



## VICTORIAN RIFLE ASSOCIATION INC

Established 1860

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# WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY (WHS) POLICY THE VICTORIAN RIFLE ASSOCIATION January 2022 – Edition 3

## Purpose

The Victorian OHS laws aim to improve the standards of workplace health and safety to reduce the chances of work-related injury and illness from occurring. In Victoria, occupational health and safety (OHS) in the workplace is principally regulated by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic) and the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017* (Vic) (Victorian OHS laws). The regulator of these laws in Victoria, in September 2017 is Worksafe Victoria (the Victorian WorkCover Authority).

Alongside the duties imposed on employers under Victorian OHS laws, there are also common law duties to provide employees with a safe workplace. The common law is the law that has been developed by the courts when deciding cases over time. Under the common law, all employers have a legal duty to take reasonable care to avoid exposing employees (and others who might be exposed to risks from the business) to reasonably foreseeable risks of injury.

Victorian Rifle Association (VRA) is committed to implementing a structured approach to workplace health and safety in order to achieve a consistently high standard of safety performance. This policy will assist the VRA in meeting its obligations in accordance with work health and safety legislation. This document applies to all VRA employees, competitors, contractors, visitors and volunteers and to other persons at risk from work carried out at the Wellsford Rifle Range. Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

## Statement of Commitment

The VRA is committed to providing a workplace that enables all work activities to be carried out safely. The VRA will take all reasonably practicable measures to eliminate or minimise risks to the health, safety and welfare of workers, contractors, visitors, volunteers and anyone else who may be affected by our operations.

This WHS Policy sets out the safety arrangements and principles which are to be observed by the VRA and its employees, visitors, contractors, competitors and volunteers to ensure compliance with the WHS Act and to provide appropriate mechanisms for continuing consultation and management of WHS matters.

## Implementation of Policy Commitment

The VRA is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of its workers (employees, contractors, or volunteers) while they are at work, and that the health and safety of other persons (e.g. visitors and competitors) is not put at risk from our operations. This will be achieved by:

- providing and maintaining a healthy and safe work environment through the implementation of safe work practices, safe systems of work and the provision of safe plant and equipment;
- ensuring that workplaces under the control of the VRA are safe, without risk to health, and have safe means of access and egress;

- routinely consulting in order to maintain effective and co-operative relationships between the VRA and its workers and volunteers, and with other duty holders, on health and safety matters in the workplace.

The VRA's commitment to providing safe and healthy working environments for its workers includes:

- providing relevant, up-to-date WHS information to all workers on matters such as workplace safety and their responsibilities;
- providing expert assistance in WHS matters where necessary;
- providing instruction and/or training in work processes where appropriate;
- developing and implementing strategies which include workplace assessment, hazard identification, and appropriate remedial action to eliminate or control hazards. (to be developed)

## Responsibilities

As the duty holder, the VRA must:

- ensure the health and safety of its workers and others in our workplace
- ensure the health and safety of other persons is not put at risk from work carried out as part of its operations
- provide and maintain a work environment that is without risks to health and safety
- provide and maintain safe systems of work
- monitor the health of workers and the conditions of the workplaces.

## Workers and Volunteers

Workers and volunteers must take reasonable care for their own health and safety while they are at work and take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons. They must comply, so far as they are reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction given by a member of the VRA Council, as well as co-operating with any reasonable policy or procedure which relates to workplace health and safety.

On a day to day basis, this includes:

- to the extent of the worker's or volunteers' control or influence over working conditions and methods, take reasonable care to work safely
- making sure that the work area is safe when leaving it
- make proper use of all appropriate safeguards, safety devices and personal protective equipment
- report all known hazards, accidents and incidents as soon as possible.

It is acknowledged that, in accordance with the Act, a worker may cease, or refuse to carry out work if they have a reasonable concern the work would expose the worker to a serious risk to their health or safety. The Act requires workers who cease work to notify the relevant manager that they have ceased unsafe work as soon as practicable after doing so. It also requires workers to remain available to carry out 'suitable alternative work'. This would not however require workers to remain at any place that poses a serious risk to their health or safety.

## Visitors and Competitors to Wellsford Range

Visitors and competitors to the range also have responsibilities to abide by the workplace safety rules and procedures. These responsibilities include to:

- take reasonable care for their own health and safety and for the health and safety of other persons
- comply with, so far as they are reasonably able, all reasonable safety directions provided by workers
- report all safety related incidents to VRA workers
- ensure the adequate supervision of any accompanying children
- not enter any restricted area without authorisation or escort
- not wilfully or recklessly interfere with property.

