

# Workplace Health & Safety Communication and Consultation Procedure

<b><i>Policy Number:</i></b>	<i>Reference No: QPR10050</i>
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## 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This procedure applies to all employees directly employed by Ecoplant & Seeddown and all Business Units and entities owned or managed by Ecoplant & Seeddown.
- 1.2. The purpose of this procedure is to detail the requirements for effective communication and consultation on Work Health and Safety (WHS) matters to aid in ensuring the safety of our employees. This includes the requirements for formal and informal consultative arrangements between employees and management.

## 2. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1. Managers/Supervisors must ensure that WHS consultation and communication is upheld in the workplace and that employees are made aware of WHS risks and issues relating to their work on a regular basis.
- 2.2. Designated Work Groups (DWG) must be established to facilitate the communication and consultation process.
- 2.3. All employees must belong to a DWG and be made aware of which DWG they belong to.
- 2.4. DWG must be invited to elect/select sufficient Health & Safety Representatives (HSR's) to meet the DWG's consultative requirements.
- 2.5. The election process for HSRs (if required) must be facilitated by the Manager.
- 2.6. Managers must consult with their HSRs and employees to determine the most appropriate consultative arrangements for their workplace/site.
- 2.7. Managers must form a WHS Committee when requested by a HSR, (if determined through consultation with their DWG)

## 3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. **Consultation** - Discussion between management and employees on WHS related issues, aimed at exchanging views, ascertaining the employee opinions, taking these opinions into consideration, and attempting to reach a consensus, so as to foster participation, involvement and cooperation.

- 3.2. **Designated Work Groups (DWGs)** - A grouping of employees that Ecoplant & Seeddown designates to be a work group for the purposes of WHS consultation (usually grouped on the basis of common work location, similar tasks undertaken or exposure to similar WHS risks). All employees shall belong to a DWG.
- 3.3. **Health & Safety Representative (HSR)** - An employee selected (or elected) to represent a DWG on WHS matters.
- 3.4. **WHS Governance** - The organisational and management structure, including roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, for managing WHS risk, developing and implementing WHS improvement strategies and maintaining an effective WHS management system.

#### 4. REFERENCES

- 4.1. Safety Policy
- 4.2. Relevant WHS legislation
- 4.3. AS/NZS 4801:2001 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems
- 4.4. HB 211 – 2001, Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems, A guide to AS4801 for small businesses

#### 5. PROCEDURE

##### 5.1. WHS Consultation

- 5.1.1. Arrangements shall be in place to carry out, so far as is reasonably practicable, consultation with employees whose health or safety is likely to be directly affected. This shall apply to the following:
  - 5.1.1.1. Hazard identification and risk assessment;
  - 5.1.1.2. Decisions related to ways to eliminate or minimise risks;
  - 5.1.1.3. Decisions about the adequacy of amenities and facilities;
  - 5.1.1.4. Changes that may affect health or safety;
  - 5.1.1.5. Decisions related to WHS procedures.
- 5.1.2. Consultation may be undertaken through the creation of dedicated forums (WHS committees), expanded scope of existing forums or other mechanism as agreed to by management and employee representatives.
- 5.1.3. Personnel required to participate in the consultation process shall receive training appropriate to their responsibilities and extent of involvement.

##### 5.2. Designated Work Groups (DWGs)

- 5.2.1. DWGs shall be formed for the purpose of facilitating employee representation and consultation on WHS matters. DWGs shall be established through negotiations with the relevant employees.
- 5.2.2. DWG establishment and composition must enable the effective representation and safeguarding of employee interests relating to WHS. A DWG may include employees from multiple workplaces.
- 5.2.3. The determination of DWGs shall include consideration of:
  - 5.2.3.1. the number of the employees to be represented and/or the number of employees who perform the same or similar types of work;
  - 5.2.3.2. the workplaces, and the areas within the workplaces, where each type of work is performed;
  - 5.2.3.3. the nature of the workplace and any hazards and WHS risks at the workplace or workplaces; and
  - 5.2.3.4. variations in employment arrangements.
- 5.2.4. Employees shall be notified of which designated work group they belong to.

