

Mental Health Policy

The working environment can often present hazards that may impact on the mental health of workers, potentially causing the worker to sustain a psychological injury or experience an exacerbation of a pre-existing condition. This may occur at a physical workplace, or any location or situation related to work or in which work is performed.

Hazards in the workplace that may impact upon the mental health of workers include the physical workplace environment, the nature and complexity of the work itself relative to the workers' knowledge and training, work procedures, excessive or prolonged work pressures, fatigue, bullying and/or harassment (including sexual harassment), exposure to a violent or traumatic event and the introduction of work restrictions that are beyond the control of the organisation. Any of these factors can lead to workers experiencing a stress response.

Work related stress describes the physical, mental, and emotional reactions that arise when workers perceive that their work demands exceed their ability to cope. However, if job stress is excessive or prolonged, it may lead to psychological and/or physical injury.

Stubbs Constructions is committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of its workers and ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, that associated hazards and risks are effectively and proactively identified and managed through a risk management approach.

In consultation with its workers or their representatives, Stubbs Constructions will support the mental health of its workers by adopting the following three-phase approach:

- preventing psychological harm by ensuring the job, task and role hazards and risks are identified, assessed, controlled and reviewed, including implementing written procedures and providing information, instruction and training to workers;
- intervening early by continually reviewing existing control measures and supporting at risk workers; and
- supporting the recovery of injured workers.

In adopting this three-phased approach, the organisation aims to:

- promote positive mental health and wellbeing
- improve mental health or ill-health literacy
- support those who are experiencing mental health difficulties and
- provide and review organisational responses that support mental health and wellbeing.

Therefore, to achieve Stubbs Constructions' aims, it will develop and implement specific strategies designed to promote and maintain a safe physical and online workplace environment and respectful culture such as:

- developing and reviewing written policies and procedures and providing support services that support mental health and wellbeing and prevent discrimination (including bullying and harassment);
- increasing workers' knowledge and awareness of mental health issues and behaviours within the workplace by facilitating active participation of workers in a range of initiatives that support

- mental health and providing appropriate information, instruction, training or supervision to workers;
- engaging with external agencies and developing strategic partnerships to streamline effective support to their workers;
- reducing stigma around depression and anxiety in the workplace by encouraging workers to seek support early if they have declining mental health, and, where appropriate, provide support and adjustments suitable to their work needs to help them to achieve their potential;
- promoting a responsive community within the workplace that requires all workers to take reasonable care in view of any reasonably foreseeable circumstance that may arise, which affects the safety of themselves or others at work; and
- monitoring the health and safety of workers and the conditions at the workplace to ensure that work related illnesses and injuries are prevented.

Identifying Mental Health Risks

Workplace hazards that can result in poor mental health, psychological injury, or an exacerbation of a pre-existing condition may be categorised as:

- environmental hazards such as prolonged exposure to noise, temperature, poor air quality, or unsafe machinery;
- organisational hazards including issues such as long work hours, shift work and related fatigue, excessive workloads, emotionally distressing work, exposure to violent or traumatic events, work tasks that are repetitive and/or monotonous, remote/isolated work with minimal support from managers, supervisors, and/or co-workers, poor role clarity and unmanaged organisational change;
- individual hazards such as workers having been afforded insufficient training, information or instruction to undertake the work required safely and correctly, poor relationships or conflict between management and workers, between co-workers, or between workers and clients/customers. The organisation also recognises that such conflict may include bullying, aggression, harassment (including sexual harassment), discrimination, or other unreasonable behaviour. Conflict may also arise from a perceived lack of fairness by workers in addressing organisational issues and resource allocation or where performance issues have been inappropriately or poorly managed.

