Master of ceremonies

Tim McMillan

Housekeeping

Mobile phones off or silent please

Restrooms can be accessed thru the back doors, and turn right

Smoking notice: Optus Stadium is a smoke-free venue

This forum is being filmed and photography will take place

In the event of an emergency, please follow the directions of Stadium Staff

Event program

The Event Program can be accessed via this QR code or link provided in WebEx.

Ask questions using Slido

Scan QR code using your mobile device
or

Go to slido.com and enter event code
#SWM2

Welcome to Country

Robyn Collard

Welcome address

Christina Folley

Director WorkSafe Mines Safety

Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety

In the past…

factive

> THE INDUSTRY HAS NOT HAD A LOT OF EXPOSURE TO THE CONCEPT OF GENDER OTHER THAN DISCUSSIONS ON THE INCLUSION OF WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE.

> WE SEE AN INDUSTRY CULTURE IN WHICH DIFFERENCE IS VIEWED WITH DISRESPECT AND DISTASTE.

> THE IDEA OF A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDERED BEHAVIOURS AND SAFETY IS A NEW CONCEPT FOR THE INDUSTRY AND ITS EMPLOYEES.

> WE DON'T SEE TOO MANY PEOPLE WHO RECOGNISE THEY ARE JUST ONE KIND OF PERSON AMONG MANY DIFFERENT PEOPLE.

Today…

> **WE CAN SAY WITH CERTAINTY THAT THINGS HAVE CHANGED.**

KARRATHA
12th May
14 participants

NEWMAN
9th May
38 participants

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

KALGOORLIE
17th May
24 participants

PERTH
15th May
57 participants

BUNBURY
16th May
44 participants

Diversity and inclusion

Psychosocial incident prevention

factive

POLICY

TRAINING

SENIOR LEADERS

PREVENTION LEARNING

TABOO TOPICS

Psychosocial incident response

factive

4 gaps in reporting channels

Pressure to not report anonymously

Channels set up for, not with workers

Same channels for everyone

Reporting procedures not monitored

3 reasons for high risk of negative experience

Unsafe responses

Inadequate training

Misunderstanding investigations

factive

Have attitudes and practices towards psychosocial risks changed?

Has the industry moved away from its preference for hypermasculinity?

Is this no longer an industry in which a person needs to be and act tough to fit in?

YES

PARTIALLY

INCONCLUSIVELY

" WHILE THERE WERE SUCCESS STORIES TO SHARE, THERE WAS ALSO AN ACKNOWLEDGE-MENT THAT THERE IS STILL A LONG WAY TO GO.

factive

factiveconsulting.com

Dean Laplonge

dean@factiveconsulting.com

CLIENT:

Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety**

Ask questions using Slido

Scan QR code using your mobile device

or

Go to slido.com and enter event code #SWM2

If Impacted…

- Mates in Mining – 1300 642 111
- Suicide Call Back – 1300 659 467
- Life Line - 13 11 14

Speak to a Mates Field Officer in the lobby, beside the coffee

What Are We Talking About?

- ## Suicidal Ideation
  Suicide Ideation is a broad term used to describe contemplations, wishes or preoccupations with the idea of death and dying. The development of suicidal ideation is seen as the 'early stages' of a person's 'journey' towards suicide.

- ## Suicide Attempt
  A suicide attempt is the action of attempting to kill oneself and surviving. It can sometimes be difficult to distinguish between an accidental injury, self-harm and a suicide attempt when the individual's intentions are unknown.

- ## Suicide
  When a person intentionally ends their own life

- ## Self-Harm
  When a person harms themselves without the express intent to die. This can happen for a number of reasons including self-expression, a way to make their mental anguish seem "real", or be a request for help

What Does The Law Say?

- WHS ACT 2020 (WA)

  s.19(1). - A person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of —

  (a) workers engaged, or caused to be engaged, by the person; and

  (b) workers whose activities in carrying out work are influenced or directed by the person,

  while the workers are at work in the business or undertaking.

What Does The Law Say?

- WHAS (Mines) Regulations 2022 (WA)

r55A. Meaning of psychosocial hazard

A psychosocial hazard is a hazard that —

(a) arises from, or relates to —

(i) the design or management of work; or

(ii) a work environment; or

(iii) plant at a workplace; or

(iv) workplace interactions or behaviours; and

(b) may cause psychological harm (whether or not it may also cause
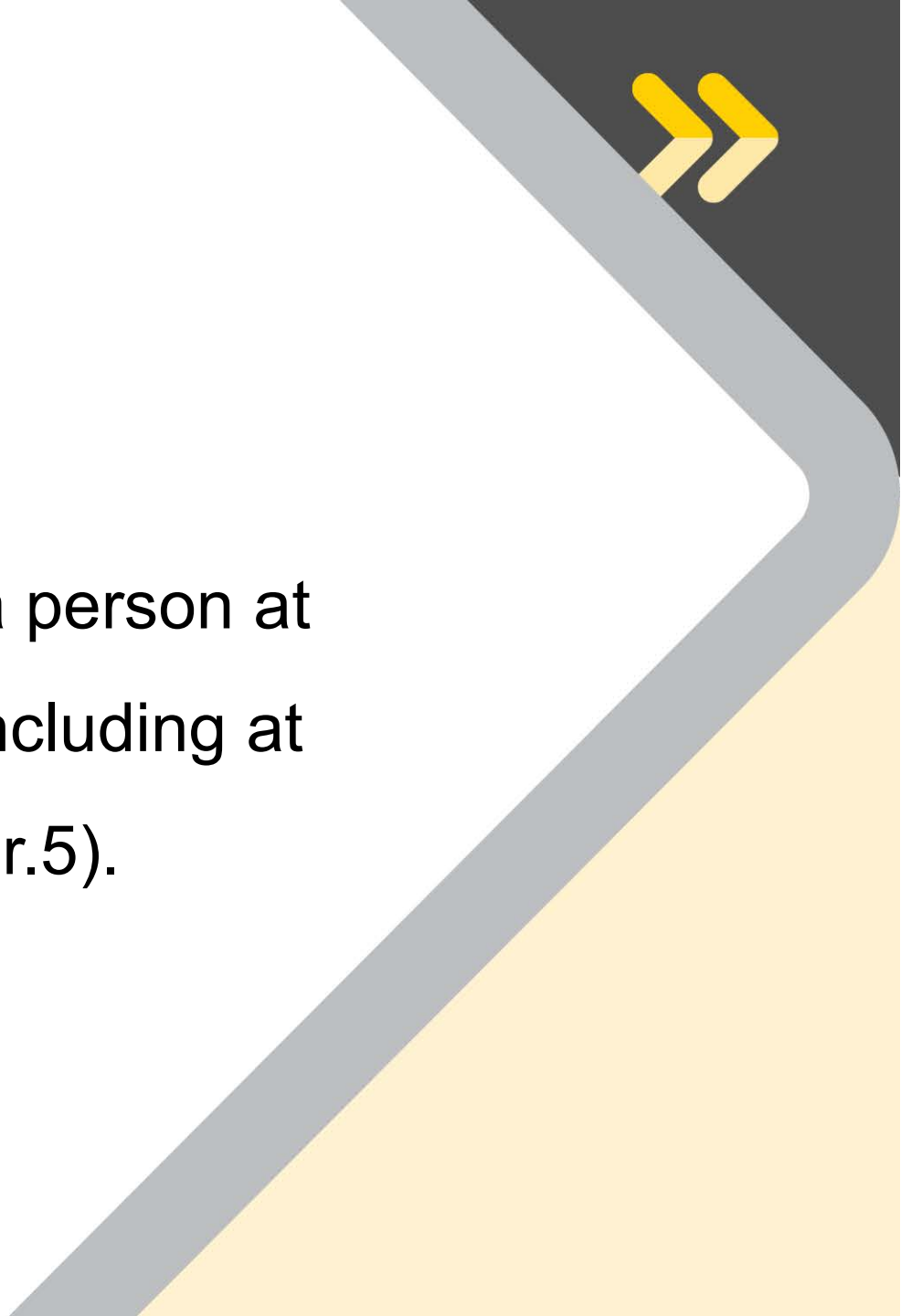
physical harm).

Reportable

Reportable Incident

…now includes the attempted suicide of a person at mine or a place associated with a mine, including at accommodation for a worker at the mine (r.5).

Notifiable

*Notifiable Incident* includes (s.35):

(a) the death of a person; or

(b) a serious injury or illness of a person; or

(c) a dangerous incident.

The serious injury or illness of a person (s.36)

(a) that requires the person to have immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital; or

(b) that requires the person to have immediate treatment for {a serious physical injury}

(c) that requires the person to have treatment by a medical practitioner within 48 hours of exposure to a substance; or

(d) that occurs in a remote location and requires the person to be transferred urgently to a medical facility for treatment; or

(e) that, in the opinion of a medical practitioner, is likely to prevent the person from being able to do the person's normal work for at least 10 days after the day on which the injury or illness occurs…

Is It Work Related?

Figure 1: Schematic summary of potential work-related causes of suicide

LaMontagne & King, (2023)
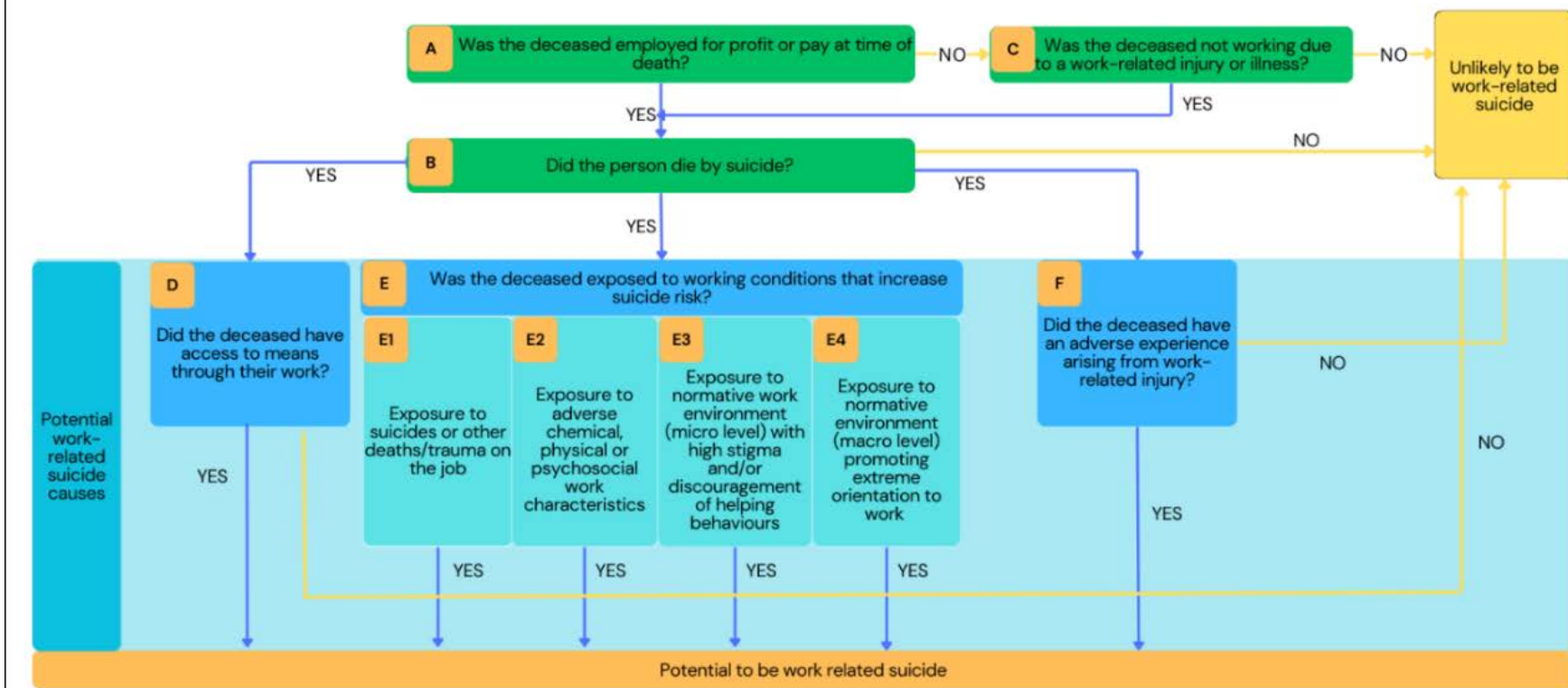
What Are We (DMIRS / WorkSafe) Looking For?

