

# 3253 Health and Safety Committee Constitution

## General Policy



### PURPOSE

- 1) In accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and to help foster consultation, cooperation and coordination between the North Burnett Regional Council and its employees a health and safety committee has been established. The title of the committee shall be the “North Burnett Regional Council Health and Safety Committee”

### SCOPE

- 2) The scope of the committee will be contained to relevant work health and safety issues and concerns only. Other matters including industrial relations and human resources issues are deemed to be outside the scope of the committee.

### DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Health and Safety Representative	Health and safety representatives are elected by workers in their work group in accordance with sections 60-63 of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.
Health and Safety Committee	The health and safety committee membership consists of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Chief Executive Officer or their nominated representative.</li><li>• The health and safety representatives for Council’s work groups.</li><li>• A senior management representative with delegated authority to make decisions.</li><li>• The People and Performance Manager.</li><li>• The Workplace Health and Safety Advisor.</li></ul> At least half of the committee must consist of health and safety representatives.

### POLICY

#### OBJECTIVES

- 3) The objectives of the health and safety committee are to:
  - Act in an advisory capacity on relevant work health and safety matters to management.
  - Recommend actions for the implementation of Council’s workplace health and management system and the monitoring of its progress.
  - Consider matters related to employee work health and safety and help in the resolution of those matters.
  - Encourage and maintain an active interest in work health and safety throughout the workplaces and assist in reducing work injuries and illness.
  - Discuss and where necessary make recommendations about work health and safety training.
  - Assist in informing employees of work health and safety rules, policies, procedures and hazards and relevant legislation changes.
  - Review the circumstances surrounding recent workplace incidents, injuries, illnesses, accidents and dangerous incidents and recommend corrective actions.
  - Discuss and make recommendations on the management of hazards and risks in the workplace.
  - Review workplace inspections and Rectification Action Plan actions.
  - Review work health and safety statistics, performance indicators and injury trends.
  - Keep records of the health and safety committee meetings including any recommendations made.

### POLICY STATEMENT

4) The guiding principles of the Health and Safety Committee Constitution are outlined below.

#### *Meetings*

- 5) a) The committee shall meet at least once every three months. At the conclusion of each meeting the date of the next meeting will be noted in the minutes.  
b) Meetings are to be held in normal working hours at a time, which is mutually acceptable to the majority of the committee members.  
c) The duration of the meetings will be approximately 1-2 hours.

#### *Quorum*

- 6) At least one-half of the committee members shall be deemed as an acceptable quorum to conduct the meeting. At least half the committee members in attendance must be health and safety representatives.

#### *Method of Notification*

- 7) The chairperson (or person delegated) is to send out an agenda at least one week in advance of every meeting.

#### *Agendas*

- 8) All committee members are encouraged to provide items for the meeting agenda by their own initiative or by discussing issues with the workers they represent. Such items should be forwarded to the chairperson at seven working days prior to the meeting to allow the agenda to be prepared and distributed to committee members.

#### *Proxy Representation*

- 9) Committee members not able to attend a scheduled meeting are to advise the chairperson in advance and shall arrange a proxy to attend the meeting on their behalf.

#### *Minutes*

- 10) a) Minutes of each meeting are to be taken by the chairperson or other nominated person.  
b) After authorisation from the chairperson the meeting minutes will be distributed to each committee member within fifteen working days of the meeting. Meeting minutes will also be placed on the Council intranet site, displayed on notice boards in relevant areas and discussed at team meetings.

#### *Workplace Inspections*

- 11) a) Workplace inspections are an important component of the accident prevention program. The supervisor of the work area or the health and safety advisor/ officer or other nominated competent person will normally carry out these hazard inspections. Health and safety representatives will be requested to conduct an annual safety inspection for the work group they represent.  
b) Workplace hazard inspections will be conducted in accordance with the "WHS Hazard Inspection Matrix".

#### *Review*

- 12) This constitution will be reviewed every two years and may be amended at a health and safety committee meeting.  
A majority of two thirds of the committee members are required to affect change to the constitution.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### *Chairperson*

- 13) The chairperson position will be filled by either a General Manager or the CEO and will be rotated on a periodic basis. The chairperson is empowered to initiate actions that are of a routine nature, which arise from the health and safety committee recommendations.

