



VOLUNTEER SAFETY HANDBOOK

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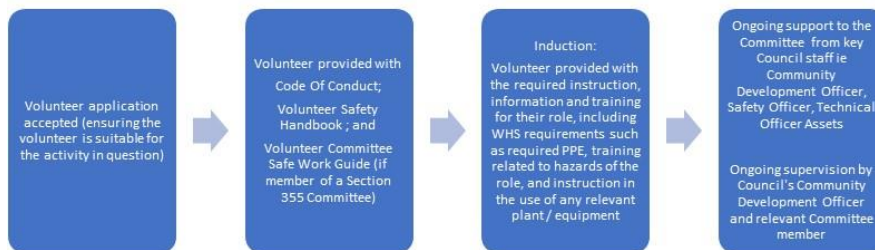
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STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Nambucca Valley Council is committed to the health, safety and welfare of its employees, volunteers, contractors and all persons visiting its workplaces and worksites. Where injuries do occur, Council is committed to effective injury management.

Volunteer organisations, including Council Section 355 Committees and sub contractors.

THE VOLUNTEER APPLICATION PROCESS



VOLUNTEER WHS REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

WHAT IS WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY?

Work Health and Safety (WHS) is about protecting the health and safety of people at work or who may be affected by the work. This includes volunteers.

WHS laws protect the rights of workers, including volunteers, and Council.

Whether a person is a volunteer, a paid worker, a work experience student or a contractor they have a right to have their health and safety protected when they are carrying out work. People who are affected by work, for instance clients you assist when you are volunteering, also have a right to have their health and safety protected or not put at risk by the work being carried out.

Council has the right to expect that all workers and visitors to their workplaces will take care and co-operate with work health and safety rules.

WHS laws protect these rights.

WHS LEGISLATION

The main objective of the WHS legislation is to provide a balanced and nationally consistent framework to secure the health and safety of workers and workplaces. Some of the ways the laws do this is by:

- ▷ protecting workers, including volunteers, from harm by requiring duty holders to eliminate or minimise risks associated with work, whether that work is paid or unpaid;
- ▷ providing for fair effective representation, consultation, cooperation and issue resolution in relation to work health and safety at work;
- ▷ promoting the provision of advice and education about work health

and safety; and

- ▷ providing a framework for continuous improvement and progressively higher standards of work health and safety.

The main responsibility for ensuring health and safety at work is placed on persons conducting businesses or undertakings, or PCBUs. A PCBU is the organisation who you work or volunteer for. For simplicity, reference shall be made to Council rather than the PCBU.

WHS LEGISLATION AND VOLUNTEERS

If you as a volunteer do the following things when carrying out work for Council you cannot be fined or prosecuted under the WHS Act.

- ▷ Take reasonable care for your own health and safety
- ▷ Take reasonable care to make sure you don't affect the health and safety of others
- ▷ Comply with reasonable instructions from Council, and
- ▷ Co-operate with any reasonable Council policy or procedure.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Council must do what is, or what was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done to ensure your health and safety. To do this we need to consider a number of factors including:

- ▷ What could happen to you at the workplace,
- ▷ How likely it is to happen,
- ▷ How bad might it be if it does happen,
- ▷ What can be done to minimise or

eliminate the risk, and

- ▷ The cost of eliminating or minimising the risk.

Council does not need to guarantee your safety but we need to do all that is reasonably practicable. Sometimes this might mean simply providing you with information and instructions on how to do your job and at other times this might mean that Council does a lot more, such as providing work specific training and protective equipment.

Under WHS law 'health' means physical and mental health. Council has to ensure that when you are doing work you are safe from psychological injury including from things like bullying, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Council must also manage risks by eliminating risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable. If it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate risks, Council must minimise those risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

Council may help to ensure your safety by doing a wide variety of things. This may include:

- ▷ Providing you with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) where required,
- ▷ Ensuring that the machinery or plant that you use meets safety standards or requirements, or
- ▷ Confirming that you have the relevant qualifications to carry out the work they give you. For example, valid driver's licence.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

As a volunteer you also have a duty under the WHS Act to take reasonable care for your own health and safety. The duty of a volunteer worker also means you must:

- ▷ Take reasonable care to ensure you don't affect the health and safety of others, for example other volunteers, members of the public or clients you may be assisting.

- ▷ Carry out your tasks in a safe way and consult with others on safety
- ▷ Follow the reasonable work health and safety instructions given to you by Council, and
- ▷ Co-operate with the reasonable work health and safety policies and procedures of Council
- ▷ Conduct Risk Assessment of your activities.

