OHS Body of Knowledge: Planned chapters (as at 20-09-20)

Title	
Global concepts	
Human	
8.1 **People as individuals**	This chapter will replace the current chapter titled *Basic principles of psychology*. It will discuss the basic psychological principles to understand the behaviour of the worker as an individual. The scope and depth to which these principles are explored will be determined by a technical/consultative panel but are likely to include: • Neuro-bio-physiology • General behaviour theory • Personality, attitudes, beliefs and feelings • Motivation including autonomy, mastery and purpose • Social identity and engagement • Communication styles • Information processing • Risk perception and risk appetite • Decision-making.
8.2 **Individual differences and work**	While workers are often treated as a homogeneous it is important to recognise that a workforce is made of individuals each with their own characteristics that impact on their physical and psychological response to hazards and the control strategies implemented. Some individual characteristics and the implications for OHS risks and their control to be explored in the chapter include: • Normal individual differences in working populations • Individual physical differences including anthropometry, physical fitness • Individual cognitive/perceptual differences • Individual differences -personality, communication and learning styles, motivations • Ethnic cultural differences • Particular populations: ageing, young, obese, disabled and chronically ill workers, medications • Drugs and alcohol • Individuals with special needs.
8.3 **People in organisations**	This chapter will replace the current chapter on *Basic principles of social interaction*. It will address people working in teams and groups as well as the psychological aspects of the broader perspective of working in organisations. The scope and depth to which these principles are explored will be determined by a technical/consultative panel but are likely to include: • Differences between groups and teams • Group dynamics • Social identity, social networks • Power, influence and authority • Leadership • Relationships and trust • Climate and context

	• Group decision-making.
10.3 **Governance and OHS in organisations**	The consultation sessions on *Ethics and Professional Practice* identified a need to examine issues around organisational governance and OHS. Such issues are further highlighted in Andrew Hopkins' recent book on *Organising for Safety* as well as his *Disastrous Decisions* on the Texas City Refinery explosion. Questions potentially addressed in an OHS Body of Knowledge chapter on Governance and OHS in Organisations include: • In what ways is good OHS governance determined by the regulatory framework? • What other (non-regulatory) factors need to be considered in determining good OHS governance? (licence to operate, ethical practice, CSR, community expectations?) • What are the implications for OHS governance for organisational characteristics such as nature of organisations (listed, private, government, NFP), size, organisational structure, agile management, maturity, etc • Does governance mean different things at different levels the organisation? • How do models of employment impact on health and safety? • What is good governance for health and safety? • What does the OHS professional need to know about governance? • How does the OHS professional influence governance for health and safety?
12.4 **Contractors and chain of responsibility**	The use of contracted services to outsource work is ever increasing in the modern labour force. Contractors may be used to: • Access specialist skills and staff • Allow managers to focus on core operational activities • Meet fluctuating workload • Minimise fixed costs. Such workplace arrangements can result in as many as 9-10 different groups of contractors with different workplace arrangements and different approaches to health and safety in the one workplace. Such contractor-organisational interfaces are complex and pose a challenge to the management of OHS with research indicating that the typical organisational approach to managing OHS in a complex contracting environment may lead to a focus on procedural compliance rather than the more reliable systems approach with higher order controls. Chain of responsibility (CoR), which places legal obligations on parties in the transport supply chain and across transport industries generally, is closely related to contracting in both the legal principles and the management systems. The CoR concept , initially developed to apply in the heavy vehicle industry, has spread to other transport sectors where it has been incorporated into legislation applying to the rail, bus, marine and taxi industries. Changes to the Chain of Responsibility (CoR) laws introduced into the Heavy Vehicle National Legislation (HVNL) in 2018 aligned CoR laws more closely with OHS laws. Like contracting, HVNL recognises that multiple parties may be responsible for offences committed by the drivers and operators of heavy vehicles. A person may be a party in the supply chain in more than one way. This chapter will address contracted services for labour as well as the related concept of 'chain of responsibility' in transport. The objective of the chapter is to develop critical evidence-based guidelines for the management of WHS for contracted services, including CoR within the transport industry. The guidelines will clarify legal obligations under WHS and Heavy Vehicle legislation resulting in improved health and safety for both contractors and principal contractors as well as the community. The guidelines will also provide a simple framework to significantly reduce administrative burden and cost and focus operational OHS management activities of Principal Contractors, Contractors and CoR parties on matters over which they have management and control.