### 5.3. **Health & Safety Representatives (HSRs)**

- 5.3.1. HSRs represent the employees in their workgroup on WHS matters. This includes but is not limited to:
  - the monitoring of measures taken to ensure health and safety;
  - investigation of WHS related complaints;
  - supporting the identification and management of WHS risks; and
  - liaising with management, inspectors or others as required on WHS matters affecting the DWG.
- 5.3.2. Where more than one (1) employee seeks to represent the DWG as a HSR, this appointment shall be determined through an election. Guidance information on the election of HSRs is at Appendices A, B and C.
- 5.3.3. All HSRs shall undergo an approved HSR training course, as soon as practicable within the period of three (3) months after the appointment is made.
- 5.3.4. HSRs shall be in office for three (3) years, unless the person resigns, is no longer an employee in the work group, or is disqualified or is removed from that position by a majority of the employees of the Work Group.
- 5.3.5. HSRs shall not be personally liable for any act or omission done in good faith in exercising a power or performing a function.
- 5.3.6. To enable the HSR to perform their functions, Managers shall:

- 5.3.6.1. consult with the HSR on WHS matters, so far as is reasonably practicable, including on request from the HSR;
- 5.3.6.2. allow HSR access to information on hazards, risks or other matters that affect the health and safety of employees in their DWG;
- 5.3.6.3. provide any resources, facilities and assistance that are reasonably necessary to enable the HSR to exercise their powers or functions.

#### 5.4. **WHS Committee Establishment and Operation**

- 5.4.1. A WHS Committee shall be established within two (2) months, where requested by employees or as determined through consultation. The WHS Committee shall include HSRs and management representatives.
- 5.4.2. The functions of the WHS committee are to:
  - 5.4.2.1. facilitate co-operation between Ecoplant & Seeddown and its employees in the identification and management of WHS matters;
  - 5.4.2.2. to assist in developing WHS standards, rules and procedures; and
  - 5.4.2.3. any other functions agreed between Ecoplant & Seeddown and the committee.
- 5.4.3. A Terms of Reference (TOR) for Ecoplant & Seeddown must be displayed on WHS noticeboards and reflect the tasks and duties of the committee; a template for the TOR are at Appendix D.
- 5.4.4. The WHS committee shall meet at least once every three (3) months, or at any reasonable time at the request of at least half of the members of the Committee, a HSR or Ecoplant & Seeddown.
- 5.4.5. Arrangements shall be in place to ensure the WHS Committee is able to exercise its functions. This shall include the provision of sufficient time by Managers given to WHS Committee members to attend meetings of the committee or to carry out functions as members of the committee, and to ensure they are being paid for that time.
- 5.4.6. Outcomes from WHS Committees shall be recorded and communicated to all employees. A template for WHS Committee meeting minutes is at Appendix E.

#### 5.5. **WHS Communications**

- 5.5.1. WHS matters shall be included in Management briefs to employees or other formal and informal forums as required.
- 5.5.2. Dedicated WHS noticeboards shall be maintained in appropriate locations and shall include as a minimum:
  - 5.5.2.1. the CEOs WHS Policy;

- 5.5.2.2. names and contact details of WHS appointments in the workplace;
- 5.5.2.3. outcomes (minutes) from the WHS Committee;
- 5.5.2.4. information on WHS hazards and risks;
- 5.5.2.5. information on WHS performance; and
- 5.5.2.6. other relevant notices as required.

5.6. **Provision of WHS Information**

- 5.6.1. Where required, WHS information shall be provided to employees in languages other than English. The extent of information provided in languages other than English shall be as necessary for personnel to carry out their work in a manner that does not adversely affect the health and safety of themselves or others.

## **6. RECORDS**

6.1. All consultative documents (records of conversation, records/minutes of meetings, calls for agenda items, agenda, briefs, toolbox and start-up meetings etc) must be retained for seven (7) years.

## **7. REVIEW**

7.1. Annual

## **8. APPENDICES**

- A. HSR Election Process
- B. HSR Election Voting Guide
- C. HSR Election Ballot Paper
- D. WHSC Terms of Reference (TOR) Template
- E. WHSC Minute Template

**HSR ELECTION PROCESS**

This appendix provides direction on the election process to be followed within Ecoplant & Seeddown.

