

Psychologically Safe and Healthy Workplaces: Risk Management Approach Toolkit

Disclaimer:

The resources in this document may be useful in assisting workplaces in identifying, assessing and controlling psychological hazards such as stress and bullying related hazards in their workplace. Any risk management procedure should address all relevant risk factors and meet the consultative requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984.

Acknowledgement:

Material written in this publication has been sourced from various key publications which are as follows:

- WorkSafe Victoria
- Comcare
- Health & Safety Executive, UK

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1. Psychologically healthy and safe workplaces

A psychologically healthy and safe workplace is one that promotes employees' psychological well-being and proactively endeavours to prevent harm to employee psychological health.

Considerable research demonstrates that certain work-related factors impact upon employees' responses to work and work conditions creating a risk of work-related stress and potentially causing psychological health problems and injuries. Work-related factors, otherwise known as psychological risk factors, include the manner in which work is carried out (deadlines, workload, and work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and co-workers, and clients or customers).

Employees exposed to these psychological risk factors in the workplace are more likely to develop stress responses and mental health conditions. In addition, workplaces that do not address the psychological risk factors have the potential to make existing employee mental health conditions and stress responses worse.

Furthermore, workplaces that address psychological risk factors and create a psychologically healthy and safe workplace will have healthier, happier employees, and are likely to benefit in terms of performance, productivity, client satisfaction and retention of employees.

2. Risk factors

When considering the effects of work-related stress, it is important to understand the characteristics of different levels of risk control within the workplace.

- Organisational: although there are many psychological risk factors that can lead to a
 psychological injury, there are eight psychological risk factors that can be controlled at an
 organisational level. They have been widely researched and are known to impact on employee
 well-being and adverse psychological health
- **Environmental**: physical and chemical stressors (as well as biological agents) can influence employees' comfort and performance within the work environment and contribute to a stress response (e.g. noise, temperature and humidity, lighting, vibration and air quality)
- **Individual**: people respond to the identified psychological risk factors differently and this can, in part, be related (or contributed) to by differences unique to individuals including previous experiences, coping ability, physiological and/or personality factors which are external to the work environment. Differences in individual responses to stress do not reduce employers' legal duty and responsibility to minimise exposure to work-related stress.

These eight psychological risk factors which can be controlled at the organisational level are:

- Autonomy/control: the amount of authority the employee has over the way they do their job
- Job demands: the amount of workload the employee has to complete, this includes timelines for completing work
- Support: the level of support the employee perceives from management and colleagues
- Role conflict/ambiguity: the extent that the employee's tasks and duties are clearly defined (i.e. understaffing can lead to employees doing tasks for more than one position)
- **Relationships**: the extent of good working relationships in the workplace. This can include the presence of bullying and harassment issues in the workplace
- Change: involves planned and unplanned change in the work environment. Changes can occur at three levels: personal (i.e. changes to position and responsibilities), management (i.e. new

- supervisors or processes and procedures), and organisational (i.e. takeover, restructure or redundancies)
- **Rewards and recognition:** involves rewarding employee efforts and recognising individual and team contributions and achievements within the organisation
- Organisational justice: refers to the perceptions of fairness about work procedures and how
 they are enacted. It involves procedural fairness and relational fairness. Procedural fairness
 refers to how procedures are implemented within the organisation. Relational fairness refers to
 the degree of dignity and respect afforded to an employee during the process.

Employees may also experience psychological injuries from **aggressive or violent incidents** that occur in the workplace. Psychological injuries from aggression and violence can occur from either cumulative events or as a result of a traumatic event. For more information on this topic, please refer to WorkSafe's Safety Topics and the Code of Practice: Violence, Aggression and Bullying at Work.

3. Psychological symptoms and signs

Harm to employees' health may occur when the employee does not have the ability to cope with the psychological risk factors placed upon them. Individuals may differ in their ability to cope with the psychological risk factors. Some factors that influence the individual's ability to cope include previous experiences, coping styles, personality styles and available support.

It is important to remember that because of individual differences, employees may react differently to stressful situations. What one employee may find stressful, another employee may not. Therefore, psychological risk factors and potential injuries should not be dismissed or disregarded on the sole basis that no employees or only one employee has been adversely affected.

The initial response to personal or psychological risk factors is in itself not an injury. The effects are usually of short duration and have no lasting effects once the stressful situation has passed. Acute or chronic harm to health may result when the employee is unable to cope with persistent and sustained exposure over a long period of time.

When an employee experiences adverse health effects from psychological risk factors they may experience symptoms and signs which can be categorised as: Physical, Emotional, Cognitive, and Behavioural. Table 1 displays the signs and symptoms within each of the categories.

