

Work Health and Safety Act 2012



Volunteer Workforce Health and Safety Training Framework:

A guide for South Australian Local Government

June 2014

The Volunteer Workforce Health and Safety Training Framework was developed in 2014 by the City of Salisbury, with funding support from the Local Government Research and Development Scheme.



Disclaimer

Any representation, statement, opinion or advice expressed or implied in this document is made in good faith, but on the basis that neither Adit Communications nor the City of Salisbury is liable (whether by reason of negligence or otherwise) to any person for any damage or loss that may occur in relation to that person taking, or not taking, action in respect of any representation, statement or advice contained herein.

About the framework

Following the release of the Work Health and Safety Act 2012, City of Salisbury successfully applied for funding from the Local Government Research and Development Scheme to develop a framework which could help all Councils appropriately respond.

The goal was to create a practical document – with templates and examples and guidance as to how Councils might like to approach the required work.

The framework is not prescriptive. Volunteer managers should seek their own advice – both about legal obligations and from workplace health and safety specialists.

This document will be helpful – but Councils have a responsibility to undertake specific risk management in their own organisations, according to the type of volunteers they have and the type of work they do.

This framework is a guide only – Councils should seek their own legal and WHS specialist advice... relevant to their specific volunteers, the work they do and where they do it.

The Reference Group

City of Salisbury commissioned Adit Communications to develop the framework with guidance from a Reference Group comprising:

Pam Pindral, Manager Healthy Ageing and Access, City of Salisbury,
Michelle Hodshon, Volunteer Development Officer, City of Salisbury,
Rebecca O'Dell, Volunteer Services Coordinator, City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters,
Kellie Stewart, Volunteer Development Officer, Town of Gawler,
Rob Edwards, Scheme Manager, LGA Workers' Compensation Scheme,
Skye Browne, Senior Coordinator Organisational Wellbeing, City of Salisbury,
Chris Rajan, Learning and Culture Development Officer, City of Salisbury, and
Thuy Nguyen, Cultural Services Officer, City of Salisbury.

For further information about how the WHS Act 2012 applies in specific issues, contact SA's work health and safety regulator – SafeWork SA – on 1300 365 255.

Consultation in framework development

Apart from the Reference Group, thirteen Councils contributed information, opinions and ideas during interviews. Many also shared sample Volunteer Role Statements. These Councils are acknowledged on page 48, but it should be noted they comprised metropolitan Councils from the north, south, east and west of Greater Adelaide, together with regional and rural Councils.

City of Salisbury volunteer program coordinators contributed valuable insight during a Focus Group – particularly in regard to workplace hazards, risk management and barriers to volunteer training.

Almost 100 City of Salisbury volunteers contributed their thoughts in a written survey – including how they would like to participate in consultation about work health and safety issues, their preferences for training delivery and barriers to participation. (A copy of the questionnaire used for this survey is included at Appendix B.)

The Local Government Association, Volunteering SA&NT and Northern Volunteering provided valuable feedback on the draft document – as did the Councils who participated in the initial consultation.

SafeWork SA also has information about the WHS Act 2012 and a number of resources on their website, at www.safework.sa.gov.au

Contents

About the framework	1
Introduction	3
About volunteering in Local Government	3
Why a volunteer-specific WHS training framework?	4
Looking at the legislation	6
Looking at consultation	8
Looking at job roles	10
Developing volunteer role statements	13
Looking at hazards	16
Hazard identification	16
Understanding and managing risk	19
Looking at training needs	20
Required competencies	20
Developing individual WHS training plans	24
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	26
Looking at the challenges	28
Resourcing	28
Engaging volunteers in the process	32
Looking at training delivery	36
Why does it need to be different for volunteers?	36
Who should deliver the training?	37
How should the training be delivered?	40
What happens next?	46
Acknowledgements	48
Appendices	49
Appendix A: Hazard Explanations	49
Appendix B: City of Salisbury 2014 Volunteer Survey Questionnaire	49

Introduction

About volunteering in Local Government

There are thousands of volunteers in South Australian Local Government – participating in hundreds of volunteer programs. In many Councils, volunteers outnumber the paid workforce – and some Councils have two or three times more volunteers than paid employees.

These volunteers contribute to the sustainability of Councils – their economic contribution is huge – and many Council services would not be delivered without them.

However, the value of volunteering in Local Government extends beyond monetary terms. The social and cultural capital that volunteering engenders and fosters within a community; the strengthening of community spirit; the opportunities for personal learning and, sometimes, the pathways to employment – all underpin the vibrancy of communities.

The Work Health and Safety Act 2012 has drawn new attention to the value of volunteering – by clearly nominating volunteers as ‘workers’ requiring the same attention to work health and safety training as paid employees.

However, the scale of volunteering in South Australian Local Government – and the diversity of volunteers and volunteer programs within and among Councils – presents challenges in achieving this.

Local Government volunteers come from all walks of life – business people, professionals, tradespeople, labourers, retirees, people who have never worked in paid employment, community leaders, students and parents. The diversity extends to an age range stretching from 12 to 90+ years, people with disabilities – and cultural and language backgrounds from many countries.

This Volunteer Workforce Health and Safety Training Framework acknowledges the challenge of introducing broad and consistent training in the face of such diversity.

It complements previous work to generate consistency in volunteer management across South Australian Local Government:

- The six-year Volunteering Strategy for South Australia developed through partnership of the Local Government Association (SA), State Government, Business SA and Volunteering SA&NT,
- The Local Government Volunteer Managers Network (LGVMN) established to raise the professional profile of volunteer leaders, facilitate transfer of knowledge and standardise core volunteer management policies, procedures and practices across Councils, and
- Initiatives such as the *Volunteering in Local Government ‘A Way For The Future’ Strategic Management Framework for Volunteer Engagement in Local Government*, the *Volunteer Management in Local Government Toolkit* and the *Local Government Volunteer Passport System*.

Councils support volunteering to:

- **Develop and strengthen the links between councils and their communities,**
- **Provide personal development opportunities for individuals,**
- **Tap into the skills, experience, talents, energies, ideas and knowledge of people in our communities, and**
- **Enable councils to extend and expand services.**

www.lga.sa.gov.au

Volunteering is work which is:

- **Of benefit to the community,**
- **Done of one’s own free will, and**
- **Done without monetary reward.**

Volunteers play an integral role within society in general by initiating and enhancing the services provided by employed staff, without being a substitute for paid work.

Covering all Bases LGA Mutual Liability Scheme

Why a volunteer-specific WHS training framework?

Everyone needs to be safe at work. The Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (considered in the next section) is quite clear about the fact paid employees and volunteers need to be treated equitably in terms of their health and safety in the workplace.

So why have a specific training framework for volunteers? Since the WHS framework is the same, why can't they just be managed through the processes used to manage the health and safety training of paid employees?

Their reason for being there is different...

Motivators for volunteers are entirely different to those for paid employees. There's no pay for them for doing a good job – their reward is the achievement of personal goals.

Recruitment and retention of volunteers is essentially about:

- Understanding the volunteer's motives for being there,
- Working with the volunteer's personal schedule, interests and capabilities to achieve those goals, and
- Recognising the volunteering effort.

These same principles need to be applied to encourage volunteers into scheduled training.

The structure of their work hours is different...

Although many volunteers commit to regular attendance, this may not even be on a weekly basis – so they don't always have the same opportunity as paid employees to simply take two hours from their usual work to attend a scheduled training session and then return to their role. Sometimes the training session will be longer than their usual volunteering session and it could be scheduled at a time when they have other commitments (including paid work elsewhere).

Even when training is able to be scheduled for volunteers within their usual volunteering hours, it may mean it causes them to 'miss out' on the very reason they're volunteering (for example the person who volunteers in a crèche in order to spend time with children, but is required to attend a manual tasks training session instead).

Their 'start position' may be very different...

Most paid employees in Local Government will begin with at least some recent exposure or familiarity with the need for workplace health and safety regulations, policies and procedures (and at least some expectation they will receive training in these aspects of their work).

Many volunteers don't.

Because volunteers give of their time freely and make such a valuable contribution, sometimes they feel they are 'free agents' and don't have to 'play by the rules' – whereas paid staff know they do.

Motivators

Volunteering

Help others

Personal satisfaction

Something worthwhile

Social contact

Be active

Use life skills

Learn new skills

Paid Work

Pay & benefits

Conditions

Status

Work/life flexibility

Job security

Management

Career prospects

...But their roles are not as 'risk-free' as often thought!

Councils are getting much better at managing their volunteers – and there is a clear focus in most to meet the National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not for Profit Organisations (the National Standards). However, some Councils have yet to extend their professionalization of volunteer management to formalised health and safety management.

There is some sense among some volunteer managers that Graffiti Removal is the only Council volunteering role with any real health and safety risk attached.

That's not true:

- Volunteers who drive a vehicle face risk from accidents (involving their own vehicle or others on the road) – and potentially from challenging behaviours in passengers,
- Volunteers who provide in-home services work in an unfamiliar environment and therefore face risk of 'slips, trips and falls' – but also from hazardous chemicals, challenging behaviours, use of unfamiliar equipment and, potentially, from pets or other animals,
- Volunteers who work in museums, retail or tourist centres face risk from slippery floors, poorly stored products, aggressive members of the public and, potentially, armed thieves,
- Volunteers who work in gardens or on building maintenance face risk from the equipment they use, the sun and other natural elements, and, potentially, insects or venomous snakes, and
- Volunteers who work in an office environment or the library face risk from the ergonomics of their workplace, incorrect procedures used in manual tasks, or, again, members of the public.

There's also significant psychological risks for volunteers:

- Stress from feeling they have no control over their work or workload,
- Stress from feeling powerless if they experience (or witness) discrimination, harassment or bullying in the workplace,
- Anxiety from not knowing how to handle challenging behaviours from their clients or members of the public,
- Impacts on confidence and self-esteem by any lack of clarity in their role, and
- Change in the workplace – which can be confronting for anyone – is much more stressful for those volunteers who may be ageing or feeling frailer and less able to cope.

These are only a few examples – and hazards in volunteer work activity are considered more fully later in the framework. However, the examples are included here to engage those readers who feel the WHS Act 2012 has placed too much emphasis on formalised health and safety training for volunteers.

Historically, WHS training for volunteers hasn't received the same resourcing as paid employees because the risk environment hasn't been acknowledged. The examples are provided as a means of stimulating more understanding of the real need for that training – and the framework to follow offers some help to achieve it.

“ Items on a shelf in a retail section of the tourist centre were too high for the reach of an elderly volunteer... they ended up down on her head... ”

“ Three volunteers alone in a heritage hall... a bloodied young man ran in, followed by a group to further beat him up... the volunteers didn't cope well... ”

“ Two volunteers driving to a special event... another car hit a pedestrian... he was thrown onto their windshield... they needed counselling... ”

Looking at the legislation

A 'volunteer' is a 'worker'

Under the WHS Act 2012, the primary duty of care for work health and safety is imposed on a 'person conducting a business or undertaking' (PCBU). The duty of the PCBU is to ensure, 'as far as reasonably practicable', the health and safety of workers, including volunteers, engaged in work for the business or undertaking.

This responsibility is really not all that new. The old Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act 1986 also required the health and safety of volunteers to be protected. However, the new Act is much more specific about that protection for volunteers being the same as for paid employees.

Under Section 7, A person is a **worker** if the person carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking, including work as:

- an employee,
- a contractor or subcontractor,
- an employee of a contractor or subcontractor,
- an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking,
- an outworker,
- an apprentice or trainee,
- a student gaining work experience,
- **a volunteer**, or
- a person of a prescribed class.

Therefore, every section of the WHS Act 2012 that refers to 'workers' applies to volunteers.

Key principles of the South Australian WHS Act 2012

The South Australian Work Health and Safety Act 2012 came into force on 1 January 2013 (with a twelve-month 'grace period' for implementation). The Act:

- Establishes health and safety duties, including the primary duty to protect any person from risks that arise from work,
- Provides for worker representation, consultation and participation – including through Health and Safety Representatives and Health and Safety Committees,
- Enables compliance and enforcement through the regulator (SafeWork SA), and
- Provides for the creation of regulations and Codes of Practice.

PCBUs

An employer under the WHS Act 2012 is referred to as a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU).

In Local Government, senior people who are responsible for making decisions on behalf of the PCBU (or a large part of it) are 'Officers' under the Act – but Elected Members are not.

In this document 'Council' is used to mean the PCBU.

'The Workplace' is a place where work is carried out for a PCBU and includes any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be while at work.

'Health' is specifically identified as meaning both 'physical and psychological health'.

Applying the WHS Act 2012 to volunteer management

The main object of the WHS Act 2012 is to provide for a balanced and nationally consistent framework to secure the health and safety of workers and workplaces.

Clauses under the Act's Object call for:

- The provision of advice, information, education and training in relation to work health and safety, and
- The highest level of protection against harm to workers' safety and welfare from hazards and risk arising from work.

Given the fundamentals of the WHS Act 2012 are the same as the previous legislation, Councils already have some systems in place to comply with the new Act.

The big change for many Councils is going to be applying the new Act (as far as reasonably practicable) to manage the health and safety of volunteers in the same way as the health and safety of the paid workforce has been managed for some time.

For Councils, that means providing for all volunteers:

- A safe work environment,
- Safe plant and structures,
- Safe systems of work,
- Safe use and handling of plant, structures and substances,
- Adequate facilities to support their welfare,
- Information, training, instruction or supervision, and
- Monitoring of volunteers' health and workplace conditions to prevent their illness or injury.

Volunteer management practitioners (including volunteer program coordinators) will have a significant role in upholding all these responsibilities.

Specifically, there will need to be a significant initial effort – and then ongoing commitment – to:

- Consult with volunteers about health and safety issues,
- Provide appropriate information,
- Provide appropriate supervision,
- Develop, facilitate and/or provide appropriate training, and
- Involve volunteers in minimisation of risk and continuous improvement.

To do this, volunteer management practitioners will need support – specifically from senior management in terms of resourcing, but also from the Council's specialists and practitioners in human resource management.

Engaging the paid workforce and volunteers will be critical success factors.

'Reasonably practicable'

means something is, or was at the time, reasonably able to be done... taking into account the:

- **Likelihood of a hazard or risk occurring,**
- **Degree of harm that might result,**
- **What the person knows, or ought reasonably to know, about the hazard and ways of eliminating or minimising the risk,**
- **Availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk, and**
- **Cost – specifically whether it is grossly disproportionate to the risk.**

Penalties

begin at \$100,000 for Councils and \$50,000 for workers for non-compliance with the WHS Act 2012, but include penalties up to \$3million and gaol terms for serious offences.

Looking at consultation

Most Councils already take steps to ensure their volunteers know what to do and who to contact if they notice anything that presents a health and safety risk to themselves or others (including paid employees or members of the public). This is usually part of either the corporate induction or site induction when volunteers first begin work.

At some Councils, volunteer programs have regular quarterly meetings and Health and Safety is listed as an Agenda item. However, this isn't enough.

The WHS Act 2012 is quite specific – not only about consulting with volunteers about health and safety, but also the nature of that consultation and when it should occur.

What 'consultation' means

Although the Act doesn't provide a specific definition for 'consultation' in its preamble, it's clear in the body of the document that it's about much more than simply sharing information. Consultation on health and safety must also:

- Provide reasonable opportunity for volunteers to express their views, and
- Provide reasonable opportunity for volunteers to contribute to decision-making about the issue.

It goes further:

- The views of the volunteers must be taken into account, and
- The consulted volunteers must be advised of the outcome of the consultation process (in a timely manner).

Volunteers' views must also be taken into account about the nature of consultation with them on health and safety matters – and, once appropriate consultation procedures have been identified, those procedures must be used on all health and safety matters.

When consultation is required

Consultation needs to occur when:

- Identifying workplace hazards,
- Making decisions about how to eliminate or minimise risk,
- Proposing change that may affect volunteers' health and safety,
- Making decisions about procedures for consulting with volunteers and about the provision of information or training,
- Making decisions about procedures for monitoring workplace conditions, the adequacy of facilities for volunteers' welfare, or resolving workplace health and safety issues, and
- Making decisions about the procedures for monitoring the health of volunteers.

Health and Safety Representatives

A request by one or more volunteers for a Health and Safety Representative (HSR) must be met – through an election process within a work group.

There are requirements around:

- ***How the work group is identified,***
- ***Who is eligible to become the HSR,***
- ***How the election should be managed, and***
- ***Provision of training for the HSR if requested.***

If HSRs are appointed, they must be involved in consultation about health and safety in their work group.

