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Committee Finance, Risk and Assurance Committee  
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## Health & Safety Update

### 1. Purpose

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

### 2. Background

The Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) Organisational Performance Report contains an overview of the organisation's health and safety management performance against key metrics during the second quarter. This report will be sent separately to councillors via the Councillor Bulletin.

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

### 3. Workplace Safety Management Practices Audit

Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) is a member of the ACC Workplace Safety Management Practices (WSMP) discount scheme. The WSMP scheme offers a 10% (primary), 15% (secondary) or 20% (tertiary) reduction off the work levy for organisations that put health and safety systems in place.

GWRC is at the highest level of audit attainment which is Tertiary Level and receives a discount of 20% on our ACC work levy. As the dollar amount of our levy is variable the actual discount amount can also vary; in 2016 our discount was ~\$45,000 on our levy of ~ \$215,000. The discount period is for two years; meaning our current discount period was due to end in November 2017.

With the new Health and Safety at Work Act, 2015, and changes to the ACC Scheme's legislation we have seen changes to the health and safety landscape. ACC has reviewed the WSMP scheme and concluded there was no significant reduction in injuries and injury claims.

ACC made the decision that from April 2017, the WSMP scheme will be discontinued and no new members or renewals will be accepted from this date. GWRC therefore made the decision to undertake an audit a year earlier than our normal cycle. Considerable internal discussion took place about this decision especially in regard to the November earthquake and how this affected our people and the tasks we undertake. Our conclusion was to proceed with the audit as our earthquake response enabled us to use many practical examples of our health and safety systems and highlight these during the audit.

We undertook our ACC WSMP Audit on February 15th with the objective of retaining our WSMP discount for a further two years from this date (this would extend our discount to February 2019).

The Audit commenced at 7am and ended at 5:30pm, working through the Critical Elements listed in the WSMP Audit Standard guidelines, and these are:

- Employer commitment to safety management practices
- Planning, review and evaluation
- Hazards identification, assessment and management
- Information, training and supervision
- Incident and injury reporting, recording and investigation
- Employee participation in health and safety management
- Emergency planning and readiness
- Protection of employees from on-site work undertaken by contractors and sub-contractors

The audit was very detailed and practical examples from our workplace of all the critical elements were presented to the Auditor. The Auditor was particularly impressed with the evidence GWRC provided around,

- our health and safety planning documents;
- the health and safety information available from KESAW, our health and safety management information system; and
- the presentation of the health and safety design of the Environment Department Utility Vehicle.

ACC have written to us confirming our attainment of Tertiary level in the audit. This being the highest level of attainment it should give our people and stakeholders confidence in our organisations health and safety systems and practices.

We have also received a copy of the Auditors report which has been sent to ACC. The report details some recommendations for consideration, these are:

- continue working on a competency matrix for all departments similar to the quad bike model;
- develop a system so all contractors are captured and staff know that contractors need to be inducted;
- ensure health and safety reviews occur for all contractors; and

- ensure post contract reviews occur for all contracts that end or are completed.

The majority of these recommendations relate to the health and safety management of our contractors. These points will be considered as we develop our revised Contractor Management Policy and guidelines. This policy revision is being undertaken in tandem with the further development of our KESAW system as it is important it is consistent with KESAW workflows. We expect the Contractor Policy to be finalised mid this year.

#### 4. Understanding Our Risks

During the first two quarters of this financial year a total of 140 health and safety related events were recorded in KESAW.

The following table shows these events recorded against the risk classification<sup>1</sup> the member of staff measured them at.

Risk classification	Number of events	% of total events
Extreme	4	3%
High	19	13%
Medium	56	40%
Low	61	44%
Total	140	

In previous reports to this Committee we have identified where the majority of high risk tasks occur. These categories are:

- Aggressive situations (e.g. with the public)
- Contractors
- Hazardous substances
- Lone/remote working
- Physical works
- Work-related transport (e.g. driving)
- Tree work
- Work in/around water

We continue to monitor the data in KESAW to highlight such things as emerging trends or changes to the high risk tasks listed above. Currently we have no trend information suggesting these require updating.

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<sup>1</sup> Risk classification is based on the industry standard 5x5 risk matrix developed by NASA during the 1960's.

The following table highlights the number of events during the first two quarters of this financial year which fell into these identified risk categories.

		Risk classification				Total	%
		Extreme	High	Medium	Low		
Risk category	Aggressive situations	0	0	1	1	2	5%
	Contractors	0	5	5	2	12	30%
	Hazardous substances	0	1	0	1	2	5%
	Lone/remote working	1	0	1	0	2	5%
	Physical works	0	1	0	0	1	3%
	Work related transport(driving)	2	2	3	8	15	38%
	Tree work	0	1	1	0	2	5%
	Work in/around water	1	0	1	2	4	10%
Total		4	10	12	14	40	

The analysis of events clearly shows that our predominant risk is workplace driving. During the period of analysis our vehicles travelled ~1,184,000km, equating to an average of an incident every ~79,000km. While the majority of these incidents were relatively minor in nature, two were categorised as extreme risk and two as high risk. Three of these four events involved the actions of a third-party affecting the safety of our people; the remaining event involved a staff member skidding while driving off-road. No injuries were reported or sustained by any of these events.

It is problematic for GWRC to control the actions of other road users; we can however support our people with training and systems to encourage safe driving.

We have previously reported to this Committee in **Report 2016.151** on the support we give our people in managing the risk of driving while at work. In summary this report detailed our Vehicle Use Policy which contains the following information relating to health and safety and workplace transport:

- Vehicles should be fit for purpose.
- Vehicles should have appropriate safety features.
- Vehicles are used for the approved purpose.
- Drivers should hold the appropriate licence.