12.5 **OHS performance evaluation**	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. While there are a number of groups researching aspects of OHS performance evaluation there appears to be little engagement between the groups. There is also a disconnect between the OHS knowledge on the topic and organisational practice. The chapter will focus on performance measurement at the enterprise level and will: • 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.
17.1 Chemical hazards **17.3** **Management of chemical hazards**	Chemical hazards are a major occupational health and safety issue in Australian workplaces. The current OHS Body of Knowledge chapter *Chemical Hazards* presents basic chemical hazard knowledge required by the generalist OHS professional giving only a brief consideration of chemical reactivity and toxicity issues, acute and chronic exposure, chemical hazard classification systems, and the identification, risk assessment and control of chemical hazards. On review, it has been identified that a different approach is required for this complex topic with two elements: (1) understanding the nature of chemical hazards and how they enter and interact with the body with particular emphasis on long effects (toxicology), and (2) the principles of management of chemical hazards. It is proposed to address this need by: • Developing a new chapter titled *Chemical hazards* to address (1) above. This chapter will be supplemented by additional chemical hazard specific chapters as required (e.g. 17.2 *Fibres, Dusts and particles* and 17.4 *Process Hazards – Chemical* first published in 2017) • Updating the current chapter to more effectively address the requirements for managing chemical hazards including the GHS.
17.2 **Fibres, dusts and particles**	As noted above, the OHS Body of Knowledge needs to address some specific types of chemical hazards in depth, an example of this is the chapter on Process Hazards (Chemical). A new chapter specifically addressing fibres, dusts and particles is required. In past years much attention has been paid to fibres such as asbestos and mineral fibres but this attention has waned in recent years with the assumption that regulation and controls are in place. Knowledge of hazardous dusts also has been available for many years but a reduction in attention to these hazards by both the health and safety community and industry generally has allowed a resurgence of ill-health and disease due to these hazards. (e.g. pneumoconiosis in Queensland coal workers) Silicosis is currently receiving particular media attention and response by regulators but the focus is on a narrow view of the sources of silica hazards. New risks are also emerging with the rapid development and commercialisation of engineered nanoparticles and nanomaterials. Knowledge of the behaviour and associated hazards related to nanomaterials is less developed and there is uncertainty amongst the OHS community as to the risk and appropriate controls. While these three groups of materials can be discussed under a broad grouping of airborne contaminants, the focus of the proposed OHS BoK chapter will be on fibres, dusts, and particles. This is due to the current demand by the OHS community for a better understanding and knowledge in relation to these materials and the unique characteristics in their behaviour, how they cause damage, assessment and controls. As assessment and control of these hazards may be considered a specialist area this chapter will focus on the knowledge required by the generalist OHS professional to: • Identify hazardous fibres, dusts and particles

