

A guide for promoting
and implementing
Leading the Way
in the Victorian
Public Sector

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# Purpose

This guide is designed to support the promotion and implementation of the Leading the Way (LTW) framework in the Victorian Public Sector (VPS).

It is not designed to be used as a ‘step-by-step’ introductory guide to workplace safety/OHS, its intention is to add value to departments and agencies by establishing and reinforcing the concept of continuous improvement partnered with the delivery of four strategic priorities (senior management commitment, safety culture, OHS performance, and accountability).

It will assist senior management and relevant staff to promote and systematically implement LTW within their own organisation to:

* demonstrate commitment to the framework
* encourage pro-active employee engagement with health, safety and wellbeing (HSW), and
* achieve improved HSW outcomes across the Victorian Public Sector (VPS).

This guide provides a recommended approach to the promotion and implementation of LTW and includes supporting tools and templates. The approach can be tailored or amalgamated with existing resourced and implemented OHS systems and hazard/risk control measures to meet the specific requirements, needs, and risk profile of individual departments and agencies.

# Background

Leading the Way is a governance framework which aims to drive pro-active organisational health, safety and wellbeing improvement across Victorian government workplaces. The document was developed in partnership with government departments, WorkSafe Victoria and unions, and forms part of the suite of Whole of Victorian Government (WOVG) initiatives to improve HSW outcomes for VPS employees.

Other initiatives in the WOVG approach include the Mental Health and Wellbeing (MHW) Charter, a minimum dataset (MDS) for benchmarking MHW related performance, MHW education and training frameworks, and the identification of leading practice in occupational violence risk management.

The LTW framework is intended to assist Victorian government workplaces to:

* design and implement practical strategies to improve health, safety and wellbeing outcomes and performance
* set clear occupational health and safety (OHS) accountabilities at all levels of the organisation
* establish performance indicators to measure improvement in OHS, safety culture, senior management commitment and accountability
* analyse data and identify trends to inform the development of systematic, proactive and sustainable approaches to managing HSW effectively
* develop performance reporting processes to ensure accountability for improving performance across an agreed set of outcome lag metrics; and utilise lead indicators to identify where the VPS is ‘leading the way’ in HSW management and safety culture
* share information, data, case studies and innovation to promote continuous improvement across the VPS.

# Objectives

The objectives of this guide are to:

* provide a methodology for promoting and implementing of Leading the Way in Victorian government departments and agencies with senior management commitment, capability, employee engagement, and participation as its foundation
* highlight the importance of having an effective and mature HSW system which is monitored and reviewed to allow for innovation and continuous improvement
* increase awareness and support of the WOVG commitment to, and the work of the OHS Leadership Group and Inter-Departmental Committee, in improving HSW outcomes for VPS employees.

# Target audience

This guide is premised on a collaborative approach to implementing LTW and one in which relevant key internal and external stakeholders are identified and included in engagement and consultation processes. Relevant stakeholders may include but are not limited to:

* senior management
* human resources
* health, safety and wellbeing teams/managers
* health and safety representatives (HSRs)
* relevant employees
* employee and employer representative organisations/unions
* WorkSafe Victoria.

# Key messages

1. The Victorian government is committed to ‘leading the way’ in employee HSW management and outcomes, including mental health and wellbeing as part of its mandate to enhance the wellbeing of all Victorians.
2. The VPS is committed to promoting a safety culture which puts the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees at the fore and having a workforce that is engaged and productive at work.
3. Leading the Way (LTW) provides a pro-active and consistent approach for government departments and agencies to identify and address opportunities for OHS improvement across four strategic priorities:
	* + Defining and evaluating shared issues
		+ Building and promoting leadership
		+ Building and promoting ownership and accountability
		+ Defining and promoting shared levers for change.
4. LTW is a framework to enable the VPS to set strategic priorities, agree on an effective, consultative approach, monitor and promote improvement through performance reporting in order to improve overall OHS and MHW performance outcomes.
5. Individual departments and agencies can tailor LTW implementation, so the framework can be used in conjunction with existing or other pro-active OHS related initiatives to improve outcomes for employees.
6. LTW balances OHS accountability with learning and improvement by:
	* + providing a model of safety maturity to assist departments to identify their current level and levers for change
		+ defining four focus areas for safety maturity self-assessment and improvement:
			- senior management commitment
			- safety culture
			- OHS systems
			- accountability
		+ adopting an action plan approach to articulate and drive individual organisations’ OHS improvement strategy
		+ providing an agreed set of process (lead) and outcome (lag) measures for WOVG OHS performance reporting and benchmarking against which departments can measure their progress and improvements.

# Implementing Leading the Way

This guide recommends three stages to inform the practical implementation of the endorsed Leading the Way approach and to support the focus on accountability with learning and improvement.

**Appendix 1** summarises the stages, steps and recommended actions to implement the LTW elements outlined in the LTW framework document. Recommended stages and actions can be tailored to meet the needs of individual departments and agencies.

