



Potential future chapters and major revisions for OHS Body of Knowledge

11-02-15 (for discussion)

New chapters

Title		Relationship to Australian WHS Strategy
Concepts		
Socio-political: Industrial and ?? context	<p>A current chapter addresses industrial, technological and business imperatives. The complexity of these concepts warrants at least 2 chapters in the BOK. (See also suggested new chapter <i>Working in organisations</i>.)</p> <p>This chapter (title yet to resolved) would examine the impact of industrial relations legislation on OHS and the overlap between OHS and issues that are sometimes OHS and sometimes managed as industrial matters (eg: drug and alcohol use) and the impact and inter-relationship of other legislation on OHS (for example, Fair work, EEO, privacy, anti-discrimination, disability. A representative TSTP would develop the scope of the chapter.</p>	
Socio-political: Working within organisations	<p>OHS professionals are often criticised for not understanding the broader demands of the organisation and working with managers, particularly senior managers. This chapter will replace the 'business imperatives' component of the earlier chapter and expand it to address operating as a 'change agent' in an organisation with consideration to the different contexts of small, median and large organisations. A TSTP would develop the scope of the chapter.</p>	
Rules, procedures and documentation (or OHS Red tape – taming the paper tigers)	<p>The issue of workplace 'red tape' is a hot topic at government, industry and organisational levels with OHS compliance seen as a significant contributing factor. However a study by Deloitte Access found that much of the perceived regulatory burden and compliance costs were 'self-inflicted' by organisations. Documentation and excessive rules are seen to create an illusion of safety while possibly increasing risk and confusion. The role of rules and procedures has been the subject of recent research and peer reviewed articles. Added to this discussion is the ABS finding that more than half of adult Australians scored less than the minimum required literacy and numeracy skills to meet the demands of everyday life and work.</p> <p>A workshop is planned which will give a basis for the chapter. This workshop will explore questions such as What is industry saying? What do the lawyers say? What does the research say? What do the regulators say? What are the professionals saying?</p>	<p>The nature of and approach to OHS rules, procedures and documentation is key factor in the culture of the organisation.</p> <p>The WHS Strategy has the strategic outcome that "Leaders in communities and organisations promote a positive culture for health and safety".</p>



<p>OHS performance measurement</p>	<p>Measurement and evaluation of OHS performance is a key organisational requirement. Providing advice and leading processes for monitoring, measuring and evaluating OHS performance is a core activity for OHS professionals. However there is currently a disconnect between the between OHS knowledge on the topic and organisational practice. The chapter will focus on performance measurement at the enterprise level and will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe current practice as it relates to OHS performance measurement • Clarify the issues and gaps in knowledge and practice as it relates to OHS performance measurement • Outline the research/evidence-base on performance measurement • Provide a synthesis of the research as a basis for informing OHS practice • Make recommendations for OHS practice. 	<p>While the scope of the chapter will be limited to OHS performance measurement at the enterprise level it will inform and have an impact on evaluation and achievement of targets set under the Australian Strategy.</p> <p>As the performance measures and OHS outcomes reflect the leadership and culture norms within the workplace the chapter will have an impact on the Leadership and culture which is one of seven action areas in the Australian WHS Strategy.</p>
<p>Complexity and adaptive capacity</p>	<p>This chapters will explore ‘old’ and ‘new’ concepts of human error, Safety I and Safety II, work as done compared with work as imagined and the ETTO principle. These concepts can be integrated into that of complexity and adaptive capacity. This overarching concept views organisations as complex socio-technical systems where people are a resource and source of innovation and adaptability and so a factor in the success of the organisation.</p>	<p>The WHS Strategy identifies that fostering innovation, quality and efficiency through continuous improvement will be important in achieving the vision of “healthy, safe and productive working lives”. By viewing people as a resource to be valued and a source of innovation and adaptability, this chapter supports the vision.</p> <p>The chapter will also have an impact on the strategic outcome that “Leaders in communities and organisations promote a positive culture for health and safety”.</p>
<p>Occupational health</p>	<p>The generalist OHS professional has a vital role in the identification and management of workplace hazards likely to impact on health and in the management of the occupational health process – bridging the gap between the specialists and the workforce.</p> <p>What does the OHS professional need to know to fulfill this role?</p>	<p>The WHS strategy identifies that the prevention and reduction in the number and severity of illnesses and associated costs will be vital to achievement of the vision and targets set under the Strategy.</p>
<p>Fitness for work</p>	<p>Fitness for work may be impacted by many short term and long term factors such as physical fitness, aging, physical or mental ill health, medication or drug use, psychological state (boredom, motivation, morale) together with the nature/demands of the work.</p> <p>What is the role of the OHS professional in providing advice/managing the risk associated with fitness for work? What do they need to know to carry out this role?</p>	<p>The WHS strategy identifies that promoting worker health, wellbeing and capacity to work will be vital to achievement of vision and targets set under the strategy.</p>
<p>Practice</p>		
<p>The OHS Professional as</p>	<p>There is considerable research and discussion on leadership generally. This chapter will take a different</p>	<p>Leadership and culture is a strategic area under the Strategy with the outcome</p>