Work-Related Risks

- Design of Work
  - "Perceived" or Real Pressure
  - Training & Support
  - Rosters
- Work Environment (including accommodation)
  - Alcohol Provisions
  - Isolation
  - Lack of Reception @ Camp
  - Lack of Recreational Activities @ Camp
- Plant or Equipment
  - Adequate PPE
  - Dangerous Plant / Equipment
  - A lack of recreational equipment
- Interactions and Behaviours
  - Bullying
  - Sexual Harassment
  - Sexual Assault
  - Exclusion
  - Poor Management

Review of Controls used to Mitigate those Risks
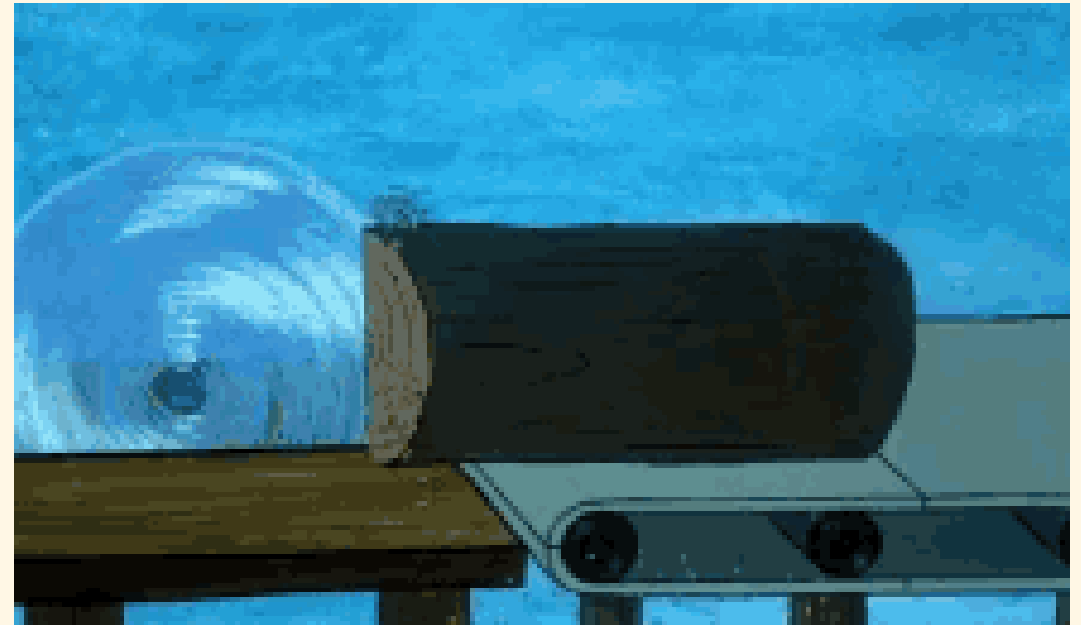
Don't Set & Forget

How Can I Help?

MANAGERS

- Mental Health Prestarts

- Contractor Management

- Trauma Informed Approach

- Monitor & Review Workplace & Work Activities

- Know your people

WORKERS

- Check in on your workmates

- Volunteer for available training

- Don't be afraid to say something

If Impacted…

- Mates in Mining – 1300 642 111
- Suicide Call Back – 1300 659 467
- Life Line - 13 11 14

Speak to a Mates Field Officer in the lobby, beside the coffee

Resources

- Suicide in Mining Guidance Sheet

- Psychosocial Hazards in the Workplace Code of Practice

- Mentally Healthy Workplaces for FIFO workers in the resources and construction sectors Code of Practice

- LaMontagne AD, & King, TL. (2023). *Work-related suicide: a discussion paper.* A report prepared for Suicide Prevention Australia. Open access @ www.suicidepreventionaust.org

Stay in touch

WorkSafe provides a range of newsletter and information products to keep you up to date.

www.dmirs.wa.gov.au/subscribe

WorkSafeWA

WorkSafeWA

WorkSafe WA

"Bullying" Inspections
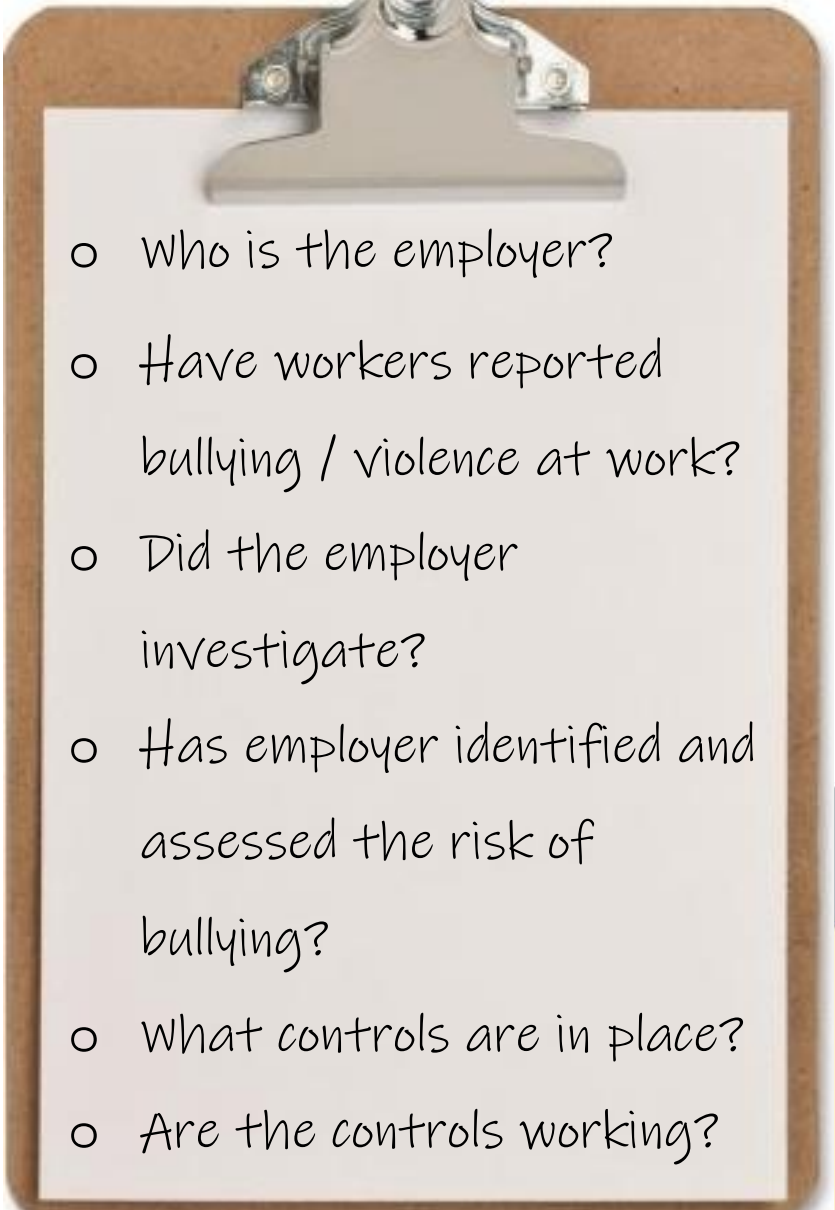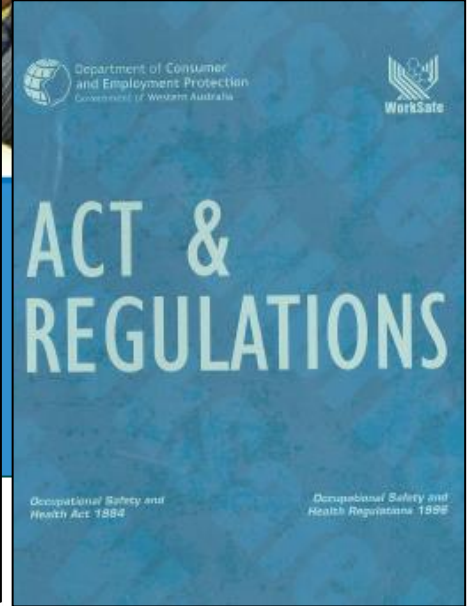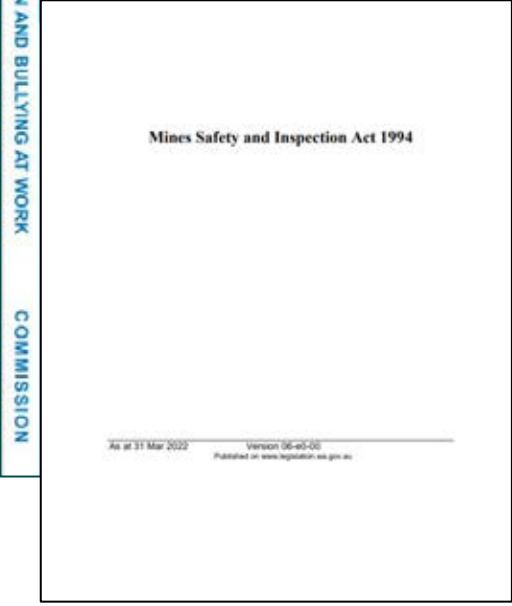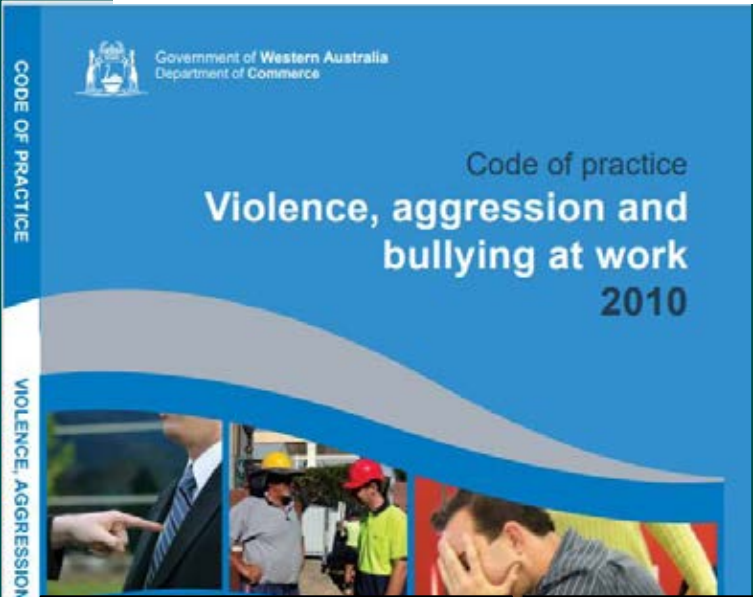
- Who is the employer?

- Have workers reported bullying / violence at work?

- Did the employer investigate?

- Has employer identified and assessed the risk of bullying?

- What controls are in place?

- Are the controls working?

Psychosocial Inspections

- Who is/are the PCBUs?

- Did a p/s hazard occur at work?

- Are/were workers exposed to a p/s hazard?

- Has PCBU identified the p/s hazards and assessed the risks?

- What controls are in place?

- Has the PCBU reviewed the controls for effectiveness?

- Have officers shown due diligence?

Key changes

o   Who is/are the PCBUs?

o   Did a p/s hazard occur at work?

o   Are/were workers exposed to a p/s hazard?

o   Has PCBU identified the p/s hazards and assessed the risks?

o   What controls are in place?

o   Has the PCBU reviewed the controls for effectiveness?

o   Have officers shown due diligence?

o   Who is the employer?

o   Have workers reported bullying / violence at work?

o   Did the employer investigate?

o   Has employer identified and assessed the risk of bullying?

o   What controls are in place?

o   Are the controls working?

What are psychosocial hazards?

Hazards related to the design of work, the work environment, plant and workplace interactions that may cause psychological harm

Bullying

Violence and aggression

Sexual harassment

Fatigue

Burnout

Psychosocial Regulations

2020
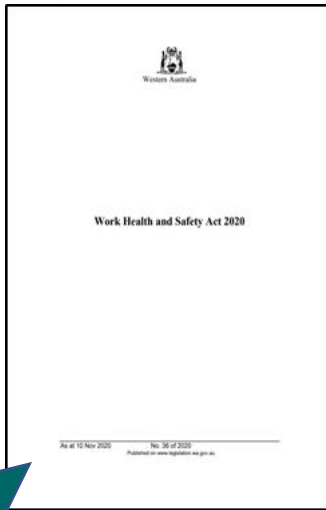
S19(1) – PCBU's duty of care
- Safe work environment
- Safe systems of work
- Adequate facilities
- Adequate training & info

s28: workers' duty of care
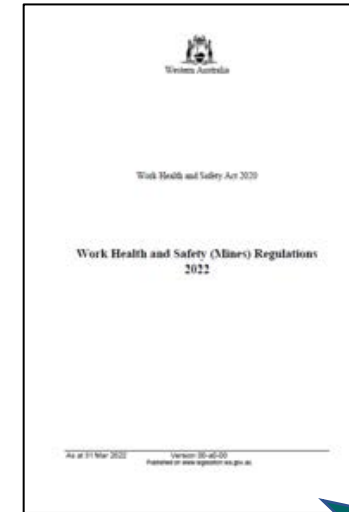
- Regs 34-38 – Health and safety risk management
- Reg 39 Information, training and instruction
- Reg 40 general workplace facilities (incl. lighting, safe movement)

Psychosocial Regulations

2022

Psychosocial hazards is a hazard that:
(a) arises from, or relates to:
- The design or management of work; or
- A work environment; or
- Plant at a workplace; or
- Workplace interactions or behaviours; and

(b) may cause psychological harm

- Regs 34-38 – Health and safety risk management
- Reg 39 Information, training and instruction
- Reg 40 general workplace facilities (incl. lighting, safe movement)

Psychosocial Regulations

PCBU control psychosocial risks SFARP – taking into consideration:

- Duration, frequency & severity of workers exposure to hazard
- How hazards interact or combine
- The design of work, incl. job demands and tasks
- How work is managed & organised
- The design, layout & environment
- Workplace behaviours
- Information & training

- Regs 34-38 – Health and safety risk management
- Reg 39 Information, training and instruction
- Reg 40 general workplace facilities (incl. lighting, safe movement)
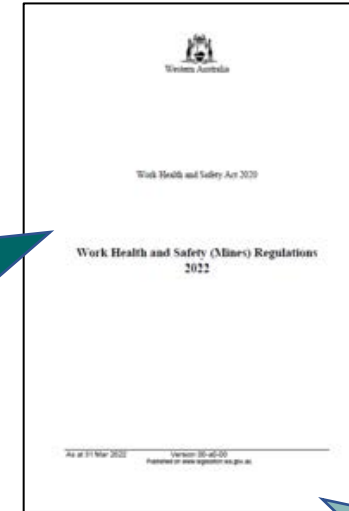
Applying Psychosocial Regulations

Organisational controls

Environmental controls

Pre-incident → Incident → Post-incident

Worker training in behaviour standards

Mgr/supervisor training

Applying Psychosocial Regulations

Organisational controls

Environmental controls

Knowledge of bystander interventions

Pre-incident → Incident → Post-incident

Worker training in behaviour standards

Mgr/supervisor training

Reporting systems

Applying Psychosocial Regulations

PCBU control psychosocial risks
SFARP – taking into consideration:
- Duration, frequency & severity of workers exposure to hazard
- How hazards interact or combine
- The design of work, incl. job demands and tasks
- How work is managed & organised
- The design, layout & environment
- Workplace behaviours
- Information & training

Control trauma

Immediate response

Control hazard

Post-incident

WHS investigation

review of controls

Appropriate support

Applying Psychosocial Regulations

Compliance example

Left document — Improvement Notice

Government of Western Australia
Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety

WorkSafe Western Australia

Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (Section 191)
IMPROVEMENT NOTICE

Reference ID: ▉

Notice Details

Issued To

Company Name	Site Name

In Relation To

In relation to:

Implementing control measures to minimise psychosocial risks so far as is reasonably practicable

At: ▉
On: ▉

Provision

I believe that you have contravened Regulation 55D. of the Work Health and Safety (Mines) Regulations 2022 in circumstances that make it likely that the contravention will continue or be repeated.