Taking reasonable care means doing what a reasonable person would do in the circumstances having regards to things like:

- ▷ your knowledge;
- ▷ your skills and the resources available to you;
- ▷ your qualifications;
- ▷ the information that you have, and
- ▷ the consequences to health and safety of a failure to act in the circumstances.

TAKING REASONABLE CARE

Taking reasonable care is simple. Just:

- ▷ Follow all reasonable instructions given to you as far as you are able to,
- ▷ Co-operate with any reasonable policy or procedure that Council has given you, and
- ▷ Talk to your manager if you have any concerns about your health and safety or that of others in relation to your work.

Other ways of making sure you take reasonable care are:

- ▷ Carrying out tasks within the role you have been given,
- ▷ Not doing tasks that you do not have the skills to undertake,
- ▷ Don't do anything that would be obviously unsafe, and
- ▷ Reading, understanding and cooperating with the policies and procedures provided to you by Council.

TALKING ABOUT WHS

Council must also consult with all their workers, including volunteers, about work health and safety matters. Consultation must include giving you opportunity to provide ideas about how to make you and others as safe as possible when you are volunteering. This can be done in various ways. For example, Council has a large number of full time workers where structured arrangements involving the WHS committees may be suitable. On occasions Council may also engage contractors, day labour workers, or volunteers to carry out specific tasks, where arrangements such as toolbox meetings may be the most practical way to consult with them.

WHAT IF SOMETHING HAPPENS

While it is unlikely, if anything does happen when you are volunteering let your immediate supervisor know straightaway.

Any serious incidents must be reported to Council immediately on 6568 2555.

A serious incident relating to the carrying out of work at Council may involve:

- ▷ the death of a person;
- ▷ the serious injury or illness of a person – this will usually require immediate medical treatment; or
- ▷ a dangerous incident that exposes people to serious risk, for example the collapse of a structure or the accidental release or spill of a dangerous chemical.

If an incident does occur that is not of a serious nature, you must ensure you still make your supervisor aware of the incident as soon as possible

Incidents not of a serious nature must be reported within 24 hours to Council on 6568 2555.

Any accidents resulting in injury or property damage may require Drug and Alcohol Testing.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

So there are a few things to remember about WHS:

Firstly: The WHS laws are designed to provide you, as a volunteer, with the highest level of protection. Council has a responsibility to ensure all that is reasonably possible to keep you safe when you are working. If Council is found not to have met their duty, they may be fined or prosecuted.

Secondly: A safe workplace is most effectively achieved if everyone contributes to finding ways to manage risks and work together to keep the workplace safe.

And lastly: If you take reasonable care as a volunteer worker you can't be prosecuted or fined.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VOLUNTEER ORGANISATION

Volunteer organisations are responsible for:

- ▷ Maintaining a Volunteer Register.
- ▷ Provision of appropriate induction and training.
- ▷ Maintenance of a work record for each period of work where volunteers are involved. This can be in the form of a sign on/sign off sheet or diary.
- ▷ Committee Office Bearers are to ensure that all volunteers are entered into the work record. This is necessary in order to record the hours volunteers work to ensure Insurance cover in the event of an accident or injury whilst carrying out duties on behalf of Council.
- ▷ Maintenance of a safe working environment, including complying with applicable WHS and other legislative requirements.
- ▷ Reporting any incidents or near misses to Council immediately if serious, otherwise within 24 hrs.

For more information, refer to Council's Volunteer Committee Safe Work Guide or contact Council's Community Development Officer or Safety Officer on 6568 2555 or email council@nambucca.nsw.gov.au

SAFETY RULES

These general site safety rules are to be followed at all times.

ACCESS AND EGRESS

Access to all fire-fighting equipment such as fire extinguishers and fire hose reels must be kept clear. All passageways to emergency exits must be kept clear of stored material, rubbish etc. Nothing is to be stored in any area marked by painting on the floor.

BEHAVIOUR

Running and throwing of objects in the workplace is not allowed. Horseplay, skylarking practical jokes will not be tolerated.

BULLYING

Nambucca Valley Council identifies workplace bullying as a risk to health and safety, which is deemed unacceptable in the workplace. Council endorses a procedure in compliance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Regulations 2011 and is committed to a safe and healthy work environment for all workers.

COMPRESSED AIR

Persons using compressed air must wear eye protection and the compressed air must not be used for cleaning down clothes or for skylarking. It must never be pointed at any person's body.

CONFINED SPACES

No persons will enter or be allowed to enter any confined space without permission of the site manager who will do an appropriate risk assessment that includes the appropriate legislation and training.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Workers and others are not permitted to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol whilst conducting work on Council premises.