## Slips, Trips and Falls

Slips, trips and falls are one of the major types of accidents in workplaces and may be due to poor housekeeping practices such as water or oil spilt. Material placed untidily or using walkways for storage can also be a cause of these types of incidents. When assessing the potential for slips, trips and falls, areas such as storage rooms, the armoury, the butts shed, and the pavilion must be examined.

## Prevention

The VRA is committed to reducing this risk of injury by following these guidelines:

- avoid walking on slippery floors
- keep floors free of water and grease
- clean floors regularly
- post warning signs around spills or wet floors
- clean up spills immediately

## Drugs & Alcohol

The VRA maintains the right to refuse work to any worker or contractor who, in the opinion of VRA Council or Executive Officer, is in an unfit state to perform their work in a safe manner.

To assist in these requirements, workers, contractors, volunteers and visitors shall observe that:

- No alcohol may be consumed until live firing has ceased, and consumption must comply with the liquor licence regulations.
- No illegal drugs shall be consumed or permitted on property at any time or under any circumstance
- If, in the opinion of the VRA Council, a worker or volunteer is unfit to work safely, they will be sent/taken home
- Workers or volunteers who are taking prescription medication that may affect their safety at work (that cause drowsiness), are to inform management of the circumstances so that appropriate duties may be assigned.
- The VRA is a smoke-free organisation and does not permit smoking in or around the clubhouse facilities.
- Smoking is only permitted outdoors in the designated smoking area

## Fair Play Code

The VRA supports and applies the standards outlined in the Fair Play Code introduced by Sport and Recreation Victoria on 1 July 2018. The Fair Play Code incorporates the original aim of encouraging appropriate standards of behaviour to enable every Victorian to be involved in sport and recreation that is safe, welcoming and inclusive. It also includes new integrity, respect, responsibility, fairness and safety guiding principles as well as guidance on responsibilities, breaches and seeking further information. Further information can be found at [www.sport.vic.gov.au](http://www.sport.vic.gov.au).

### Principles

The Fair Play Code outlines a set of guiding principles on expected standards of behaviour for every person involved in sport and recreation in Victoria.

This includes every participant, coach, support person, official, administrator, club member, spectator, parent, volunteer or member of the public involved with sport and recreation in Victoria. All should demonstrate the principles of integrity, respect, responsibility, fairness and safety in relation to sport, recreation, training and club sanctioned activities by:

### Integrity

- being honest, fair, respectful, trustworthy, reliable, open and transparent in dealings with others
- avoiding any real or perceived conflicts of interest
- striving to earn and sustain a high level of community trust and goodwill
- not engaging in or advocating the possession and use of banned performance enhancing substances or methods, or illicit drugs
- not participating in or encouraging action that may jeopardise the integrity of sport and recreation including match-fixing, illegal sports betting and other corruption.

### Respect

- treating everyone involved in sport and recreation in a considerate, objective and courteous manner with proper regard for their rights, dignity and worth
- refraining from any form of discrimination, harassment, bullying, abuse, child abuse, intimidation, victimisation or vilification of others, including on the basis of age, race, sex, disability, sexuality, gender identity or religion
- recognising and valuing the contribution of all to sport and recreation, including volunteer coaches, officials and administrators who give up their valuable time to make sport and recreation happen.

### Responsibility

- considering and accepting the consequences of one's actions and decisions
- being a positive role model by displaying self-control, respect, care and diligence towards all involved with sport and recreation
- complying with specified child safe standards of conduct expected of adults when dealing and interacting with persons under 18 years of age
- understanding the possible consequences of breaching the *Fair Play Code* and immediately reporting any potential breaches to appropriate authorities.

### Fairness

- understanding and playing by the rules and spirit of sport and recreation
- being informed, consistent, impartial, just and reasonable in dealings with others

- being a 'good sport' by encouraging and praising fair play over winning at all costs
- providing a 'fair go' to people of all abilities to be involved in sport and recreation and reach their full potential.

## Safety

- providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment that places the health, welfare and well-being of participants above all else
- taking all reasonable steps to ensure equipment, facilities and programs meet health and safety standards and are appropriate to the age and ability of participants
- being aware of and supporting policies and practices in relation to injury management, return to play, adverse weather and child safe standards
- showing concern and caution towards others who may be sick or injured and immediately reporting any safety issues to appropriate authorities.

## Inappropriate Behaviour

Bullying, harassment, intimidation, discrimination and violence of any form will not be tolerated at the VRA towards employees, volunteers, members and competitors or from employees, volunteers, members and competitors.

## What is bullying?

A person is bullied at work if:

a person or group of people repeatedly act unreasonably towards them or a group of workers and the behaviour creates a risk to health and safety.

Unreasonable behaviour includes victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening. Whether a behaviour is unreasonable can depend on whether a reasonable person might see the behaviour as unreasonable in the circumstances.