Reason

The reason I believe the provision is being, or has been, contravened is:

My investigation revealed that you are the person in control of a business or undertaking (PCBU contracting services at various mine sites in WA including ▉. Correspondence with the Site Senior Executive in March 2023 revealed that there was a report incident of sexual harassment at ▉ involving a worke employed by ▉. My review of the investigation report into this incident dated ▉ revealed that the subject of this inciden dragged the affected worker towards the back of ▉ out of sight of the only other person ▉ where he engaged in unwelcome touching of a sexual nature.

Right document — Improvement Notice

Government of Western Australia
Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety

WorkSafe Western Australia

Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (Section 191)
IMPROVEMENT NOTICE

Reference ID: ▉

My review of the ▉ risk assessment of ▉ revealed the risk of worker exposure to sexual harassment was potentially high and listed control strategies to mitigate this risk to "low", including but not limited to promotion of EAP services, Employee Safety Culture surveys, mental health wellbeing workshops and management review of reports. As per regulation 55 (2) in determining the control measures to implement in order to minimise psychosocial risks, the PCBU must have regard to all relevant matters, including the design and layout of the workplace (reg 55D(2)(e)). My review of the investigation report and risk assessment conducted by ▉ revealed that the PCBU has failed to consider the availability of natural or electronic surveillance in the kitchen. It is reasonable to expect that workers employed by ▉ will frequently interact within this work area, and failure to consider how the layout of ▉ may impact the risk of sexual harassment increases the risk of worker exposure to psychosocial hazards such as inappropriate workplace behaviour.

Directions

You are directed to take the following measures:

Ensure that psychosocial risks are eliminated or minimised so far as is reasonably practicable by taking into consideration all relevant matters, including the design and layout of work areas where workers are likely to work; the duration, frequency and severity of the exposure of workers and other persons to the psychosocial hazards; the supervision provided to workers; workplace interactions or behaviours; and the interaction of psychosocial hazards.

In identifying and assessing these risks, consult with workers to update risk assessment for sites such as this where ▉ workers are likely to work and provide evidence of changes made to the risk assessment or controls with the notification of compliance to this notice.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are provided for your consideration:

Refer to the *Code of practice on Violence and Aggression at Work* for detail on identifying and controlling the organisational environmental sources of risk and the *DMIRS Gendered Violence: Sexual Harassment* information sheet for information on risk management of sexual harassment

Due Date

You are required to remedy the contravention or likely contravention by no later than:

| Due Date: | ▉ | Due Time: | 4:30PM |

Right panel

✓ Risk assessment
✓ Some controls in place
➤ Failure to consider layout

⬇

➤ Review controls –
➤ consider all sources of risk (including layout)

Compliance example

Document 1 (left - Improvement Notice):

Government of Western Australia
Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety

WorkSafe Western Australia

Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (Section 191)
IMPROVEMENT NOTICE

Reference ID: ▉▉▉

Notice Details

Issued To

Site Details

Company Name   Site Name

In Relation To

In relation to:

control measures to eliminate psychosocial risks so far as is reasonably practicable

At:

On:

Provision

I believe that you have contravened Regulation 55D. of the Work Health and Safety (Mines) Regulations 2022

Reason

The reason I believe the provision is being, or has been, contravened is:

My investigation revealed that you are the person in control of a business or undertaking (PCBU) at ▉▉▉ Correspondence with the Site Senior Executive (SSE) on 2 Feb 2023 revealed that there had been incidents of inappropriate behaviour which could risk the physical and psychological health of workers including occupational violence and aggression and harassment in the previous 12 months. Correspondence with the SSE on 6 Jan 2023 revealed that in response to one of these incidents, site management developed a poster and other guidance information outlining the risks of sexual harassment and advised employees and contractors of behaviour expectations at pre starts. My review of other training and information on standards of acceptable behaviour revealed

Document 2 (middle - Improvement Notice continued):

Government of Western Australia
Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety

WorkSafe Western Australia

Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (Section 191)
IMPROVEMENT NOTICE

Reference ID: ▉▉▉

that the code of conduct guidelines and policy as well as the site induction presentation and the ▉▉▉ handbook and guidelines also formed part of the information and training provided by the PCBU to workers to mitigate the risk of injury arising out of these inappropriate behaviours.

My review of these documents to mitigate the risk of injury arising out of inappropriate behaviours such as bullying and harassment, as well as violence and aggression revealed that the training and information provided to workers at ▉▉▉ site is not adequate to control the risk of psychological or physical harm arising from these behaviours. Specifically;

- While ▉▉▉ handbook and guidelines states that Bullying, Harassment, and/or Sexual Harassment is not tolerated at any level, it does not provide examples or outline how these behaviours or interactions are a psychosocial hazard as per regulation 55A. This handbook also defines workplaces as not including residential, or recreational facilities, despite violence and aggression having occurred in the accommodation village previously and these facilities being included in the definition of a mining operation (as per regulation 5B of the WHS Mines Regulations 2022).
- The ▉▉▉ Induction training slides cover work health and safety hazards, including fatigue, dust, and slips, trips and falls but there is no mention of inappropriate workplace behaviours which present a psychosocial hazard such as bullying, harassment or occupational violence and aggression

It is practicable for the PCBU to ensure that all workers on the site (including contractors) receive adequate training on the work health and safety duties and responsibilities relating to workplace behaviour, where these duties apply and the measures used to prevent inappropriate or unreasonable behaviour from occurring as is outlined in section 4.2.6 of the Code of Practice on Workplace Behaviours. Failure to provide training on the psychosocial risks associated with workplace behaviours such as violence, aggression and harassment means that the PCBU is not eliminating or minimising the risk of workplace interactions or behaviours as far as is reasonably practicable.

Directions

You are directed to take the following measures:

1. Review the ▉▉▉ village handbook and guidelines to ensure that workplaces are defined as any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work in a mining operation –including accommodation and recreation facilities as part of the tenement.

2. Review the ▉▉▉ training to ensure that workers receive adequate information on the psychosocial risks associated with inappropriate behaviours such as bullying, harassment

Right side bullet points:

✓ Training

➢ Insufficient detail on hazardous behaviours

➢ Review info/training on behaviours, controls and duties

Refer to Code of Practice Workplace Behaviours

Summary…

- All psychosocial hazards (including fatigue, traumatic events, harassment, etc.) must be identified & controlled as far as practicable

- New psychosocial regulations stipulate factors that must be considered in control strategies

- Guidance is available!

Lunch

Next session commences at 1:00pm

Managing risk of workplace psychosocial hazards:
Ten practical steps
Dr Marcus Cattani, Edith Cowan University

PANEL SESSION: Supporting colleagues and bystanders
Panellists: Julia Armitt, Lorna MacGregor and Damien McVeigh

Work Health Safety Excellence Awards 2023

27 October, Optus Stadium
Register now

Background

- Use of the elements of the risk-based approach

- Complexity!

- Psychological hazards in the legislation

- Work and non-work influences

- Work-relatedness of events and injuries

- Critical events

- "Prevention" is a focus of literature and guidance

Respect@Work: National Inquiry into

SUICIDE IN THE AUSTRALIAN MINING INDUSTRY: A NATIONAL STUDY
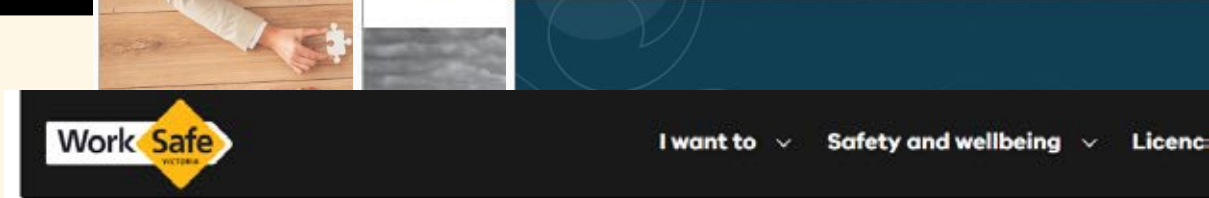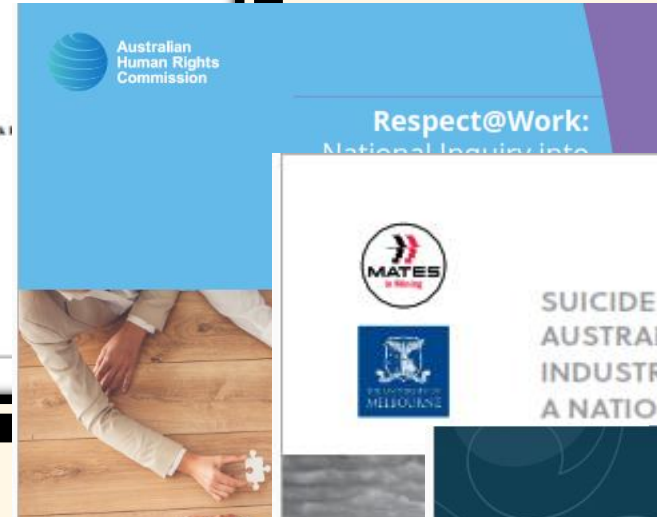
Home > News