Consultation

Information

Induction

Handbook

Noticeboards

Website

Memos/email

Newsletters

Program meetings

Toolbox talks

Feedback

One-to-one chat

Toolbox talks

Program meetings

Health & safety rep

Suggestion box

Surveys

Forms

What Councils could do

The important thing to remember about consultation is that it's a two-way street.

Councils may already have good consultation processes in place with volunteers to provide opportunity for feedback and these processes may be sufficient to comply with the WHS Act 2012 – as long as they extend appropriately to health and safety issues (including hazard identification and risk management).

Apart from the firm instructions in regard to responding to requests for a Health and Safety Representative (HSR) or a Health and Safety Committee (HSC), the 'consultation' section is prefaced by the 'as far as reasonably practicable' rider.

It may be that initiating the appropriate election of HSRs for work groups – referring to the Act to appropriately identify specific work groups – could help you meet the consultation requirements.

If you already have a Health and Safety Committee (HSC), it may help to facilitate volunteer representation on the committee – but it will be important to remember that, under the Act, at least one-half the HSC members should not have been nominated by the employer.

However, the real intent in this part of the Act is to make sure all workers, including volunteers, have opportunity to provide input to the organisation about health and safety issues. Paid staff are likely to be more comfortable filling in forms than some volunteers – so talking with volunteers directly can be a better option.

Making sure it's an Agenda item for any program meetings is a good start – but volunteer coordinators need to be skilled at facilitating discussion and volunteers need to feel comfortable to contribute. Smaller 'toolbox talks' in small groups on-the-job may be a better option.

Most Councils will need a mix of consultation methods because of the diversity in volunteers and volunteer programs.

What others have done

- One Council has an innovative reporting mechanism whereby any staff member or volunteer can pick up an internal telephone and dial 911 to immediately report any observed health or safety issue.
- Some volunteer coordinators, who have had difficulty catching up with volunteers on-site for program meeting discussions about safety procedures, have simply had a telephone chat.
- Others use the corporate induction to tell volunteers they are 'the fresh eyes' for Council on safety issues – and that their input will be valued.

“ To be honest, we don't do it well at all. We're very good at informing our volunteers about health and safety – but we don't try very hard to get their ideas... ”

“ We try to encourage the appropriate paper trail on safety issues, but we get a much better response when they just have to put up their hand and tell us... ”

Looking at job roles

The WHS Act 2012 requires Councils to provide volunteers with appropriate information, training, instruction or supervision to protect them from risks to their health and safety while performing in their voluntary roles.

One of the difficulties for Councils in complying with this section of the Act, is the huge diversity in job roles performed by volunteers – and while almost all those roles are considered by Councils to be low-risk, there are hazards in all roles.

In order to assess the risk – and provide appropriate information and training to manage it – the roles first need to be clearly understood.

Developing Role Statements (or Position Descriptions) provides this understanding for both the Council and the volunteer. A template for developing a Volunteer Role Statement is included in this section of the framework.

However, some Councils have volunteer workforces of around 500 people – and can have high numbers of Role Statements, sometimes more than 100!

Developing a plan to provide appropriate information and training to each of these roles is an enormous task.

One way to manage the process is to group similar roles – to look at the shared hazards and undertake broad risk analysis, then identify required health and safety core competencies before considering role-specific competencies.

Broad volunteer roles

Most Council volunteers belong to one of the categories shown below.

When applying the framework, some roles may appear to belong to more than one group. Select the group in which the majority of hours are spent – and later Activity Mapping (considered overleaf) will pick up any need for additional competencies.

The 'other' category is there for those out-of-the ordinary volunteer roles most Councils seem to create.

For volunteers to be protected from health and safety risks, the information and training they receive needs to be tailored to the type of work they do and where they do that work.

Councils with large numbers of volunteer role statements can begin the process by grouping roles that include common activities... and then looking at the specifics.

Administration	Committees	Child Care	Elderly Support	Environmental Field Work	Graffiti Removal	Grounds People
Guides	Hospitality	In-Home Services	Justices of the Peace	Library Shelving	Maintenance	Marketing
Retail	Social Program Support	Special Events	Transport	Tutoring	Youth Mentoring	Other

Activity mapping

Broad role groups are useful because there will generally be a set of activities common to most positions in that group – which will help in hazard identification and risk management in the form of appropriate information and training.

However, volunteer roles generally tend to be more fluid than paid roles, so roughly mapping volunteers' activities in groups can be a good first step before heading toward a full-blown hazard register or competency framework.

The template below is an example of something you might develop. Where there's a question mark, it's likely this activity might apply to some members of the role group, so you'll need to look at role statements individually.

Once you have this type of information you can approach your Council's work health and safety team to talk about general hazards and required competencies for each group.

“ There’s always the community centre receptionist who also prunes the roses... or the gardener who does the filing in the office when it’s too hot outside...”

An example of activity mapping for role groups

	Supervising Other Volunteers	Office Environment	Outdoor Environment	Manual Tasks	Food Handling	Cash Handling	Driving	Contact with Public	Contact with Chemicals	Use small equipment	Use PPE	Work Alone
Administration	?	✓		?		?		?		?		?
Committees		✓						?				?
Child Care	?		?	✓	✓			✓		?	✓	
Elderly Support				✓	?		?	✓		?	✓	?
Environmental Field Work	?		✓	?			?	?	?	?	✓	?
Graffiti Removal	?		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Grounds People			✓	✓				✓	?	✓	✓	?
Guides	?	?	?	?		?		✓				✓
Hospitality	?			✓	✓	✓	?	✓	?	✓	✓	?
In-Home Services				✓	?		✓	✓	?	?		?
Justice of the Peace		✓						✓				?
Library Shelving		✓		✓				✓				
Maintenance			✓	✓				✓	?	✓	✓	?
Marketing	?	✓	?	?		?	?	?				
Retail	?	?		?	?	✓		✓		✓		?
Social Program Support			?	?	?		?	✓				
Special Events	?		?	✓	?	?	?	✓	?	✓	?	
Transport	?		✓	✓		?	✓	✓		✓		?
Tutoring	?	✓						✓		?		
Youth Mentoring	?		?	?	?		?	✓		?		

The diversity of volunteer roles in South Australian Councils*

Aboriginal Advisory Panel	Groundskeeper	Programs Coordinator (General)
Administration Support	Hairdressing	Projects - Specific, Short-term Support
Advisory	Hall Booking Coordinator	Reception/ Front Desk
Aqua Class Support	Heritage Guide	Records Maintenance Assistant
Archiving Support	Heritage Hall Cleaning	Recycling Support (Retail)
Art Gallery Assistant	Heritage Hall Maintenance	Recycling Support (Sorting)
Band (community performances)	History Hub Digital Projects	Recycling Support (Wholesale)
Bicycle Re-Gifting (coordinator)	History Hub Support	Regulatory Services Ambassador
Bicycle Re-Gifting (repairs)	Home Maintenance Support	Respite Care Support (Individual)
BMX Track Support	Hospitality Support	Respite Social Group Support
Board of Management (centres)	Imagination Playground Play Support	School Holiday Program Support
Book Club Organiser/Facilitator	Immunisation Clinic Support	Ship Greeter (Visitor Information)
Café/Kiosk Assistant	Information & Eco Centre Attendant	Shopping Support - Groceries
Café/Kiosk Coordinator	Information Management	Shopping Support - Other, Social
Café/Kiosk Supervisor	Innovation Lab Support	Skating Attendant
Cemetery Maintenance	Program Support in Nursing Homes	Social Group Support
Centre Maintenance Support	iPad Buddy	Social Group Facilitator
Children and Youth Literacy Support	Justice of the Peace	Social Support - Aged (Outings)
Children's Out-of-School Activities	Language/Literacy Coordinator	Social Support - Disability (Outings)
Children's Pre-School Activities	Library Support - Book Repairs	Special Events Coordinator
Choir (community performances)	Library Support - Cataloguing	Special Events Support (Back of House)
Committee Chairperson	Library Support - Shelving	Special Events Support (Front of House)
Committee Member	Local History Research/Archiving	Statistical Collection Officer
Committee Secretary	Maintenance Support (Structures)	Supermarket Tour (Healthy Lifestyle)
Committee Treasurer	Marketing - Brochure Distribution	Technical Services (Receivables)
Community Bus Driver	Marketing - Publicity (Media/Newsletter)	Tour Guide (Environmental, Tourist)
Community Bus Helper	Marketing & Promotion Coordinator	Town Crier
Community Care - Shopping Support	Marketing & Promotion Support	Town Crier - Escort
Community Centre Functions Set-up	Marketing - Web Design Support	Toy Library - Cleaning, Shelving
Community Centre General Support	Meal Service - Customer Service	Transport and Social Support - Bus
Community Information	Meal Service - Dishwashing	Transport and Social Support - Car
Community Information (Environmental)	Meal Service - Preparation	Tutor - Craft
Community Sports Assistant	Media Lab Support	Tutor - English Language
Crèche Assistant	Medical Transport Driver	Tutor - IT/Computer Training
Crèche Facilitator	Men's Shed Support	Tutor - Lead Lighting
Cultural Diversity Working Group	Mentor - Driver's Licence	Tutor - Literacy
Cultural Heritage Guide	Mentor - Migrant Support	Tutor support - English Language
Curator of Art Exhibitions	Mentor - Youth	Tutor support - IT
Customer Service	Mentor - Youth Literacy	Van Buddy
DATA Entry Support	Mobile Library - Housebound Deliveries	Van Driver
Digital Hub Support	Mobile Library - Housebound Selections	Visitor Information Centre - Guide
Environmental Education Support	Museum Guide	Visitor Information Centre - Information
Environmental Field Work	Museum Maintenance	Visitor Information Centre - Retail
Environmental Health Support	News Editors/Recorders	Visitor Statistics (Maintenance/Reporting)
Environmental Watch (Spotter)	Nursery (Garden) Assistant	Volunteer Management Support
Family History Research Support	Nursing Home Lifestyle Programs	Volunteer Management System Support
Friendly Visiting Nursing Homes	Oral Histories Collection	Website Management
Friendly Visiting Private Homes	Oral Histories Editing/Recording	Wetlands Research and Support
Golf Links Maintenance	Organisational Wellbeing Support	Writers' Group Facilitator
Graffiti Removal Administration	Playgroup Coordinator	Youth Advisory Group
Graffiti Removal Response	Playgroup Support	Youth Programs Supervisor
Graffiti Spotter/Reporter	Program Assistant - 50s+	Youth Study Group Support

* This list is not all-inclusive. It has been prepared from consultation with only 15 Councils.

Developing volunteer role statements

As a management tool

Most South Australian Councils have Role Statements (or Position Descriptions) in place for their volunteer roles to meet insurance requirements and best practice standards.

However, this has generally been an evolutionary process over a number of years – more contemporary role statements are prepared for new volunteer roles, while more traditional roles may be operating under terminology which has been superseded. The increasing diversity in volunteering is also likely to mean there have been changes to role tasks (without accompanying review of the role statement).

The WHS Act 2012 is forcing a review of volunteer role statements in terms of responsibilities, tasks and training. It's an appropriate time to take a more holistic look at the documents and develop consistency – at least across various programs, but perhaps also across the Council or South Australian Local Government generally.

However, in many Councils there are a number of employees developing role statements for volunteers. This can include the volunteer management practitioner, volunteer program coordinators, managers in various departments, or human resources specialists.

As an alternative to centralising the process, consistency can be generated by developing a template (with instructions and suggestions) for everybody to use – that addresses insurance and WHS audit requirements and best practice standards.

However, there is no one correct way to develop volunteer role statements. Ideally, they will reflect the role statements used for the paid workforce in each Council – but with considerably less complexity. An example is provided overleaf.

HR practitioners will select from a 'standard' long list of skills and personal attributes when preparing role statements for paid employees. This list may be a useful 'start-point' to prepare a similar, shortened, list for volunteers – but there will be differences. 'Reliable' is an attribute likely to be common on volunteer role statements.

As a marketing tool

Contemporary volunteering is a highly competitive environment. Councils are competing for volunteers in a market that includes very attractive organisations offering exciting opportunities.

The Volunteer Role Statement is a useful marketing tool and, as such, it needs to use a structure and language that is attractive to incoming volunteers – the baby boomers and younger generations.

- **Make it attractive – but don't over-sell it.**
- **Don't insist on 'experience' if what you really want is 'aptitude'.**
- **Be clear about the specific training requirements – and what happens if they're not met.**
- **Acknowledge any known challenges.**

Some common errors in volunteer role statements

- The role purpose is not clearly distilled. Volunteers need to know why they're in the role. What are the outcomes for Council? For the community?
- There are too many selection requirements. What are the key skills and attributes needed for that role?
- 'Key responsibilities' often becomes a list of tasks. What are they really accountable for?
- Marking 'experience' as essential, when it's really only preferred. Is it actually knowledge, attitude or aptitude that's essential?

An example volunteer role statement template

Page 1 of 2

Role Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect the work to be done (rather than the location). • Reflect other titles used in the paid workforce – but include 'volunteer' in the title. • Be consistent across programs – e.g. don't interchange 'assistant' and 'officer' for similar roles operating in different programs or departments. • Make it attractive, but don't oversell it.
Role Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a short statement that describes what this role achieves for Council and the community. (This is about outcomes, not tasks.) • For example, the role objective for a Volunteer Crèche Assistant at a community centre is not 'child care'. • It may be: <i>'Assist Council to respond to identified community needs by providing appropriate supervision of children so their carers can participate in educational, recreational and social activities'</i>.
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be descriptive to accommodate various locations. For example, for a 'Volunteer Special Events Assistant': <i>'Council-run special events take place in our own facilities and in local public indoor venues. Some events take place in parks, gardens and other outdoor areas.'</i>
Reporting to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although you need the department, division etc for your records, you can include this at the end. Volunteers need to know who will supervise their role and who will provide support to them. • Use the title of this supervisory/support role rather than the name of the person. (Names may change and introductions are part of the induction process.)
Primary Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a short statement to summarise the role. For example, the primary responsibility of a Volunteer Crèche Assistant may be to: <i>'Supervise children at all times to ensure their safety and Council's Duty of Care. Mandatory reporting of any noted child abuse or neglect is part of this role.'</i> • Primary responsibilities also include the commitments all workers must make. Use the same terminology as used on paid employee roles and the WHS policy – for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Observe and comply with all health and safety policies and procedures, including all safe operating procedures or instructions, and – Take all reasonable steps to ensure personal safety, and that of others, is not put at risk through any action or omission. • Other primary responsibilities include respecting confidentiality and abiding by Council's Code of Conduct. • The primary responsibilities non-specific to the role should be consistent on all Volunteer Role Statements.
Key Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Tasks need to be reasonably specific, but not down to the level of procedures. • An example for the Volunteer Crèche Assistant might be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Supervising children at safe play</i> – <i>Planning, setting up, dismantling and cleaning play equipment and craft activities</i> – <i>Maintaining written reporting systems.</i>
Essential Skills, Knowledge and Personal Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's important to break requirements into what is 'essential' and what is 'preferred'. • Essential skills are usually those you absolutely need before a person could start work in the volunteer role. • However, in some instances you may be prepared to allow a volunteer to start – either buddied or with additional supervision – and then provide the training for them to acquire those essential skills.
Preferred Skills, Knowledge and Personal Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For example, 'Basic Computer Skills' may be an essential requirement for a Volunteer Administration Assistant, but the role statement could read: <i>'Basic Computer Skills (or a willingness to undertake training to acquire these skills)</i> • Be clear about personal qualities required for the role or, alternatively, capacity to develop those qualities.