<b>STEP</b>	<b>TASK</b>	<b>DETAIL</b>
1	Agree on Returning Officer and Assistant	Must be acceptable to at least 50% of DWG
		Must be employees
		Must conduct the election
		Cannot nominate for a position
		Can vote
2	Returning Officer invites nominations	Display notice at least 28 days prior to election stating:
		Purpose of election;
		Day, time and place;
		How and where nominations can be lodged;
		Name of DWG;
		Details of Returning Officer;
3	Returning Officer examines nominations	Notice must be displayed for at least seven (7) days
		Nominations can be in writing or verbal to Returning Officer
		Nominees must be members of the DWG
		More than one nomination requires formal election
		If only one nomination received person is classed as elected unopposed go to Step 7
4	Develop ballot papers	Ensure 1 ballot paper per DWG member
		Candidates must be listed alphabetically by surname
5	Hold the election (Formal Ballot)	One ballot paper should be provided to each eligible employee
		Ballot papers to be filled in at one time in private
6	Hold the election (Informal Show of hands)	One vote per member (employ enough counters to ensure accurate result is obtained).
		Candidate who receives the majority of votes is elected.
		In a tied result, consider the agreed election procedure or a fair alternative eg candidate's name can be drawn out of a hat. In some circumstances a new election may be called or both candidates may be elected
7	After the election	Count ballot papers with Assistant.
		In a tied result, consider the agreed election procedure or a fair alternative eg candidate's name can be drawn out of a hat. In some circumstances a new election may be called or both candidates may be elected
		Advise employees about the results
		Notify WHS regulator of the result and HSR appointment
		Arrange a meeting of WHS representative/s, management or the committee
		Organise training for HSR
		All notices, ballot paper, records of conversation and consultation must be retained for a period of five (5) years



# **[Insert DWG Name] DWG HSR Election Voting Process Guide**

## **1. How to record your vote**

The Ballot Paper will allow you to vote for a member of your DWG to represent you in consultations with management; and represent you as a member of the **[Insert Name]** WHS Committee;

Please remember that your vote is important, so as to avoid an invalid vote, the instructions should be followed. Your voting choices are defined below and should be read carefully. It is important that you record your preference as detailed in the following paragraph;

To record your vote, place a tick  next to the name of the person(s) for which you would like to represent you in consultations with management and represent you as a member of the **[Insert Name]** WHS Committee;

All persons who nominated themselves in the required nomination period have been confirmed as eligible and are listed on the ballot paper.

The election process is open to all Ecoplant & SeedExceptions **[Insert DWG Name]** DWG Members.

## **2. How election will be decided**

The **[insert number]** person/s who receive the highest number of votes will be selected as the HSR for the **[Insert DWG Name]** DWG.

## **3. Voting process**

The voting process in the workplace will be conducted by **[insert name] (Returning Officer)** or **[insert name] (Assistant)** in the **[insert location e.g. Kitchen]**;

Voting will take place daily between **[DD MM YY]** to **[DD MM YY]** during **[xxxx hrs]** to **[xxxx hrs]**, or until such time as all employees of Ecoplant & SeedException covered by the DWG have been issued ballot papers.

Each team member wanting to vote must;

- sign an eligible voter list to acknowledge being issued a ballot paper,
- vote as per instructions on the ballot paper by marking the ballot with a tick  in the area provided; and
- place the completed ballot paper in the secure ballot box provided.

## **4. Counting the votes**

Voting closes at **[xxxx hrs]** on **[DD MM YY]**.

Vote counting will be conducted by the Returning Officer and Assistant with results published by **[xxxx hrs]** on **[DD MM YY]**.

## **5. Outcome of the vote**

The outcome of the vote will be emailed to nominees and management as soon as the vote results have been counted and validated.

Results will be posted on noticeboards in DWG workplaces and relayed via team briefing sessions.

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## **6. Invalid votes**

Any vote which does not clearly indicate an individual's vote, in accordance with the above voting instructions will be treated as an invalid vote. The Returning Officer is responsible for deciding if a vote is valid or invalid.

## **7. Voting protocols**

If for whatever reason **[insert name]** (Returning Officer) or **[insert name]** (Assistant) need to leave the voting area then all voting shall be suspended and the ballot box shall be locked away.