Table 1. Signs and symptoms

Physical	Cognitive	Emotional	Behavioural
 Increased heart rate (pounding) Elevated blood pressure Sweaty palms; tightness in the chest Headaches Diarrhoea Tightness in neck/back muscles Trembling Tics or twitching Stuttering Other speech difficulties Pupil dilation Nausea and/or vomiting Sleep disturbance Fatigue Proneness to accidents Slumped posture Shallow breathing Susceptibility to minor illnesses Dryness of mouth or throat Butterflies in stomach 	 Forgetfulness Preoccupation Blocking Errors in judging distance Diminished or exaggerated fantasy life Reduced creativity Difficulty in making decisions Mental confusion Lack of concentration Diminished productivity Lack of attention to detail Orientation to past Over-sensitivity to criticism 	 Irritability Lowered self-esteem Angry outbursts Depression Jealousy Feeling 'up-tight' Suspiciousness Diminished initiative Loneliness Helplessness Insecurity Frustration Lack of interest Tendency to cry Critical of oneself and others Lacking in confidence Self-deprecation Exhaustion Desire to escape 	 Increased smoking Aggressive driving Having accidents Clumsiness Nervous laughter Panic Increased alcohol or drug abuse Carelessness Eating too much Fast (even incoherent) speech Chewing fingernails

Changes in workplace behaviour may also be observed when an employee is experiencing symptoms and signs as part of a stress response. This includes, but not limited to:

- Increased absenteeism from work
- Increased tardiness
- Increased sick leave
- Decline in productivity and performance standards
- Impaired concentration or ability to make decisions which increases the risk of injury
- Reluctance to return to workplace area where the event occurred (particularly in circumstances which involved aggression, violence and trauma).

4. Hazard identification

Hazard identification for psychological risk factors follows a similar process to hazard identification for physical risks in the work environment. Different methods can be used complimentary to each other to determine the presence of each work-related risk factor. Such methods include:

- Analysing workplace data
- Direct observations
- Employee surveys

Appendix A provides a sample psychological hazard investigation report that your workplace can use.

4.1. Analysing workplace data

Workplace data may be examined or analysed to determine trends and the presence of psychological risks in the workplace. Determine if you have these sources of information in the workplace, and seek aggregate or summary information.

Records of sick leave	Look for trends and patterns (e.g. do some areas have higher numbers of absences
with or without certificates	or longer absences than others? Are the rates of absences or duration increasing?)
Continuates	Look for types of illness in summary information – tension headaches or migraine,
	recurrent general ill-health such as colds or flu, digestive system ulcers,
	musculoskeletal disorders such as tendon or muscular soreness, etc. Examine data
	frequencies and trends for each workplace/workgroup.
Annual or Long Service	Look at the pattern of use. Taking small amounts of time off is commonly associated
Leave	with unpleasant working conditions and employee psychological health. Sometimes
	non-usage of leave may also indicate problems.
Absenteeism records	Look for trends and patterns (e.g. do some areas have higher numbers of absences
	or longer absences than others? Are the rates of absences or duration increasing?)
Workers' compensation	Examine Workers' Compensation claims for work-related stress, post-traumatic
claims	stress disorder, anxiety and depression etc.
	Also look for long duration claims, especially those involving sprains & strains or
	struck/assaulted by clients.
Complaints (i.e.	Look for trends and patterns. Are there common themes to complaints? Do some
Grievances, Bullying	areas have more complaints than others? Are they any areas where the number of
Complaints)	complaints is increasing?
	Madalana da ana da ana da ana da ana da ana da da da ana da da ana da da da ana da
	Workplace grievance information can also indicate issues that may give rise to
	psychological hazards in the workplace such as harassment, discrimination, work-
Incident and injury	related aggression and bullying. Look at dates and times that coincide with other events, trends, etc. The pattern of
Incident and injury records	small and large incidents can provide insights into the sources of psychological risk in
records	a workplace.
Employee assistance	Summary data from usage, types of issues managed, etc. Is the usage increasing?
programs	Are similar issues arising?
Industrial relations	This can provide insights into the level of job dissatisfaction in the workplace.
records	Industrial relations disputes are frequently associated with stress in the workplace.
Minutes of meetings	Minutes of meetings e.g. OHS meetings, tool box meetings, staff meetings – look for
	issues that remain unresolved and reappear over time such as workload, changes in
	work roles, etc.
Work schedule records	Examine records of work schedules and how they were designed, records of long
	hours of work, planned and unplanned, and overtime usage.
Organisation's policies	Knowledge of – and compliance with – the organisation's policies and procedures for
and procedures	workplace consultation and issue resolution, and the prevention of work-related:
	Harassment or bullying;
	Aggression in the workplace
	Unfair treatment
	Discrimination
	Interpersonal conflict
	Fatigue
	Stress.

(Note: this table is adapted from WorkSafe Victoria's *Stresswise – Preventing Work-Related Stress: A Guide for Employers in the Public Sector*).

4.2. Direct observation

Often a walk around the workplace which involves informal conversations with employees and directly observing how employees are working and interacting with each other can identify the presence of psychological risk factors in the work environment. For example, a conversation you have with an employee reveals that the work area is understaffed due to recent increases in client orders. The employee advised that they are experiencing high work pressure and subsequently has taken a number of sick days that week as the employee is dreading attending work. You may also observe how employees communicate in times of conflict. Is it constructive communication or do employees tend use blame language and personal criticism rather than commenting on the standard of work required?

Direct observation is a good way to build rapport with employees and indicates your support. Walking around the workplace and having informal conversations with employees is highly visible and demonstrates you are approachable if they need to speak with you about any concerns or issues.

'Walk-arounds' or direct observation should be conducted as regularly as possible; once a week as a minimum.