Mandatory Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dividing training into mandatory and optional makes it very clear what is expected. • Describe the induction/orientation requirements here – both at a corporate and site level. • List the training participation that is required of all volunteers. Your statement might read: <i>'All Council volunteers and paid employees are required to undertake training in'</i> • Follow this generic list with a list of any training participation that is compulsory for the specific role. • Clarify whether this compulsory training needs to be completed before commencement of the volunteer role or the timeframe in which it needs to be completed. • Include a note that says, <i>'Council will endeavour to provide flexible training options, but reserves the right to suspend a volunteer placement until compulsory training is completed'</i>. 	
Optional Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List any additional relevant training that could be accessed as part of the volunteer training schedule. • Add a note that says, <i>'There may also be opportunities to access personal development to support your current or future desired volunteer roles'</i>. 	
Time and Financial Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be specific if possible (e.g. 3 hours each Tuesday afternoon from 1-4pm) • If this is not possible, give an indication (e.g. <i>Participate in a negotiated roster with approximately 2 hours per week over a 12 month period</i>). • This is an opportunity to include your expectation of the duration of the volunteer role (to secure a return on your increased training investment). • Note the fact any pre-approved costs will be reimbursed (or refer to your policy). 	
Role Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer volunteers to the Volunteers Handbook (or another document) for general benefits of volunteering with Council. • Include here any specific benefits for the particular role (e.g. any Certificates or Statements of Attainment from offered training or provision of a Reference as appropriate after a qualifying period). 	
Role Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be clear about what the volunteer may need to address (e.g. standing for long periods, working on weekends, sometimes dealing with difficult clients etc) 	
Performance Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a 3 month probationary period? • Are there program meetings the volunteer is expected to attend? • Do all volunteers participate in an annual review? 	
Special Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note here anything relevant not covered above – but don't cross into the role of the corporate or site induction process. 	
<p>I have read and understood this Role Statement and agree to abide by the conditions as outlined.</p> <p>Name (Volunteer)</p> <p>Signed (Volunteer) _____ Date _____</p> <p>Name (Volunteer Supervisor)</p> <p>Signed (Volunteer Supervisor) _____ Date _____</p>		<p>Date for Review</p> <p>.././....</p>
<p>This Volunteer Role is part of Council's</p> <p>.....Department</p> <p>.....Division</p>	<p>Name (General Manager)</p> <p>Signed (General Manager) _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	

Looking at hazards

Hazard identification

Hazard identification is the first step in risk management – and certainly needs to be done before you can plan what information and training volunteers will need to ensure they can do their job safely.

While Councils will have a corporate Hazard Register (Hazard Profile) covering all roles in the paid workforce – and it will no doubt help in identifying hazards in volunteer roles – the significant differences to (and among) volunteer roles means you can't rely only on that.

Hazard identification is commonly now a continuing process in volunteer management – as new programs are developed, once-only special events are facilitated and new volunteers come on board – or at any time there is change in the work environment.

However, the focus on volunteers in the WHS Act 2012 requires a more general look at hazard identification – and there's no stand-alone method of doing it. Steps that can contribute to hazard identification include:

- Talking to volunteers about things they see that could cause them harm (this is part of your consultation duty of care),
- Talking to volunteer coordinators about risks they may have seen volunteers take,
- Talking to on-site health and safety specialists,
- Reviewing safety records to see where incidents or near-misses are common,
- Revisiting incident reports and reviewing subsequent investigation findings,
- Walking-the-floor – visiting volunteer sites to see them at work,
- Thinking about long-term hazards (such as impacts on psychological health),
- Examining the Hazard Register for similar roles in the paid workforce, and
- Considering the feasibility of a formal Safety Audit – just for volunteers.

““ Supplies were stacked under a desk... a volunteer went under the desk to retrieve them... banged her head hard on the way out. two black eyes and a trip to the GP...”

““ One man mentored disadvantaged youth in our programs for years... he was quite affected by their sad lives... but we had no idea it was taking a toll until he became ill...”

Hazard Identification

Volunteer suggestions

Coordinator suggestions

WHS on-site specialists

Historical safety records

Incident investigations

Work-site observations

Employee hazard register

Formal safety audit

Psychological impacts

Which hazards are likely?

The Safe Work Australia 'How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks' Code of Practice provides examples of common hazards as:

- Manual tasks,
- Gravity,
- Electricity,
- Machinery and equipment,
- Hazardous chemicals,
- Extreme temperatures,
- Noise,
- Radiation,
- Biological, and
- Psychosocial.

However, most Councils will have their own hazard profile, developed around the Code of Practice, but specifically targeted to work undertaken by their employees. It can be difficult to hold.

City of Salisbury's Hazard Register (Hazard Profile) contains 55 hazards in six categories. Not all apply to volunteers, but the potential list is still significant.

The examples below come from the City of Salisbury Hazard Register and definitions are included at Appendix A.

Physical

Animal Attack
Burns
Cuts/Abrasions
Dust/Fumes
Electric Shock
Engulfment (Water/Flood)
Fall from Height
Falling Objects
Fire/Explosion/ Bomb Threat (Emergency)
Harmful Contact
Hole/Excavation
House Keeping
Inclement Weather
Insects/Vermin
Pedestrians
Remote/Isolated Work
Sharps
Slip/Trip/Fall
Struck by Objects (Impact)
Vehicle Impact
Workplace Terrain

Chemical

Acids/Alkaloids
Herbicides
Pesticides

Ergonomic

Manual Tasks
Tool Design
Lighting
Workplace Design/Layout

Biological

Arbovirus
Blood Borne Disease
Infectious Disease
Zoonoses

Psychological

Discrimination
Harassment
Personal Threat
Verbal/Physical Abuse

Radiation

Sun & UV Exposure

Sometimes volunteers can be working in an environment that's out of your control – other venues, people's homes, public spaces. Because these workplaces are not part of your usual WHS management systems, identifying the hazards that might confront them is even more important.

“ It can be such a rush setting up... and we're only a small team... sometimes volunteers lift things on their own... even when they really know they shouldn't... ”

“ A long term graffiti removal volunteer was becoming more and more frail... forgetting to take the phone out... increasing difficulty walking... you have to manage it ... ”

The examples drawn from the City of Salisbury Hazard Register are used in the template overleaf, which shows how hazards can be matched to volunteer role groups. However, volunteer management practitioners should contact members of their Work Health and Safety team to access the hazard profile used by their Council.

An example of mapping hazards in role groups

		Administration	Committees	Child Care	Elderly Support	Environ. Field Work	Graffiti Removal	Grounds People	Guides	Hospitality	In-Home Services	Justice of the Peace	Library Shelving	Maintenance	Marketing	Retail	Social Support	Special Events	Transport	Tutoring	Youth Mentoring		
Physical	Animal Attack				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓		✓	✓				
	Burn	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓						✓	✓					
	Cuts/Abrasions	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓			✓		✓		✓					
	Dust/Fumes					✓	✓	✓						✓				✓	✓				
	Electric Shock	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	
	Engulfment-Water					✓				✓													
	Fall from Height						✓	✓						✓									
	Falling Objects					✓	✓	✓						✓									
	Fire/Emergency	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Harmful Contact					✓		✓							✓								
	Hole/Excavation					✓	✓	✓															
	House Keeping	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Inclement Weather					✓	✓	✓			✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
	Insects/Vermin					✓	✓	✓							✓		✓	✓	✓				
	Lighting	✓													✓	✓			✓				✓
	Pedestrians				✓		✓		✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
	Remote/Isolated		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓												
	Sharps					✓											✓		✓				✓
	Slip/Trip/Fall	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Struck by Objects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓						✓		✓		✓				
Vehicle Impact					✓	✓				✓							✓	✓	✓				
Workplace Terrain					✓	✓										✓		✓	✓				
Chemical	Acids/Alkaloids					✓		✓															
	Herbicides					✓		✓						✓									
	Pesticides					✓		✓						✓									
Ergonomic	Manual Tasks	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Tool Design	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓					✓				✓					
	Workplace Layout	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Biological	Arbovirus					✓	✓	✓			✓												
	Infectious Disease			✓							✓												
	Blood Borne Disease					✓	✓	✓						✓		✓		✓				✓	
	Zoonoses					✓		✓			✓												
Psychological	Discrimination	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Harassment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Personal Threat	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Verbal/Physical Abuse	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Ra	Sun & UV Exposure			✓		✓	✓		✓					✓		✓	✓	✓					

Understanding and managing risk

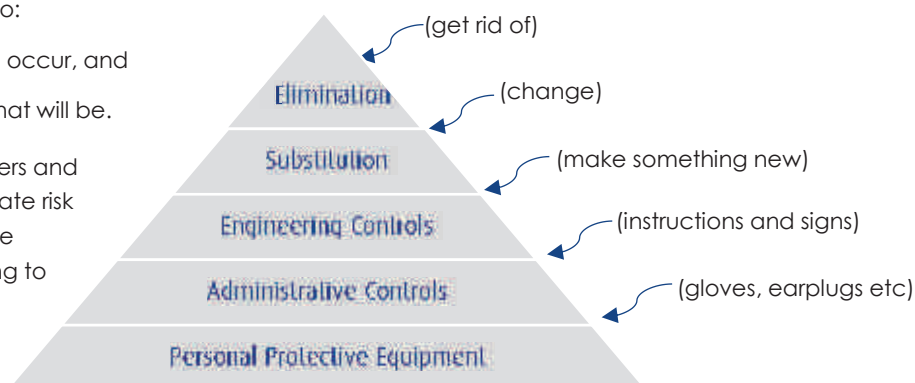
Understanding the risk involved in hazards is important.

The next steps are about prioritising risks as to:

- How likely it is for an injury or illness to occur, and
- If an injury does occur, how serious that will be.

Risk assessment in consultation with volunteers and volunteer coordinators will lead to appropriate risk management, which should follow the same principles as for paid employees – according to the Hierarchy of Control.

Using the Hierarchy of Control will impact on how much training is required.



Risk assess specific tasks in order to manage them

Looking at graffiti removal

The introduction of the WHS Act 2012 brought various responses from Councils in terms of risk managing graffiti removal:

- One Council no longer has volunteers involved in 'Graffiti Removal' – they are now 'Graffiti Spotters',
- One Council drastically reduced the number of volunteers working from home on graffiti removal – so controls and appropriate training could become more manageable,
- One Council no longer has volunteers working from home, alone, on graffiti removal – they now work in teams, from the Council base, where all materials are stored and their use monitored,
- One Council still allows volunteers to work alone – but materials are stored at the Council base and their use is better monitored in terms of location and the size of the area treated, and
- One Council brought all their graffiti removal volunteers back in for WHS refresher training.

“ A volunteer reported that a chemical he was using to remove graffiti was blown into his eyes by a gust of wind... he says he was wearing safety glasses at the time... ”

“ One man who always used his PPE when on the job, decided to use the chemical (stored at his home) on his driveway... without gloves... and ended up with 3rd degree burns... ”

Looking at manual handling

Not all manual tasks undertaken by volunteers are high risk.

Assessing individual tasks to identify the specific risks will help to identify the appropriate management approach. The model at right highlights some of the elements to look for.

Manual Tasks Risks
Sustained force
Repetitive movement
Awkward posture
Unusual degree of effort
Sustained vibration
Handling live people/animals
Load unstable
Load unbalanced
Load difficult to hold

Looking at training needs

Required competencies

Training is an important element in risk management – particularly in the lower levels of the hierarchy of control. Safety policies and procedures – ‘the rules’ – can only be effective if volunteers understand them and know how to apply them in the workplace.

Some volunteer managers feel there is enough ‘training’ in the induction process – through the corporate induction (which highlights the need for safety and provides a copy of the Council WHS Policy) and the site induction (which is more specific to the volunteer’s role and provides a copy of relevant procedure documents). However, as with the paid workforce, these are really only ‘first steps’.

Policies and procedures are no use if they’re not enforced – and no use if those governed by them are not competent in their implementation.

Core WHS competencies for volunteers

One way to develop an appropriate set of Work Health and Safety core competencies for volunteers is to start with the accepted norm for the paid workforce – and decide which competencies you feel comfortable in removing.

What is considered an appropriate set of core competencies for the paid workforce may vary slightly between Councils – but the list of eight on the right of this page is generally accepted as a minimum. It is reasonable to consider that all these core competencies should be expected in volunteers working in Council workplaces.

‘Office Ergonomics Awareness’ and ‘Heat Stress / Inclement Weather / Sun Safety’ appear interchangeable – but it’s important to remain aware of the fluidity of volunteer roles. It is entirely possible some volunteers will need to be competent in both areas.

Even though ‘Manual Tasks’ was not identified as a hazard in all volunteer roles in the example template on page 18, it is reasonable to expect all volunteers should have a basic understanding of the risks associated with manual tasks and an awareness of how to perform those tasks safely – even if this is not a common part of their role.

‘Duty of Care (Workers)’ would be expected to include the ‘reasonable care’ that workers, including volunteers, must take under the WHS Act 2012 – as well as provide some understanding of WHS issues and how they are managed in the workplace.

‘Hazard Identification and Risk Management’ would be expected to include an understanding of how to identify and reduce risk for themselves and others – while ‘Bullying and Harassment Awareness’ would be expected to include not just knowing what behaviour is unacceptable in the workplace, but what to do if it happens to them or they witness it happening to others.

Competency means the volunteer has the knowledge, skills and other appropriate attributes to effectively do the job they are asked to do. WHS competency means the volunteer has the knowledge, skills and other attributes to do it safely – and understands why.

Core WHS Competencies

Duty of Care
(workers)

Bullying & Harassment
Awareness

Drugs & Alcohol in
the workplace

Emergency Mgt
Response (general)

Manual Tasks for
Workers

Hazard Identification
& Risk Management

Office Ergonomics
Awareness

Heat Stress/
Inclement Weather/
Sun Safety

Role-specific competencies

The set of required role-specific competencies for volunteers is nowhere near as long as it is for the paid workforce – but there are at least 11 which could be expected to be commonly required for groups of volunteers.

'*Armed Holdup Procedures*' is relevant for volunteers tasked with handling cash – e.g. in cafés and kiosks, at special events or in some administration roles – and will help them understand appropriate behaviours to keep themselves (and others) safe during an incident.

'*Driver Safety Awareness*' is relevant for volunteers who transport others, drive to in-home visits or transport goods for special events to help them understand the causes of motor vehicle incidents, manage driver fatigue, ensure their vehicle is roadworthy and manage their own driver safety.

'*First Aid – Basic Awareness*' is important so volunteers are aware what NOT to do, as well as what steps they should take during an incident and is relevant for any volunteer working without direct supervision.

'*Food Handling Safety*' is obvious for those working in cafés and kiosks, but what about the volunteers who transport prepared food, cook the barbecue or serve food at special events?

'*Infection Control – Sharps Awareness*' is obvious for volunteers working in an immunisation clinic or recycling centre, but what about those working in parks, gardens, cemeteries, or sporting grounds? Or cleaning or maintaining buildings? Or removing graffiti from fences or buildings? Or setting up for special events in outdoor settings? These 'outdoor' volunteers should also be competent in responding appropriately if they happen upon a snake or other venomous threat during their volunteer work.

'*Work Zone Traffic Management*' could be relevant for volunteers involved in graffiti removal – dependent on how this is structured and managed – and they may also need training in '*Working Alone Awareness*'. Other volunteers, such as a hall booking volunteer or a gardener may also be working at a site where assistance is not readily available in the case of injury, illness or incident and need training in an effective communication system.

“ **One of our volunteers helping out at a sports ground brought in some syringes and needles he'd found... he didn't stick himself... but we worried what could have happened...** ”

“ **A group of volunteers were working together in a kitchen when one suffered a severe asthma attack... and then had memory loss after the incident...** ”

Role-Specific Competencies

Armed Holdup Procedures

Driver Safety Awareness

First-Aid – Basic Awareness

Food Handling Safety

Hazardous Substance Awareness

Infection Control Sharps Awareness

Minor Plant Operation

PPE Use

Venomous Animal Awareness

Work Zone Traffic Management

Working Alone Awareness

Volunteer 'supervisors'

In some settings, volunteers work in a supervisory capacity (over other volunteers). Some role statements include titles with terms such as 'coordinator', 'team leader', 'facilitator', 'café supervisor', 'organiser' etc. These roles appear to be common in kiosks, crèches, playgroups, tutoring, mentoring, tourism guides, walk groups and special events.

When this is the case, thought should be given as to whether these volunteers should participate in additional training – or train at a higher level in something they've already undertaken.

For example:

- Do they need training in 'Apply First Aid' (the former Senior First Aid certificate) rather than only 'Basic Awareness'?
- Should they be introduced to a higher level of understanding of 'Due Diligence' and 'Duty of Care'?
- Is the level of training they've had in 'Bullying and Harassment Awareness' enough?
- Do they need training in 'Dealing with Aggressive Behaviours'?
- They may have undertaken 'Manual Tasks for Workers', but do they now need competency in 'Manual Tasks (Managers and Supervisors)'?

Workplace health and safety depends on all workers and supervisors having the appropriate competencies to do the job.

Others that may need 'that little bit extra'

Other volunteers may need additional – or higher level – training because of their workplace, rather than the role they have within it. For example:

- Volunteers working in grounds maintenance or environmental field work may need to be competent in 'Fire Prevention', and
- Those working in settings such as cafés or Men's Sheds – where the degree of harm from an incident could be higher – may need competency in 'Apply First Aid'.