Any person who is required temporarily to take medicinal drugs that may affect their ability to work safely should inform their supervisor so that suitable duties can be found for them.

ELECTRICAL DISTRIBUTION PANELS

Only approved electrical contractors are to access the interior of electrical distribution panels where there are exposed electrical connections.

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

All electrical equipment in use at Council facilities must be tested and tagged as per electrical safety standards ie. AS/NZ 3012 and 3760 by an approved contractor.

No electrical leads or extensions should be left lying on floors where they can form a trip hazard or could be subject to damage from trolleys, vehicles or dropped objects.

GAS CYLINDER STORAGE AND USE

Supplies of flammable gas, oxygen and inert pressurised gas must be separated in storage by a distance of at least 3 metres in a well-ventilated area or separately inside vapour proof walls. Where oxygen and acetylene cylinders are used then they are to be upright and secured in a proper welding trolley. All acetylene cylinders are to be stored upright, to prevent separation of acetone and acetylene.

GUARDING ON MACHINERY

The protective guards placed on plant are not to be disabled or removed for any reason

except as part of a documented maintenance program for that plant.

HAZARD REPORTING

Any person who identifies a potential danger or hazard in the work site is to correct the situation IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO, or warn nearby persons of the danger, highlighting the danger in some way or isolating it. The hazard is then to be reported to the supervisor for that area or the local Health and Safety Representative if no supervisor is present.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Any person, including contractors or sub-contractors, who bring any hazardous substance on site is to provide in advance an MSDS for that substance to site management and seek approval for its use. Any person using or storing a hazardous substance on site is to do so in accordance with all information supplied in the relevant MSDS for that substance.

HOTWORK

Hot work is thermal or oxygen cutting or heating, and other related heat producing or spark producing operations including but not limited to the following:

- ▷ Acetylene or gas burning
- ▷ Welding, brazing or electric arc welding
- ▷ Soldering
- ▷ Heat gun operation
- ▷ Heating and driving rivets
- ▷ Use of open flames
- ▷ Abrasive blasting
- ▷ Grinding
- ▷ Power operated tools that cause spark generation, eg cutting tools
- ▷ Use of gasoline or other internal combustion engines and other similar appliances that produce sufficient heat to ignite flammable vapours.

In consultation with Council's Project Supervisor a Hot Work Permit may be required before performing the task. The permit should contain information such as:

- ▷ Location details
- ▷ Exposure of hazards
- ▷ Gas testing
- ▷ Validation
- ▷ Return of permit
- ▷ Other data relating to the hot work being performed.

HOUSEKEEPING

All work areas are to be kept clear of accumulated scrap or rubbish at all times. Oil and water leaks are to be reported and absorbent material used to remove the leaked fluid. No unreasonable collection of combustible material should be allowed to accumulate

ISOLATION OF POWER AND PLANT

When any maintenance or set-up task is being performed on any plant, or when plant is unsafe to turn on or operate, it must be isolated by disabling its power supply and where possible by barricading the plant to prevent access.

Isolation is to be effected by the removal by the person carrying out the work of any operating key, placing an authorised isolation tag over the operating controls and unplugging or blocking of any electrical, fluid or mechanical power source. The isolation tag is to be completely filled in and signed and dated. The reason for the isolation and the person who placed the tag are to be clearly identified. Only the person who has placed the isolation tag is authorised to remove it.

LADDER USE

Where access to high shelves or tops of cupboards in the office is required, persons are not to use chairs but are to use approved step ladders approved for the task. They are not to stand on the very top step. Top rungs are to be tied to structures that they are leaning against where practical.

MANUAL HANDLING ASSISTANCE

Any person who feels that a load they are required to lift or otherwise move is either too heavy or too awkward for them to move is to seek assistance from other persons or forklifts. Any person asked for such assistance is to co-operate as far as practicable with this request. Any task that is believed by any person to be a manual-handling hazard is to be reported to the area supervisor so that a risk assessment can be undertaken.

MOBILE PHONE USAGE

Mobile Phones are not to be used whilst operating any machinery or working in traffic conditions.

PLANT AND MACHINERY AUTHORITY TO OPERATE

Only persons who are trained by or hold a relevant certificate of competency are permitted to operate any fixed/mobile plant, forklifts or equipment. This restriction applies to any worker, visitor, sub-contractor or contractor on site. Contractors need to maintain resumes of operators' skills, qualifications and experience and make these available for inspection from Council representatives.