At all times when voting is not taking place, the ballot box and ballot papers are to be locked away.

Other than the Returning Officer or Assistant, no one is to have access to or view the list of Team Members eligible to vote.

Other than the Returning Officer or Assistant, no one is to be advised or view who has or has not voted.

Team Members can be encouraged to vote but cannot be asked if they have or have not voted.

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# [Insert DWG Name] DWG HSR Election

## Ballot Paper

For the election to the office of **[Insert how many e.g. two] (2) [Insert DWG Name] Health & Safety Representatives** to represent the DWG in employer consultations and represent the DWG as members of the **[Insert Name] WHS committee**

*Candidates are listed in alphabetical order by surname.*

Place a tick (✓) in the box next to the name of the candidate of your choice for each position that is up for election. E.g. 1 position select one person, 3 positions select 3 persons. The candidates can be from any shift team.

<b>[Insert Name]</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>[Insert Name]</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>[Insert Name]</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>[Insert Name]</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>[Insert Name]</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ballot papers are to be folded in half and placed in the ballot box.

The ballot box will be opened at the end of the voting period by **[Insert Name]** (Returning Officer) and votes counted.

**Voting Period:** [xxxxhrs] Monday [DD Mon YY] until Monday [DD Mon YY].

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**[NOTE - add or delete tasks to reflect your arrangements]**

## **Ecoplant & Seeddown**

# **WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE (WHSC) TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Role**

The primary role of the WHSC is to provide a consultative forum to oversee, monitor and review the implementation of Workplace Health, and Safety (WHS) systems and procedures in order to provide a safe and healthy workplace.

[Insert section below if you are lodger within a larger organisation]

The secondary role of the WHSC is to provide input into the management of WHS within Ecoplant & Seeddown through representation on the [insert managing company name] WHSC.

### **WHSC Responsibilities**

Ecoplant & Seeddown's WHSC will:

- develop, implement, manage and review WHS measures to protect all employees, visitors and contractors in Ecoplant & Seeddown;
  - develop, implement and monitor a workplace hazard inspection program;
  - review findings of the inspections to identify any trends;
  - review all identified WHS risks and report on the effectiveness of control measures;
  - review all workplace incidents, injuries, illnesses, hazards, and dangerous occurrences to identify any trends;
  - review recommendations arising from investigations into workplace incidents, injuries, illnesses, hazards, and dangerous occurrences;
  - review recommendations arising from WHS audits to identify opportunities for improvement;
  - review results of all occupational or environmental health monitoring carried out on employees in the workplace and any recommendations arising out of these results;
  - direct and coordinate the development, implementation, management and review of workplace WHS management plans (WHSMP)
  - review workplace WHS registers;
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- assist in the identification and resolution of workplace WHS issues;
- evaluate the potential WHS effects of any new chemicals, physical agents, installations or processes which are proposed to be introduced into the workplace;
- advise employees about any changes to any; procedures, standards, rules or legislation affecting the workplace;
- establish, encourage and maintain consultation with all members in order to generate interest in WHS in the workplace;
- identify WHS training deficiencies;
- contribute to and evaluate WHS training programs;
- monitor WHS key performance indicators (KPI);
- coordinate the conduct of WHS activities; and
- share information and recommendations with other WHS Committees where similar hazards or risks exist;

**NOTE:** A WHSC is not entitled to have access to any personal or medical information concerning an employee without the employees consent unless the information is in a form that:

- does not identify the employee; and
- could not reasonably be expected to lead to the identification of the employee.

### **Meetings, Minutes and Activities**

Ecoplant & Seeddown's WHSC must meet formally (at intervals not greater than three (3) monthly, but may meet more frequently if required) on [insert date or time frame eg. first Tuesday of the month], or at any reasonable time at the request of at least half of the members of the committee.

A quorum of members must be present for the meeting to progress. At least 2 (two) employee representatives and 2 (two) management representatives must be present to make a quorum.

The dates and time of the meetings are to be promulgated electronically and posted on WHS noticeboards.

A request for submission of agenda items is to be displayed on WHS noticeboards at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting and displayed for at least one (1) week.