For other volunteers, the need to develop specific competencies will depend on the degree to which they are exposed to psychological hazards. For example:

- Those dealing with the public on 'sensitive' issues – such as Justices of the Peace – may need to be competent in 'Dealing with Aggressive Behaviours', and
- Those working in aged care support may benefit from 'Understanding Dementia' or 'Managing Challenging Behaviours'.

“ Our bus drivers know how the shopping is supposed to be stacked... some began to ignore the process... we made it a WHS investigation... they were re-trained... ”

“ Our poor JPs often get abused... verbal abuse and threats of violence... because of the sensitivity of some of the documents they work with... family issues and so on... ”

Competency mapping

Mapping core competencies and role-specific competencies across volunteer role groups can be an effective first step toward developing individual Job Training Plans.

This process is informed by the activity mapping and hazard identification previously conducted for role groups. The example below provides a general guide only and is likely to vary across Councils (such as where Marketing volunteers carry and distribute brochures or Committees are required to 'set up' their meeting rooms with tables and chairs).

An example of WHS competency mapping

		Administration	Committees	Child Care	Elderly Support	Environ. Field Work	Graffiti Removal	Grounds People	Guides	Hospitality	In-Home Services	Justice of the Peace	Library Shelving	Maintenance	Marketing	Retail	Social Support	Special Events	Transport	Tutoring	Youth Mentoring		
Volunteer Core Competencies	Duty of Care (Workers)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Bullying & Harassment Awareness	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Drugs & Alcohol in the Workplace	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Emergency Mgt Response (General)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Manual Tasks for Workers	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
	Hazard Identification & Risk Management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Office Ergonomics Awareness	✓	✓									✓	✓		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	
	Heat Stress / Inclement Weather / Sun Safety			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓		✓	✓			
Volunteer Role-Specific Competencies	Armed Holdup Procedures	✓			✓				✓		✓					✓	✓	✓					
	Driver Safety Awareness				✓	✓	✓			✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓				
	First Aid - Basic Awareness	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Food Handling Safety			✓	✓				✓		✓					✓		✓					
	Chemical/ Hazardous Substance Awareness			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓				✓					
	Infection Control Sharps Awareness					✓	✓	✓	✓									✓				✓	
	Minor Plant Operation					✓	✓	✓	✓					✓									
	PPE Use			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓									
	Venomous Animal Awareness					✓	✓	✓		✓				✓		✓		✓					
	Work Zone Traffic Management						✓											✓					
	Working Alone Awareness		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓					✓		✓	

Developing individual WHS training plans

Most members of Councils' paid workforce are accustomed to Job Training Plans. Generally, they sign up to these plans on appointment – and periodic reviews are either accepted or embraced. Volunteers, however, often have become only recently exposed to role statements (or position descriptions) – and the most common questions during inductions are often about any stipulated training requirements.

Not all volunteers are hesitant about training. Some acknowledge the provision of training as recognising the importance of their role to Council – and, for a few, the opportunity to learn new skills has been their key motivation to volunteer.

So, like paid employees, some volunteers will embrace the concept of an individualised WHS training plan and others will accept it. However, the difference in the volunteer workforce is that some will attempt to reject it!

Implementing individual WHS training plans for volunteers will therefore be a bit trickier than for the paid workforce.

Why have individual WHS training plans?

A WHS training plan will ensure both the Council and the volunteer are clear about what is required to ensure each person has the appropriate education and training to contribute to workplace safety for themselves and others – as per the WHS Act 2012.

An effective Training Plan will usually document a 'start position' or current competency level. This may lead to some discussion around Recognition of Prior Learning (considered further in this section) and will also add to the effectiveness of training evaluation when the plan is reviewed (considered later).

The WHS Training Plan will list the training modules required and how they will be delivered – prompting discussion around any issues such as inadequate computer literacy or access for an online module, or reluctance for class-room settings.

The Training Plan will also nominate whether each module is 'required', 'recommended' or offered as a self-development tool (in recognition of the volunteer's contribution to Council and the community).

Prioritisation can also occur by nominating timeframes within which each module needs to be completed. Although a set of core competencies for volunteer roles may be considered essential, it may be that one or more role-specific competencies are considered more urgent. It is also unrealistic to expect that Councils will be able to immediately deliver all the required training to hundreds of volunteers – or that volunteers will be able to immediately contribute the time required to complete it.

The 'reasonably practicable' qualification in the WHS Act 2012 allows for appropriate scheduling of training – and individual WHS Training Plans will provide a tool to track participation and monitor progress.

An example of a volunteer's WHS Training Plan is provided overleaf.

WHS Training Plan

Competencies to be obtained

Delivery mode

Current competency level

Priority

Timeframe to be completed within

Contact person/facilitator

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Any other requirements

Co-commitment

“ It's important that both the volunteer and the Council representative sign the WHS Training Plan... as a co-commitment to ensuring it is implemented.

Example of a volunteer WHS training plan

Volunteer	Name	Thomas Green	Role	Graffiti Removal Volunteer																																																																																																																																																													
Volunteer Coordinator	Name	Bob Brown	Role	Graffiti Coordinator, Asset Services																																																																																																																																																													
	Department	Asset Services																																																																																																																																																															
	Telephone	XXXX XXXX	Email	bbrown@xxxxxxx.sa.gov.au																																																																																																																																																													
Legend	Priority																																																																																																																																																																
	A.	Required – Extensive knowledge																																																																																																																																																															
	B.	Required – Basic knowledge																																																																																																																																																															
	C.	Recommended – Self development (enhances personal skills)																																																																																																																																																															
Legend	D.	Informative																																																																																																																																																															
	Current Competency																																																																																																																																																																
	1.	No knowledge, no skill (no information gathered on subject matter)																																																																																																																																																															
	2.	Conceptual knowledge (basic understanding only, no applicable experience)																																																																																																																																																															
	3.	Some application (demonstrated some application, but requires assistance)																																																																																																																																																															
4.	Performs without assistance (basic knowledge/application, comfortable with little or no supervision)																																																																																																																																																																
5.	Mastery (expert on subject matter, understands all aspects and able to teach/supervise others)																																																																																																																																																																
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Training Module</th> <th>Priority</th> <th>Current Competency</th> <th>Delivery Mode</th> <th>Contact or Facilitator</th> <th>Comment</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="6">WHS Induction Competencies</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bullying & Harassment Awareness</td> <td>B</td> <td>2</td> <td>Online-E3</td> <td>John Smith</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Drugs & Alcohol in the Workplace</td> <td>B</td> <td>2</td> <td>Online-E3</td> <td>John Smith</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Emergency Mgt Response (General)</td> <td>B</td> <td>1</td> <td>Online-E3</td> <td>John Smith</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Manual Tasks for Workers</td> <td>B</td> <td>4</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>RPL Certificate sighted</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hazard Identification & Risk Management</td> <td>B</td> <td>1</td> <td>Online-E3</td> <td>John Smith</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Heat Stress / Inclement Weather / Sun Safety</td> <td>A</td> <td>3</td> <td>One-to-one</td> <td>Bob Brown</td> <td>Mgr to induct SOP xx</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="6">Additional WHS Competencies</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Driver Safety Awareness</td> <td>C</td> <td>4</td> <td>Online E3</td> <td></td> <td>Vehicle inspection</td> </tr> <tr> <td>First Aid - Basic Awareness</td> <td>C</td> <td>1</td> <td>Workbook</td> <td>John Smith</td> <td>By 30.06.14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chemical/ Hazardous Substance Awareness</td> <td>A</td> <td>2</td> <td>Online-E3</td> <td>John Smith</td> <td>Prior to start</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Infection Control Sharps Awareness</td> <td>B</td> <td>1</td> <td>One-to-one</td> <td>Bob Brown</td> <td>Mgr to reinforce SOP xx</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Minor Plant Operation</td> <td>B</td> <td>2</td> <td>One-to-one</td> <td>Bob Brown</td> <td>Mgr to reinforce SOP xx</td> </tr> <tr> <td>PPE Use</td> <td>A</td> <td>2</td> <td>One-to-one</td> <td>Bob Brown</td> <td>Mgr to reinforce SOP xx</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Venomous Animal Awareness</td> <td>B</td> <td>2</td> <td>RTO XYZ</td> <td>Ann White</td> <td>Next available course</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Work Zone Traffic Management</td> <td>B</td> <td>1</td> <td>Blended</td> <td>Bob Brown</td> <td>Mgr to supplement E3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Working Alone Awareness</td> <td>B</td> <td>1</td> <td>One-to-one</td> <td>Bob Brown</td> <td>Mgr to reinforce SOP xx</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="6">Specific Procedures</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SOP xx – Graffiti Removal</td> <td>A</td> <td>1</td> <td>Blended</td> <td>Bob Brown</td> <td>Mgr to reinforce</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MSDS – Muck Off</td> <td>A</td> <td>1</td> <td>Blended</td> <td>Bob Brown</td> <td>Mgr to reinforce</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="6">Non-WHS Competencies</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Drivers Licence</td> <td>A</td> <td>4</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Sighted</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="6">I acknowledge the training requirements for this volunteer role and commit to fulfilling the training plan.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Coordinator</td> <td>Bob Brown</td> <td>Signature</td> <td><i>Bob Brown</i></td> <td>Date</td> <td>xx.xx.xxxx</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Volunteer</td> <td>Thomas Green</td> <td>Signature</td> <td><i>Thomas Green</i></td> <td>Date</td> <td>xx.xx.xxxx</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>						Training Module	Priority	Current Competency	Delivery Mode	Contact or Facilitator	Comment	WHS Induction Competencies						Bullying & Harassment Awareness	B	2	Online-E3	John Smith		Drugs & Alcohol in the Workplace	B	2	Online-E3	John Smith		Emergency Mgt Response (General)	B	1	Online-E3	John Smith		Manual Tasks for Workers	B	4			RPL Certificate sighted	Hazard Identification & Risk Management	B	1	Online-E3	John Smith		Heat Stress / Inclement Weather / Sun Safety	A	3	One-to-one	Bob Brown	Mgr to induct SOP xx	Additional WHS Competencies						Driver Safety Awareness	C	4	Online E3		Vehicle inspection	First Aid - Basic Awareness	C	1	Workbook	John Smith	By 30.06.14	Chemical/ Hazardous Substance Awareness	A	2	Online-E3	John Smith	Prior to start	Infection Control Sharps Awareness	B	1	One-to-one	Bob Brown	Mgr to reinforce SOP xx	Minor Plant Operation	B	2	One-to-one	Bob Brown	Mgr to reinforce SOP xx	PPE Use	A	2	One-to-one	Bob Brown	Mgr to reinforce SOP xx	Venomous Animal Awareness	B	2	RTO XYZ	Ann White	Next available course	Work Zone Traffic Management	B	1	Blended	Bob Brown	Mgr to supplement E3	Working Alone Awareness	B	1	One-to-one	Bob Brown	Mgr to reinforce SOP xx	Specific Procedures						SOP xx – Graffiti Removal	A	1	Blended	Bob Brown	Mgr to reinforce	MSDS – Muck Off	A	1	Blended	Bob Brown	Mgr to reinforce	Non-WHS Competencies						Drivers Licence	A	4			Sighted	I acknowledge the training requirements for this volunteer role and commit to fulfilling the training plan.						Coordinator	Bob Brown	Signature	<i>Bob Brown</i>	Date	xx.xx.xxxx	Volunteer	Thomas Green	Signature	<i>Thomas Green</i>	Date	xx.xx.xxxx
Training Module	Priority	Current Competency	Delivery Mode	Contact or Facilitator	Comment																																																																																																																																																												
WHS Induction Competencies																																																																																																																																																																	
Bullying & Harassment Awareness	B	2	Online-E3	John Smith																																																																																																																																																													
Drugs & Alcohol in the Workplace	B	2	Online-E3	John Smith																																																																																																																																																													
Emergency Mgt Response (General)	B	1	Online-E3	John Smith																																																																																																																																																													
Manual Tasks for Workers	B	4			RPL Certificate sighted																																																																																																																																																												
Hazard Identification & Risk Management	B	1	Online-E3	John Smith																																																																																																																																																													
Heat Stress / Inclement Weather / Sun Safety	A	3	One-to-one	Bob Brown	Mgr to induct SOP xx																																																																																																																																																												
Additional WHS Competencies																																																																																																																																																																	
Driver Safety Awareness	C	4	Online E3		Vehicle inspection																																																																																																																																																												
First Aid - Basic Awareness	C	1	Workbook	John Smith	By 30.06.14																																																																																																																																																												
Chemical/ Hazardous Substance Awareness	A	2	Online-E3	John Smith	Prior to start																																																																																																																																																												
Infection Control Sharps Awareness	B	1	One-to-one	Bob Brown	Mgr to reinforce SOP xx																																																																																																																																																												
Minor Plant Operation	B	2	One-to-one	Bob Brown	Mgr to reinforce SOP xx																																																																																																																																																												
PPE Use	A	2	One-to-one	Bob Brown	Mgr to reinforce SOP xx																																																																																																																																																												
Venomous Animal Awareness	B	2	RTO XYZ	Ann White	Next available course																																																																																																																																																												
Work Zone Traffic Management	B	1	Blended	Bob Brown	Mgr to supplement E3																																																																																																																																																												
Working Alone Awareness	B	1	One-to-one	Bob Brown	Mgr to reinforce SOP xx																																																																																																																																																												
Specific Procedures																																																																																																																																																																	
SOP xx – Graffiti Removal	A	1	Blended	Bob Brown	Mgr to reinforce																																																																																																																																																												
MSDS – Muck Off	A	1	Blended	Bob Brown	Mgr to reinforce																																																																																																																																																												
Non-WHS Competencies																																																																																																																																																																	
Drivers Licence	A	4			Sighted																																																																																																																																																												
I acknowledge the training requirements for this volunteer role and commit to fulfilling the training plan.																																																																																																																																																																	
Coordinator	Bob Brown	Signature	<i>Bob Brown</i>	Date	xx.xx.xxxx																																																																																																																																																												
Volunteer	Thomas Green	Signature	<i>Thomas Green</i>	Date	xx.xx.xxxx																																																																																																																																																												

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an important part of your training needs analysis.

It's a legitimate process in verifying paid staff have the appropriate competencies to undertake their role – and can be an equally legitimate process in determining volunteers have the education and training they need to comply with the WHS Act.

It may be particularly relevant where volunteers:

- Also volunteer at other organisations (and undertake training there),
- Are still employed (and undertake WHS training at their workplace), or
- Have significant skills and experience in the aspect of their role for which you're intending to schedule training.

However, while RPL may be a solution for the volunteer who says, "But I already know all this", it's not the easy solution some may think.

Although RPL recognises existing knowledge and skills (competencies) without being concerned about how the competencies were acquired – it is an assessment process.

If you want to include RPL for accredited training, you'll need to involve a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) as a partner. RPL needs to be conducted by a qualified assessor – who examines specific evidence of competency to issue a Certificate of Attainment against competency standards included in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

A qualified assessor considering an application for RPL will examine presented evidence to determine that it is:

- **Valid** – it must relate directly to the competencies for which RPL is sought,
- **Authentic** – the evidence must be genuine and more than only a personal claim of achievement,
- **Sufficient** – there must be enough evidence to allow an accurate and informed decision, and
- **Current** – it must be up-to-date enough to demonstrate that practices haven't changed in the meantime.

Councils who decide to adopt an RPL-like process for non-accredited training should follow a similar pathway. Although there may be some temptation to accept the word of a volunteer, or even their coordinator, this would leave the Council vulnerable under the WHS Act should there be a subsequent incident.

A volunteer program coordinator can contribute to the body of evidence by providing a reference for the volunteer to the assessor – in writing or verbally – but the reference needs to do more than say, "Pam has safe food handling skills" – it needs to include examples of how Pam has shown that.

The assessor is also likely to want to see Pam at work in the café and ask questions to ensure she has the theoretical knowledge to underpin the practical skills.

RPL acknowledges the skills and knowledge people have gained through:

- **Formal training received at work or through a training provider,**
- **On-the-job experience at work,**
- **On-the job experience as a volunteer, or**
- **Life experience (including hobbies or other activities).**

It's about assessing evidence of competency.

RPL for accredited training can only be granted by qualified assessors attached to RTOs that deliver the course or training module for which competency is being assessed. Assessors can make reasonable adjustment for literacy levels and cultural backgrounds.