4.3. Employee survey

Employee surveys are designed to take the 'pulse' of an organisation or work area at that point in time. Employee surveys are a common method for measuring psychological risk factors in the workplace by assessing employees' perception of the workplace and their work experiences. Employee surveys are typically a cost effective means to assess the entire workforce in a confidential and anonymous manner compared to other ways to obtain the information such as employee focus groups and interviews for example.

Employee surveys use specific questions to identify the presence of psychological risk factors in the organisation overall and in work location/ groups. Employee surveys can include specific questions that measure the degree of psychological distress and physical symptoms.

When examining employee survey results look for employee satisfaction with such things including but not limited to, leadership, pay, the management of workplace conflict, reward and recognition of effort, career opportunities, job security, working conditions, workplace consultation, communication and involvement in decision-making, control over workload, work schedules, work culture issues such as levels of support, social or physical isolation, and management style.

Employee surveys can be custom designed or standard measures. External consultants may be able to assist with the design, implementation and analysis of the survey results and conduct any follow up interventions. Professionals with particular expertise in this area include Organisational Psychologists, Organisational Development consultants and Human Resources consultants.

Employee surveys can be purchased through psychometric test suppliers. Some employee surveys have restricted access; for example can only be purchased and administered by registered Psychologists or accredited users. Other surveys may be obtained for free if published in a public source (e.g. internet, journals and books) and there are no restrictions on who can administer the survey.

There are also survey web sites that allow the user to create their own survey, administer the survey and analyse the collected data.

4.4. Examples of employee survey measures

The matrix below displays a list of free to use employee survey measures and the psychological risk factors that are measured. This is not an exhaustive list. There may be other free to use and paid measures that are appropriate to use for your workplace. For more detailed information on each of these employee survey measures in the table below, please refer to Appendix B –Employee Survey Measures.

	Employee Survey Measures	Authority / Control	Job Demands	Support	Role Conflict/ Ambiguity	Relationships	Change	Rewards and Recognition	Organisational Justice	Other
1.	Management Standards Stress Indicator Tool - HSE	√	√	√	√	√	√			
2.	The Positive Work Environment Toolkit	✓	√	✓	~	√	✓	√	√	√
3.	Stresswise – Preventing Work- related Stress (Risk Management Tool)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
4.	People at Work Project: An Assessment of Psychosocial Hazards in the Workplace	V	√	√	√	~	√	√	√	√
5.	Australian Psychological Society: Psychologically Healthy Workplace Program		~	√	√	~		√		√

4.5. Examples of health surveys / assessments

Self-report health measures are surveys where an employee indicates their perceived health, or experiences. They are not generally intended to be used as a diagnosis method however can provide information that may facilitate medical practitioners in determining a diagnosis, when combined with other diagnosis methods. The inclusion of self-report measures for employees' health should be used with caution and should not be used to diagnose an employee with a psychological condition. It is a means of gathering group information (collated, unidentified, and confidential) to determine if overall employee health is being adversely affected.

Some health measurements assess emotional reactions such as anger, anxiety or depression. Others look at the physical symptoms associated with stress or general psychological health and well-being.

The table below provides a list of measures, although not developed for work-related health and injury, they are often used in occupational settings and used by General Practitioner and Psychologists. This is not an exhaustive list. There may be other free to use and paid measures that are appropriate to use for your workplace.

Health Self-Report Measure	Anxiety	Coping	Depression	Distress
Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS)	✓	√	√	
Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10)	√		√	
Australian Psychological Society: Psychologically Healthy Workplace Program				√

For more detailed information on each of these health self-report measures, please refer to Appendix C – Health Self-Report Measures.

You may even consider developing your own broad and general questions related to health effects, for example "I believe my health has been affected as a result of work-related stress".

Note: Privacy and confidentiality of personal information must be protected. Personal information or opinion, whether true or not about an identifiable individual. It should not be possible to identify an individual from workplace records, survey data or workplace consultation, therefore grouped or aggregate information is recommended to protect the identity of individuals.

Only persons authorised to handle personal information should summarise, aggregate or de-identify personal information.

5. Risk management

All employers should carry out a regular check of the workplace in consultation with health and safety representatives and employees to identify if there are psychological risk factors within the organisation (risk identification) and take steps to implement solutions to control risks (risk management). Sample Risk Management tools have been included in Appendix A to assist your organisation with identifying psychological risks and implementing risk controls.

6. Risk controls

There are three types of interventions for controlling psychological risk factors: primary, secondary and tertiary. Primary interventions are aimed at the organisational and employee level. Secondary and tertiary interventions are focussed at the employee level.

Interventions and controls should be aimed at the organisational level to control psychological risk factors. Interventions aimed at the organisational level are generally preventative controls and designed to either eliminate or reduce the risk factors. Examples include job redesign or the reallocation of work to distribute work more evenly across employees. While addressing psychological risk factors through employee level strategies is a control measure (e.g. counselling), it should be used in conjunction with an organisational level approach, as it does not address the reduction of the risk factors in the workplace.

One way of preventing risks before they happen is by implementing a Leadership Development Program (LDP). A Leadership Development Program may focus on developing specific attributes related to the "people skills" of the manager or supervisor. This may include, but is not limited to attributes such as conflict management, emotional intelligence, gaining followership, empowering employees and learning skills to develop employees' strengths and improve employee performance, whilst developing employee loyalty, trust and support.

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to identify, assess and control the emotions of oneself, others and groups. If managers/ supervisors have an ability to perceive emotions of employees, their leadership and management skills may be more effective.