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	- Explain how they cause damage to humans and the nature of resulting ill-health and disease - Understand the nature of the risk - Advise on standard controls - Recognise when specialist advice is required, and how to work with such specialists. Thus it will provide generalist OHS professionals with the knowledge to identify and trigger action for these hazards, be a first point of contact and so ensuring appropriate and timely action to, where possible, eliminate the hazards and otherwise minimise the risk.
29 **Mobile plant**	The OHS Body of Knowledge currently has a chapter on Mobile Plant written in 2012 which approaches mobile plant hazards in a construction context. There is a need for a new OHS Body of Knowledge chapter to address this high risk hazard to encompass construction, logistics as well as the more general use of mobile plant. While acknowledging the importance of trained operators, the control section of the chapter will focus on high level engineering controls. This is a high risk hazard which continues to be linked with traumatic fatalities and injuries and which really needs to be addressed in a different way.
Practice	
37.3 **OHS professional practice on the 2020s**	The OHS Body of Knowledge addresses the core conceptual knowledge to underpin OHS professional practice. While much of this knowledge is technical, OHS professionals also require knowledge and skills of OHS as a professional practice to synthesise the technical knowledge into strategy and action. There is currently significant research and discussion around what constitutes effective practice with some accepted OHS practices seen to only add to the administrative burden within organisations or have a focus limited to legislative compliance. This new chapter will review the current national and international research on what constitutes effective OHS practice and, drawing on consultations with OHS professionals, organisational management and regulators, will describe the features and characteristics of effective OHS professional practice for the 2020s.
37.5 **Psychologically healthy workplaces**	Psychologically/mentally healthy workplaces is a prime focus of discussion among OHS professionals and health providers, within organisations and the community generally. This is as it should be with work-related psychological issues being a major cause of disability and workers compensation claims. However, there are ressing challenges around the approaches to achieve psychologically healthy workplaces which can undermine the goal of psychologically healthy, safe and productive workplaces. These challenges include: - A lack of awareness and knowledge of the potential wide-ranging sources of work-related psychological harm (psychosocial hazards) or overly narrow consideration of these issues - Inadequate skills and confidence in prioritising practical ways to improve the design and management of organisations and work and deal with unacceptable workplace behaviours so reducing the likelihood of psychological harm - A tendency for organisations to focus most effort on strategies that work at an individual rather than systemic level (i.e. individual resilience and stress management rather than organisational, work task and system design). - A focus on mental health promotion and awareness activities, which normalise seeking help for (mental health) symptoms and outcomes which may be associated with psychological hazards at work, without addressing the relevant sources of harm in the workplace. A holistic, integrated approach to creating a safe and healthy working environment and systems of work is required to systematically reduce sources of risk (psychosocial hazards) in order to prevent psychological and physical harm and support mental well-being.

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	The OHS Body of Knowledge extends its integrated conceptual approach to address psychologically healthy workplaces. It addresses underpinning knowledge by considering: • Human behaviour and response (see 8.1 People as individuals, 8.2 Individual difference and work, 8.3 People in Organisations) • Hazards (20, Fatigue, 21 Psychosocial hazards, 22 Bullying, aggression and violence) • Context (10.2 Organisational culture) • Systems (12.1 Systems, 12.2 OHS management systems, 12.4 Rules and procedures) • Control (34.1 Prevention and Intervention, 35 Mitigation of health impacts, 34.4 Design of work). This new chapter will provide a synthesis of the knowledge from other chapters to provide guidance on a implementing a holistic, proactive prevention-based approach to psychologically healthy workplaces that addresses the challenges identified above.
38.1 **Working within organisations**	OHS professionals are often criticised for not understanding the broader demands of the organisation and working with managers, particularly senior managers. This chapter will present the knowledge, especially the research theory to facilitate the development of skills to enable the OHS professional to operate as a strategic partner. This knowledge includes understanding their business especially the internal and external 'levers', change management, building credibility and influencing without power. The theory and practice will be integrated to provide OHS professionals with a holistic approach to working with influence within organisations. It will also consider the different approaches that may be applicable to the new graduate entering the profession, the professional working at the operational level and the professional operating at the senior strategic level.
38.2 **Leadership and the OHS Professional**	There is considerable research and discussion on leadership generally. This chapter will take a different 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. Recent industry workshops have also identified the role of generalist OHS professionals in understanding and promoting transformational compared with transactional change. (There is a need to address skills related to communication, consultation, engagement and relationship building generally. It may be that these skills can be addressed in this chapter.) This chapter would also be linked with the intended chapter on *Working in organisations.*
39.2 **The OHS Professional as a workplace researcher**	There is very little critical evaluation for workplace interventions in OHS with strategies often based on the personal experience or 'gut feel' of an individual manager or OHS professional or the recommendations of a consultant. There is a need for OHS professionals to be able to undertake workplace-based 'research' to evaluate strategies and inform future direction. If shared, such structured activity could inform and improve OHS practice generally. The OHS Body of Knowledge currently has a chapter on *The OHS professional as a critical consumer of research*. 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. 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. 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.