“ They may have been doing that job for years without incident... but that doesn't mean they're doing it right... or that the incident isn't just around the corner... ”

An example of a checklist to recognise prior learning

Recognition of Prior Learning for		SITXFSA101 Use Hygienic Practices for Food Safety		
Applicant		John Smith	Date	xx.xx.xxxx
Performance Criteria			Satisfactory evidence submitted	
			Yes	No
Element 1: Follow hygiene procedures and identify food hazards				
1.1	Follow organisational hygiene procedures	✓		
1.2	Promptly report unsafe practices that breach hygiene procedures	✓		Examples
1.3	Identify food hazards that may affect the health and safety of customers, colleagues and self	✓		Scenario
1.4	Remove or minimise the hygiene hazard and report to appropriate person for follow up	✓		Scenario
1.5	Follow hygiene procedures and identify food hazards	✓		
Element 2: Report any personal health issues				
2.1	Report any personal health issues likely to cause a hygiene risk	✓		Examples
2.2	Report incidents of food contamination resulting from personal health issues	✓		Scenario
2.3	Cease participation in food handling activities where a health issue may cause food contamination	✓		Scenario
Element 3: Prevent food contamination				
3.1	Maintain clean clothes, wear required personal protective clothing and only use organisation-approved bandages and dressings	✓		
3.2	Prevent food contamination from clothing and other items worn	✓		
3.3	Prevent unnecessary direct contact with ready-to-eat food	✓		
3.4	Avoid unhygienic personal contact with food or food contact surfaces	✓		
3.5	Avoid unhygienic cleaning practices that may cause food-borne illnesses	✓		
Element 4: Prevent cross contamination by washing hands				
4.1	Wash hands at appropriate times and follow hand washing procedures consistently	✓		
4.2	Wash hands using appropriate facilities	✓		
Overall Comment		RPL approved		
Assessor	Anne Brown, Senior Trainer XYZ RTO	Signed	<i>Anne Brown</i>	

Source of elements, performance criteria and evidence assessment guide: www.training.gov.au

Elements describe the essential outcomes of the units of competency for this training unit, while the **performance criteria** show what needs to be demonstrated to achieve the element.

In order to assess an applicant for RPL in this unit, the assessor would need to see the volunteer in action using hygienic work practices to prepare and store food, but would also ask questions to ensure the volunteer had other appropriate skills and knowledge – including setting problem-solving exercises.

In order to be competent in this unit, volunteers would also need specific **skills** – such as communication skills (to report breaches or hazards), literacy skills (to understand notices and documents), and problem-solving skills (to identify and address hygiene hazards). The questioning would also assess **knowledge** of the content of hygiene procedures and food safety standards and codes.

Looking at the challenges

All Councils agree paid employees and volunteers are equally entitled to a healthy and safe working environment.

However, while some volunteer management practitioners are embracing the introduction of more formalised work health and safety training for their entire volunteer workforce, others feel overwhelmed at what they see as the enormity of the task.

Previous sections of this framework have intended to facilitate the work – by breaking down the task and offering suggestions as to how appropriate planning might be achieved. However, there remain a number of challenges to address before Councils can move on to consider training delivery.

Fundamentally, the key challenges fall into two main areas:

- Resourcing, and
- Engaging volunteers.

Resourcing

One way for the new training to be introduced would have the volunteer workforce included with the paid workforce in existing health and safety assessment and training systems.

Managed in this way – as part of day-to-day operations – Councils would meet their legal obligations without the effort of establishing new systems.

This may, in fact, be the best option in the future, when only small numbers of volunteers are coming on line at any one time – and most of those incoming volunteers are drawn from baby boomer and younger generations (where WHS training is accepted – and expected).

However, many Councils now have hundreds of volunteers – the majority of them 65 years and older – to put through multiple training modules in order to be compliant with the WHS Act 2012. Attempting to simply absorb them into existing systems does not appear 'reasonably practicable'.

That doesn't mean, though, that volunteers' WHS training belongs solely with the Council's volunteer services department.

To do it effectively, volunteer management practitioners will need strong support from senior management, their own direct-line management and other Council departments – especially those that specialise in human resources management and health and safety management.

Getting all these people 'on board' will require more effort in some Councils than others.

“ My first problem will be getting volunteers to do it... but then, if lots of them agree, I'll have an even bigger problem resourcing it all... ”

Resourcing
Budget
Planning Time
Management Time
Program Coordinator's Time
Appropriate Trainers
Appropriate Training Facilities
Training Support
Monitoring
Evaluation

Influencing upward and across

Senior management endorsement of additional funding to support development and implementation of the new training regime is critical to success.

Some practitioners feel the WHS Act 2012 will be 'the big stick' to achieve this. However, the more appropriate approach to have a voice heard (above others bidding for a bigger portion of Council's budget) is to present a sound business case.

Usually it is the line manager who will do this, but volunteer management practitioners have a key role in developing that case.

The business case will need to include attention to the:

- Value of volunteering to the Council and the community,
- Compatibility of volunteering and volunteer work health and safety training with the Council's overall vision, mission statement and strategic plan (and endorsed Volunteer Strategy if one is in place),
- Compliance with Council's Work Health and Safety Policy,
- Key points from the WHS Act 2012 relevant to volunteer training,
- Hazard identification relevant to volunteer roles,
- Core and role-specific competencies that need to be achieved, and
- Planning for training implementation (including expected costs).

It will be important to include allowance for any additional training or support needed to develop and implement the program – and for any additional training for volunteer program coordinators (if they're intended to be part of training delivery).

In terms of engaging other departments – 'human resources' generally and 'health and safety' or 'training' specifically – it will be important to be mindful of their own budget, resourcing limitations and competing commitments.

However, they will be more supportive once shown the preparatory work already completed on:

- Volunteer roles and activities,
- Hazard identification,
- Risk management,
- Required core and role-specific competencies, and
- Proposed individual or group training plans.

These people have specialist knowledge – but so do volunteer management practitioners – so a collaborative approach drawing on the combination of specialist skills is another critical success factor.

Involving the specialists who manage the health and safety of the paid workforce also demonstrates to volunteers their work is as valued as the work of contracted employees – and that Council is as committed to their health and safety.

“ It comes down to the ethos of the Council... how much they value their volunteers... do they see them as part of the workforce... appreciate the social capital etc ...

“ Sometimes volunteers are seen as a cost-free resource, which can lead to persistent under-investment. Maybe because it's WHS – and law – it will get more support...

“ It can be difficult to get the other departments on board... especially to realise people supervising volunteers need help from them... they're not trained trainers...

Engaging volunteer program coordinators

In many Councils, it is the volunteer program coordinators who currently deliver the majority of training to volunteers – generally during site inductions and specifically during on-the-job supervision.

While corporate inductions commonly introduce newcomers to Council's WHS Policy and highlight the rights and responsibilities of the Council and the volunteer, it's usually at the work site that volunteers are given instruction on how policies and procedures relate to their specific role and new work environment.

However, volunteer program coordinators are seldom given specific training in this role – other than a checklist to guide them through the process – and most volunteer management practitioners will concede some coordinators are much better at delivering this training than others.

Engaging volunteer program coordinators in the objectives of the new training regime is essential:

- If they are to directly deliver any elements of the training plan, Councils should consider 'train-the-trainer' support,
- If the training is to be outsourced, but coordinators will have extra tasks in developing individual training plans, ensuring and monitoring participation and/or evaluating training, they may need training or admin support, and
- Even if all this is managed for them, day-to-day operations in their work area will be impacted, so they need to understand the importance of it.

Consulting early with program coordinators – about the WHS Act 2012, the business case submitted to upper management and the preparatory work used in collaboration with other departments – is the best way to achieve this engagement.

Support for volunteer management practitioners

Some Councils have already moved to provide additional support for volunteer management practitioners as part of their response to the WHS Act 2012. This additional resourcing is important – at least in the initial stages – to assist with (or liberate time for) planning, implementation and management of the new training regime.

Suggestions as to how this might be achieved include:

- Extending hours where the role is a part-time position in smaller Councils,
- Seconding a human resources practitioner for the 'establishment' period,
- Seeking an increased allocation of administration support hours from within the department, and/or
- Recruiting a new volunteer (or inviting transfer from another role) with appropriate skills and experience to assist with volunteer training.

“ Coordinators get a little bit overrun in their 'real' job. While they support the idea of volunteer training, it probably gets pushed to the side a bit...”

“ Volunteer supervisors need to be skilled in that role...as well as in their 'other' role... and they need to be given time to work with their volunteers...”

“ I have a volunteer IT expert to help develop spreadsheets so I can easily pull out what I need... to make the business case for when I go to get the money for all this...”

Additional resourcing challenges

Resourcing challenges are impacted by a number of other variables.

Changing regulatory environment

The Work Health and Safety Act 2012 isn't the only recent regulatory change to affect volunteers working in Council environments – for example, recent changes in Child Safe Environments regulations and Home and Community Care (HACC) guidelines and standards. 'Keeping up' and complying with the changes places additional demands on resources.

Changing volunteering preferences

Volunteer management is not the only Council service delivery area facing change in the regulatory environment – but it is the only area that is concurrently facing dramatic change in its workforce demographic. As the new wave of baby boomer and younger generations join the volunteer workforce, they bring with them preferences for short term and episodic volunteering – and an increased tendency to move between different organisations to contribute their volunteering effort. These characteristics give a reduced return on training investment.

Broad demographic – with different training support needs

The broad socio-demographic of the volunteer workforce means a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to volunteer training is likely to be ineffective. Some volunteers are likely to have specific language, cultural or literacy support needs, while many will need additional support in terms of IT training and/or access if any part of the training is online. Offering a range of delivery methods to accommodate differences in support needs and preferences adds to resourcing challenges.

Limited application for 'already-paid-for' systems

Councils are increasingly using digital technologies in the training of their paid workforce – webinars, online courses and the use of mobile devices – and have invested heavily in them. Yet the current demographic of the volunteer workforce means these 'already-paid-for' technologies have limited application.

The tyranny of distance

Regional and rural Councils can have pools of volunteers separated by significant distances. Organising travel support for volunteers – or training in two, three or four locations – adds to resourcing challenges. To a lesser extent, distance also becomes an issue for larger metropolitan Councils, which can have, for example, up to six libraries and a team of volunteers in each. Typically, volunteers prefer training to be 'local'.

The need for 'refreshers'

Because of the scale of volunteering in local Councils, resourcing will need to accommodate the fact that some volunteers are likely to be due for 'refreshers' before other volunteers have even completed their initial training.

“ Even within the Council I'm constantly needing to validate aspects of my work... volunteer training is only a small part of my role, which is constantly changing... ”

“ Inductions for paid staff are now online... and our online training system also tracks who has done it and when... its all there, but it wouldn't work for our volunteers... ”

“ We tend to rotate locations for the training...try to give everyone easy access... but it can work out expensive if only a few turn up at each place... ”

Engaging volunteers in the process

Recognising and addressing specific barriers to volunteer participation in training is a significant element in engagement – and therefore a significant contributor to developing appropriate training delivery systems.

What will stop them?

All volunteer management practitioners consulted during development of this framework said they have – or will have – difficulty in engaging many of their volunteers in WHS training. Commonly, this was thought to be due to the age of volunteers (most often 65 years or older) and the fact many had been volunteering in a specific role for some years (and therefore thought training unnecessary).

However, while many Councils have an annual or biennial survey of volunteers, little work has been done to really explore this – to understand why volunteers generally aren't interested in training (although, of course, many are).

However, despite the scarcity of specific research, anecdotally we know:

- Older volunteers may feel daunted at the prospect of training. Unless they have only recently retired from work, it's likely to be many years since they participated in formal education or training and there is often a fear they may not 'keep up',
- People from diverse cultural backgrounds may worry their communication and/or literacy skills will be insufficient to undertake the offered training,
- Australian-born volunteers, too, may have literacy issues which see them reluctant to participate,
- Computer literacy is almost certain to be an issue for much of the current volunteer demographic if some of the training is to be delivered online,
- Volunteers still working (there are many) – or recently retired from high-level careers – may feel the offered training is well below their existing level of expertise, and
- Others are discouraged by the time commitment, the timing of the session, or location (if it requires travel).

Rather than generalise, however, it's important each Council understand the specific barriers to training among their own volunteers – which can vary considerably according to the socio-demographics of the region.

A survey of 96 volunteers at City of Salisbury to assist development of this framework found:

- One-third (33%) of respondents felt the timing of training (in terms of days or time) would cause difficulty,
- Although the number of training sessions didn't appear to be an issue for most respondents (selected by 10%), the time involved in each session was a concern for one-in-five (21%) of respondents (preferring shorter sessions),
- One-in-five (20%) of respondents had an issue with location involving travel,
- A reasonably significant proportion of respondents (15%) noted that 'feeling forced to do it' would be a barrier to training participation, and
- Only one-in-five (20%) of respondents felt there were no personal barriers to training participation.

The survey questionnaire also sought to gather information about volunteers' preferences in regard to consultation and is included at Appendix B as an example of one approach to gathering required information.

“ We offer training regularly to our volunteers, but get few 'takers'... and, usually, those that come are not the ones who really need to be there... ”

“ Some have been builders or labourers in a past life... but don't have a training certificate... when we ask them to come in for manual handling training, they laugh... ”

What if they don't participate?

Before deciding on an appropriate approach to engage volunteers with formalised WHS training, Councils first need to consider the consequences if the engagement fails.

What will you do with those who simply refuse to participate?

What about those who are willing to attend, but can't match up with your offered session times?

How hard – and for how long – will you try before repeated non-attendance is interpreted as refusal?

Will you tell people they simply can't volunteer anymore?

Do you need to consider the impact that will have on them?

What will happen to your programs if a number of volunteers need to be 'suspended'?

Preparing clear responses to these questions early in the process will ensure:

- A 'policy' is in place to guide the response to individual issues (detaching from emotional involvement can be difficult – especially with elderly people who often volunteer for social connectedness),
- Plans are in place for services where there's likely to be significant impact (from a number of predicted refusals), and
- There are no 'mixed messages' in your communication about the training to the volunteer workforce – or volunteer coordinators.

“ You do lose people... some just say 'stick it'... but out of that you develop an extremely strong team of skilled people... ”

“ It's easier to draw the line when there are obvious safety issues... it's harder to convince them when they're stacking library shelves... but you can't take the risk... ”

Using the right approach

Organisational change is never easy. Forced change will almost always generate resistance – and when the workforce to undergo involuntary change is at work voluntarily, 'demands' will mostly be met with outright opposition.

Using the WHS Act 2012 as 'a big stick' is currently favoured by a number of Councils to introduce the new training to volunteers. But what does this say about the value of volunteers to Council? That it is only interested in the health and safety of volunteers because the law says it has to be?

'Selling' the change doesn't usually draw a good response either. Most people resist if they feel something is being made unrealistically attractive in order to achieve their 'buy-in'.

Most change management practitioners recommend an approach that is consultative and creates a shared understanding about the need for change, before attempting to implement it. This will usually involve information followed by face-to-face consultation (from higher levels and then from line management).

To follow this thinking, engaging volunteers in the new training regime might be best achieved by information through a newsletter or personal letter – but followed quickly by an opportunity for volunteers 'to have their say'.

Create a shared understanding about the need for change... provide information... and then facilitate consultation. Change management works best when people 'get to have their say'...

Deciding to whom volunteers might best like to 'have their say', will be the tricky part.

Change, by its nature, is unsettling – even when it's embraced! For many volunteers – especially those who are older or from non-English speaking backgrounds – the change to formalised WHS training is likely to see them move easily from 'unsettled' to 'upset'. So the consultation process needs to have a 'settling' influence.

Individual Councils will need to decide whether this is most likely to be achieved by the volunteer management practitioner (who may have strong facilitation skills) – or by the program coordinator (with whom volunteers may feel more comfortable). The best option is likely a combination of both.

Written notices are very weak at developing understanding, but can be effective at conveying information. Some change management practitioners recommend distributing the written information during the consultation process, while others suggest distributing it prior – to allow people time to digest the information, so they have appropriate questions prepared when they participate in the consultation conversation.

A draft example letter to volunteers is included overleaf. Key messages to note are:

- There's no choice about participating (although this is not overstated),
- The WHS Act 2012 is featured, but there is no suggestion the Council is complying unwillingly,
- The new training involves everyone (which will help any volunteer who feels targeted because they are ageing or 'have done something wrong'),
- This isn't just about them, but the clients they support and the other people they work with,
- People may already have the skills and knowledge, but it's still important to be sure (and things might have changed),
- Council has taken account of volunteers' needs and preferences,
- Steps have been taken to try to make the process enjoyable (which may help those who have had a poor experience of training previously), and
- There will be opportunity for volunteers to 'have their say'.