Effective leadership skills is one of the preventative factors for work-related stress and psychological injury. Effective leadership skills may be seen in the workplace as reduction in Grievances, formal complaints and inappropriate workplace conduct, such as bullying and conflict.

Examples of available for a LDP approach include, but not limited to:

- 1. Health Safety Executive Line Manager Competency Indicator Tool
- 2. Managing Conflict at Work
- 3. Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) Fee associated with use.

More information about these measures can be found in Appendix D. This is not an exhaustive list. Other free-to –use measures and pay for use measures are available.

Note that in there are other measures available online in regards to Emotional Intelligence, however each measure will need to be assessed to deem appropriateness of use. These measures may not be free but may be worth considering.

A guide to using measures can be found within the *Toolkits and Information Resources section*: Comcare: Using Employee Opinion Surveys to Improve People Outcomes.

These example measures can be used for risk factor identification, self-reporting of symptoms and developing leadership attributes. It is not compulsory to use these measures; they are merely examples

of the available measures to workplaces. These measures are examples of how these areas can be measured and therefore managed. It is important to ascertain which (if any) of these measures will be relevant for your organisation.

You may need to engage specialists or external consultants to assist you in the design and implementation of some of the controls. As mentioned previously, professionals with particular expertise in this area include Organisational Psychologists, Organisational Development consultants and Human Resources consultants.

6.1 Primary intervention

Primary interventions are implemented before hazards or injuries/ incidents are present. These sorts of interventions usually require both organisational level strategies and employee level strategies.

It is practicable for organisations that are known to have the psychological risk factors present in the workplace, due to the nature of the job or clientele, and in consideration of past Workers' Compensation claims for work-related stress, to have primary intervention strategies in place.

Primary interventions are aimed at:

- 1. Modifying or eliminating the psychological risk factors that may give rise to a harm to health and
- 2. Developing employees' ability to cope with the psychological risk factors.

Primary interventions may also focus on the interface between the employee and the workplace (e.g. selection processes, training for managers, supportive leadership and team climate).

6.2 Secondary intervention

Secondary interventions are implemented after hazards or injuries/ incidents are present, but before harm to health develops. Secondary interventions focus mainly on employees (e.g. employee assistance programs, medical treatment, counselling).

However, secondary interventions, such as the introduction of an employee counselling service, or training to improve employees' coping skills for stress, do not eliminate or reduce the risk factors from the work environment.

6.3 Tertiary intervention

Tertiary interventions are implemented after it has been medically established that an injury has developed. Tertiary interventions are employee focused. These interventions concern the treatment of the diagnosed psychological injury. The aim is restore the employee's psychological health, or improve employee psychological health to the point where the employee is able to return to work (e.g. return to work program) and a healthy state of functioning.

6.4 Examples of primary, secondary and tertiary interventions

Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	
Job redesign	Employee assistance program	Return to work programs	
Policies and procedures (e.g. early intervention procedure)	Individual stress management training	Psychiatric/ psychological treatment	
Flexible working arrangements	Individual relaxation techniques/ classes	Medication if prescribed	
Recruitment and selection processes	Individual time management training	Employee assistance program	
Supportive leadership	Workload adjustments	Individual stress management training	
Management training		Individual relaxation techniques/ classes	
Team climate change		Individual time management training	
		Workload adjustments	

Appendix A – Psychological Hazard Investigation Report (sample)

Part A: Individual details

		_				
Full name:		Gender		Date of birth:		
		│				
Contact phone:						
Contact phone: (Work)						
(Home)						
(Mobile)						
1-1-241-		01-1			7.0	
Job title:		Status	:	Part-time	Casual Ex-employee	
Work Area/Dept:		Working	g Hours:			
Employed since: (date)		Time in	position:			
Details of relevant training: conflict resolution, managin	g aggressive clie	ents), ref	reshers	, , ,	·	
Part B: Incident details						
Type:	Timeframe:				Shift start time:	
☐ Incident ☐ Injury	One-off ir					
Illness	-		me: specify timefran			
Date of incident (or most	Time of incident		1st Papartad to:			
	most recent inci		-			
cumulative):	cumulative) (24h	nr):				
Specific location of incident	:					
Describe what happened: (vincident – the sequence of e				what was said, des	scribe the	
Part C: Nature of injury/ illness						
Describe injury or illness:						
Location of injury /hocks	rto officitor!\					
Location of injury: (body parts affected)						

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Initial Treatment: Ni		id	GP					
Facility Name:								
Dataila								
Details:								
Further treatment required/ likely: No Yes Unsure								
Part D: Mechanism of i	njury							
Relevant history: (Previous grievances, existing process) Psychological risk factors								
Work Environment	Organisational Culture	Authority / Control	Job Demands					
Poor workplace layout	☐ Poor leadership	Low level of influence over how work is performed	☐ Inadequate time to do the job					
Restricted / limited space	Low levels of support for problem solving	Low level of influence over task demands	Inadequate resources to complete the job satisfactorily					
Layout or location that interferes with communication	Low levels of support for personal / professional development	Excessive responsibility but little authority or decision making ability	☐ Working long hours (overtime, through breaks, taking work home)					
Layout or location that interferes with social support	☐ Values not clearly defined	Low level involvement in decision making	Work overload or too little to do					
☐ Inadequate equipment availability/ suitability	☐ Values not regularly communicated	Low level of influence over how work is performed	High mental task demand (high level decision making, prolonged periods of concentration)					
Lack of maintenance of equipment and building	Acceptable standards of behaviour in line with values are not enforced	Low level of influence over task demands	Monotonous work/ under stimulating or meaningless work					
☐ Poor lighting	Low levels of trust amongst employees towards management	Low level of influence over the pace of the work	Under use of worker's skills					
☐ Poor air quality and ventilation	Poor communication	Low level involvement in determining working hours / shift work	High emotional tasks demands or tasks that require emotions to be kept hidden					
Excessive noise	☐ Other:	☐ Other:	☐ Working under time pressures or continually subject to deadlines					
High temperature and humidity			☐ Unpredictable shift rosters					