Building regulator charged following inspector's death

WorkSafe has charged the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) after an inspector took their own life in May 2022.
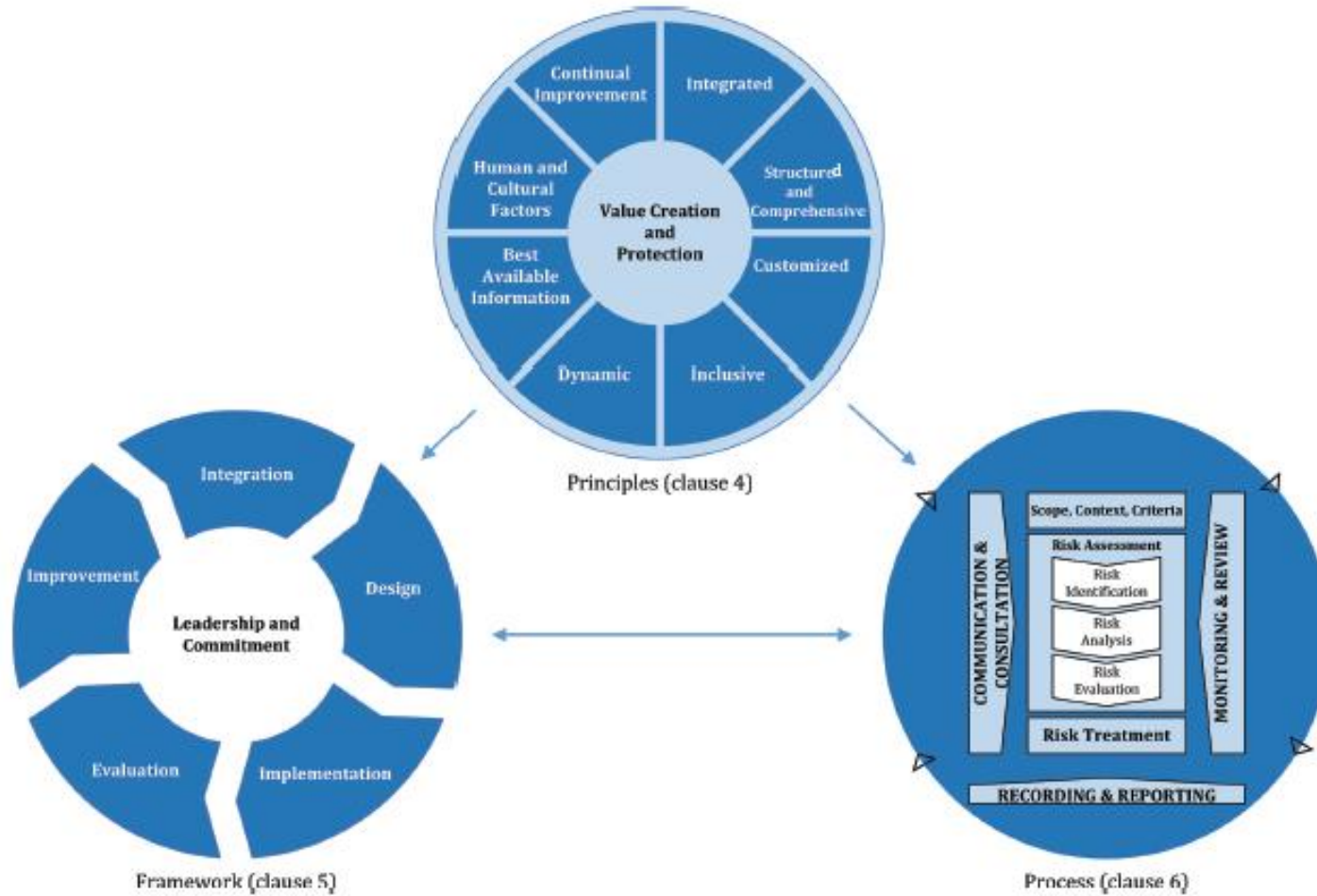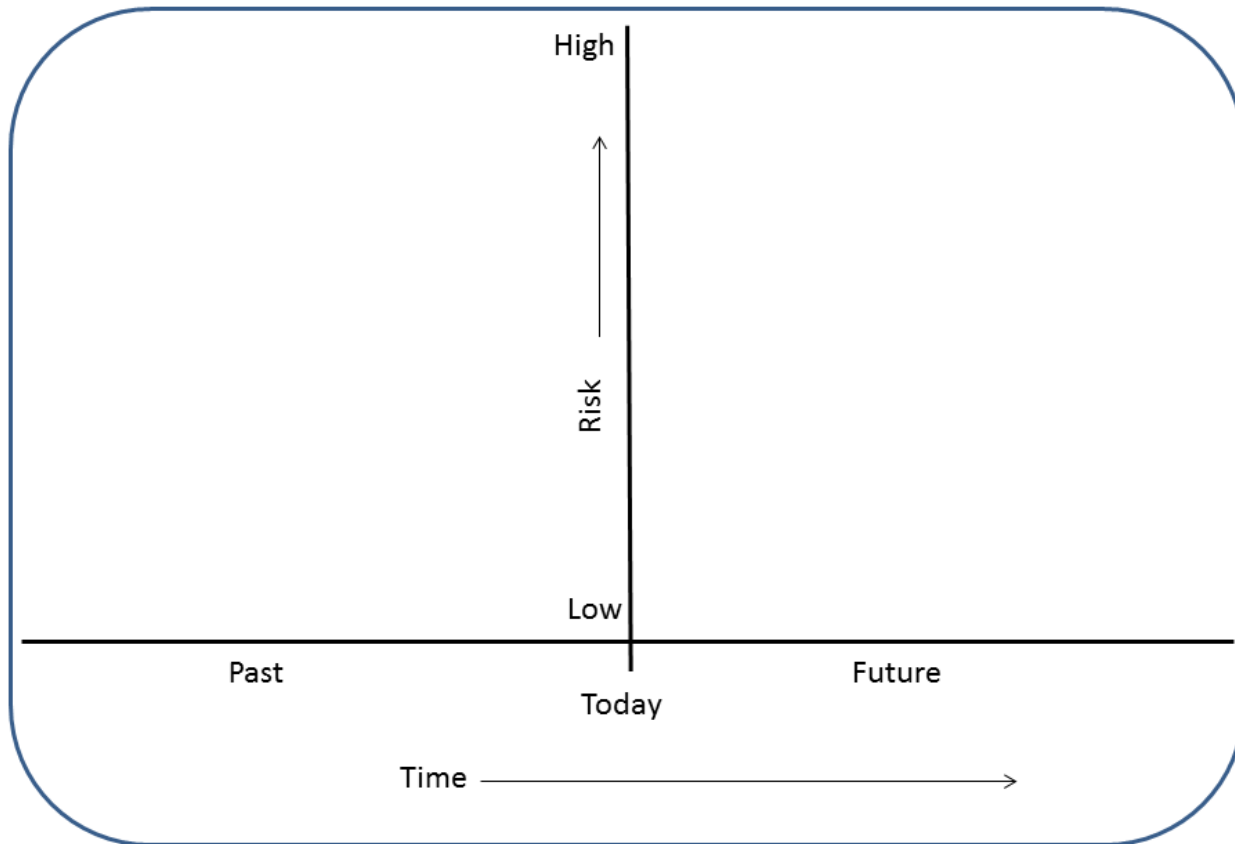
Risk management 101

Figure 1 — Principles, framework and process

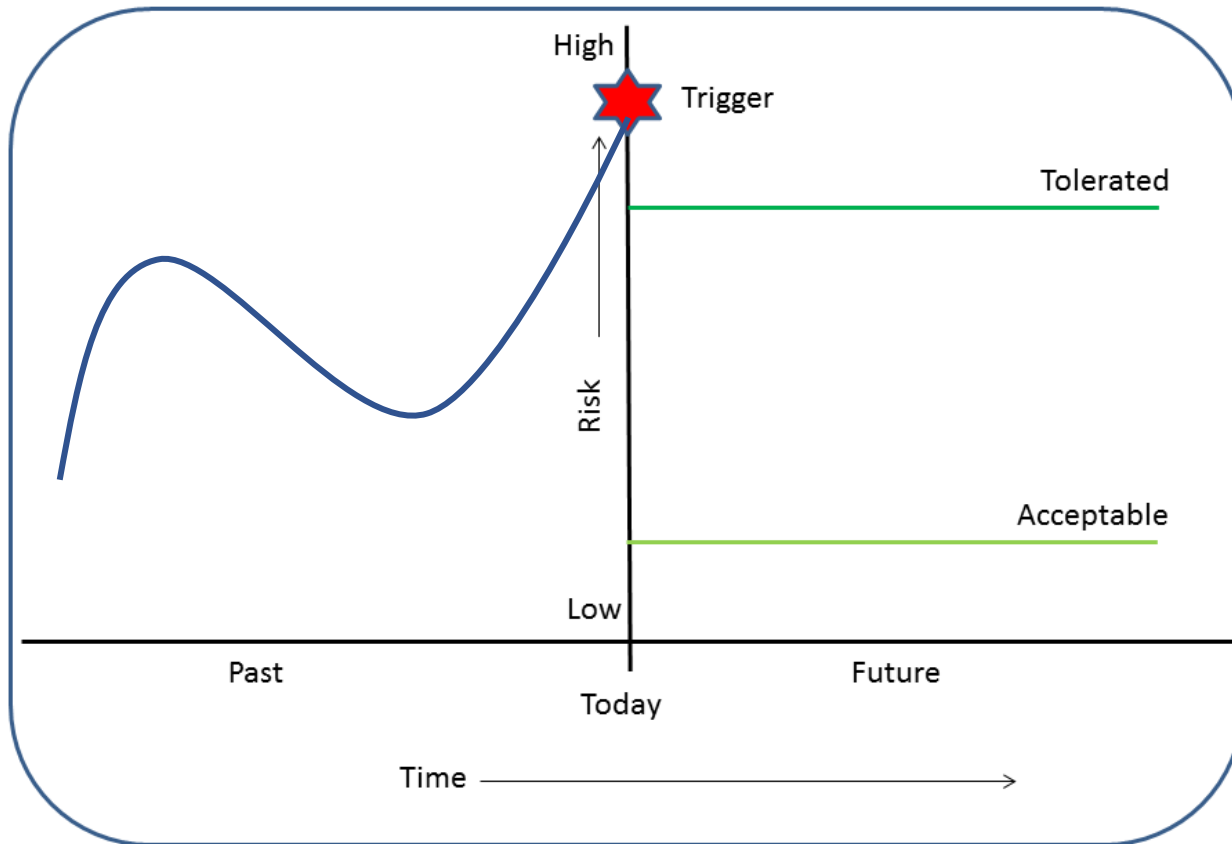ISO31000 (2018) "Risk Management: Guidelines"

Risk over time

Cattani, 2012

Managing risk to an acceptable level is a process over time

Risk over time
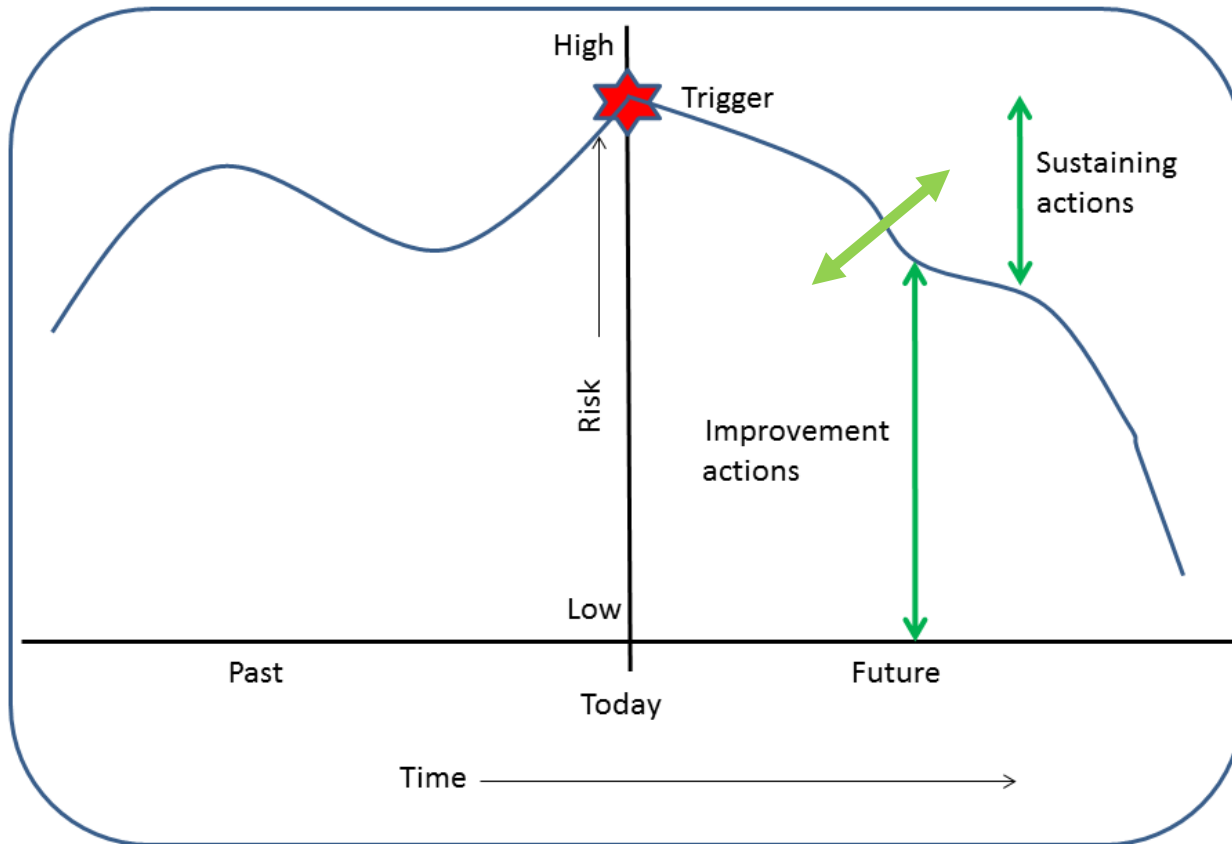

Cattani, 2012

To prevent the trigger recurring we set criteria to guide and "warn" us.

Tolerated risk: the level of risk which changes behaviour.

Acceptable risk: the level of risk at which we slow down or stop change: the target level

Risk management partners

Cattani, 2012

We must consider the impact of our improvement actions over time.

Improvement actions (i.e. which address unacceptable risk) become sustaining actions.

Risk management partnership….

The next slides are a framework to manage, which need to be customised.

1. Principles: We can do this…together

What is the message:

- The organisation must commit (i.e., Principles)

- The research and guidance says that we can create inclusive, respectful and diverse workplaces.

What do we need to know/do?

- Take a customised organisational approach & consider external factors

- Use a risk-based systems approach (i.e., which we used to improve OHS performance)

How effective are you/your employer?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

No commitment   Commitment & strategy   Commitment embedded

Victim

Non-work

Leaders

Perpetrator

Bystander

Research

Regulator
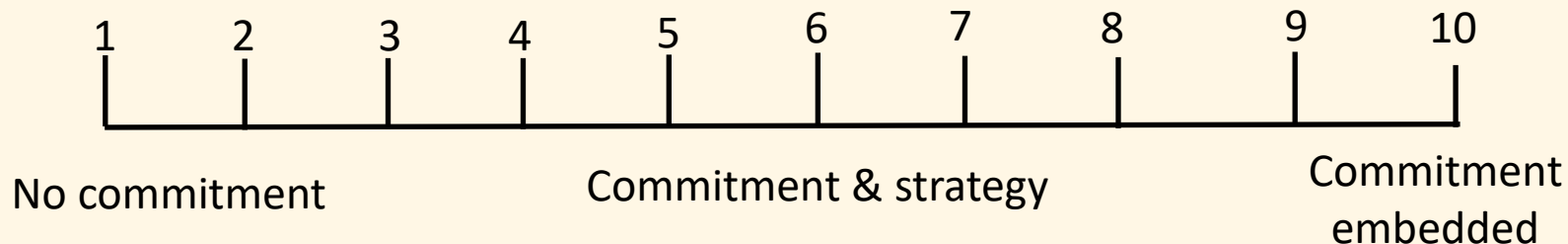
2. Principles: This is good business

What is the message:

- Manage the threats to your business

What do we need to know/do?

- Identify, analyse and evaluate the issues which prevent success
- Take a customised organisational approach to address priorities "This is how we do things around here!"
- Embed this approach throughout…eg: policy, leadership, communication, training
- Review and develop

How effective are you/your employer?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

No threat analysis   Evaluated issues   Organisational approach
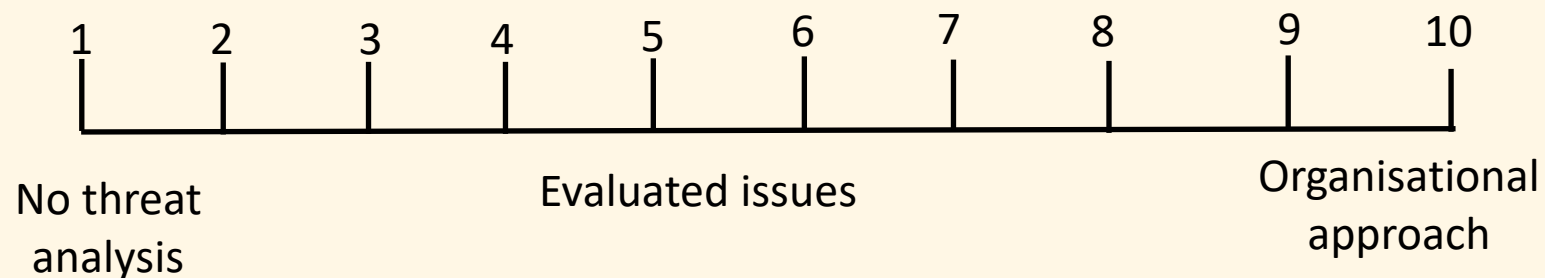
3. Framework: Leaders must lead change

What is the message:

- Leaders influential in organisational approach and culture

What do we need to know/do?