Therefore, hazards that may result in poor mental health, psychological injury, or an exacerbation of a pre-existing condition will be identified by:

- having meaningful one-on-one conversations with workers, supervisors and managers about mental health hazards and risks;
- inspecting the workplace for environmental hazards that could influence staff comfort and performance, which may consequently contribute to a stress response;
- regularly reviewing organisational hazards, including:
 - job demand (eg the level of physical, mental and emotional effort required to do a job);
 - job control (eg the level of control a worker has over aspects of their work including how or when a job is done);

- support available (eg the level of support from supervisors and co-workers, information, equipment, and resources available to allow the work to be done);
- change management (eg how change in the organisation, structure or job is communicated and the extent of worker involvement in these changes); and
- organisational justice (eg perceptions of unfairness, consistency, bias and respect for workers);
- identifying changes in staff behaviour (eg poor self-care or someone who is usually friendly becoming more withdrawn);
- regularly inspecting the workplace to help identify changes in the way work is undertaken;
- identifying an increase in task errors or deteriorating work performance;
- observing the nature of relationships between workers, managers, supervisors, co-workers and clients/customers;
- reviewing relevant reporting systems and records such as incident reports, workers' compensation claims (including unsuccessful claims), staff surveys, grievance records, patterns of unplanned absenteeism (eg personal (sick) leave) and staff turnover data;
- using confidential surveys to gather information from workers, supervisors and managers;
- consulting with industry or employee associations; and
- ensuring regular feedback from isolated workers such as those working from home is taken into consideration.

Stubbs Constructions recognises that individuals respond to hazards in different ways and that individual differences such as age, existing disabilities, injuries or illnesses as well as life experiences may make some workers more susceptible to harm from exposure to the same hazard. It is also recognised that there may be more than one aspect of the working environment or workplace that is contributing to the mental health of workers and the subsequent risk of psychological injury or exacerbation of a pre-existing condition.

Assessing Mental Health Risks

Assessing the risk to the mental health of workers involves examining the identified risk factors in more detail to determine the level of risk, and to help prioritise the order in which control measures are implemented.

The level of risk can be assessed by considering:

- the capacity of the hazard to induce harm, for example exposure to low levels of conflict may be unpleasant without causing a health and safety risk whereas high levels of unmanaged conflict can escalate into workplace bullying, increased stress and cause incidents;
- the extent of the exposure to the hazard (ie the duration, frequency and intensity of exposure), for example work related stress may increase if workers are constantly under time pressure; and/or

- individual differences, for example how workers deal with exposure to a particular psychological hazard may vary.

When assessing mental health risks, the organisation will consider:

- whether workers are exposed to hazardous or unpleasant physical work environments (eg exposure to excessive or irritating noise, hazardous chemicals, poor ventilation, lighting or workstation set up, unsafe plant, equipment or machinery);
- the way that work and systems of work are organised, such as:
 - the complexity, content and demands of the work required, including work that is cognitively or emotionally demanding, or highly repetitive, monotonous, or machine-paced;
 - the workload expectations and pace of the work, including whether workers' skills and experience are underused and whether there are conflicting job roles and responsibilities;
 - work schedules and working hours;
 - work procedures;
 - the extent of participation and control that workers have over the work, including their work hours, which can affect their ability to meet the demands at home such as family responsibilities, when they can have rest breaks and whether they are able to refuse a service to an aggressive client or customer;
- the way that work and workers are managed, including:
 - the degree and quality of supervision provided to workers;
 - the degree of information, instruction and training provided to workers and whether it is sufficient to enable workers to do their work safely and correctly, and allows them to meet the organisation's expectations;
 - the level of resources allocated to undertake the work (eg equipment, materials, personnel resources);
 - the way in which worker effort is recognised and/or rewarded;
 - opportunities for skill/career development, including workers' overall status within the organisation and remuneration levels;
 - the way in which underperformance is managed;
- whether adequate worker support systems are in place (eg sufficient access to employee assistance programs, counselling, information on mental health and information on workplace policies);
- interpersonal relationships, particularly where there may be poor existing relationships resulting from:
 - a breakdown in relations between management/supervisors and workers;
 - a breakdown in relationships between co-workers;
 - a breakdown in relationships between workers and clients/customers;
 - known or reported discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), bullying or other unreasonable behaviour by co-workers, supervisors or clients/customers;

- the way in which organisational or structural change within the business is managed and communicated (eg restructures, potential sale of the business, or work restrictions placed upon the organisation over which it has little or no control, the introduction of new or additional resources or processes that may change the way work is undertaken); and
- whether there is inconsistency or bias in the implementation of organisational procedures.