PLANT AND EQUIPMENT BREAKDOWN AND REPAIR

Volunteers and sub-contractors are responsible to ensure plant and equipment is maintained. If breakdowns occur onsite Contractors must ensure a risk assessment of any repairs to ensure they are carried out safely without risk to anyone on site. Plant and equipment service and repair documentation should be provided to Council if requested to satisfy the condition of the plant.

SIGNS

All persons must comply with the requirements of any safety signs on site. The wilful defacing of any sign is an offence. Damage to any safety sign is to be reported without delay to the area supervisor.

SITE FENCING

All persons on Councils worksites must comply with the requirements of Safety and Security Site Fencing on Construction and / or job sites.

SMOKING

Smoking is not permitted in Council buildings, outbuildings, roofed enclosures and vehicles. If you wish to smoke you must do so in Council designated smoking areas or outside the premises and not within 10 metres of the entrance of the building. Waste products must be disposed of in appropriate bins.

TRAFFIC CONTROL

All persons on Council worksites including contractors and sub-contractors must follow the Roads and Maritime Authority Manual "Traffic Control at Worksites". Should there be any doubt about the clarity of the RMA Manual for the circumstances of the traffic control required, reference should be made to the Australian Standard "Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices Part 3: Traffic Control Devices for Work on Roads".

WELDING

Welding operations are only to be undertaken by properly qualified persons or contractors. A fire extinguisher of the correct type and filling is to be close by and available in the charge of a person who knows how to use it. If other persons are in the work area, anti-flash curtains are to be used. Wherever possible, welding is to be done on weekends when the workplace is otherwise deserted.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

All volunteers of Council are expected to comply with Council's procedures including personal protective equipment (PPE) and summer safety, as summarised below:

Minimum personal protective clothing expected of all workers:

- ▷ Steel capped safety boots
- ▷ A SafeWork NSW approved reflective safety vest
- ▷ Relevant hearing and eye protection
- ▷ Loose fitting shirt with long sleeves and collar
- ▷ Knee-length shorts

SUMMER CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to the above minimum personal protective clothing expected of workers, specific additional considerations for summer include:

- ▷ A broad brimmed hat (minimum brim of 80mm) or appropriate headgear with flap of fabric to protect back of neck and ears
- ▷ Sunglasses
- ▷ Sunscreen Broad spectrum SPF30+

Any volunteer who is required to work outside for a period in excess of an hour should wear personal protective clothing for protection from the ultra violet rays of the sun for that complete day.

SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENTS

A volunteer organisation or sub-contractor may be asked to provide a Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) on some project components. A SWMS may be required:

- ▷ When it is likely that someone could be injured because there is no work method statement in existence
- ▷ When a worker needs to be inducted to a new task
- ▷ When workers need to be reminded of a work practice
- ▷ When a system of work has changed for High Risk Work
- ▷ when a risk assessment is carried out and the hierarchy of controls calls for administrative controls (eg rotation of duties, teamwork, use of aids or PPE, special preparation, special precautions etc.)

Volunteers and sub-contractors may be requested to supply Safe Work Method Statements in relation to activities on Council worksites. These must be kept on site and all workers on site must know and understand their content.

For more information, refer to Council's Volunteer Committee Safe Work Guide or contact Council's Community Development Officer or Safety Officer on 6568 2555 or email council@nambucca.nsw.gov.au

NOTIFICATION OF INJURIES, INCIDENTS AND NEAR MISSES

Council must be notified of an injury, incident or near miss within 24 hours of the near miss/incident. This requirement applies to all persons in the workplace including workers, contractors, sub-contractors, visitors, and members of the public. Matters to be reported include the following categories:

A. DANGEROUS OCCURRENCE

Death, amputation of a limb, patient on life support or occurrence presented an immediate threat to life.

NOTE: This is a non-disturbance occurrence and the area surrounding it must not be disturbed until a SafeWork NSW Inspector arrives unless to assist the injured or make the area safe.

B. SIGNIFICANT OCCURRENCE

Incident presents risk to health or safety which is not immediately life threatening. Worker likely to be incapacitated for more than 7 days.

C. INJURY

An accident resulting in medical attention and/or time loss.

D. INCIDENT/NEAR MISS

A minor injury with or without first aid or an injury that could have, or almost did occur.

E. HAZARD

Something having the potential to cause harm to life, health or property.

PROCEDURE

All persons on Council sites involved in occurrences, injuries or incidents described herein will notify their superiors and/or site supervisors:

- ▷ in the case of A, B, or C above, immediately,
- ▷ in the case of D or E above, at the first available opportunity.