- Leaders influence culture and trust

- Leadership agree and communicate the tolerated risk (i.e., acceptable behaviour): policy or standard?

- Leaders demonstrate and communicate acceptable

- Everyone knows about the organisational approach

How effective are you/your employer?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

No leadership
driving change

Leaders managing
performance to criteria

Leaders champions
of change
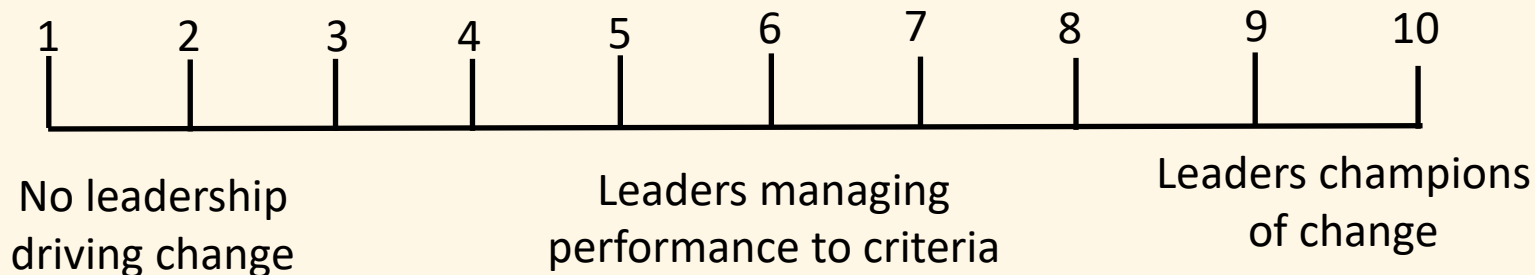
Leaders

4. Partnerships: Roles and responsibilities

What is the message:

- The leadership team need an organisational approach

What do we need to know/do?

- Agree leadership and employee roles (i.e., a due diligence approach)

- Create risk management partnerships

- Review Guidance, ask Experts

- Monitor performance

How effective are you/your employer?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

No defined roles

People understand roles

Empowered team approach

Leaders
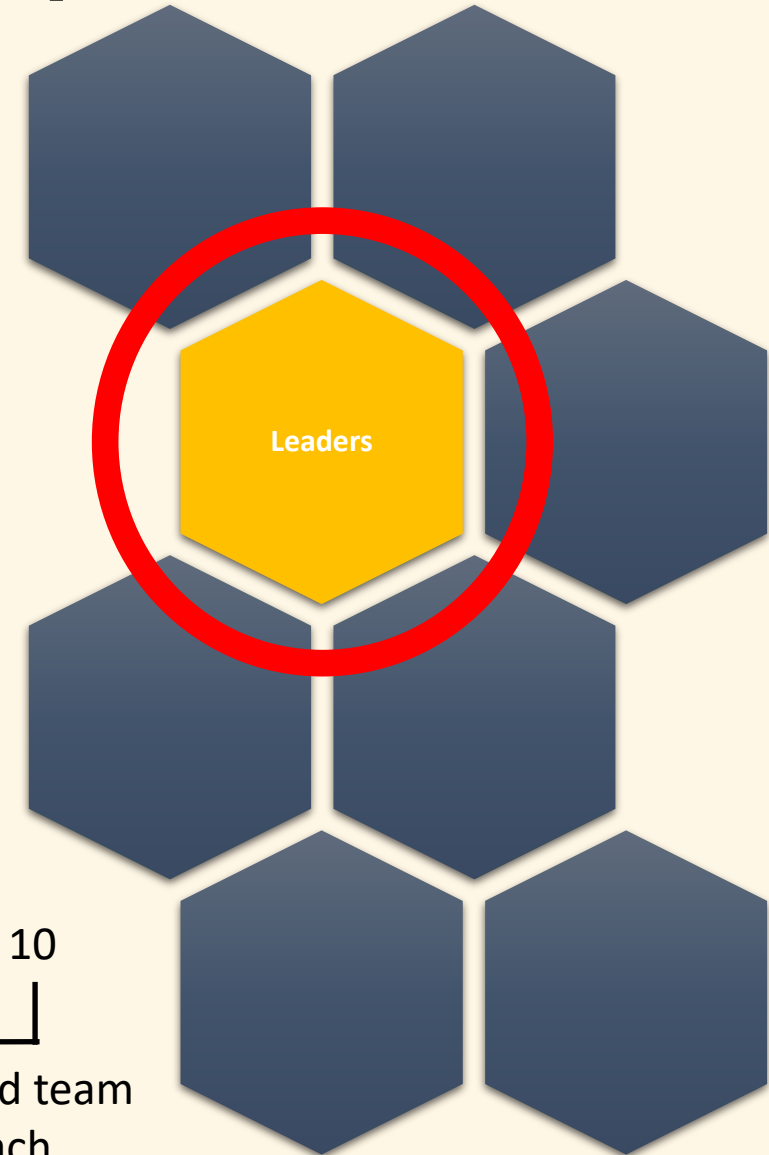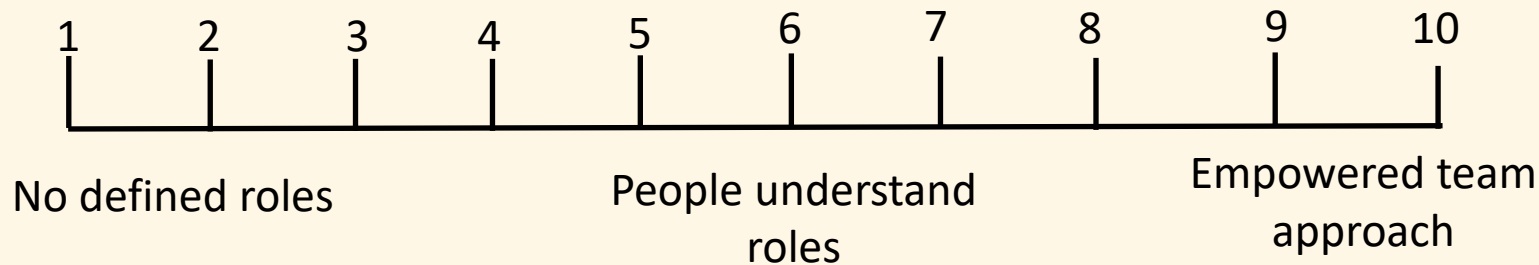
5. Process: Justify action

What is the message:

- Agree how to improve using risk management

What do we need to know/do?

- Develop a risk management process

- Train people to conduct risk management plans

- Consult widely to conduct risk management plans

- Communicate outcomes to all

How effective are you/your employer?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

No risk plans   Process & training   Diverse teams
                          developed   agree plans

Leaders
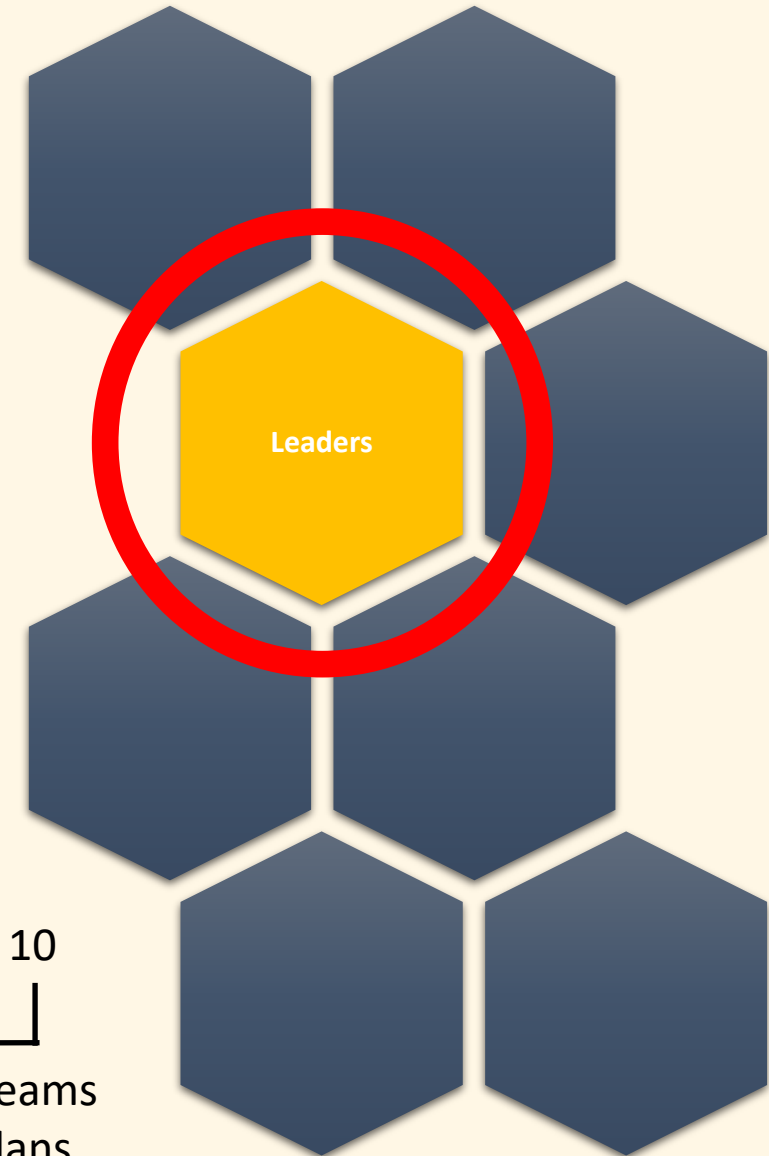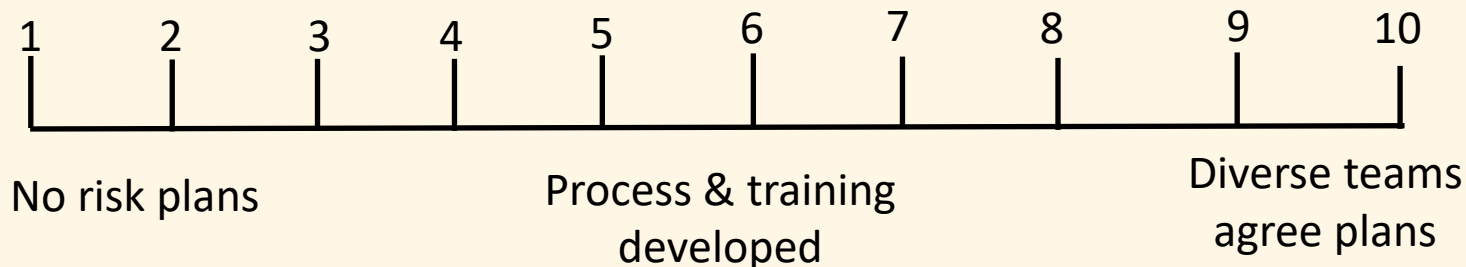
6. Risk factor: Incivility and bullying

What is the message:

- Rude language 'incivility' is just the beginning

What do we need to know/do?

- It may seem crazy but rude language lays the foundation for worse language and behaviour

- Do not swear or be rude to people (ok...this is going to take some time!)