	Other:					Continuous exposure to people through work
						Low social value of work
						High uncertainty in job
						Other:
	Support		Role Conflict & Ambiguity	F	Relationships at Work	Change
	Inadequate or absent supervision		Expectations of the role conflict with the individuals values or job demands		Social or physical isolation	Lack of communication about changes in the workplace
	Inconsiderate or unsupportive supervision		More than one manager which may give rise to conflicting priorities / tasks		Poor relationships with co- workers	Management of organisation change is not done well or not done at all
	Low levels of support for problem solving and personal development		Work and job objectives, accountabilities, scope, responsibilities and expectations are not clearly communicated		Poor relationships with superiors	Job insecurity (i.e. restructure or redundancies)
	Social or physical isolation		Other:		Interpersonal conflict	Lack of progress in job/ career for a prolonged period
	Poor relationships with co-workers				Lack of social support	Other:
	Poor relationships with supervisor/s or manager/s				Lack of agreed procedures or knowledge of procedures for dealing with workplace problems or complaints	
	Interpersonal conflict				Other:	
	Other:					
Re	ewards & Recognition	Oı	rganisational Justice	٧	Vorker Characteristics	Other
	Efforts, contributions and achievements are not recognised at the team level		Procedures are not perceived as fair, unbiased, consistently applied, using accurate information and are open to appeal processes		Young/older worker	Experience / skill:
	Efforts, contributions and achievements are not recognised at the individual level	_ I	Workers are not able to bring a support person to relevant meetings		Returning from a period of extended leave	Training/information:
	Performance appraisal is not undertaken on an annual basis or as required.	_	Workers are not treated with respect and dignity		Physical limitations	Other:
	Managers and supervisors have not been provided training to undertake providing feedback and performance appraisals	;	Workers do not perceive a positive and fair working environment		Cognitive limitations /learning difficulties	
	Workers are not	☐ F	Procedural fairness		Language or cultural	

provided with opportunities for development	procedures a within the org		barriers					
Other:	☐ Other:		Other:					
Part E – Action required (To be completed by OSH rep/ Supervisor/ Manager in consultation with employee, and attached to employee Incident Report) Which of the risk factors need control measures?								
☐ Work environ ☐ Work demand ☐ Role clarity ☐ Level of conti ☐ Relationships ☐ Workplace ch ☐ Workplace su ☐ Recognition a ☐ Organisations ☐ Worker chara	ment ds rol s at work nange upport and rewards al justice							
☐ Other/s :								
	•••••							
Control measures	to be implemented: (us	e Hierarchy of	Control)					
	equired (immediate & fut	ure) By w	hom By wher	Comple				
1					☐ Employee ☐ OSH rep ☐ OSH Committe ☐ Supervisor/man			
1					I I Human Rasour	-		
2					Human Resour Other:	-		
						-		
						-		
						-		
3						-		
3						-		
3			me after receiving	the report of	Other:	-		
4	res the employer within a	reasonable ti	_	-	a hazard or injury to:	ces		
3	res the employer within a	reasonable ti	and determine the	action, if an	a hazard or injury to:	ces		
The legislation requirement (a) invest to take (b) notify	res the employer within a igate the matter that has e; and	reasonable ti	and determine the	action, if an	a hazard or injury to:	nds		
The legislation requirement (a) invest to take (b) notify Date employee was	res the employer within a igate the matter that has e; and the employee who report	reasonable ti	and determine the	action, if an	a hazard or injury to:	nds		
The legislation requirement (a) invest to take (b) notify	res the employer within a igate the matter that has e; and the employee who report	reasonable ti	and determine the	action, if an	a hazard or injury to:	nds		

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Investigation Completed by:	
(Name)	(Position)
(Signature)(Date)	

Appendix B - Risk Assessment Tool (sample)

This risk assessment tool (sample) is designed to help employers meet their legal obligations to manage risks associated with psychological injury. This tool is not exhaustive. You may need to consider other risk factors which are unique to your organisation. Add these factors to the 'Additional Factors' section of this checklist.

To use this checklist, read the statements below and tick YES to any of the statements you agree with. Make any relevant comments which should be considered as part of the risk assessment process. A risk rating table has been provided below to assist you in assessing the risk. When determining the risk rating of an identified risk factor you will need to consider the likelihood of the injury occurring against the severity of the consequences if the injury occurs, whilst taking into account the existing systems and controls at the workplace.

This sample risk assessment tool can be used as a stand-alone assessment or in conjunction with an employee survey.