Figure 1: Leading the Way approach



1. Establish the authorising environment and senior management commitment
	* + Gain senior management commitment
		+ Promote and socialise
2. Analysis and planning
	* + Determine current Safety Maturity level
		+ Identify relevant levers for change
		+ Develop LTW Action Plan
3. Implement, integrate, monitor, report and learn
	* + Implement and integrate
		+ Monitor, report and learn.

# Appendix 1: Three stages of implementing Leading the Way

Stage 1 Establish the authorising environment and senior management commitment

| Step | Recommended actions | Product |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Gain senior management commitment | Formal endorsement of LTW implementation from senior management group, including a comment to resource identified improvement prioritiesLTW commitments are integrated within organisation-wide strategies and business planning | Senior management endorsement |
| Promote and socialise | Develop and implement a communication plan for socialising LTW to target audience in consultation with departments/agencies’ OHS committees and communications specialistsIdentify opportunities for management at all levels to provide input into the LTW self-assessment process | LTW communication plan |

Stage 2 Analysis and planning

| Step | Recommended actions | Product |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Determine current Safety Maturity level | Identify provisional safety maturity level from preliminary LTW Self-Assessment completed by departments’ OHS professionalsUse additional information outlined in LTW Evidence Guide to check/ adjust provisional safety maturity level:* subjective evidence from a range of stakeholder views via LTW stakeholder survey, People Matters, management surveys, focus groups or workshops, OHS consultative forums
* objective evidence from audits, records, inspections. documents
* data analysis of LTW/MDS metrics and other relevant quantitative OHS measures.

Use results to identify aspects of OHS systems and safety culture that require more detailed analysis through:* formal evaluation of the OHS management system (OHSMS)
* data analysis to determine physical and psychological risk priorities
* safety culture and/or organisational culture assessment tools
 | Internal report on the department’s LTW Safety Maturity |
| Identify relevant levers for change | Use the LTW framework document (Figure 4) and maturity model (Figure 5 and Table 1) along with LTW Self-Assessment outcomes to identify the critical levers for change and priority actions for improvement aligned to the department’s maturity level, specifically in the LTW focus areas of:* senior management commitment
* safety culture
* OHS systems
* accountability

Use references for more detailed information on characteristics and drivers of safety maturity | Priority improvement actions established |
| Develop LTW Action Plan | Document an Action Plan using the sample template (5.4.1) or departments’ equivalent ensuring it is consistent with all elements the sample action plan.Assigned priority rating to each action according to the department’s own risk management methodology.Develop the action plan including consultation with* the departments/agencies’ OHS professionals or advisors and
* workers and their health and safety representatives (HSRs), through OHS consultative forums or processes
 | LTW Action Plan |

Stage 3 Implement, integrate, monitor, report and learn

| Step | Recommended actions | Product |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Implement and integrate | Gain top management endorsement of, and resourcing for, LTW Action Plan including budget, FTE, executive sponsorship, physical resources etc.Integrate LTW Action Plan into the departments/agencies’ strategic OHS improvement plans | Priority improvements actioned |
| Monitor, report and learn | Monitor and report to senior management on progress and implementation of action items against timelines and milestones.Departments/agencies may periodically re-assess against the maturity curve using the self-assessment tools to gauge whether actions taken are improving their performance in the particular focus area(s)Report on status of WOVG OHS performance at Public Sector OHS forumsShare learnings and outcomes of improvement initiatives with other departments through LTW case studies.and meeting forums. | LTW performance reporting and improvementCase studies |

# Appendix 2: Leading the Way – sample of communication activities

## Stage 1 Establish the authorising environment and senior management commitment

* Secretary to sign endorsed Leading the Way document, with Minister for Finance and other members of OHS Leadership Group
* announcement by top management representative/s (e.g. Board member) with overall responsibility for OHS management and reporting on performance to the executive board
* launch of LTW by top management representative/s within their department or agency to reinforce the high priority given by them to safeguarding the OHS and MHW of employees
* intranet presence as well as consideration given to external facing information platforms
* department newsletters and team talks
* webinars and e-Learning modules on safety leadership and safety culture
* workplace posters highlighting the features and benefits associated with an implemented LTW framework and/ or WOVG Strategy on a Page

## Stage 2 Analysis and planning

* utilisation of relevant social media e.g. Yammer for socialisation/discussion of LTW in relevant forums/groups
* invite HSRs and employees input into LTW Self-Assessment though the Stakeholder Survey and other consultative mechanisms
* executive level input into LTW Self-Assessment
* briefings to People and Culture/ HR/ OHS teams and engagement in analysis and planning
* LTW Action Plan to peak management and OHS consultative forums

## Stage 3 Implement, integrate, monitor, report and learn

* updates at WOVG forums, department Board meetings and key people management and governance bodies/committees by top management representative/s
* regular OHS performance reports to senior management and consultative forums
* message(s) from senior management reinforcing the ongoing importance of a safe and healthy workplace
* information sessions to heighten awareness for appropriate key senior management roles within a department
* in-house award ceremonies celebrating to individuals/teams actively exhibiting LTW behaviours to improve employee/department outcomes
* collection and publishing of LTW case studies to benchmark against best practice to encourage continuous improvement