- Consult to develop an organisational approach

How effective are you/your employer?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

No bullying approach

Consulted to create a plan

Managing risk factor
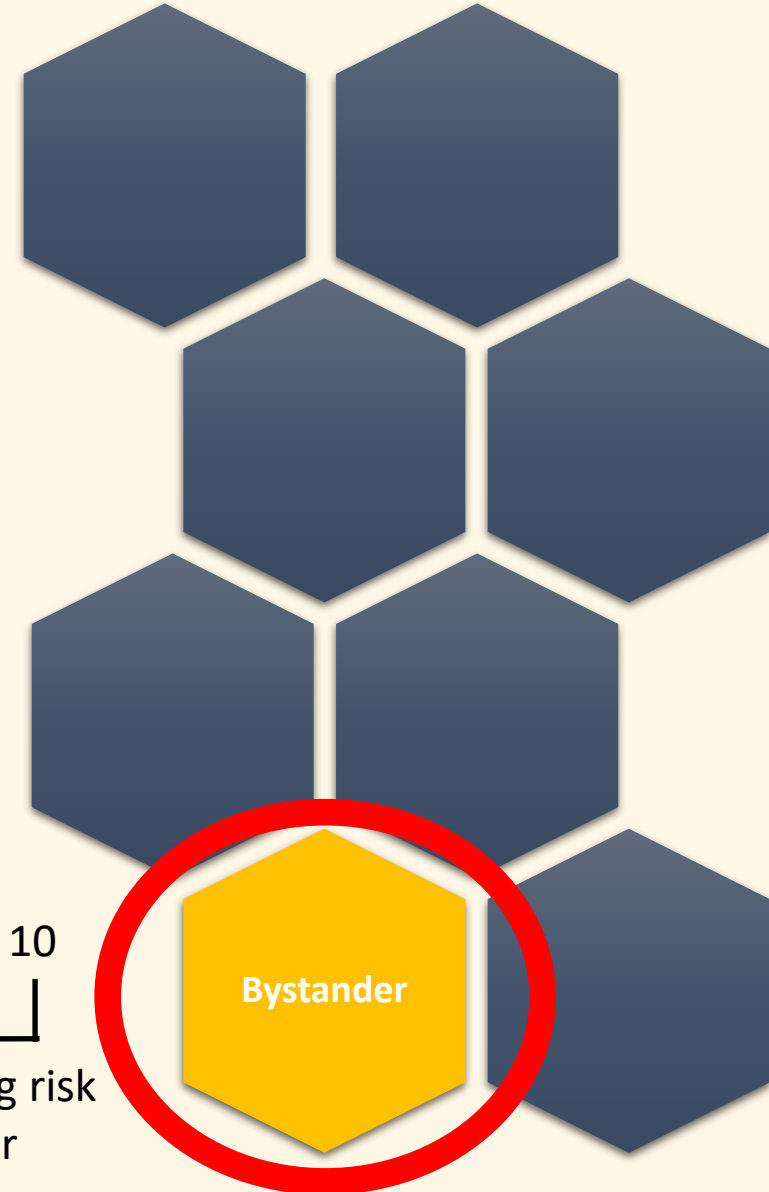
Bystander
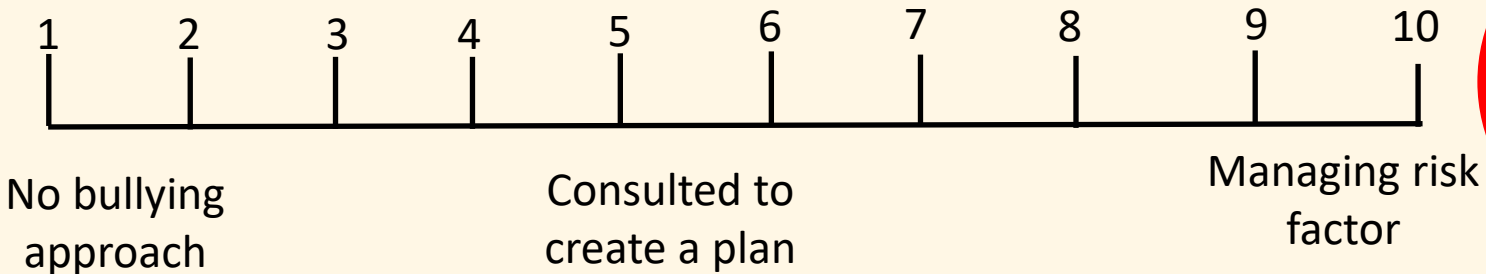
7. Risk factor: What shall I do?

What is the message:

- We all have a role to establish, maintain or change the environment we work in.

What do we need to know/do?

- Be informed eg: through training

- Provide support or report incidents if required

- Establish 'the way we do things around here'

- Find out what resources are available, also external if culture is not accepting or trust 'not right'

How effective are you/your employer?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Undefined expectations   Individuals aware of roles   Managing risk factor

Bystander
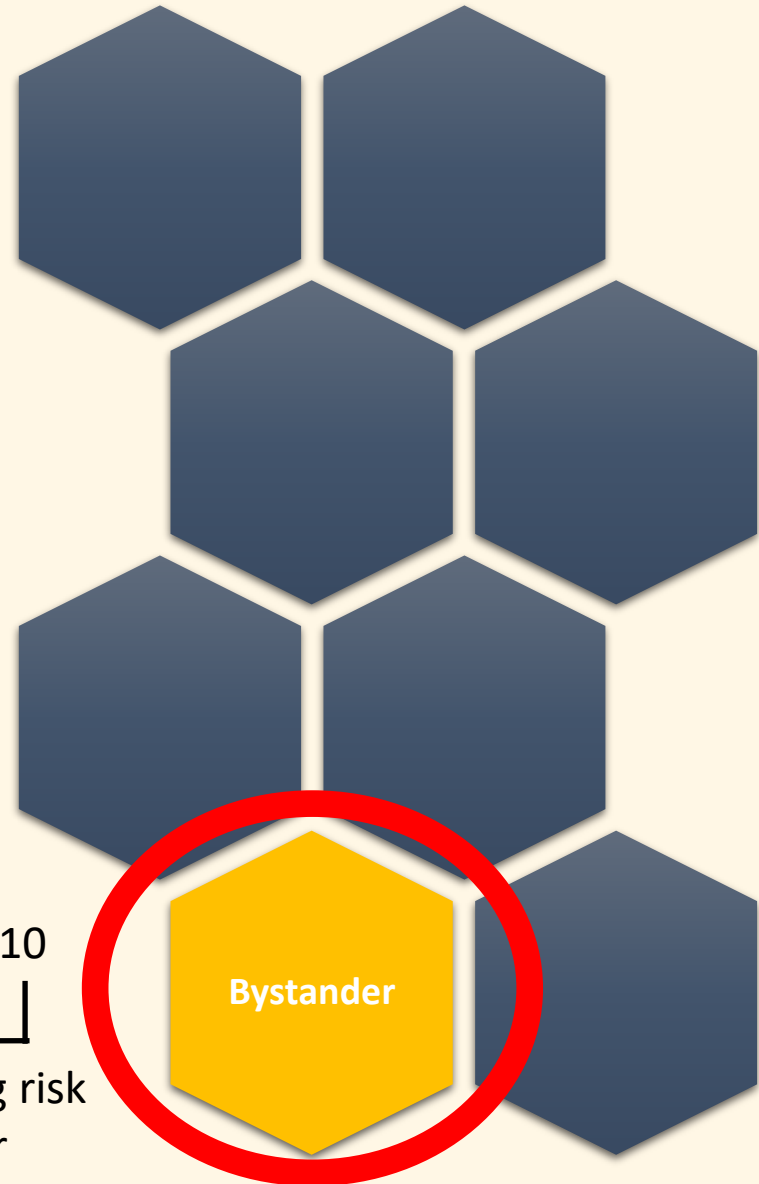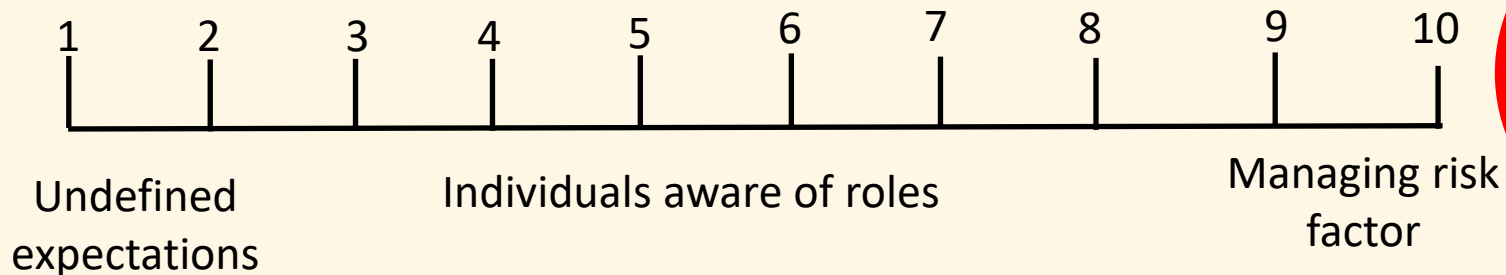
8. Risk factor: I am a b***

What is the message:

- You may not be perceived how you think, because of your language and behaviour.

What do we need to know/do?

- Don't….touch people, swear, use sexual terms, steal others possessions.

- Do…look after your colleagues; help out; call out bad behaviour

- Seek support through organisational or public services

How effective are you/your employer?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

No support   General support   Targeted initiatives
                    available
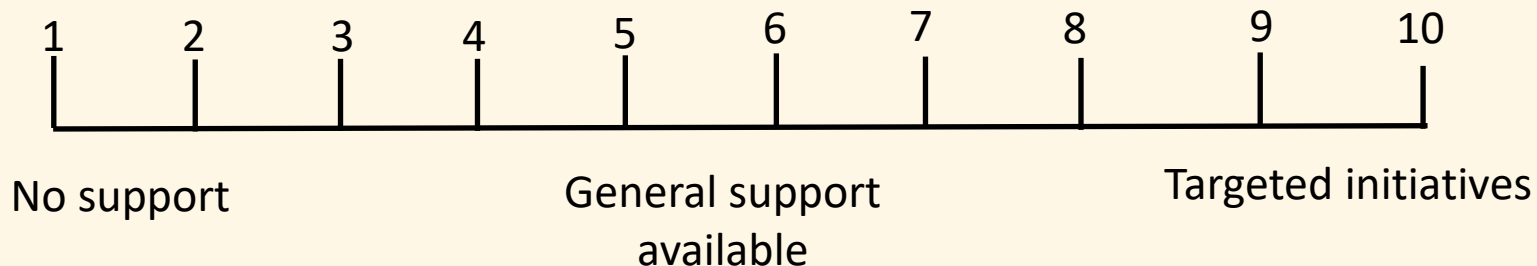
9. Risk factor: I don't know what to do

What is the message:

- Organisations must inform all employees of support and resources

- If you have been abused, please tell someone

What do we need to know/do?

- Organisations must provide individuals with appropriate support

- Talk with your partner, counsellor, helpline

How effective are you/your employer?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

No support   General support   Targeted initiatives
                        available

Victim
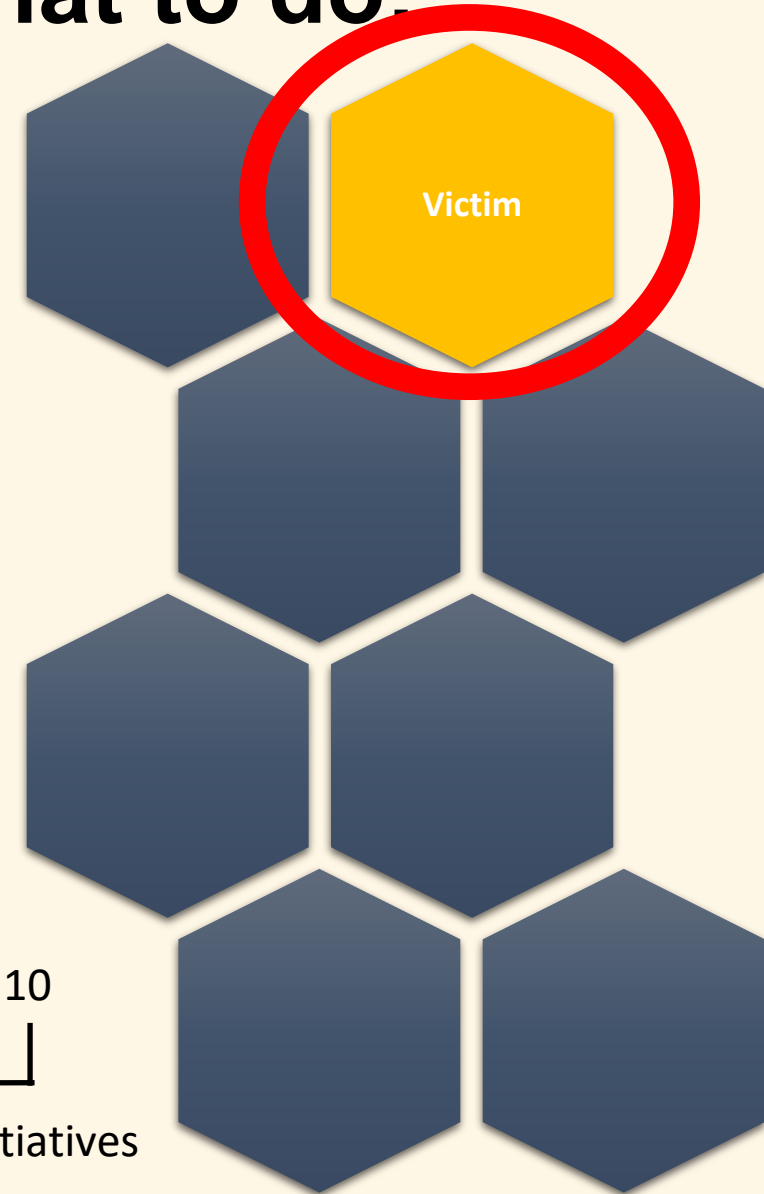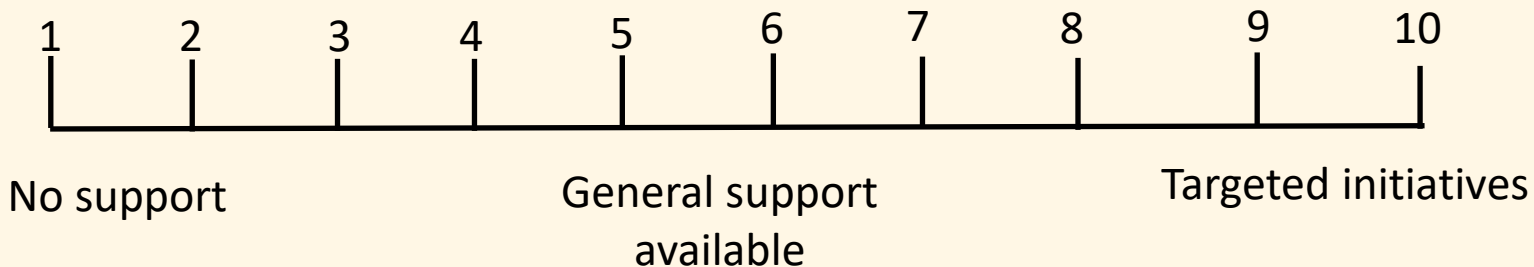
10. Review and improve

What is the message:

- A systems approach takes time to mature, identify strengths and manage weaknesses

What do we need to know/do?