Examples of bullying include:

- behaving aggressively
- teasing or practical jokes
- pressuring someone to behave inappropriately
- excluding someone from work-related events or
- unreasonable work demands.

## Investigation of Complaints, Breaches or Incidents

The VRA undertakes to investigate all formal complaints, breaches of the Fair Play Code or incident reports submitted. The VRA will take action to resolve the complaint. If the complaint is found to be valid, action and sanctions may include any combination of the following:

- Asking for an apology
- Creating an agreement with the offender that will stop the behaviour of concern
- Conciliation/mediation conducted by an independent/impartial third party to seek a mutually acceptable solution
- Disciplinary action in the form of verbal, written or final warning or dismissal
- Suspension of membership or cancellation of membership
- All violence will be reported to the police.

In determining the action to be taken, the following factors will be considered:

- Severity and frequency of the behaviour
- Whether there have been previous incidents or prior warnings.

When conducting an investigation, the VRA should:

- treat all matters being investigated seriously and confidentially
- examine matters impartially and in a timely way
- allow for appropriate time
- identify and speak to relevant witnesses
- inform everyone involved of the possible investigation results and outcomes
- assess reports on their merits and facts
- hear parties separately (versions of what allegedly happened may differ)
- record the facts surrounding the matter.

To ensure the investigation process is conducted in a fair, objective and timely way, it is important to ensure the respondent:

- is fully informed of all allegations against them
- is fully informed about the investigation process and possible outcomes (e.g. disciplinary action)
- has an opportunity to seek independent advice and representation
- is given full opportunity to reply to the complaint/s
- has their confidentiality maintained
- is informed how they can seek a review of a decision.

At the end of an investigation, the person investigating should submit an objective report that:

- describes the allegations/what was reported
- describes the investigation processes
- outlines all relevant evidence (including who was interviewed)
- concludes whether workplace bullying can or cannot be substantiated

The report should be acted on and its key findings communicated in a sensitive way to the complainant and respondent.

## Reporting of Notifiable Incidents

Any serious incidents occurring at Wellsford Range must be notified immediately to the Executive Officer or VRA Chairman. The VRA's duty to notify the Worksafe applies to serious injuries to any person including employees, volunteers or a member of the public. After becoming aware that any such incident has occurred, it is the Executive Officers responsibility to report 'notifiable incidents' to Worksafe by the fastest possible means, either:

- by phone—ring Worksafe on 1800 136 089 or 13 23 60

Serious Injuries include but are not limited to:

- medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance
- immediate treatment in hospital as an in-patient, or
- immediate medical treatment for severe injuries, e.g. amputation, serious head or eye injuries, serious lacerations, loss of a bodily function, spinal injuries or electric shock.

## Pandemic Planning

VRA employees should be provided with current and accurate information on the workplace risks associated with the pandemic as well as clear advice and education on how these risks will be controlled or minimised. Under the OHS Act, employers are required to take all reasonably practicable steps to protect the health and safety at work of their employees.

The VRA must consult with their employees when assessing a risk to the health and safety of employees at any workplace under the employer's control. Employees also have duties under the OHS Act. Employees must co-operate with their employer in implementing risk control measures. They must take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure they do not do anything that creates or increases a risk to the health and safety of themselves or others. In a pandemic situation it is reasonable to expect that these obligations placed on employee and employer will include complying with public health advice and any emergency measures.

The VRA is committed to the below risk management techniques during any officially recognised pandemic period:

### Physical distancing

- Maintaining a minimum distance of 1.5 metres between employees or members of the public
- Allowing only essential employees to attend the workplace
- Using alternative work options including work from home.
- Ceasing handshaking and other physical contact in the workplace during the pandemic.

### Control entry to the workplace

- Limit the number of customers in the VRA shop to one.
- Place signs outside the shop informing customers of the limit.

### Hygiene and use of PPE

- The VRA will limit risk of transmission by undertaking additional cleaning at the workplace and supporting good personal hygiene.
  - This may include but is not limited to hand sanitizer, disinfectant spray, hand soap and paper towel.

### If employees become ill at work

- The VRA will isolate an employee who report or show compatible symptoms to the pandemic.
- The employee will be asked to leave the workplace and arrangements will be made for transport if required.
- When the employee has left, the workplace, the workstation and communal areas will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.
  - The worker should not return to work until they have been cleared of the suspected infection by their doctor or DHHS

The above information and guidelines written above should be periodically reviewed and updated by the VRA Council to ensure a safe and secure environment

## Disclaimer

The above information is for guidance only and is not to be taken as an expression of the law. It should be read in conjunction with the relevant legislation

<b>Date Reviewed</b>	<b>Reviewed By</b>	<b>Edition Number</b>
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