PRIVACY NOTIFICATION

Volunteers are advised that the information provided on this form is collected for including workers compensation, injury management, public liability and risk management purposes. Access is limited to authorised Council officers and authorised persons employed by Council's insurers. Provision of information is voluntary however, if such information is not provided it may not be possible to take appropriate action. The personal information will be stored in Council's records.

WHEN AND HOW TO NOTIFY SAFEWORK NSW

A regulator (SafeWork NSW) must be notified of a 'notifiable incident' immediately after the PCBU becomes aware of the incident arising from the business or undertaking.

Under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Part 3 Incident notification) a notifiable incident means:

- (a) the death of a person, or
- (b) a serious injury or illness of a person, or
- (c) a dangerous incident.

For more information, visit the SafeWork NSW website safework.nsw.gov.au or phone 13 10 50.

To notify a "notifiable incident" contact SafeWork NSW on 13 10 50.

Council also requires you to report any serious incident immediately occurs by phone on 6568 2555.

INFORMATION THAT WILL BE REQUESTED

| | |
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| What happened? | <p>Provide an overview of what happened.</p> <p>Nominate the type of notifiable incident – was it death, serious injury or illness, or ‘dangerous incident’ (as defined above)?</p> |
| When did it happen? | Date and time |
| Where did it happen? | <p>Incident address.</p> <p>Details that describe the specific location of the notifiable incident. For example, section of the building or the particular piece of equipment that the incident involved – to assist instructions about site disturbance.</p> |
| What happened? | Detailed description of notifiable incident. |
| Who did it happen to? | Injured person’s name, salutation, date of birth, address and contact number. Injured person’s occupation. Relationship of the injured person to the entity notifying. |
| How and where are they being treated? (if applicable) | <p>Description of the serious injury or illness ie nature of injury</p> <p>Initial treatment of serious injury or illness.</p> <p>Where the person has been taken for treatment.</p> |
| Who is the person conducting the business or undertaking? (there may be more than one) | <p>Legal and trading name.</p> <p>Business address (if different from incident address), ABN/ACN and contact details including phone number and email.</p> |
| What has/is being done? | Action taken or intended to be taken to prevent recurrence (if any). |
| Who is notifying? | <p>Notifier’s name, salutation, contact phone number and position at workplace.</p> <p>Name, phone number and position of person to contact for further information (if different from above).</p> |

Although all of this information may not be available at the time of notification, PCBUs must still notify the regulator immediately of the incident and provide the information they have. The rest of the information will be collected by the regulator at a later time.

SITE PRESERVATION

The person with management or control of a workplace at which a notifiable incident has occurred must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the site where the incident occurred is not disturbed until an inspector arrives at the site or directs otherwise (whichever is earlier).

Requirements to preserve the incident site apply to any plant, substance, structure or thing associated with the notifiable incident. This means that any evidence that may assist an inspector to determine the cause of the incident is preserved.

An incident site may be disturbed:

- ▷ to assist an injured person
- ▷ to remove a deceased person
- ▷ to make the site safe or to minimise the risk of a further notifiable incident
- ▷ to facilitate a police investigation, or
- ▷ after an inspector has given a direction to do so either in person or by telephone.

The sooner the regulator is notified, the sooner the site can be released. If however after arriving at the incident site an inspector considers that it should remain undisturbed in order to facilitate investigation of the incident they may issue a non-disturbance notice. This notice must specify the period for which the notice is to apply— no more than seven days.

Penalties apply if an individual or body corporate fails to preserve a site

SITE PRESERVATION REQUIREMENTS ONLY APPLY TO THE INCIDENT SITE

Requirements to preserve a site only apply in relation to the immediate area where the incident occurred—not the whole workplace.

DIRECTIONS ON SITE PRESERVATION

If you are unsure about what you need to do to preserve a site, ask the regulator when you notify them of the incident.

You can also ask the regulator to be relieved of your legal obligations to preserve the incident site at this point— even if you don't meet the strict criteria above.

UPGRADING NOTIFICATIONS

If a notifiable incident escalates from a serious illness or injury to a death, the regulator must be separately notified of the death immediately after becoming aware that the person has died.

RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

The notifier must keep a record of the notifiable incident for at least five years from the date of notification. Penalties apply for failing to do so.

As a practical matter these records should include any directions or authorisations given by an inspector at the time of notification (including authorisations to disturb incident sites) and any confirmation you received from the regulator that you notified them about the incident.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR EFFORTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NAMBUCCA VALLEY COUNCIL'S VOLUNTEER PROGRAM!

Nambucca Valley Council
www.nambucca.nsw.gov.au

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you would like further information on any of the topics covered in this handbook or have any general enquiries, please contact Council on 6568 2555, or via email on council@nambucca.nsw.gov.au.