- Consultation and participation: involve diverse groups of people in your systems and their improvement

- Benchmark your performance and develop an improvement plan

How effective are you/your employer?

```
1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8     9     10
```

No system review

System developed, review planned

Action plan being managed

Victim

Non-work

Leaders

Perpetrator

Bystander

Research

Regulator
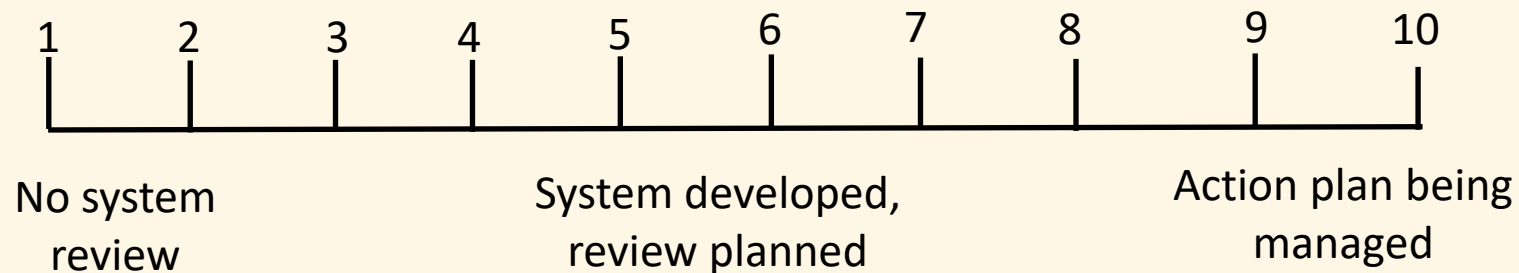
Conclusion

1. The risk-based approach can be used to manage an organisational approach to psychosocial hazards.

2. Start with the leadership team to gain their commitment.

3. Focus on your organisation's priorities.

Ask questions using Slido

Scan QR code using your mobile device
or

Go to slido.com and enter event code #SWM2

Workplace bullying defined

Workplace bullying consists of 'systematic interpersonal behaviours inflicted over a period of time that forces a target into a position where they feel unable to defend themselves' (Einarsen et al., 2011).

Withholding information

Opinions ignored

Unreasonable deadlines

Excessive monitoring

Unmanageable workload

Menial tasks

Withholding recognition

Humiliation and ridicule

Gossip and rumours

Ignored or excluded

Insulting or offensive remarks

Repeated reminders of mistakes

Allegations

Teasing and sarcasm

Practical jokes

Intimidating behaviour

Threats/actual abuse

Spontaneous anger

Workplace bullying prevalence in Australia

- Studies typically find approximately 10% of Australian workers have experienced workplace bullying over the previous 6 months.

- When the behavioural measure (NAQ-R etc.) is used, prevalence is considerably higher – typically over 20%.

- According to Ballard and Bozin (2023), the true costs of workplace bullying to the Australian economy are in the region of $30b pa.

The consequences of workplace bullying

Harm to Targets → **Costs to Organisations**

Harm to Targets
- Lower emotional wellbeing
- Stress
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Musculoskeletal disorders

Costs to Organisations
- Lost productivity
- Absenteeism
- Turnover
- Displaced time and effort
- Legal and reputational costs
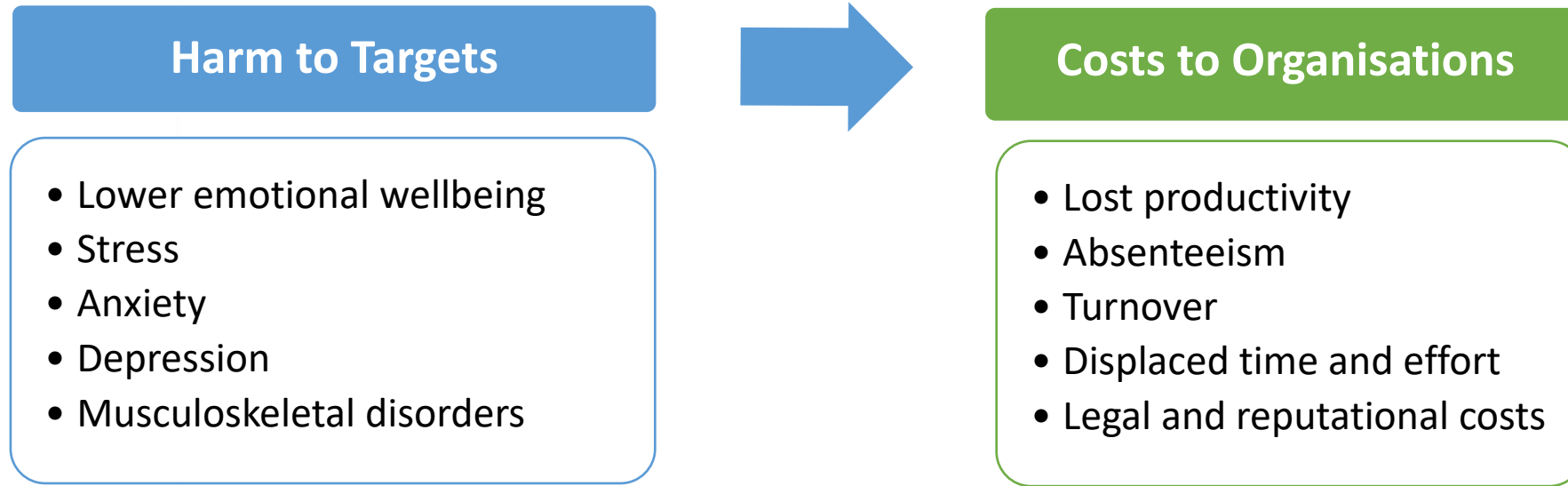
- Similar negative health effects have been found with witnesses and people accused of bullying.

- Exposure to workplace bullying is claimed to be a "more crippling and devastating problem for employees than all other kinds of work-related stress put together" (Einarsen et al., 2011).

Re-Conceptualising workplace bullying

- Workplace bullying as a problem **of** organisations (rather than being a problem **for** organisations).

- Workplace bullying is often **not a simple interpersonal issue** occurring between two individuals independently, but rather it is brought about by **interacting cultural and work environment factors** within a social context (whether it be throughout an organisation or work team).

- A systems approach – bullying as a symptom rather than a cause.

The causes of workplace bullying

Government/regulatory

* Performance pressures

* Under-resourcing

Societal/industry

* (In)tolerance towards aggression

Organisation

* Culture

* Leadership

* Hierarchy

* Organisational change

* Socialisation

Task/Job

* High responsibility

*High workloads

* Lack of goal clarity

*Low autonomy

* Lack of support

Stress

Conflict
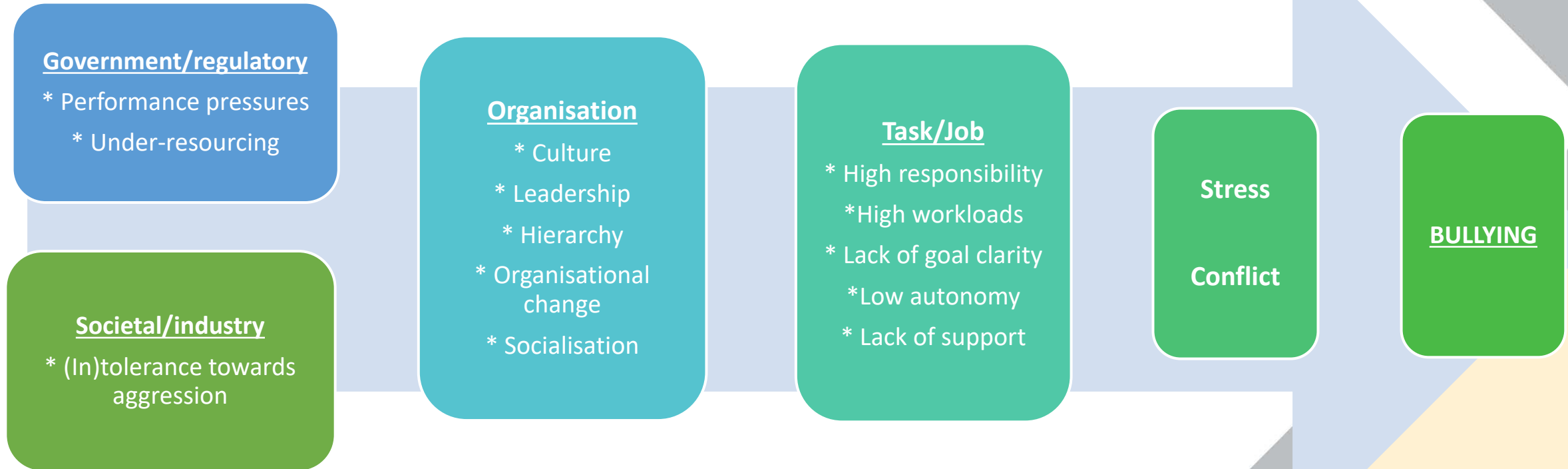
BULLYING

Preventing workplace bullying

Important questions:

1. **What** are the most effective methods or initiatives for organisations to prevent and/or address workplace bullying?

2. **How** should these interventions be implemented for the greatest impact?

Preventing workplace bullying

- Removing or minimising causes

- Fostering an organisational culture of zero-tolerance for bullying

- Requires multi-level, multi-component initiatives

Industry/Society

Organisation

Team

Individual
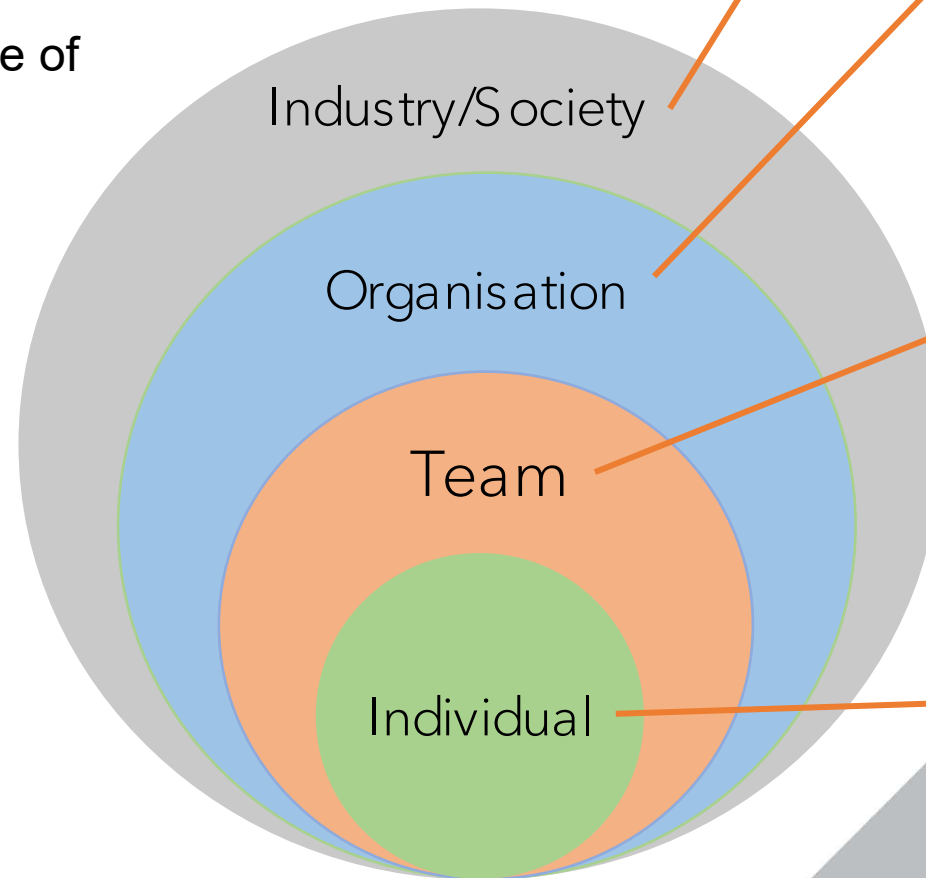
* Strong union representation
* Government funding
* Societal messaging

* Anti-bullying policy
* Clear procedures
* Communication from senior management
* Supportive HR function

* Awareness and management training
* Fostering management competency
* Team building

* Coping and Resilience
* Coaching
* Proactive management of inappropriate behaviours

The evidence for what interventions work best

- A wide variety of approaches to managing workplace bullying reported in the scholarly literature.

- Evidence for what works to reduce the prevalence of workplace bullying is very limited.

- Most evaluated studies focus on the individual – e.g. awareness, assertiveness, or cognitive rehearsal training for staff which, in some cases, specifically targeted victims of bullying.

Others focus on wider aspects of the work system:

- middle management training

- development of action plans targeting workplace causes of bullying

The evidence for what interventions work best

- Multi-level programmes consists of a range of initiatives, such as:

- Establishing learning communities

- Developing and implementing policy and a shared vision with regard to bullying

- Staff and management training

- Introducing practices for the management of bullying

- Investigations and perpetrator dismissals

- Introducing confidential advisors

- The creation of resources relating to workplace bullying and its management

Multi-pronged and multi-level approaches to the management of bullying are recommended as it's a complex phenomenon (but not always successful).

Recommended steps for introducing an anti-bullying program

1. **Organisational preparation:**

- Obtain **senior management commitment and support** for the initiative.

- Ensuring that the organisation is **ready for the change**.

- Establish a **Steering Group** of managers and staff from throughout the organisation to coordinate and drive the program.

- Consider any **barriers** likely to impede progress or success of the program.

- Ensure **sufficient resources** and time are allocated to the initiative.

- **Communicate the initiative with all s**taff, including the need for and value of the initiative.

Recommended steps for introducing an anti-bullying program

2. Risk assessment:

- Conduct an initial assessment of the risks to gauge the extent and nature of the problem.

- Staff surveys are commonly used to gather such information, alongside audits of existing support and management systems.