It should be noted there is no information as to exactly how the training will be delivered. Even though planning should be well progressed at this stage, to include it now will suggest volunteers can have no input – and your plans may change during the consultation stage.

There are different schools of thought as to who should sign the letter.

If the correspondence comes from the CEO or a divisional manager, it will escalate the importance of it and concurrently acknowledge the importance of volunteers' health and safety to Council.

However, a letter from the volunteer management practitioner may feel more personal. It is not recommended the letter should come from volunteer program coordinators, who are likely to be more involved in the consultation stage.

Written notices are very weak at creating understanding – but can be strong at providing information.

Having information to hand prior to consultation gives people time to think about what they really want to know – and what they really want to say.

Identify the key messages... then include them in the information and again during consultation.

Make sure paid staff who will be involved in formal and informal consultation – the program coordinators – are engaged with the key messages.

“ We need to acknowledge their workplace training and experience... but still be firm about the fact they either need to do this, or prove they're up-to-date... ”

An example of a letter to volunteers prior to consultation

Dear [Name],

Your safety – and the safety of people you work with – is extremely important to us.

Your contribution to our Council and to our community is valuable and deserves the highest level of protection.

The new Work Health and Safety Act 2012 is very clear about the fact volunteers as well as paid employees must have appropriate work health and safety training in their roles – and we agree.

Although, in practical terms, the new legislation hasn't changed very much, it is quite specific and we have been looking at a number of areas of our business to make sure we are fully complying.

We have been working hard to develop a training system for all our volunteers that will allow us to confirm everyone has all the required skills and knowledge to make their contribution to the community in a way that ensures – to the highest level possible – their own health and safety and the health and safety of others around them.

Some parts of the training will need to be undertaken by every volunteer. These are the same work health and safety 'core competencies' we expect all our paid staff to have. Other parts of the training will only apply to volunteers working in certain roles - the 'role-specific competencies'.

We understand you have been working safely in your volunteer role already – many of you for some time – and that some of you have significant experience and training in work health and safety from a paid work role. For these volunteers, the new training system will ensure everyone is up to date, with the latest information. This is about taking care of everyone – not just new volunteers.

Because you are so important to us, we have tried to make sure the new training system isn't a burden. We want it to be something you enjoy and something that doesn't demand more time than you are able to give. Many of you have already contributed your thoughts, ideas and suggestions about training through our recent Volunteer Survey – and that certainly helped our planning.

We will be talking to as many volunteers as possible about the new training before it begins. If you're not able to be part of those discussions when the time comes, but have some questions or comments, please contact [name and contact details].

Yours etc...

Looking at training delivery

Why does it need to be different for volunteers?

Experts tell us that workplace training ideally should accommodate different learning styles – that people generally lean toward either auditory; visual; tactile; sociological; or structured learning preferences.

We also know the learning environment has impact on the effectiveness of training – the formality of the setting; temperature; lighting; noisiness; opportunity for kinesthesia; and mobility – and that learners have varying preferences in all these elements too.

An effective group trainer will therefore incorporate elements in their delivery pitched toward each of these preferences.

So, isn't that all that needs to happen when training volunteers? Well, yes... and no.

While the current volunteer profile may suggest a group is more likely to generally prefer certain elements – such as an informal, quiet learning environment and a more social, visual and tactile approach – there are other aspects to consider when planning volunteer learning.

Incorporating some learning (or re-learning) to learn

For many volunteers, decades will have passed since they were last in a 'learning' situation. Their metacognitive skills are way out of practice. They'll need more help in recognising 'the important bits'. They'll need more help in how to store information (remember) – and they'll need more help in transitioning what they learn to the real world.

Recognising the emotional start point

Learning is an emotional process. Volunteers are likely to turn up to formal training angry or resentful (because they don't feel they need to be there) – or anxious because they don't know what to expect and whether they'll cope. Either way, they'll need to relax before they can begin to learn. Building in some engaging interactive elements will help.

Avoiding Information overload

What do they really need to know? Flooding people – especially older people or people already struggling with communication issues – with too much information means they will remember none of it.

Building practice into training

Learning is only retained when it's used. Volunteers don't immediately walk out of the training room back into daily jobs where they can apply what they've learned. They'll need to practice what they've learned during the training.

Workplace training becomes more complex when you build in the general volunteer profile.

Building a learning culture in a volunteer workforce takes extra effort – but everyone benefits.

“ We have volunteers who mentor others who are anxious about it... it can be really daunting for some people... they need someone like them to say, 'It's okay'...”

“ The training has to be really relevant for them... if they're 65 and stack library shelves, they don't want to know how to load wheelchairs on a bus...”

Who should deliver the training?

Managing training internally

Funding WHS training for volunteers is an acknowledged issue for most Councils. Some intend to manage the training 'in-house' to reduce costs – but this could cause far bigger cost issues, if it means Council remains exposed.

The exposure may include potential non-compliance with the WHS Act 2012 where the training is not to a level to 'protect all persons from risks to their health and safety'.

Any training delivered by internal staff not competent in the field may also lead to insurance risk. Although volunteers are not entitled to benefits under the LGA Workers Compensation Scheme (LGAWCS) which protects paid employees, they do have benefits under the Local Government Risk Services (LGRS) Personal Accident Policy and are recognised under the LGA Mutual Liability Scheme (LGAMLS) when performing designated roles for Council.

Core components in the LGAWCS guidelines for WHS Induction and Training clearly require (among other things):

- Nominated staff are competent (through appropriate training) to deliver the induction package to new workers, and
- Trainers are competent to deliver training.

Councils who use program coordinators and other staff to lead inductions and deliver training to volunteers therefore need to be confident these employees are 'competent' in the role.

Competency in training might include a *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment*. Another qualification is *Certificate IV in Volunteer Program Coordination* which Volunteering SA&NT (in conjunction with TAFESA) is offering in 2014 and is available through Northern Volunteering SA's NVETS registered training organisation.

This certificate includes core units in 'Maintain workplace WHS processes' and 'Plan, organise and facilitate learning in the workplace'. There are also a number of elective units such as 'Contribute to the implementation of a systematic approach to managing OHS'; 'Identify risk and apply risk management processes'; 'Facilitate adult learning and development'; 'Provide work skill instruction'; 'Design and develop learning programs'; and 'Use training packages and accredited courses to meet client needs'.

Under the Australian Government's *Skills Connect* program, subsidies are available (at the time of writing) for employees who have been coordinating or supervising volunteers for six months or more – and, for coordinators aged 50 years or more, the training in this certificate may be free.

Even where coordinators are not actually delivering the training, but rather planning and facilitating it, this type of professional development is valuable.

Some Councils have specific staff members trained and competent to deliver training – and do this well for the paid workforce. However, it's important that these training specialists also have the expertise to understand and manage the differences in training volunteers.

Using staff not trained in training delivery may prove to be a false economy. Council may remain exposed if trainers don't do their job well.

The LGA Workers Compensation Scheme guidelines for WHS induction and training procedures require staff delivering induction packages and training to be competent in the role.

Staff trained and competent to deliver training to the paid workforce will need additional skills to deliver the same training to volunteers.

“ Our coordinators don't deliver the training – but they do organise it and arrange for guest speakers... some are better at this than others... ”

Identifying preferred external training providers

Some volunteers will cope very well with training courses – no matter how the training is delivered or who is involved in the delivery. However, it is reasonable to assume – given the general volunteer profile – these volunteers will form only a small proportion of Councils' volunteer workforce.

Apart from TAFESA's three institutes (North, South and Regional), there are 197 privately operated Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) in South Australia and 63 of them specialise in work health and safety. NVETS (Northern Volunteering SA's RTO arm) is the only current RTO specialising in volunteering.

So how do you select a training provider?

Quality

Although using a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) provides obvious confidence in terms of knowing they will have suitable premises, qualified trainers – and capability to train, assess and issue a parchment for both accredited and non-accredited training – other providers may also be appropriate. An example checklist (overleaf) provides some of the questions Councils will need to ask in order to assess suitability.

Relevance

Experience in delivering the specific WHS training relevant to Councils is important – along with experience – or at least good understanding – of the differences involved in training volunteers. To help determine relevance, you should be provided with clear information about specific content in courses, so you can assess whether this matches with desired learning outcomes.

Adaptability

Ideally, Councils will want a provider to deliver a customised training package that provides the required training without overloading unnecessary information. The provider should also be able to adapt the delivery method to the volunteer profile – which includes older people and people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Flexibility

Successfully engaging large numbers of volunteers with training will depend on being able to offer days and times according to identified preferences. An ability to conduct training off-site (at Council locations) will help to overcome any transport barriers.

Delivery methods

Training providers with a highly interactive approach are likely to have increased learning outcomes for volunteers – who we know will generally benefit from hands-on applications that include 'practice' as part of training.

Evaluation

Although training providers should have their own session feedback system, Councils may need their own evaluation – customised to the learning outcomes they're seeking. Providers open to this approach are confident in their work.

It doesn't need to be an RTO if you don't require accredited training, but you do need to be confident in the quality of the training... and have a record of learning outcomes.

Clear information on content is important because coordinators will need to strengthen the learning by providing appropriate practice opportunities in the workplace.

The option to be able to customise packages is important. It respects volunteers' time commitment and keeps them from being overloaded with information they're unlikely to use.

Some flexibility is important. Being able to offer training to volunteers at a time and place that suits them acknowledges their time and effort is freely given.

Example of a training provider checklist

Provider			Contact Name		
Telephone			Email		
Modules	1.	2.	3.		
General			Yes	No	Comment
1. Is the organisation a Registered Training Provider (RTO)?					
2. If not an RTO, is there access to an RTO for assessments?					
3. If not an RTO, are the staff appropriately qualified?					
4. Does the provider have suitable facilities for on-site training?					
5. Are the facilities 'local'?					
6. Are there Certificates of Participation for non-accredited training?					
7. Are the fees reasonable?					
8. Is there access to applicable subsidies for eligible participants?					
9. Is there opportunity for RPL assessments for those not training?					
10. Is there appropriate insurance for volunteers on their premises?					
Relevance					
11. Does the existing training program include required WHS courses?					
12. Is there experience in/ understanding of training volunteers?					
13. Is there written information about the content of courses?					
14. Is the information clear on learning outcomes?					
15. Do the learning outcomes match identified need?					
Adaptability					
16. Can current courses be customised to suit the volunteer profile?					
17. Can a customised training package be developed to specific needs?					
18. Can training accommodate Non-English Speaking Backgrounds?					
19. Can training materials be provided in languages other than English?					
20. Can training accommodate older volunteers?					
21. Can training accommodate people with slight/moderate hearing loss?					
22. Can training accommodate other disabilities?					
Flexibility					
23. Can training be conducted on Council premises if requested?					
24. Is there flexibility on days for delivery of face-to-face training?					
25. Is there flexibility on time-of-day for delivery of face-to-face training?					
26. Is there opportunity for additional support to those who need it?					
Delivery methods					
27. Does the training include a mix of delivery methods?					
28. Are face-to-face sessions highly interactive?					
29. Are there built-in elements to make training interesting and engaging?					
30. Are there sufficient built-in hands-on, practical applications?					
31. Is there quality written information for volunteers to support training?					
32. Can this information be provided in languages other than English?					
33. Is there access to interpreters if required?					
Evaluation					
34. Is there a system in place to evaluate and record learning outcomes?					
35. Can a customised training feedback tool also be included?					

How should the training be delivered?

Using a mix of delivery methods

Whether the training is managed internally or outsourced, there are still decisions to be made on the mechanics of delivery. The predominant training mode used by a specific Council will depend on access to resources and the socio-demographic of its volunteer workforce.

However, the significant diversity which exists within that workforce means having a mix of delivery methods is the best option. Most training courses in the contemporary learning model – including WHS modules – come in a variety of forms.

Having a predominant training mode may be 'reasonably practicable' – but offering other options to some volunteers, or groups of volunteers, will help address barriers.

About the 'mechanics' of face-to-face training

Face-to-face training is likely to be included in the mix by most Councils. However, there are a number of ways this can be introduced. For example, each Council will need to decide whether to group volunteers for training sessions in:

- Specific work areas (volunteers may be more comfortable in this setting, but it can be difficult logistically),
- A mix of volunteers from across various work areas (can add to socialisation, which is often a key motivator for volunteering), or
- A mix of volunteers and paid staff (provides enhanced recognition for the value of volunteers, but they may feel intimidated and paid staff may be frustrated if the pace needs to slow).

The 2014 City of Salisbury Volunteer Survey found two-thirds (66%) of respondents would be happy to participate in training which involved a mix of paid staff and volunteers, followed by an almost two-thirds (62%) who would be happy to train only with volunteers from their own work area, while about one-half (53%) would be happy to train with volunteers from other areas.

Identifying preferences in this area needs to be part of the consultation process. An approach which is effective in one Council may not work well in another (evidenced by quotations on this page from two volunteer management practitioners). The survey questionnaire example at Appendix B includes options to help explore this.

Some volunteers may feel so apprehensive about group sessions that they initially may need one-to-one training, while others equally apprehensive may cope in a group situation if there's a 'buddying' arrangement where another volunteer can support them.

There are also likely to be differences when it comes to volunteers' comfort with external trainers. In one Council, the program coordinator (or another member of the team) attends these group training sessions with volunteers. This is not only reassuring to the participants, but also facilitates appropriate 'practice' opportunities later in the work environment – matched to the specific training.

- **Online:**
 - Independent
 - At home, 'help-desk'
 - On-site, IT support
- **Work Book:**
 - Independent
 - With support
- **Face-to-Face:**
 - On-site, own group
 - On-site, broad group
 - Off-site, broader group
- **Buddying:**
 - One-to-one
 - One-to-group
- **One-to-One**

“ Our best attendance is when sessions involve only the group they usually work with. I tried opening it up to volunteers across Council and the numbers fell off...

“ We used to do it in their own team, but it's more cost-effective to do everyone at once. They like meeting new people and we've had good feedback on that aspect...

Potential for e-learning

E-learning is common in Councils for paid employees and there is at least some opportunity for its use with volunteers.

Although the 'typical' volunteer may be older, Councils increasingly are attracting younger volunteers – and online training is likely to be preferred by many of them. These volunteers shouldn't be forced into face-to-face training simply because two-thirds of the volunteer workforce is 65 years and older.

And it is not reasonable to assume older volunteers may not also be interested in online training. Many older people have already undertaken training courses to allow them to use contemporary technology – computers, smartphones and iPads.

The 2014 City of Salisbury Volunteer Survey found more than one-half (57%) of respondents 65 years and older felt able to perform most basic tasks on a computer – and had a computer and internet access at home. When the selected age group was expanded to include all those 55 years and older, almost two-thirds (63%) of respondents said they were able to perform most basic tasks on a computer and had access to a computer and the internet at home.

Other volunteers may welcome the opportunity for e-learning if there were some support for it. Is it possible a group could work together on computers in the library with a volunteer IT tutor? Is it possible for someone to volunteer as a telephone 'help desk' for those who have computer and internet access at home?

Using a workbook

Some volunteers – including those who find the practicalities of attending face-to-face training sessions difficult to manage – may prefer to use a workbook.

Workbooks may already be available for some courses – or e-learning training providers may customise on request. However, it could also be possible to develop a customised workbook in-house with the help of training specialists – so a number of different training needs can be met in the one process. If this is attempted, it will be important to engage appropriate expertise to ensure the developed workbook complies with WHS requirements – and that Council is not left exposed through perceived inadequate training.

However, done well, this delivery method has strong benefits for both volunteers and Council.

Volunteers will have flexibility in when and where they commit their time to it; whether they work together in a group or complete the workbook individually; and whether they need support to fully understand some sections. For volunteers from a non-English speaking background, using a workbook allows time to process words and phrases – and there is potential for translations if required.

Councils will find flexibility in the 'start-time' for specific training – reducing delays while waiting for face-to-face training to be available and also in managing refresher training.

Once developed, workbooks can provide a less resource-intensive delivery method – although it will be important to ensure appropriate assessment of completed training modules.

Upskilling volunteers in computer literacy so they can participate in online training potentially has additional benefits for volunteer programs.

“ Our older volunteers feel intimidated in a group with young ones. They feel they're holding things up if they ask questions... and so they don't... ”

Benefits of using a workbook:

- **Flexibility in time commitment,**
- **Can be used in a group setting or individually,**
- **Is applicable across all ages,**
- **Can be made language appropriate,**
- **Facilitates provision of one-to-one support,**
- **Is adaptable for specific relevance,**
- **Facilitates ongoing refresher training, and**
- **Can be less resource-intensive to manage.**

Non-English speaking backgrounds

Cultural diversity in the volunteer workforce is not homogenous across South Australian Local Government.