Controlling Mental Health Risks

Stubbs Constructions will ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable that the risk of psychological harm will be eliminated or minimised by ensuring that:

- work related factors that may impact upon the mental health of workers are identified, acknowledged, assessed, controlled, and regularly monitored and reviewed, including where such impact is not able to be controlled by the organisation such as a change in Government policy;
- a positive physical and online work environment and culture is created and promoted within the workplace to help ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect;
- all managers and supervisors are provided with sufficient training in the identification, prevention and management of mental health risks and in good management practices;
- all managers and supervisors understand the procedures and processes in place, including those relating to the taking of reasonable management action to eliminate or minimise work related mental health risks and psychological injuries to workers;
- senior management and supervisors set the behaviour standards that provide a safe workplace for all workers and ensures everyone at the workplace understands what constitutes mental health risks and the organisation's expected behaviours within the workplace, including clients/customers or members of the public. To this end, managers and supervisors will:
 - model respectful behaviours at all times;
 - implement written policies which clearly identifies the expected behaviours;
 - address unreasonable or unwanted behaviour as soon as they become aware of it;
 - ensure that unwanted behaviours are properly investigated and appropriate actions taken (where applicable); and
 - consult with workers and develop effective communication and productive working relationships within the workplace;
- the expectations of workers are clearly articulated and communicated, for example through job descriptions, relevant policies and work procedures;
- all workers are provided with an appropriate induction that includes information related to the organisation's commitment to supporting the mental health of workers and the workers' responsibilities related to helping to ensure a healthy and safe workplace, including providing a transparent reporting process and workers understanding how to effectively report matters such as workplace bullying and harassment, including sexual harassment;
- all workers have sufficient training, instructions, tools and equipment to do their work safely and are provided information on the processes to enable early intervention in relation to any workplace conflict before it potentially escalates;

- the skills and experience of workers are appropriately utilised by the organisation, and workers are not routinely underutilised or used in areas of work where they have not been deemed competent;
- there is adequate and appropriate supervision of workers;
- all workers understand the applicable organisational operations that may impact upon their mental wellbeing and the processes and procedures in place to eliminate, minimise and report any mental health risks;
- the physical work environment is safe with appropriate and adequate plant and equipment for workers to perform their jobs properly and safely;
- the systems of work are safe when properly followed and that they take into account the establishment of realistic deadlines, access to adequate breaks and leave, and include fair and equitable work scheduling and rostering;
- there are appropriate resources and processes in place to eliminate or manage mental health risks and the risk of work-related psychological injuries, and these resources and processes are effectively and efficiently implemented, managed and utilised;
- there are appropriate processes for receiving, monitoring and reviewing information on incidents, hazards and risks related to the mental health of workers, and any information received will be responded to in a timely way;
- investigations in relation to mental health issues will be completed in a timely manner, and (if substantiated) appropriate action will be taken promptly to prevent reoccurrence;
- there are sufficient resources in place to assist workers with non-workplace related mental health issues and their overall mental health, including the provision of confidential counselling for affected workers, whether work related or not;
- workers receive adequate and appropriate feedback on work performance and due recognition is given for positive performance; and
- any worker affected by poor mental health, a psychological injury or an exacerbation of a pre-existing condition is adequately and appropriately supported in their return to work.

Bullying and Harassment

The risk of workplace bullying and harassment can be minimised, so far as is reasonably practicable, by creating and promoting a positive physical and online work environment and culture where everyone is treated fairly and with respect.

Bullying and harassment within the workplace, whether by management, co-workers or clients/customers, are two common risks to the mental health and wellbeing of workers. Regardless of whether bullying or harassment occurs via physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct, the experience can adversely affect the psychological and physical health of a worker. It may lead to short- or long-term anxiety and/or depression as well as suicide.

In line with its policy in relation to mental health risks, the organisation will ensure that effective control measures are put in place to address and resolve workplace issues early, thereby minimising the risk of workplace bullying or harassment.

