



Occupational Health and Safety Policy

The NSW Fire Brigades (NSWFB) is committed to maintaining and improving occupational health, safety and welfare in the workplace, and reducing the incidence and severity of workplace accidents, injuries and illnesses. The NSWFB recognises that every person has the right to a safe and healthy working environment. The NSWFB will ensure the health and safety of visitors and contractors while on NSWFB premises. We will meet our moral and statutory obligations through the processes of joint consultation with all levels of employees, workplace committees, management and unions.

The NSW *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* and *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001* establish occupational health and safety (OHS) requirements for all workplaces throughout NSW. The NSWFB complements this legislation by issuing NSWFB specific policies, procedures and programs. Responsibility for OHS is shared by all employees as outlined below.

Corporate Executive Group

The Commissioner and the Corporate Executive Group are responsible for providing leadership and ensuring that appropriate resources are available to meet the moral and statutory obligations as stated in this policy.

Officers and managers in charge of Regions, Zones, Divisions and Branches

Officers and managers are responsible for taking action to correct unsafe and unhealthy conditions or behaviour in their areas of jurisdiction. Their responsibilities are to:

- support consultative arrangements in accordance with the duty to consult,
- ensure that supervisors assume the operational responsibility to identify, assess and control local workplace hazards,
- monitor purchasing to ensure that specifications meet OHS criteria,
- ensure that *Material safety data sheets* and other OHS information is readily available to employees,
- ensure that injury, illness, hazardous exposures and near miss notifications are submitted within the prescribed time, the occurrence is investigated, and any necessary remedial action is taken,

- ensure that risk management registers are maintained and treatment plans are actioned, and
- ensure that adequate financial resources are made available to implement necessary remedial action.

Officers and supervisors in control of stations, sections and units

Officers and supervisors in control of stations, sections and units are responsible for ensuring that their environment is consistent with occupational health and safety standards. Their responsibilities are to:

- consult with and inform staff about health and safety issues,
- encourage staff to report matters that are inconsistent with occupational health and safety standards,
- assist in the rehabilitation of injured staff in accordance with *the NSW Fire Brigades Return To Work Program For Injured Employees*,
- investigate all health and safety matters within their area of supervision and take remedial action, and
- follow up outstanding problems.

Employees

Employees' responsibilities are to:

- cooperate as far as is necessary to enable compliance with any requirement under the Act or the Regulation that is imposed in the interest of health, safety and welfare,
- take reasonable care for their own safety and that of other persons at their place of work,
- be aware of key OHS personnel such as the first aid officer, fire warden, and workplace OHS representatives, and
- be aware of the location and use of OHS related items such as first aid kits, *Notification of injury, illness, exposure and near miss form*, *WorkCover incident report form*, and *Material safety data sheets*.

Employees are encouraged to participate in workplace consultation arrangements.

Visitors and contractors

All visitors and contractors (non employees) to any NSWFB workplace are briefed on safety procedures, provided with identification badges, *Material safety data sheets* (if

required) and any necessary personal protective equipment to minimise risks associated with using plant and equipment in the NSWFB.

Supervisors must adopt appropriate means to prevent visitors and/or unauthorised persons from entering restricted areas in the workplace.

Occupational health and safety consultation committees

Committees established under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* will:

- encourage consensus on all aspects of this *Occupational health and safety policy* and OHS programs through the process of joint consultation,
- ensure that, where possible, an employer's representative who has the necessary authority to make decisions attends OHS meetings,
- review measures taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all staff at work,
- discuss matters that are considered to be a risk to health and safety with other employees, and
- participate in the dissemination of OHS information.

Health Services Branch

The role of the Health Services Branch is to:

- advise and assist management in the identification and elimination of hazards to occupational health and safety in the workplace,
- provide a consultative service to develop programs to reduce or prevent workplace accidents and illnesses,
- advise on issues of OHS, new technology and equipment, health and fitness standards and codes of practice,
- provide technical support to Occupational Health and Safety Committees,
- conduct investigations into accidents, injuries, work-related illnesses, and major safety issues,
- coordinate OHS education and training for all NSWFB employees,
- administer workplace rehabilitation and workers compensation for NSWFB employees, and
- assess and advise on matters of occupational health, safety and wellbeing of employees.