Such actions or recommendations are to be decided by a majority of votes of the members present. Any contentious issues or issues requiring financial outlay must be approved by the CEO before action is taken.

#### *Committee Members*

- 14) The health and safety committee membership is to consist of:

- The Chief Executive Officer or their nominated representative.
- The health and safety representatives for Council's work groups.
- A senior management representative with delegated authority to make decisions.
- The People and Performance Manager.
- The Workplace Health and Safety Advisor(s).

At least half of the committee must consist of health and safety representatives.

#### *Election of Health and Safety Representatives*

15) Health and safety representatives are elected by workers in their work group in accordance with sections 60-63 of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

Candidates for election may submit their own nominations or be nominated by another worker in that work group. Where there is more than one nomination for a work group a ballot will be held.

A health and safety representative will hold their office for three years unless during that period they:

- Resign; or
- Cease to be a worker in the work group they represent; or
- Are disqualified as a health and safety representative under section 65 of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011; or
- Are removed from the position by the majority decision of the work group.

A health and safety representative may renominate for the position

#### *Rights of Health and Safety Representatives*

16) The health and safety representatives are responsible for raising specific work health and safety issues that arise in relation to the employees in their work group. Employees should initially raise work health and safety issues with their supervisor and if the matter cannot be resolved in that instance should notify the health and safety representative for the work group. Where the health and safety representative cannot resolve a work health and safety issue, it is agreed that the matter will be referred to the Health and Safety Committee. The health and safety representative is expected to discuss with their work group, issues that need to be raised at the health and safety committee meeting as well as the outcomes from that meeting. The health and safety representatives will also place copies of the minutes on notice boards or distribute copies among their work group.

#### *Term of Appointment for Committee Members*

17) All elected health and safety representatives and where applicable deputy health and safety representatives are entitled to be members of the Health and Safety Committee. Their membership on the committee will continue until they either resign from the committee or they no longer represent a work group as a health and safety representative.

Management and specialist advice representatives, which includes the Workplace Health and Safety Advisor(s), are entitled to be members of the committee for as long as they hold that position with Council.

A committee member shall be taken to have vacated the member's office:

- In the event of the member's resignation; or
- In the event of the members absence without notifying the committee for three consecutive meetings; or
- The member is no longer in the position with Council that entitled them to be a member of the committee.

A member of the health and safety committee may at any time resign the position by tendering a letter of resignation to the committee chairperson.

#### *Observers and Guests*

18) Observers and Guests may include other management representatives, employees, union officials or representatives of safety organisations.

Where an observer or guest wishes to address the meeting, prior arrangements are to be made with the committee chairperson to allow sufficient time to be allocated.

Observers and guests have no right to debate or vote on committee issues.

## APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

19) Applicable legislation and regulation:

- a) Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011
- b) Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 2011
- c) How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice 2011
- d) Work Health and Safety consultation, co-operation and co-ordination Code of Practice 2011

## RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

General Manager Corporate and Community

## APPROVAL DATE

02/03/2021

## REVIEW DATE

March 2025 (Standard four year term)

## REVISION HISTORY

Version	Meeting	Approval Date	History
1	Workplace Health & Safety Committee Meeting	02/03/2021	Revised Policy

## APPENDIX 1: HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE OPERATING GROUND RULES

- 1) The following ground rules apply for North Burnett Regional Council Health and Safety Committee meetings:
  - Members are to complete allocated tasks and actions.
  - Discussion is open to all members of the committee and all members are encouraged and expected to participate.
  - The health and safety committee meeting starts on time.
  - The chairperson will maintain order and facilitate discussion for debate.
  - Discussions to stay focussed.
  - Members must not conduct separate informal discussions during the course of the meeting.
  - Seven working days' notice of agenda items to the workplace health and safety advisor.
  - All members have equal voting rights. A simple majority (more than 50%) establishes the decision.
  - Committee members are required to participate in training activities to improve their knowledge and skills and enhance the roles and function of the committee.