Bullying is repeated, offensive, abusive, intimidating, insulting or unreasonable behaviour directed towards an individual or a group, which makes the recipient(s) feel threatened, humiliated or vulnerable. Whether intentional or not, bullying creates a risk to health and safety and will not be tolerated by the organisation. It includes, but is not limited to:

- abusive, insulting or offensive language or comments;
- physical or emotional threats;
- aggressive and intimidating conduct;
- belittling or humiliating comments;
- victimisation;
- practical jokes or initiation;
- unjustified criticism or complaints;
- deliberately excluding someone from work related activities;
- withholding information that is vital for effective work performance;
- setting unreasonable timelines or constantly changing deadlines;
- setting tasks that are unreasonably below or beyond a person's skill level;
- denying access to information, supervision, consultation or resources to the detriment of the worker;
- spreading misinformation or malicious rumours; and
- changing work arrangements such as rosters and leave to deliberately inconvenience a particular worker or workers.

Harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct based on grounds of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation which affects the dignity of anyone at work or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Whether intentional or not, harassment creates a risk to health and safety and will not be tolerated by the organisation.

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, an unwelcome request for sexual favours or any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct includes making a statement of a sexual nature to a person, or in the presence of a person, whether the statement is made orally or in writing. Harassment on the grounds of sex is any unwelcome conduct of a seriously demeaning nature and includes making a statement to a person, or in the presence of a person, whether the statement is made orally or in writing.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- insensitive jokes and pranks including inappropriate comments based on sex;
- lewd or abusive comments about appearance;
- asking intrusive personal questions based on a person's sex;

- deliberate exclusion from conversations;
- displaying abusive or offensive writing or material;
- unwelcome sexual advance, or an unwelcome request for sexual favours;
- unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature;
- unwelcome touching; and
- abusive, threatening or insulting words or behaviour.

Any incidents of bullying or harassment will be thoroughly investigated and (if substantiated) appropriate action will be taken in line with our disciplinary policies and procedures.

If the behaviour involves violence and aggression such as physical assault or the threat of physical assault, the matter will be reported to the police.

Post Injury Support

Stubbs Constructions will support the recovery of injured workers in line with their duties under workers' compensation legislation. This includes:

- providing early assistance and support to access treatment and rehabilitation services, generally from the time a claim is lodged
- supporting timely and sustainable recovery at work or return to work through effective consultation, addressing any remaining work-related psychological hazards and risks that may exacerbate the existing work-related psychological injury or cause a new injury and
- reviewing the effectiveness of the control measures to ensure further harm or new injury does not occur.

Worker Responsibilities

Stubbs Constructions recognises that the management of work-related mental health issues and the psychological health and safety of workers starts with a clear and open commitment from the organisation. The overall success of the organisation's risk management strategies is also dependent upon workers understanding their own responsibilities in relation to health and safety, which includes helping to minimise risks to their own mental health and the mental wellbeing of others at work.

To this end, workers are responsible for ensuring that they:

- have received an induction that includes information related to the organisation's commitment to supporting the mental health of workers and the workers' responsibilities related to helping to ensure a healthy and safe workplace;
- understand the organisation's policies and procedures to identify, assess, control, monitor and review risks to workers' mental health;
- understand their role at work, ensure that the role has been clearly articulated, and that the required duties are within the scope of their skills, knowledge and experience;
- have received sufficient training, instructions, tools and equipment to do their work safely;
- support co-workers in their awareness of mental health and strategies to eliminate or minimise the impact;

- actively participate in the consultation mechanisms, forums or counselling designed to help ensure their health and safety at work, including those targeted at the overall mental health of workers;
- understand the applicable organisational operations that may impact upon their mental wellbeing, including those beyond the control of the organisation, and the processes and procedures in place to eliminate, minimise and report any mental health risks;
- comply with all systems of work and procedures that are designed to support health and safety at the workplace, including those specifically designed to eliminate or minimise mental health risks;
- utilise the applicable procedure to report any work-related mental health hazard or risk to their own mental health or the mental wellbeing of others at work as soon as it is identified, including any incidence of bullying or harassment, including sexual harassment (as outlined above) affecting themselves or another worker; and
- receive adequate and timely feedback on work performance.

In minimising the mental health risks to others in the workplace, workers must not act or behave in a manner that could be considered bullying or harassment. Such behaviour creates a risk to health and safety and, whether intentional or not, will not be tolerated by the organisation. Any incidents of bullying or harassment will be addressed via a grievance and/or disciplinary process.



Wayne Licht
Managing Director
Stubbs Constructions Pty Ltd

Date: 30 June 2022

Review Date: 30 June 2024