Risk Rating Table

Likelihood of injury or harm to health		Consequences of any	Existing systems		
	Insignificant	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic	How do the existing controls and systems impact on the risk rating?
Very Likely	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme	
Likely	Moderate	High	Extreme	Extreme	(increase/decrease?)
Moderate	Low	High	Extreme	Extreme	
Unlikely	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme	
High Unlikely (rare)	Low	Moderate	High	High	

Risk Assessment

Completed by:		Position:				
Date of Risk Assessment:		Review Date:				
Workplace Data Analysis	Answer (Each YES answer indicates a risk control is needed)	Risk Rating (N/A, Low, Moderate, High or Extreme)	Comments (Make notes on reasons for your assessment)			
Are there any trends in records of sick leave with or without certificates which show relevant trends (e.g. headaches, recurrent colds or flu and musculoskeletal disorders)?	Yes □ No □					
Are there cases of annual or long service leave (or non-usage) as a result of psychological risk factors or work-related stress (e.g. using annual leave as sick leave is exhausted or not using annual leave due to work pressure)?	Yes □ No □					
Are there any trends in absenteeism (e.g. some areas having a higher absenteeism rate than others)?	Yes □ No □					
Are there cases of workers' compensation or psychological injuries (e.g. work-related stress, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and depression etc.)?	Yes □ No □					
Are there trends or common themes in complaints or workplace grievances?	Yes □					

Workplace Data Analysis	Answer (Each YES answer indicates a risk control is needed)	Risk Rating (N/A, Low, Moderate, High or Extreme)	Comments (Make notes on reasons for your assessment)
Are there trends in Employee Assistance Program usage and types of issues managed?	Yes □ No □		
Are there industrial relations records or disputes which link to job dissatisfaction in the workplace?	Yes No		
Are there any related and unresolved issues in minutes of meetings (e.g. workload or change in work roles)?	Yes □ No □		
Are there work schedule records that reflect long hours of work, overtime usage or other relevant information?	Yes □ No □		
Is there a lack of knowledge and compliance of the organisation's policies and procedures relating to psychological risk factors (e.g. harassment, bullying, discrimination etc.)?	Yes □ No □		
Additional:	Yes □ No □		

Direct observation	Answer (Each YES answer indicates a risk control is needed)		Risk rating (N/A, Low, Moderate, High or Extreme)	Comments (Make notes on reasons for your assessment)
Are there work areas which are understaffed?	Yes			
	No			
Are there work areas experiencing a high number of sick days compared to others?	Yes			
	No			
Are there work areas where employees handle conflict destructively (e.g. using	Yes			
blame language and personal criticism?	No			
Other:	Yes			
	No			

Risk Factors (May be identified from direct observations, analysis of workplace data and employee survey results)	Answer (Each YES answer indicates a risk control is needed)	Risk Rating (N/A, Low, Moderate, High or Extreme)	Comments (Make notes on reasons for your assessment)
Authority/control Issues to do with control over and involvement in decisions that could be reasonably be expected in a job or a role about such things as: Work methods Workload Work schedules The pace of work The working environment Shift work Other (describe):	Yes 🗆 No 🗆		

Risk Factors (May be identified from direct observations, analysis of workplace data and employee survey results)	Answer (Each YES answer indicates a risk control is needed)	Risk Rating (N/A, Low, Moderate, High or Extreme)	Comments (Make notes on reasons for your assessment)
Lack of variety Monotonous, under-stimulating, fragmented or meaningless work Under-use of skills High uncertainty Low social value of work Continuous exposure to people through work Unpleasant tasks Tasks that require emotions to be kept hidden Work overload or under load Machine pacing Having too much or too little to do	Yes No		
 Working under time pressures Continually subject to deadlines Other (describe): 			

Risk Factors (May be identified from direct observations, analysis of workplace data and employee survey results)	Answer (Each YES answer indicates a risk control is needed)	Risk Rating (N/A, Low, Moderate, High or Extreme)	Comments (Make notes on reasons for your assessment)
 Inadequate or absent supervision Inconsiderate or unsupportive supervision Low levels of support for problem-solving and personal development Social or physical isolation Poor relationship with co-workers Poor relationships with supervisors/managers Interpersonal conflict Lack of social support Isolated or solitary work Other (describe): 	Yes □ No □		
 Role Conflict/ambiguity Unclear work role Conflicting roles within the same job Responsibility for people Continuously dealing with other people and their problems Other (describe): 	Yes □ No □		

Risk Factors (May be identified from direct observations, analysis of workplace data and employee survey results)	Answer (Each YES answer indicates a risk control is needed)	Risk Rating (N/A, Low, Moderate, High or Extreme)	Comments (Make notes on reasons for your assessment)
Social or physical isolation Poor relationship with co-workers Poor relationships with superiors/workers Interpersonal conflict Lack of social support	Yes □ No □		
 Bullying, harassment and violence Isolated or solitary work Lack of agreed procedures or knowledge of procedures for dealing work workplace problems or complaints Other (describe): 			
 Management of organisational change is not done or not done well Lack of communication within the workplace Rigidity of work practices Job insecurity Career uncertainty Stagnation Other (describe): 	Yes □ No □		