GWRC recently invested in an EROAD electronic system for vehicle fleet management. One of the key attractions of the EROAD system was to enhance health and safety by understanding where our people are, and to enable monitoring of our vehicle practices.

The support we give our people to mitigate the risk of driving includes:

#### Driving Behaviour

Each vehicle requires a driver's licence to be inserted so the vehicle can be matched with the driver. This enables monitoring of driver key metrics such as speed and braking for example so any safety issues can be addressed.

#### Vehicle Health & Maintenance

A well-maintained vehicle fleet is a major contributor to better safety outcomes. Through our centralised management we have better controls to ensure that vehicles have current WOFs, and registrations with regular servicing being undertaken.

Regular checks of vehicles are conducted to ensure fire extinguishers and other safety equipment are installed and maintained.

#### Visibility of vehicles

We can track individual vehicles in real-time as EROAD provides a GPS system. This ensures that if staff (especially those working in more remote areas) do not check in or are unable to be raised on the RT, we are able to locate their general whereabouts based on the location of the vehicle.

#### Training

GWRC undertakes training for our people which recognises the specialised vehicles that are used during the course of our work. This training is tailored to meet the diversity of our work functions and the terrains we operate in. Training is provided on all our vehicles - quad bikes, motorbikes, four wheel drive vehicles and forklift trucks for example.

The above points combine towards mitigating the risk of workplace driving.

### **4.1 Extreme and High Risk Events**

A summary of the remaining Extreme and High risk events in these two quarters follows:

#### Contractors

The new Health and Safety at Work Act, 2015, details that we must co-operate, co-ordinate and consult with our contractors where we have overlapping responsibilities in the tasks we undertake. Three of the high risk events were an excellent example of working with a contractor in the field to mitigate risk of a task which contractors were undertaking on our land and on our behalf.

The incident involved a piece of GW hired machinery which our contractors were engaged to operate. The contractor raised some health and safety issues regarding the machinery which was being used to harvest pine poles; we investigated the concerns immediately. The result of this was we ceased operation of this machinery and looked at different options to achieve the work safely. This was an excellent example of working collaboratively with a contractor where we have overlapping health and safety duties.

### Hazardous Substances

A small amount of low-toxicity carrot bait poison (pindone) was spilt from the rear of one of our utility vehicles. A full internal investigation took place into this incident in order to help us recommend improvements to our transportation of such substances.

There were twelve recommendations from the investigation, eight of which have been completed. The majority of these made recommendations into how these types of hazardous substances are stowed and transported. The remaining four recommendations focused on how we communicated the process to our people. These are scheduled to be completed by 31 March 2017.

### Lone/remote working

Two of our people were conducting field work and did not contact base at the agreed time raising concerns for their welfare. While the two staff members returned to base with no injuries, an internal investigation took place in order to establish the reasoning behind this event.

The findings of the investigation were that our people did not follow the working alone or remotely procedure. The reasoning behind their actions was lack of clarity over whether the procedure applied in the situation they were working in. The key learning is that if our people are working away from our offices they must be clear with their line managers on their whereabouts and actions for day.

### Physical works

A hired 'bobcat' digger operated by GW staff which was clearing a bank lost stability and tipped. The result was an injury to our staff member requiring medical treatment; the staff member returned to work within one day of the incident.

A full investigation took place into this incident resulting in five recommendations to mitigate similar incidents happening in the future. Four of these recommendations have been completed, the remaining one relates to the sourcing or development of specific training into the use of these small diggers. This is proving challenging as on first investigation there does not seem to be specific industry training therefore there is a potential need to develop our own training; we continue to research this.

A positive outcome following this incident was a 'learning conversation' which took place. Here we conducted a visit to the site of the incident with a number of our people from differing GW departments with an interest in the use of diggers. We spoke through the incident timeline and discussed it as a group to share knowledge and learnings.

### Tree work

A chainsaw was identified which had a missing chain guard creating a hazard. The hazard was reported and rectified prior to any work being undertaken with this chainsaw. To support our people in working with chainsaws we are partnering with an Industry Training Organisation to draft an improved training course.

We have currently run one pilot course with our people and received positive feedback so we will be using this course on an ongoing basis as part of our core training for our people using chainsaws.

#### Working in/around water

A group of GW staff attended a wader safety course and raised some concerns about the safety of entering the river during the training session. An internal investigation took place including discussions with the course provider and feedback from attendees.

Our findings were that the tasks our people do in waders varies greatly and there were differing perceptions of safety when entering the water. The course trainer did not put our people at risk; on future courses consideration will be given to the tasks our people do and we will tailor the course specifically to this rather than a generic approach. The key point here is that if a member of staff does not feel it is safe to enter the water they should not.

## **4.2 Management of incidents**

GWRC has a comprehensive Incident Management Policy available to all staff. This policy details how we manage incidents and clearly allocates responsibilities and accountabilities. When an incident takes place it is recorded in KESAW and the person entering this information categorises the level of risk involved. This level of risk determines the organisation's approach to the management of the incident (this process is detailed in a flow chart in the Incident Management Policy).

In relation to all Extreme and High risk incidents, such as those listed in **Section 4** of this report, it is a requirement for a General Manager to have final sign-off. For Medium or Low risk events these are monitored by the Department Manager or Team Leader to ensure that the actions taken are satisfactory.

## **5. Communication**

There is no communication required.

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

No decision is being sought in this report.

### **6.1 Engagement**

Engagement on this matter is unnecessary.

## **7. Recommendations**

*That the Committee:*

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

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