An agenda is to be promulgated at least one (1) week prior to WHSC meeting.

Supplementary activities may also be conducted as needs arise.

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Minutes must be promulgated via email to [insert CEO/Director name], [insert names as required], placed on noticeboards and sent for information to the Manager WHS within two (2) weeks of the meeting.

Where issues are raised by personnel via WHSC agenda submissions or any other means, feedback to the originator must be provided.

Where decisions are required from the WHSC these must be made by a “show of hands” vote with more than 50% result required for carrying the vote.

The original minutes and reports from any supplementary activities above are to be held on file for a minimum of five (5) years.

**Representation**

Ecoplant & Seeddown’s WHSC will be chaired by [insert name], with [insert name] as Secretary and representation from:

- each workplace Group Safety Representative (GSR); and
- management representatives;

Contractors and non-work group WHS specialists may be invited to attend;

Observers and guests should be included at the discretion of the Chair.

**Duration of these TORs**

This TOR for Ecoplant & Seeddown’s WHSC is current until [insert date].

Signed

Name.....Signature .....CEO

Name.....Signature.....Chair

Name.....Signature.....Secretary

Name.....Signature.....Member

Name.....Signature.....Member

Name.....Signature.....Member



# Workplace Health & Safety Committee Minutes

<b>Site / Location</b>		<b>Chair</b>	
<b>Date</b>		<b>Secretary</b>	
<b>Start time</b>		<b>Finish Time</b>	[Finish Time]

**Attendance**

Member Name	Position / Workgroup	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul

**Apologies**

Member Name	Position / Workgroup	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
				<b>Shade months where meetings are held</b>				

**Additional Invites**

Additional Invites	For agenda item No.

Item	Description	Action
1. Previous Minutes Accepted	All present to review previous minutes for accuracy and advise Chairperson of any errors. This includes action items and items to be escalated.	
2. Previous Business	List items requiring action from previous meeting minutes.	
3. WHS Performance	Review WHS Performance Indicators to date. This should include local, division and group WHS performance indicators where known or appropriate.	
4. Incident and injury reports and associated investigations	Insert incident and injury reports and investigation data since previous WHS Committee meeting. Record any actions required from WHS Committee.	

# Workplace Health & Safety Committee

## Minutes

5. Hazards / Inspection reports and associated investigations	<p>Insert hazards reported since the previous WHS Committee meeting for review. Record any actions required from WHS Committee.</p> <p>Review the workplace hazard inspection schedule and outcomes of inspections completed since last WHS Committee meeting. Record any actions required from WHS Committee.</p>	
6. Risk Assessment Review	<p>Review of site risk register including completed assessments, the effectiveness of risk controls, risks assessed but not yet controlled and new risks not yet assessed.</p> <p>Record any actions required from WHS Committee.</p>	
7. Audit Review	<p>Management Representative to provide review of relevant audits scheduled/completed and their outcomes since last WHS Committee meeting.</p> <p>Record any actions required from WHS Committee.</p>	
8. New relevant projects / proposals where WHS may be affected	<p>Management Representatives should advise the committee of any relevant projects proposed where WHS may be affected and record any actions required by the committee.</p>	
9. Awards and Recognition	<p>Review acts or sustained behaviour which made a tangible contribution to improving safety performance.</p> <p>Consider options for local recognition and / or suitability for submission for award or recognition from a higher management level.</p>	
10. New Business	<p>List new business items raised by WHS Committee members through employee submissions to their HSR</p> <p>Record any actions required from WHS Committee.</p>	

**For referral:**

Item	Description	Action
11. Items to be referred to Safety and Compliance meeting / next level up	List items that cannot be resolved by the WHS Committee and therefore require referral to the Safety and Compliance meeting/next level up.	

**Sub-committee report (If applicable)**

Item	Description	Action
12. Report summary	Summarise key issues, findings, decisions required or other relevant items provided to committee.	

**Next meeting:**

**Distribution of minutes:**

Committee Members (To)	Copied (c)



# Workplace Health & Safety Committee

## Minutes

I certify that these meeting minutes are a true reflection of the WHS Committee meeting content.

Signed:

Chairperson		Secretary	
Date		Date	

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