- Feedback the assessment results to all staff to encourage staff awareness and foster engagement and commitment to the program.

3. Step Three: Action Planning

- Consider risk assessment results with a view to developing an **Action Plan of initiatives to address bullying**. (Steering Group and participatory workshops with staff)

- The Action Plan should target the issues identified in the risk assessment (e.g. policy development and implementation, targeted training, implementing structures and processes for the management of bullying, or involve aspects of organisational redesign).

Recommended steps for introducing an anti-bullying program

Step Four: Implementation

- The Action Plan should be implemented by the responsible parties outlined in the Action Plan.

- Communicate with all staff about progress made to ensure staff remain aware of the organisation's commitment.

- Ensure that managers are adequately equipped and committed to taking responsibility for changes to be implemented.

Step Five: Evaluation

- Evaluation of the implemented initiatives should be regular and ongoing.

- Repeat the risk assessment survey at regular intervals to assess progress.

- Seek staff feedback on their experience of the program and identifying barriers to success.

- The Action Plan should be frequently reviewed and new initiatives added.

Success factors

- Workplace bullying interventions need to be **tailored** to the workplace context

- Should be **multi-level** and **multi-pronged**

- **Management engagement** is required at all levels

- **Worker participation** in the intervention design and implementation

- There should be a mechanism for organisational ownership and sustained prioritisation

- The intervention should be **ongoing** (as opposed to a one-off training session, for example)

- It must be **immersive**, involving large numbers of the target work group or organisation

Our study

4-year study

Focused on ambulance, police, fire, and emergency services personnel

Evaluation of employee wellbeing, and the effectiveness of wellbeing programs

Context

First responders are more likely to report:
- **Depression and anxiety**
- Increased risk of **mental health struggles**
- Contemplation of **suicide** and suicide completion

Understanding workplace trauma

The work itself

- Witnessing a serious accident
- Exposure to death, suicide, or injury

Negative community interactions

- Being threatened with a weapon
- Being verbally, physically, or sexually assaulted

Negative workplace interactions

- Ongoing bullying
- Workplace incidents, injuries, or death

"
An employer must eliminate psychosocial risks in the workplace, or if that is not reasonably practicable, minimise these risks so far as is reasonably practicable.
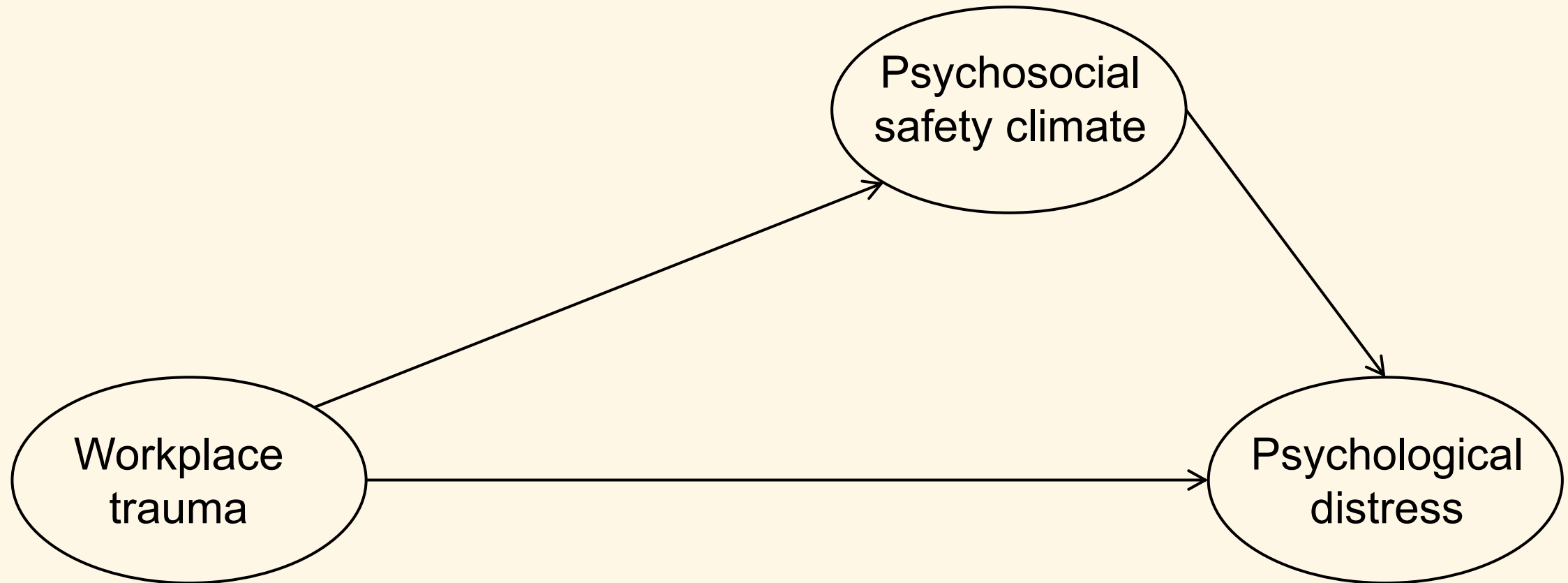
Safe Work Australia, July 2022

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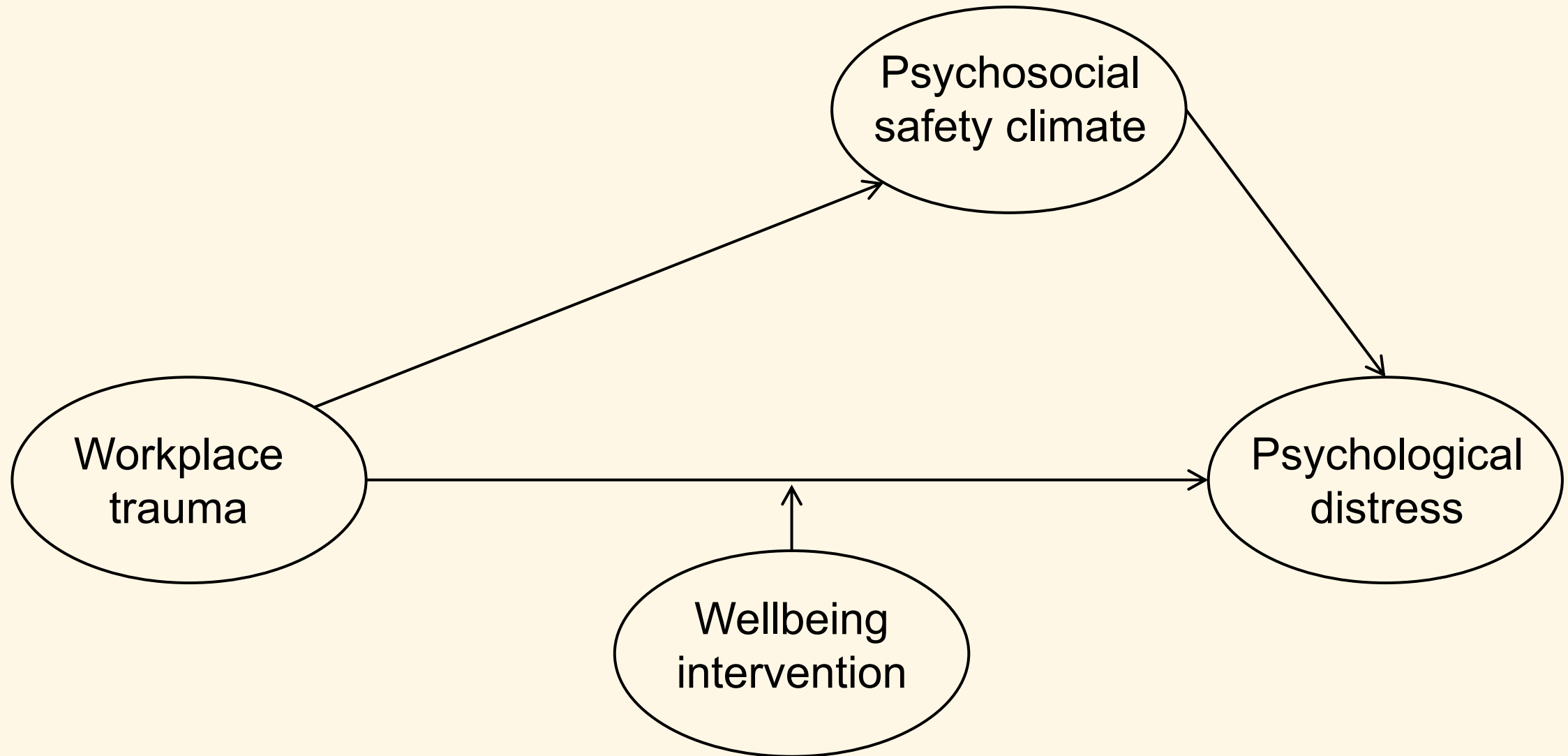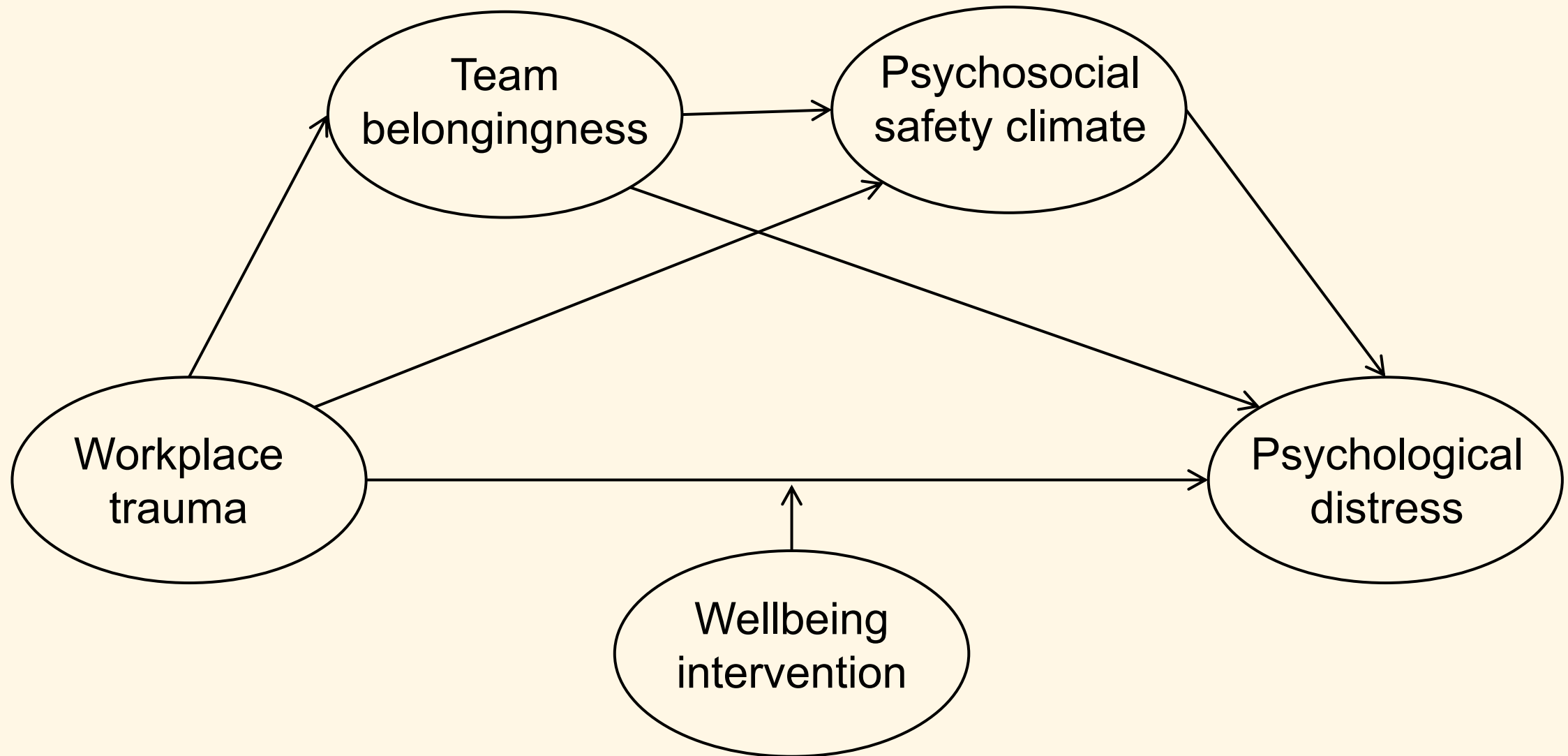
Mitigating workplace trauma

Mitigating workplace trauma

Mitigating workplace trauma

Mitigating workplace trauma

Standardised model results

Impact on psychological distress				
Role	*Administrative staff*		*Frontline employees*	
Participation in the wellbeing intervention	Yes	No	Yes	No
Psychosocial safety climate	-0.257***	-0.139**	-0.167***	-0.159***
Team belongingness	-0.557***	-0.393***	-0.356***	-0.371***
Workplace trauma	+0.094	+0.112	+0.281**	+0.183***
R^2	53.5%	25.1%	31.7%	28.2%

In summary

- For first responders, **trauma** is a standard **part of their role**.
- **Psychosocial safety climate** does, to a degree, reduce the impact of trauma on psychological distress, but not sufficiently.
- Similarly, **wellbeing programs support employee wellbeing** to a certain extent, but their impact is limited.
- To enable employees to thrive organisations should consider increasing their focus on fostering **interpersonal relationships at work**, such as **team belongingness**.

Thank you

Any questions please feel free to contact:

Associate Professor Ben Farr-Wharton
✉ b.farrwharton@ecu.edu.au

Closing remarks

Sally North

Acting WorkSafe Commissioner

Forum concludes

Thank you for being part of Psychosocial hazards forum

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