Some Councils have very few volunteers from non-English speaking backgrounds, while others have broad diversity, with significant numbers of volunteers from a range of language groups.

For others, cultural diversity is only just beginning – as more migrants and humanitarian entrants settle in their community, often from backgrounds relatively 'new' to South Australia.

Social inclusion means these culturally diverse volunteers should participate as much as possible in mainstream training with their co-volunteers. However, often this is best achieved with appropriate supports in place.

Throughout this framework, there have been a number of suggestions about specific considerations for volunteers for whom English is not a first language. The suggested supports can enhance the personal experience of these volunteers – both in volunteering with Council and in training participation – but they are specifically designed to enhance learning outcomes.

Potential supports include:

- Spending time to have a conversation about the training, the reason it has been scheduled and its expected outcomes,
- Arranging training delivery in a location which is local and 'familiar',
- Having program coordinators (or another 'familiar' member of staff) attend training sessions with volunteer groups,
- Ensuring trainers are aware of any communication difficulties and cultural norms,
- Ensuring training delivery includes both visual and auditory elements (lots of images rather than lengthy text),
- Providing written material prior to commencement of the training session (if possible in their first language),
- Including people from specific language groups in the same face-to-face training sessions,
- Building in opportunities for them to observe skills in action (showing them how it should be done),
- Arranging for an interpreter to attend and provide support as required to the group (and allowing extra time for translations),
- Arranging for a 'buddy' to attend training sessions with individual volunteers,
- Providing course notes to volunteers in their own language,
- Providing feedback sheets (training evaluation forms) in their own language, and
- Developing or accessing workbooks as the delivery method (and arranging translation if required).

“ Sometimes we'll schedule a session for a specific language group... those more skilled in English then help the others through... ”

“ You do have to be tough though...if they don't have sufficient English, we help them into ESL classes before they can volunteer. They need reasonable English to be safe... ”

“ We've had a recent influx of Somalian volunteers... so we have a volunteer with skills in their language attend induction and training with them... ”

Tips for engaging volunteers during training

Planning broader work health and safety training for volunteers is not just about 'getting it done' to comply with the WHS ACT 2012 – it's about creating a learning culture across the volunteer workforce.

This means ensuring volunteers are engaged during training sessions.

Engagement also means volunteers will be more likely to willingly participate in future training – and are likely to speak well of the experience to others.

Applying general adult learning principles will facilitate both this engagement process and the learning outcomes.

Volunteer training should therefore include:

- **'The big picture'** – why they're doing the training, what they'll get out of it, a broad overview of what they'll learn,
- **Relevant content** – they like to be able to link the learning to their volunteer role,
- **Active participation** – they'll generally enjoy learning more when 'doing' it,
- **Multi-sensory learning** – they like to 'see' as well as 'hear' – and 'touch' if it's possible and relevant to the learning,
- **Practice** – they may not get immediate applications in their role and they'll benefit from role play in scenarios,
- **Feedback throughout the session** – being told they're 'getting it' will make them more open to learn more,
- **Reinforcement** – not just from the trainer at the end of the session, but from their program coordinator in their role, and
- **Reward** – this can be a Certificate of Participation listing the topics they've covered, or may be as simple as providing some socialisation time over a cup of tea or coffee (and some nice food to go with it).

It will be important to remember that many volunteers participating in the training will have no experience of adult learning.

For older volunteers, their only learning experience may have been in a very formal school classroom and migrants or humanitarian entrants from some countries (especially women) may have had no educational experience at all.

Seemingly unnecessary steps – such as explaining participants may leave the room at any time to go to the toilet or bring a drink to their seat – may be important in ensuring participants can engage with the learning without being concerned about 'the rules'.

“ You have to make sure every session is a good one – one boring experience will turn them off for future sessions... and turn others off when they talk about it... ”

“ It needs to be applicable... they need to be able to see how they'll use the training in their specific volunteer role... if they don't, they won't come next time... ”

“ It can be very threatening for some people. It took me months to get one woman to a session... but now she signs up for everything! ”

Tips for engaging training providers with volunteers

Good trainers will adapt each training session to better accommodate the specifics of the group before them. Those experienced in training volunteers will already have adapted their course delivery style – and perhaps some of the content.

However, it's not always possible to organise specific work health and safety training with an external training provider that has this experience – and Councils delivering training in-house may want to use specialist staff or guest presenters also not practised in training volunteers.

Providing the prospective trainer with as much useful information as possible about the participant group, before the training session, will facilitate engagement – and therefore learning outcomes.

Tell them about roles and common tasks

Information about the volunteer roles – and applicable tasks performed in those roles – will help the trainer appropriately 'pitch' the training so it is more personally relevant to participants. A good trainer will be able to adapt visuals used during the session to reflect the composition of the group and include targeted practicals.

Offer scenarios

External trainers are not expected to know the workings of Councils. Offering a few real-world scenarios volunteers might encounter within their role will help them reinforce the relevance of the training.

Describe what to expect

A trainer who walks into a session expecting everyone to be fit, healthy, hearing well, proficient in English and accustomed to workplace training will be unprepared for the challenges ahead. Are there cultural norms for communication and interaction that need to be considered? What will this specific group find intimidating or offensive?

Seek your own – and share – feedback

Using the trainer's standard session evaluation forms may not give either Council or the trainer appropriate and relevant feedback. Cultural norms may inhibit people from giving honest appraisals; language or literacy issues may interfere with the intended message and volunteers reluctant to participate may give a harsh view of the training. Gathering and analysing the feedback internally may give a more accurate picture – but sharing findings with the training provider will help develop understanding of what works well for volunteer training.

Be clear about expected learning outcomes

Although learning outcomes should be included in the written material you have from the training provider before scheduling the session, clarifying expectations may shift the emphasis during delivery. For example, volunteers working in a kitchen and those removing graffiti may both attend Hazardous Substances sessions – but desired learning outcomes for the first group may focus more on identifying chemicals and avoiding exposure, while outcomes for the second group may focus more on controls to reduce risk from exposure.

Good trainers will adapt the session to better accommodate the group of participants before them – but they may need advance knowledge of the group composition.

Trainers will likely have well-developed cultural awareness – but may have no knowledge of the specific cultural background in front of them.

Helping to develop appropriate scenarios for use in the training session will increase the relevance of the training for volunteers ... and the learning outcomes.

Example of a training provider information sheet

Training Provider	XYZ Training		Contact Person	Jane Smith, Training Manager		
	Telephone		xxxx xxxx	Email	xxxxxx@XYZtraining.org.au	
Training Session	Session Title		Manual Tasks for Workers			
	Date	Tuesday 25 March 2014	Start Time	9.30am	End Time	11.30am
	Venue	John Harvey Gallery, City of Salisbury, 12 James Street Salisbury				
	Expected number in group			14		
Required Learning Outcomes	At the completion of the session, participants will be expected to					
	<p>Have an understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hazardous manual tasks • How to assess manual tasks • Ways of reducing risk of injury from manual tasks • Techniques for performing manual tasks safely 					
About the Participants	The volunteer work roles held by people in this session are					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library volunteers • Special Events volunteers (Bhutanese Senior Social Support Group) 					
	The tasks they perform relevant to this training session are					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library volunteers mostly return books to library shelves • Some library volunteers will also load books into the mobile library van • Special Events volunteers may assist with setting up tables and chairs or trestles • Special Events volunteers may also unload, lift and carry supplies from a vehicle to the event site 					
	The preferred learning mode for this group is					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visuals + auditory for theory • Active participation • 'Hands-on', practical • Interaction with others 					
Session Feedback	The 'special needs' to be accommodated in this group are					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About half the group is 65 or older. Please take extra care when setting practice tasks. • 3 participants have some difficulty hearing, but understand clear speech. • The Bhutanese volunteers have conversational English skills, but will need a little time between key points to mentally translate/understand. • They may also need gentle encouragement to verbally participate. • The group will benefit from having written hand-outs from the start of the session. 					
Other Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your usual feedback form may not be suitable for use with this group. Please submit/discuss with the contact below. • We will supply participants with our own feedback form (translated for the Bhutanese participants) and will supply you with a summary of the findings on request. 					
What we will supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please supply all participants appropriate written material supporting session content (to enable learning reinforcement) • Please supply Certificates of Participation referencing key learning outcomes 					
More Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue (accessible 30 mins before and after session) • Tea/Coffee from 9am – Morning Tea at 10.15am • Whiteboard and screen if required • A volunteer with interpreter skills to assist as required • Scenarios (on request) suitable for practical applications 					
	Contact Person		Mary Brown, Volunteer Services Manager			
Telephone		xxxx xxxx	Email	xxxxxx@XYZtraining.org.au		

What happens next?

Assessing the effectiveness of the training

Good workplace training is about more than participation in a training session with a group of co-workers. Good training is about competency – and competency is about knowledge + skills + aptitude.

The competency of participants is formally assessed in accredited training courses and becomes a useful indicator of the effectiveness of the training – but what about volunteers participating in non-accredited WHS training? How can Councils feel confident the training is effective?

- **Participant opinion** is important. The use of a customised feedback form (with support for volunteers who may struggle with it) will provide valuable information about the appropriateness and relevance of the delivered training. (An example feedback form is included overleaf.) However, the findings from these forms can be much enhanced through discussion with participating volunteers – either individually or in team meetings.
- **Supervisor observation** of changes in volunteers' approach to their work is equally important. Volunteer program coordinators should provide feedback to volunteer management practitioners (or training organisers) about whether the training has had impact.
- **Workplace improvements** such as a reduction in incidents or an increase in reporting of 'near misses' will indicate success in creating the desired safe working culture.
- **Formal assessments** may not be appropriate for some volunteers, but assessment can still occur through discussion and observation.

Opportunity for practice

Most training practitioners will have a favoured statistic that shows retention of learning only occurs when there is opportunity for the learning to be put into practice. Some will quote specific time frames within which the learning must be practiced, while others will give a proportion of the learning that is lost over increasing periods of time. The actual statistics are not important.

What is important, however, is that there needs to be practice as soon as possible following the learning – and that opportunities for volunteers may need to be created, rather than occur naturally.

For example, a volunteer who usually works the front counter of a kiosk may need a shift making the sandwiches after participating in an *Implement Food Safety Procedures* session – or a volunteer on a first shift back from an *Office Ergonomics* session may be asked to conduct a safety audit of the area (noting applicable 'good bits' as well as identifying health and safety risks).

Volunteer management practitioners should work with program coordinators to ensure practice opportunities exist in the work area – or are created.

Good training doesn't end at completion of a session.

It needs reinforcement, practice, monitoring and evaluation.

Good training therefore involves the trainer, the participant, co-workers (as role models) and the supervisor.

Good WHS training develops a safety culture in a worksite.

There are various conflicting statistics about how quickly we forget new learning without practice.

This only puts doubt on the statistics... not the importance of practice following learning.

If opportunities don't exist naturally, supervisors need to create them.

Example of a volunteer learning evaluation tool

Session Title	Led by	Date							
<p>We are interested in what you thought about this training session.</p> <p>Your feedback will help us plan and improve future sessions of this training for other volunteers – and also any other training sessions for you.</p> <p>Please look at each statement below and consider how you feel about that statement.</p> <p>Circle 1 if you strongly agree with the statement, or 5 if you strongly disagree with the statement – or one of the other numbers if your feelings are somewhere in between. If the statement is not relevant to your session, please circle 6.</p>									
Thank you. We appreciate your help.				Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
Content Delivery									
Topics covered were relevant to my volunteer role				1	2	3	4	5	6
They were delivered in a way that was easy to understand				1	2	3	4	5	6
There was enough time to get through what we intended				1	2	3	4	5	6
The materials provided were useful				1	2	3	4	5	6
There was enough opportunity to practice and try things				1	2	3	4	5	6
Facilitator									
The facilitator was knowledgeable about the topics				1	2	3	4	5	6
The facilitator was well prepared for the session				1	2	3	4	5	6
The facilitator answered questions clearly and fully				1	2	3	4	5	6
General Satisfaction									
I have an increased understanding of the topic				1	2	3	4	5	6
I am confident of applying what I learned in my workplace				1	2	3	4	5	6
The room was satisfactory				1	2	3	4	5	6
The catering was satisfactory				1	2	3	4	5	6
Overall I had a good experience				1	2	3	4	5	6
I would be happy to attend other sessions in the future				1	2	3	4	5	6
Do you have any other comment?									
.....									
.....									
Volunteer Name		Work Area		Date					

Acknowledgements

This publication is an initiative of City of Salisbury, produced with funding through the Local Government Research and Development Scheme.

The project was led by Pam Pindral, Manager Healthy Ageing and Access, City of Salisbury and managed and conceptualised by Michelle Hodshon, Volunteer Development Officer, City of Salisbury.

The document was developed and written by Christine Ellis, Adit Communications.

Other members of the Reference Group were:

Skye Browne, Senior Coordinator Organisational Wellbeing, City of Salisbury,

Rebecca O'Dell, Volunteer Services Coordinator, City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters,

Kellie Stewart, Volunteer Development Officer, Town of Gawler,

Rob Edwards, Scheme Manager, LGA Workers' Compensation Scheme,

Chris Rajan, Learning and Culture Development Officer, City of Salisbury, and

Thuy Nguyen, Cultural Services Officer, City of Salisbury.

City of Salisbury would like to acknowledge the following people and organisations for their contribution to the framework – by contributing their thoughts, ideas and experiences during project development and/or providing feedback on the draft document.

Neville Hyatt, Senior Policy Officer, Local Government Association of South Australia,

Carole Rogers, Training Coordinator, Volunteering SA & NT, and

Peter Heyworth, Executive Officer, Northern Volunteering (SA).

Lis Brittan, Community Development Officer – Volunteering, City of Adelaide,

Roxanne Withers, Volunteering Strategy & Development Officer, City of Playford,

Vanita Schwarz, Volunteer Development Officer, City of Marion,

Angelique Williams, Volunteering Services Coordinator, City of Holdfast Bay,

Mike Feszczak, Volunteer Management Officer, City of Onkaparinga,

Rob Jervis, Volunteer Liaison Officer, Yorke Peninsula Community Transport & Services Inc,

Ngareta Cronin, Volunteer Coordinator, Rural City of Murray Bridge,

Shannon Lopez, Community Development Officer, City of West Torrens,

Suzie Schultz, Community Development Officer, District Council of Loxton Waikerie, and

Narelle Biddell, Compliance Officer, City of Port Lincoln.

Thank you also to the volunteer coordinators at City of Salisbury who contributed their thoughts during a focus group on volunteer risks and training preferences and the volunteers who participated in a written survey about consultation, training barriers and training preferences.

Appendices

Appendix A: City of Salisbury Hazard Explanations

Appendix B: City of Salisbury 2014 Volunteer Survey
Questionnaire

Appendix A: City of Salisbury Hazard Explanations

Physical	
Animal Attack	Where a person while undertaking an activity is working in an area where they are exposed to the threat of an attack by an animal such as a dog, snake, etc.
Asbestos	Where a person while undertaking an activity could be exposed to Asbestos fibres. Asbestos is used by the building and construction industries for strengthening cement and plastics as well as for insulation, roofing, fireproofing and sound absorption. It is also used to insulate boilers, steam pipes and hot water pipes. The automotive industry have used asbestos in vehicle brake shoes and clutch pads. It has also been used in ceiling and floor tiles; paints, coatings, and adhesives; and plastics. If products containing asbestos are disturbed, tiny asbestos fibres are released into the air and when breathed in, they may get trapped in the lungs. Over time, these fibres can cause scarring and inflammation, which can affect breathing and lead to serious health problems.
Burn	Where a person while undertaking an activity could suffer a burn from coming in contact with a hot object, surfaces, hot materials, parts of plant equipment etc.
Collapse	Where a person while undertaking an activity could be injured due to a collapse of something in the environment they are working in. This could include the risk of collapse of an excavation or a trench. Typical work could be laying of pipes, underground services, grave digging etc.
Confined Space	Where a person while undertaking an activity in an enclosed or partially enclosed space that is not intended or designed primarily for human occupancy and could be exposed to a hazardous environment such as: the oxygen concentration could be outside the safe oxygen range; there is a concentration of airborne contaminant that may cause impairment, loss of consciousness or asphyxiation; there could be concentration of flammable airborne contaminant that may cause injury from fire or explosion; where engulfment of a stored free-flowing solid or a rising level of liquid could cause suffocation or drowning.
Crushing	Where a person while undertaking an activity could be crushed by mechanical actions within the plant or by material movement etc.
Cuts/Abrasions	Where a person while undertaking an activity the work or objects being worked with could cause cuts and abrasions. This could be clean-up of branches and debris, pruning, litter collection, mechanical work, etc.
Dust/Fumes	Where a person while undertaking an activity could be exposed to dust or fumes caused by the process or materials or dust from the outside environment.
Electric Shock	Where a person while undertaking an activity is working with or in the vicinity of an electrical power source that if contacted could cause an electric shock capable of injuring or killing the person.
Engulfment (Water/Flood)	Where a person undertakes an activity in locations where there is a risk of engulfment by water, e.g. working in stormwater systems, creeks, pump sumps, pool filtration tanks, water tanks, swimming pools, wetlands, marinas, etc.
Entanglement	Where a person while undertaking an activity could become entangled in the equipment or plant being used for the activity. This could include drilling holes in paper, using an auger for drilling holes to plant trees, drain cleaning equipment, etc.
Fall from Height	Where a person while undertaking an activity could either when working at height, (e.g. on a roof, elevated platform etc or working around trenching excavations etc) suffer a fall that could injure the person.