<p>a leader working with leaders</p>	<p>approach by looking at what OHS professionals need to know and be able to do to be leaders themselves and to work with leaders, these leaders may be ‘management leaders’ or may be at any level in the organisation.</p> <p>(There is a need to address skills related to communication, consultation, engagement and relations building generally. It may be that these skills can be addressed in this chapter.)</p>	<p>that “Leaders in communities and organisations promote a positive culture for health and safety”.</p>
<p>The OHS Professional as a researcher (or reflective practitioner)</p>	<p>The OHSBOK currently has a chapter on <i>The OHS professional as a critical consumer of research</i>. However an OHS professional should also be able to undertake workplace-based ‘research’.</p> <p>Recent accreditation assessments have identified the inadequacy and inappropriate nature of the standard university offerings in research methods training for OHS work based projects and research.</p> <p>This chapter will consider ‘research’ in its broadest definition – as a systematic process undertaken when there is a question that requires answering. The design of evaluation studies to assess the effectiveness of OHS interventions using quantitative and qualitative methodologies are an example of such research.</p> <p>While the chapter content will be informed by academic research principles and methodologies the chapter will ‘translate’ these methodologies to develop a model of research suitable for application by OHS professionals in the workplace.</p>	<p>The WHS strategy has the strategic outcome of “evidence-informed practice” which includes the outcomes that: Australia has an effective research and evaluation infrastructure and capacity; evidence is translated to assist practical application and the results of research and evaluation are disseminated and implemented.</p> <p>This chapter will contribute to the development of evidenced-based practice</p>
<p>Ethical practice</p>	<p>Industrial ethics, CSR, ethics of professional practice.</p>	

Major revisions

Title		Relationship to Australian WHS Strategy
<p>Global concepts</p>		
<p>Work</p>	<p>The BOK ‘narrative’ is that people work and work impacts on their health and safety. The objective of this chapter is to examine the nature of work to enable an understanding of how work impacts on people. The current chapter traced some of the history of the development of working conditions and the factors shaping work in Australia. However there has been rapid changes in the nature of work in the last 5 years with remote work, working from home, ‘hot desking’, contracting, working hours, global work relationships, use</p>	<p>The vision of the Australian Strategy is for <i>healthy, safe and productive working lives</i>. Understanding what constitutes work, the scope of work (beyond the legal definition) and the impact of work must be integral to achieving the vision.</p>



	<p>of technology and expectation of 24 hour availability to name a few.</p> <p>A revision of this chapter would review and summarise the current chapter into a historical introduction and examine the current features of the concept of work and the potential future direction. It is proposed that a TSTP would be convened and that a workshop of invited participants would inform the development of the chapter.</p>	
Health	<p>The current chapter on the <i>Health</i> as a global concept presents one view. There is currently an ongoing broad discussion on health and its relationship to work and whether the discussion should be around the impact of work on health, 'good work' and health or health generally and the difference between health <i>per se</i> and occupational health. What is the implication of the ILO/WHO (1950) definition of occupational health "<i>the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being of workers in all occupations by preventing departures from health, controlling risks and the adaptation of work to people, and people to their jobs</i>"?</p>	
Concepts		
Socio-political: OHS law and regulation in Australia	<p>This chapter was written in 2011. The information in this chapter is largely out of date. There are also some aspects not covered in the current law chapters that should be addressed.</p>	