



Australian Government

Department of Finance

Ministerial and Parliamentary Services

First aid and emergency management policy

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First aid and emergency management policy

Introduction

Under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act), the Commonwealth, as the Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU), and represented by Senators and Members and the Department of Finance (Finance), must ensure the health and safety of people working in its business or undertaking so far as is reasonably practicable.

Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984 (MOP(S) Act) employees have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety, and that of other persons.

The object of the WHS Act, as stated in Section 3 is to establish:

The principle that workers and other persons should be given the highest level of protection against harm to their health, safety and welfare from hazards and risks arising from work as is reasonably practicable

Responsibility for administering the work health and safety for MOP(S) Act rests with the Ministerial and Parliamentary Services (MaPS) division of Finance.

First aid & emergency management are work health and safety issues

- The adequacy of emergency management procedures and first aid facilities, equipment and training can have serious implications for the health and safety of :
 - Senators and Members;
 - MOP(S) Act employees;
 - other persons in a Senator's or Member's office; and
 - members of the public.
- Workers who are trained as First Aid Officers (FAOs) and/or Emergency Officers (EOs) perform valuable roles in reducing the risk of injury and illness within the workplace.
- Work Health and Safety (WHS) Regulations require the Commonwealth to ensure the provision of, and access to, first aid equipment and facilities, and emergency management procedures and equipment.
- The Commonwealth must ensure that an adequate number of workers are trained to administer first aid in the workplace, or that access to other trained FAOs is available to workers.
- The Commonwealth must also ensure an adequate number of workers are trained to manage emergency procedures, or that access to other trained EOs or equivalent (i.e. Fire Warden) is available to workers.

Aim

Under the WHS Act, Senators and Members, MOP(S) Act employees and Finance share the responsibility for implementing and managing emergency management procedures and first aid services, including equipment, facilities and training. This policy has been developed to:

- clarify who has responsibilities for first aid and emergency management (Section A);
- provide Senators, Members and MOP(S) Act employees with up-to-date information to assist them to fulfil their emergency management (Section B1) and first aid (Section B2) obligations; and
- provide advice to Senators and Members and MOP(S) Act employees on how to manage first aid and emergency risks in the workplace (Section C and Section D).

This policy has been developed having regard to Safe Work Australia's First Aid in the Workplace Code of Practice (Code of Practice). In most cases, compliance with the Code of Practice would achieve compliance with the health and safety duties in the WHS Act in relation to first aid. This policy is designed to assist in ensuring compliance with the Code of Practice.

Definitions

First aid: the immediate treatment or care given to a person suffering from an injury or illness, until more advanced care is provided or the person recovers.

First Aid Officer (FAO): a MOP(S) Act employee nominated by their Senator or Member to be the FAO for their office, who holds a current Provide First Aid Statement of Attainment (previously known as Apply First Aid), or equivalent, issued through a Registered Training Organisation (RTO).

Emergency Officer (EO): a MOP(S) Act employee nominated by their Senator or Member to be the EO for their office, who has been trained by the contracted service provider in emergency management for their workplace.

First aid equipment: includes first aid kits and other equipment used to treat injuries and illnesses.

First aid facilities: includes first aid rooms, health centres, clean water supplies and other facilities needed for administering first aid.

Health and safety in the MOP(S) Act employment environment

Some factors that may contribute to the first aid and emergency environment that MOP(S) Act employees work in include multiple work locations, extensive and consistent travel, extended Parliamentary sitting hours, or transient colleagues. These factors may appear to be beyond the control of an individual Senator or Member or MOP(S) Act employee.

However, under the WHS Act (Section 47), Senators and Members, MOP(S) Act employees and Finance all have duties to consult, cooperate and coordinate activities with all other persons who have a duty in relation to the same WHS matter. By working together to encourage a culture of health and safety awareness, Senators and Members, MOP(S) Act employees and Finance can assist to eliminate or minimise injury risks in Senators and Members' offices.

Senators and Members and MOP(S) Act employees are expected to comply with this policy within the current limits of the Commonwealth resources available to them.

Consultation

Finance:

- will consult on the content of this draft policy with MOP(S) Act employees through the MOP(S) Act Employee Work Health and Safety Committee (the Work Health and Safety Committee); and
- may consult with Senators and Members from time to time.