Risk Factors (May be identified from direct observations, analysis of workplace data and employee survey results)	Answer (Each YES answer indicates a risk control is needed)	Risk Rating (N/A, Low, Moderate, High or Extreme)	Comments (Make notes on reasons for your assessment)
Rewards and recognition Reward or status in the workplace Social value of work Individual and team contribution Achievements Other (describe):	Yes □ No □		
 Organisational justice Bias of work procedures Inconsistency of applied procedures Lack of respect given to employees during the process Unclear or unfair processes for performance appraisal and management Other (describe): 	Yes □ No □		

Risk Factors (May be identified from direct observations, analysis of workplace data and employee survey results)	Answer (Each YES answer indicates a risk control is needed)		Risk Rating (N/A, Low, Moderate, High or Extreme)	Comments (Make notes on reasons for your assessment)
Physical work environment	Yes □			
 Poor workplace layout Lack of space Layout or location that interferes with communication Layout or location that interferes with social support Inadequate equipment availability, suitability or Lack of maintenance of equipment and building Poor lighting Poor air quality and ventilation Excessive noise High temperature and humidity Other (describe): 	No 🗆			

Risk Factors (May be identified from direct observations, analysis of workplace data and employee survey results)	Answer (Each YES answer indicates a risk control is needed)	Risk Rating (N/A, Low, Moderate, High or Extreme)	Comments (Make notes on reasons for your assessment)
Organisational culture and function	Yes □		
 Poor communication Poor leadership Low levels of support for problem-solving and personal development Lack of definition of or agreement on organisational objectives and structure Vision and values not clearly defined, regularly communicated Acceptable standards of behaviour, in line with organisational values are not enforced Low levels of trust amongst employees and towards management Other (describe): 	No 🗆		
Additional:	Yes □		
	No □		

Risk management plan (sample)

If you tick YES to any of the statements in the risk assessment checklist, you will need to identify and implement risk control solutions. The following table is an example of a Risk Management Plan that your company can adapt for its use.

Location / Group : Front reception	Risk factor: Front reception team are understaffed due to one staff member on extended leave, creating increased workload for remaining staff members and conflict amongst the team.			
	Short terr	m (up to four weeks)		
Action required	Person responsible	Completion date	Review date	Comments on review
Assess appropriateness of mediation and offer mediation (if appropriate) offer EAP assistance and additional resources.	Joe Smith	01/06/14	15/06/14	Parties involved now have a constructive working relationship and continue to access EAP support.
Hire one temporary administration staff to assist team with workload whist staff member is on extended leave.	Joe Smith	23/05/14	30/05/14	Feedback from the team has been positive and the addition of the temporary staff member has decreased the workload to a manageable level.
	Medium term (four weeks to six mont	hs)	
Action Required	Person Responsible	Completion Date	Review Date	Comments on Review
Develop dispute resolution procedure.	Joe Smith	01/06/14	01/12/14	Received formal complaints during this time which were managed using procedure. Procedure needs amending to

				include provision of external investigation if deemed appropriate.
	Long term (n	nore than six months)		
Action Required	Person Responsible	Completion Date	Review Date	Comments on Review
Provide leadership development training to all management employees.	Joe Smith	01/06/14	01/06/15	
Assess current state of our organisational culture and develop our culture to be in alignment with our organisational values.	Joe Smith	01/06/14	01/06/15	

Appendix C – Employee Survey Measures

Title:	HSE Management Standards Stress Indicator Tool
Source:	Health & Safety Executive (UK)
	http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/downloads.htm
What does it do?	Employee self-report survey that measures key areas of work associated with poor health and well-being, lower productivity and increased sickness absence.
What does it measure?	 Job Demands Autonomy/control Support Relationships Role conflict/ambiguity Change
Does it include separate scores for each element?	Yes
Is a User Manual or other supporting documentation provided?	Yes HSE Indicator Tool Manual How to organise and run focus groups

Title:	The Positive Work Environment Toolkit
Source:	State Services Authority Victoria
	http://www.ssa.vic.gov.au/products/view-products/how-
	positive-is-your-work-environment.html
What does it do?	Rates the work environment, to see what is working and
	what is not and then implement actions to improve the
	work environment. The toolkit has a Quick Check Tool, a
	description of people's roles in the ideal situation, litmus
	test questions, case studies and resources.
What does it measure?	 Job Demands
	 Autonomy/Control
	Support
	 Relationships
	Role Conflict/Ambiguity
	Change
	Rewards and Recognition
	Organisational Justice
Does it include separate scores for	Yes
each element?	
Is a User Manual or other supporting	Yes
documentation provided?	

Title:	Stresswise – Preventing Work-related Stress (Risk
	Management Tool)
Source:	WorkSafe Victoria: https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au
What does it do?	Guides employers in the public sector on managing work- related risks to stress
What does it measure?	Work-related stress risk factors
Does it include separate scores for each element?	No
Is a User Manual or other supporting documentation provided?	Yes

Title:	People at Work Project (Fee associated with use)
Source:	The People at Work Project is a research collaboration among Queensland University of Technology and The Australian National University, with Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, WorkCover NSW, WorkSafe Victoria, Comcare, Safe Work Australia, and beyondblue (Partner Organisations). The project is funded by the Australian Research Council and the Partner Organisations. http://www.peopleatworkproject.com.au/
What does it do?	This survey measures how different workplace characteristics influence worker health and well-being, focusing particularly on risks to psychological health.
What does it measure?	 Job Demands Autonomy/Control Support Relationships at Work Role Conflict/Ambiguity Change Rewards and Recognition Procedural Justice Emotional Demand Cognitive Demand
Does it include separate scores for each element?	Surveys are returned to People At Work Project who score, analyse the data and provide overall and workgroup reports.
Is a User Manual or other supporting documentation provided?	Yes. Project documents are available on the website.

