

Report	16.57
Date	19 February 2016
File	CCAB-22-82
Committee	Finance, Risk and Assurance Committee
Author	Matthew Lear, Health and Safety Manager

## Health and Safety Update

### 1. Purpose

To inform the Finance, Risk and Assurance on the health and safety performance of the organisation.

### 2. Background

The GWRC Organisational Performance Report contains detailed analysis of the organisation's health and safety management performance against key metrics during the second quarter. This report has been separately sent through to councillors via the Councillor Bulletin.

This report contains supplementary information on other initiatives and activities undertaken by the Health and Safety Department.

### 3. Health and Safety Strategy 2014 - 2019

Our health and safety strategy contains a number of high level strategies and themes, which continue to be applicable to the way in which we manage health and safety at GWRC. Our commitment is to provide and maintain a safe and healthy work environment for our people (our employees, contractors, subcontractors, volunteers and students), and for others who could be exposed to harm because of our activities (for example the public, visitors to our sites, or those who work alongside us on various workplaces). This will not change with the introduction of the new Health and Safety at Work Act which comes into effect on 4 April 2016.

A copy of our Health and Safety Strategy 2014 – 2019 is attached to this report as **Attachment 1**.

### **3.1 Health and Safety Management Information System**

During the last 18 months we have focused health and safety resources on identifying and implementing a health and safety management information system to underpin our safe systems and practices. This management information system is essential to support us in recording, monitoring and reporting upon our health and safety activities in a structured, logical and consistent way.

A major project milestone was reached in December 2015, with the introduction of the first two system modules, Event and Hazard management. These modules enable us to record and monitor incidents and report hazards.

We continue to work on the remaining modules which are Job Management, Contractor Management, Volunteer Management and GIS functionality ahead of a full system launch later in the year. A comprehensive communications and training programme is planned to ensure managers and staff are trained to fully utilise the new system.

## **4. ACC Workplace Safety Practices Management Audit**

In November 2015, Shed 39 was selected by ACC to be audited as part of its Workplace Safety Management Practices (WSMP) programme. GWRC again achieved tertiary accreditation, which is the highest level an organisation can obtain. This result provides assurance about GWRC's health and safety management system and the application of that system across the organisation.

The WSMP audit is broken down into 10 critical elements examining different aspects of the organisations health and safety management system. Where applicable, the auditor identified recommended improvements to our system. A summary of these elements and recommendations is attached as **Attachment 2**. These recommendations will be incorporated into the current review of our health and safety action plan.

WorkSafe NZ is currently working on a new health and safety performance system called the 'Safety Star Rating Scheme' which will take a more holistic view of an organisation's health and safety culture and performance. It will provide an organisation with the opportunity to obtain an independent assessment of whether they are meeting agreed good health and safety practice.

It is unknown, at this stage, whether the 'Safety Star Rating Scheme', once implemented, will replace or complement the ACC WSMP system. The green light for 'go-live' for this new scheme will be requested from Parliament at the end of this year.

## **5. Focus on one key risk area**

There are a number of key risk areas throughout the organisation. This part of the report will focus on one key risk area, each quarter, to provide information on how we are managing that risk.

A key risk area which has been a significant area of focus for our organisation is workplace transport, and in particular our use of quad bikes. An

investigation was undertaken to review our system and consider how to better protect our employees using quad bikes.

Recommendations from this investigation on the use of quad bikes have previously been reported to this committee. As a result of this investigation and recommendations, Crush Protection Devices (CPDs) have been fitted on our entire quad bike fleet. Other recommendations undertaken to mitigate the risk are the implementation of standard operating procedures, competency assessments, training assessments and continuous monitoring. Quad bike usage continues to be an area of interest to WorkSafe NZ, as well as many similar international agencies.

It is interesting to note the work taking place in Victoria, Australia on quad bikes. WorkSafe Victoria has recently announced that CPDs will be required to be fitted to quad bikes in their State to aid injury prevention. This decision was a result of coronial inquests in NSW and Queensland which were completed in 2015. We are reassured that the work in Victoria with the fitting of CPDs echoes the work GWRC has done.

## **6. Health and Safety at Work Act 2015**

The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 comes into effect on 4 April 2016. There are a number of new regulations which support this Act, including General Risk and Workplace Management Regulations and Worker Engagement Participation and Representation Regulations. We are currently reviewing these regulations to determine which regulations are applicable to the work of GWRC.

We are reviewing our health and safety management system and policies to ensure they align with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act. As each policy is updated, we will use this opportunity to educate and train the organisation on any new requirements.

### **6.1. SOLGM Health and Safety Roadshow**

Officers recently attended a health and safety roadshow facilitated by the New Zealand Society of Local Government Managers (SOLGM) and sponsored by Simpson Grierson Law.

The roadshow consisted of a series of presentations addressing themes such as ‘Due diligence and practicable steps’, and ‘Who is an officer?’ the latter presentation facilitating a healthy debate. The roadshow was very informative and highlighted the different levels of understanding across councils of the new Act.

WorkSafe NZ defines an officer as, “*A person who holds a very senior leadership position and has the ability to significantly influence the management of a business or undertaking. A business or undertaking can have more than one officer*”. There is clarity in the Act that the Chief Executive is an “officer” but ambiguity as to whether other GWRC executive members would be legally defined as “officers”. The executive has adopted the approach that regardless of where the legal liability may fall, all executive members will exercise due diligence.

## **7. Communication**

There is no communication required.

## **8. The decision-making process and significance**

No decision is being sought in this report.

### **8.1 Engagement**

Engagement on this matter is unnecessary.

## **9. Recommendations**

*That the Committee:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*

Report prepared by:

**Matthew Lear**  
Health and Safety Manager

Report approved by:

**Leigh-Anne Buxton**  
General Manager,  
People and Customer

**Attachment 1: Health and Safety Strategy 2014 - 2019**

**Attachment 2: Summary of WSMP critical elements and recommendations**