Title:	Psychologically Healthy Workplace Program
Title.	(Fee associated with use)
Source:	·
Source.	Australian Psychological Society
	http://www.apshealthyworkplace.com.au
What does it do?	This survey provides an overall assessment of workplace
	psychological health.
What does it measure?	 Job Demands
	Support
	 Relationships at Work
	Role Conflict/Ambiguity
	Rewards and Recognition
	Learning and Development
	Teamwork
	Empowerment
	Ownership
	Individual Morale
	Team Morale
	Team Stress
	Individual Stress
Does it include separate scores for	The APS provides a summary report with overall scores
each element?	and scores for each element.
Is a User Manual or other supporting	Yes, documents are available on the website.
documentation provided?	

Appendix D - Health Self-Report Measures

Title:	Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS)
Source:	University of New South Wales http://www2.psy.unsw.edu.au/dass/
What does it do?	Measures negative emotional states
What does it measure?	DepressionAnxietyCopingStress
Does it include separate scores for each element?	Yes
Is a User Manual or other supporting documentation provided?	Yes

Title:	Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10)
Source:	https://www.tac.vic.gov.au/files-to- move/media/upload/k10_english.pdf
What does it do?	Measures psychological health.
What does it measure?	Depression Apriotic
	AnxietyStress
Does it include separate scores for each element?	No
Is a User Manual or other supporting documentation provided?	Yes

Title:	Psychologically Healthy Workplace Program (Fee associated with use)
Source:	Australian Psychological Society
	http://www.apshealthyworkplace.com.au
What does it do?	This survey provides an overall assessment of workplace
	psychological health.
What does it measure?	 Job Demands
	Support
	 Relationships at Work
	Role Conflict/Ambiguity
	Rewards and Recognition
	 Learning and Development
	Teamwork
	Empowerment
	Ownership
	Individual Morale
	Team Morale
	Team Stress
	Individual Stress
Does it include separate scores for	The APS provides a summary report with overall scores
each element?	and scores for each element.
Is a User Manual or other supporting	Yes, documents are available on the website.
documentation provided?	

Appendix E – Leadership Development Tools

Title:	HSE Line Manager Competency Indicator Tool
Source:	Health & Safety Executive (UK)
	www.hse.gov.uk
What does it assess?	Supervisor/Manager skills in conflict and stress management
What does it involve?	Manager/Supervisor Self-report tool that provides guidance on
	whether they have the behaviours identified as effective for
	preventing and reducing stress at work
What does it specifically	Behavioural areas identified as important for stress prevention and
measure?	management
	 Managing emotions and having integrity
	 Managing and communicating existing and future work
	Managing the individual within the team
	Reasoning/managing difficult situations
Does it include separate scores	Yes
for each element?	
Does it include any	Yes.
baseline/comparison results?	
Is any software provided	Yes Excel macros that give total scores and priority areas
Is a User Manual or other	Yes
supporting documentation	
provided?	
Conditions of use?	No
Does it include or refer to	Yes (available via a link to The Chartered Institute of Personnel
supporting Guidance Material	and Development)
to address identified problems?	Line management behaviour and stress at work Updated guidance
	for line managers

Title:	Managing Conflict at Work
Source:	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
	www.cipd.co.uk
What is it applicable to:	Conflict management
	Bullying
	Distinction between strong management and bullying
What does it do?	Manager self-report survey on conflict management skills and
	management style
What does it specifically	Conflict Management Skills:
measure?	Dealing with issues
	Use of official processes
	Participative approach
	Monitoring team relationships
	Role-modelling behaviour
	Integrity
	3 ,
	Management Style:
	People focus
	Personal integrity
	Visibility
	Promoting standards
	Challenging the status quo
Does it include separate scores	Yes
for each element?	
Does it include any	Yes
baseline/comparison results?	
Is any software provided	No
Is a User Manual or other	Yes
supporting documentation	
provided?	
Conditions of use?	No
Does it include or refer to	No
supporting Guidance Material to	
address identified problems?	

Title:	Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) – Not free
Source:	MHS Psychological Assessments and Services
	http://ei.mhs.com/MSCEIT.aspx
What is it applicable to:	Leadership Development
	Performance Management
What does it do?	Measures the ability to identify, assess and control the emotions
	of oneself, others and groups.
What does it specifically	Perceiving Emotions
measure?	Faces
	Pictures
	Facilitating Thought
	Facilitation
	Sensations
	Schodishe
	Understanding Emotions
	Changes
	Blends
	Managing Emotions
	Emotion Management
	Emotional Relations
Does it include separate scores	Yes
for each element?	
Does it include any	Yes if you measure before and after LDP.
baseline/comparison results?	
Is any software provided	No
Is a User Manual or other	Yes – when purchased
supporting documentation provided?	
Conditions of use?	Yes
Does it include or refer to	No
supporting Guidance Material to	
address identified problems?	