Physical (Continued)

Falling Objects	Where a person while undertaking an activity is working in areas where work or activities are being carried out above them and there is a risk that objects could be dislodged or be dropped on them, such as: branches when tree pruning; a piece of plant e.g. during maintenance of an air conditioning unit or similar plant located on a roof; replacing dislodged ceiling tile at a recreation centre; repair replacement of a skylight.
Fire/Explosion	Where a person while undertaking an activity with plant, equipment or substances that has the potential to ignite and/or explode (e.g. carrying out welding or other heat generating activities in areas where there are flammable or combustible materials, or refuelling plant or equipment during the activity).
Fire/Explosion/Bomb Threat (Emergency Situation)	Where a person while undertaking an activity could be exposed to an uncontrolled emergency situation within the work area. e.g. a fire, bomb threat, uncontrolled chemical release, flooding, earthquake, plane crash, etc.
Harmful Contact	Where a person while undertaking an activity could come in contact with a source or substance that could cause injury. Examples are: high pressure paint jet (road line marking), air hose, high pressure spray cleaner, cutting blade (circular saw, chain saw, band saw etc) cutting blade (guillotine), cutting blade (mower, slasher etc).
Hole/Excavation	Where a person while undertaking an activity could trip or fall into a man-made or natural hole or excavation. e.g. trenches for stormwater pipes, building excavations, post holes, graves, drop-off into a creek, potholes in the ground, etc.
Hot/Cold Working Environment	Where a person while undertaking an activity could be working in an environment that has extremes of temperature, e.g. near a source of heat such as a furnace or in a freezer or cool room. NOTE: This does not include inclement weather.
House Keeping	Where a person while undertaking an activity is at risk of being injured when moving around the worksite by tools, plant, equipment, materials etc that are not stored appropriately.
Inclement Weather	Where a person while undertaking an activity is exposed to hot, dry, cold, wet, windy weather, that could lead to heat stress, heat exhaustion, dehydration, hypothermia, etc. It does not include the effects of UV radiation from sun exposure. Sun and UV exposure is found under the Radiation hazard category.
Insects/Vermin	Where a person is working in an area where they could be exposed to insects and vermin such as snakes, rats, mosquitoes, fleas, spiders, etc.
Moving Vehicles/Plant	Where a person is undertaking an activity in an area where traffic is moving within or past the worksite or they are moving to and from the activity through an area where traffic is present, e.g. working on or near roadways, in a warehouse where forklifts are present, in a workshop where plant is moving around.
Noise	Where a person's hearing (or concentration) while undertaking an activity could be affected by noise from plant and or equipment being used or operating at a work area or adjacent to the work area.
Pedestrians	Where pedestrian safety during an activity undertaking could be affected by the activity, e.g. where the work area encroaches on areas used for public access.
Poor Visibility	Where a person while undertaking an activity is working in an area where the line of sight is blocked by objects or terrain. NOTE: This does not include poor lighting.

Physical (Continued)	
Remote/Isolated Work	Where a person while undertaking an activity is working alone and if there was an instance where they were in a situation that threatened their safety or they were injured immediate assistance is not available. e.g. working alone after hours, working alone in isolated public places, working alone in remote areas, etc.
Sharps	Where a person while undertaking an activity could come in contact with hypodermic syringes or other contaminated sharps in rubbish, tree and leaf litter, toilets and other public areas.
Slip/Trip/Fall	Where a person while undertaking an activity could be exposed to slippery, cluttered or uneven walk surface that could cause a person to slip, trip or fall.
Struck by Objects (Impact)	Where a person while undertaking an activity could be struck by: objects that are ejected from plant/equipment; a piece of plant that has moving parts; a person physically hitting or walking into an object, e.g. hitting their head on low object, walking into plant/equipment.
Vehicle Impact	Where a person while undertaking an activity drives any vehicle powered or otherwise, e.g. bicycle, car, bus, truck, van, ute, etc where a collision could occur between a vehicle and another vehicle, a vehicle and person or a vehicle and object.
Vibration	Where a person while undertaking an activity operates or comes into contact with equipment that transmits vibration, e.g. line trimmer, soil compactor, etc.
Workplace Terrain	Where a person undertakes an activity where conditions exist in the terrain that if encountered by the person, vehicle, plant or equipment could cause injury or property damage, e.g. rock(s), stump(s), slippery surface, steep slope, etc.
Chemical	
Acids/Alkaloids	*CONSIDER THE SUBSTANCES USED IN THE ACTIVITY Where a person while undertaking an activity could come in contact with acids or Alkaloids. Acids are corrosive substances widely used throughout industry for cleaning, etching, plating and stripping. They are usually in liquid or powder form. Most are acutely hazardous, especially when concentrated. Acids can penetrate clothing rapidly causing serious burns and damage to tissues beneath the skin, e.g. paint stripper. Alkaloid substances are used primarily for cleaning and scouring. Like acids, they are acutely hazardous, especially in concentrated form. Most have strong caustic or corrosive action. e.g. drain cleaner
Dangerous Substances	Explosive materials chemicals, liquids, gasses etc e.g. petrol, gases such as LPG and Acetylene.
Gases/Vapours/Fumes	Where a person while undertaking an activity could be exposed to gases, vapours or fumes that could be toxic if breathed or absorbed through soft tissue or cause an explosion if exposed to an ignition source. Vapours or fumes can be given off by chemicals used in the workplace for example from: cleaning solvents (PVC pipe cleaner), glues (PVC cement), fuels (petrol, kerosene etc), pesticides and herbicides. Gases are often used in the workplace for example: fuel (petrol, LPG and CNG), acetylene gas for welding
Hazardous Substances	Chlorine
Herbicides	Where a person while undertaking an activity could come in contact with a chemical substance used to destroy or inhibit the growth of plants, especially weeds.
Pesticides	Where a person while undertaking an activity could come in contact with a substance that is intended to kill, repel or otherwise control any organism that is designated a "pest", including weeds, insects, snails, rodents, fungi and bacteria.

Ergonomic	
Manual Tasks	Where a person while undertaking an activity is required to use force to lift, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person, animal or thing.
Plant Design	Where the health or safety of a person undertaking an activity could be affected if the design of the plant exposes the person to the risk of injury while using the tool (e.g. where an emergency stop button is not accessible from the point of use).
Tool Design	Where the health or safety of a person undertaking an activity could be affected if the design of the tool exposes the person to risk of injury while using the tool (e.g. handle shape forces the worker to bend their wrist instead of the tool).
Lighting	Where a person's safety while undertaking an activity could be affected by the light level in the work area, e.g. where a person has fine detail work, data entry from documents, travels into unlit areas, roof spaces, works at night etc.
Workstation Design/Layout	Where the intentional or un-intentional change in the workstation design or layout could impact on the health or safety of the occupants. This hazard is relevant to computer workstations, or a workstation for checking in library books, etc.
Biological	
Arbovirus	Where a person while undertaking an activity could come in contact and be bitten by insects such as, mosquitoes, ants, bees, wasps, flies, beetles, praying mantis, cockroaches, dragonflies, cicadas, fleas, moths. Arboviruses are a large group of viruses that are spread by certain invertebrate animals (arthropods), most commonly blood-sucking insects.
Biological Substances (Unknown)	Where there is a risk that a person while at work could come into contact with an infectious substance of which the source is not known (e.g. medical waste).
Blood Borne Disease	Where a person while at work could come in contact with infected blood. This could be via syringes, working in amenity areas, working with injured people, exposure to persons with injuries. Blood borne diseases are those in which an infection present in the blood of an infected individual is transmitted by contact with the blood of a susceptible individual. Blood borne diseases include: Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV/AIDS
Infectious Disease	Where a person while at work could come in contact with infectious diseases caused by bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi and can be spread, directly or indirectly, from one person to another.
Legionella	Where a person while at work could come in contact with the Legionella bacteria by inhaling Legionella bacteria from the environment. This could be through contact with warm, stagnant water and soil it seeps into, e.g. air-conditioning cooling towers, potting mixes, water in old irrigation piping.
Zoonoses	Where a person while undertaking an activity could come in contact with dead and living birds and animals. Zoonotic diseases are infectious diseases of birds and animals that can cause disease when transmitted to humans.

Psychological	
Discrimination	Where a person while undertaking an activity comes in contact with a person or other people who unfairly treat them on the basis of prejudice. Discrimination could be from a person in the workplace either employed by the organisation, a contractor, volunteer, visitor or member of the public.
Harassment	Where a person while undertaking an activity comes in contact with a person or persons whose unwanted negative attention is intimidating, demeaning or bothersome. Harassment could be from a person in the workplace either employed by the organisation, a contractor, volunteer, visitor or member of the public.
Personal Threat	Where a person while undertaking an activity comes in contact with a person or persons who threatens. Personal threat could be from a person in the workplace either employed by the organisation, a contractor, volunteer, visitor or member of the public.
Verbal/Physical Abuse	Abuse could be from a person in the workplace either employed by the organisation, a contractor, volunteer, visitor or member of the public.
Radiation	
Sun and UV Exposure	Precautions need to be taken when a person performs work outdoors between 10 am and 3pm that exceeds ten minutes cumulatively. Outdoor workers have a higher risk of certain kinds of non-melanoma skin cancer because they often spend long periods of time in the sun, all year round, over many years of working life.
Radiation	Exposure in the workplace other than sun exposure, e.g. X-Rays etc.



Volunteer Survey

If you would like some help to complete this survey please phone the Volunteer Development Officer on 8406 8475

Your safety – and the safety of people you work with – is extremely important to us.

The Work Health and Safety Act 2012 applies to volunteers as well as paid employees – and part of that law asks us to make sure you are appropriately informed, trained and consulted on health and safety issues.

This survey is part of that consultation. It will help us better plan for the future, by telling us what you think about health and safety training and related issues. It should take you only a few minutes to complete and **you do not need to include your name at the end. Thank you for taking part.**

About your current volunteering with City of Salisbury...

1. How often do you volunteer with us?

- 1 More than once a week
- 2 Weekly
- 3 Fortnightly (every two weeks)
- 4 Monthly
- 5 On a casual basis or only for special events
- 6 Other..... *[please describe]*

2. How many hours do you volunteer **each time**?

- 1 Less than 1 hour
- 2 1 or 2 hours
- 3 2 or 3 hours
- 4 4 or 5 hours
- 5 More than that
- 6 Don't know / Not sure

3. How long have you been a volunteer with us?

- 1 Less than 6 months
- 2 6 to 12 months
- 3 1 to 2 years
- 4 3 to 5 years
- 5 6 to 10 years
- 6 More than 10 years
- 7 Can't remember now / Don't know

4. Do you volunteer anywhere else?

- 1 Yes – one other place
- 2 Yes – two other places
- 3 Yes – three other places
- 4 Yes – more than three other places
- 5 No – I only volunteer at City of Salisbury

5. What type of volunteering work do you do **with us?** *[Can tick more than one]*

- 1 Administration / Reception / Office Support
- 2 Café / Kiosk / Preparing or Serving Food
- 3 Child Care / Crèche
- 4 Computer Work / Information Technology
- 5 Coordinator / Team Leader / Facilitator
- 6 Environmental (e.g. planting, wetlands)
- 7 Gardening / Maintenance / Graffiti Removal
- 8 In-home support
- 9 Justice of the Peace
- 10 Library
- 11 Marketing
- 12 Personal assistance e.g. shopping support
- 13 Special Events
- 14 Sport and Recreation support
- 15 Tutoring / Instructing / Mentoring
- 16 Transport
- 17 Something else..... *[please describe]*

6. How do you get information now about your volunteer role with City of Salisbury? *[Can tick more than one]*

- 1 From management in presentations to a large group
- 2 In the Volunteer Handbook
- 3 Through Volunteer Program meetings in a group
- 4 In small group chats with my Volunteer Coordinator
- 5 In one-to-one chats with my Volunteer Coordinator
- 6 From other paid staff where I work
- 7 From other volunteers where I work
- 8 Written – such as a letter, memo or newsletter
- 9 On noticeboards
- 10 On the electronic noticeboards
- 11 On Council's website
- 12 By email
- 13 By telephone
- 14 Something else..... *[please describe]*
- 15 Don't know / Not sure about this

About health and safety information...

7. How would you **like to get information about health and safety** related to your volunteer role? *[Can tick more than one]*

- 1 Directly from management in presentations
- 2 In the Volunteer Handbook
- 3 Through Volunteer Program meetings in a group
- 4 In small group chats with my Volunteer Coordinator
- 5 In one-to-one chats with my Volunteer Coordinator
- 6 From other paid staff where I work
- 7 From other volunteers where I work
- 8 Written – such as a letter, memo or newsletter
- 9 On noticeboards
- 10 On the electronic noticeboards
- 11 On Council's website
- 12 By email
- 13 By telephone
- 14 Something else..... *[please describe]*
- 15 Don't know / Not sure about this

8. How would you **like to give information back to us** about any health and safety issues? *[Can tick more than one]*

- 1 Directly to management
- 2 Through Volunteer Program meetings
- 3 In small group chats with my Volunteer Coordinator
- 4 In one-to-one chats with my Volunteer Coordinator
- 5 Directly to other relevant paid staff where I work
- 6 By being able to pick up the phone and tell someone
- 7 Be being able to send an email to a safety person
- 8 Through my site health and safety representative
- 9 Written – on hazard and incident reporting forms
- 10 In periodic surveys like this
- 11 In a suggestion box
- 12 Something else..... *[please describe]*
- 13 Don't know / Not sure about this

About health and safety training...

9. What type of **health and safety training** do you think **would be useful** in your volunteer role? *[Can tick more than one]*

- 1 Armed Holdup Procedure
- 2 Bullying and Harassment Awareness
- 3 Chemical/ Hazardous Substances Awareness
- 4 Driver Safety Awareness (defensive driving)
- 5 Drugs and Alcohol in the Workplace
- 6 Emergency Management Response (General)
- 7 First Aid - Basic Awareness
- 8 Food Handling Safety
- 9 Hazard Identification and Risk Management
- 10 Heat Stress/Inclement Weather/UV Sun Safety
- 11 Manual Tasks for Workers
- 12 Minor Equipment Operation
- 13 Office Workstation Safety Awareness
- 14 Use of Personal Protective Equipment
- 15 Venomous Animal Awareness
- 16 Work Health and Safety Basics
- 17 Work Zone Traffic Management
- 18 Working Alone Awareness
- 19 Something else..... *[please describe]*
- 20 None of these / nothing

10. **What would stop you** – or make it really difficult for you – to participate in one or more of these courses? *[Can tick more than one]*

- 1 Location (travel is an issue for me)
- 2 Time commitment required (hours each session)
- 3 Time commitment required (number of courses)
- 4 Timing – the days/times required to attend
- 5 Cost (if out of pocket expenses weren't reimbursed)
- 6 Lack of confidence – I'd just feel uncomfortable
- 7 Lack of confidence – I feel too old for this now
- 8 Lack of confidence – my English is not so great
- 9 Lack of interest – it just doesn't appeal to me
- 10 Lack of relevance – there is no safety risk in my role
- 11 Lack of relevance – I already know how to stay safe
- 12 Feeling forced to do it – it should only be by choice
- 13 Something else..... *[please describe]*
- 14 None of these / nothing

About how health and safety training would work best for you...

11. This question is about **how you would prefer to participate** in health and safety training related to your role.

Please look at each statement below and consider how you feel about that statement. [Circle '1' if you 'strongly agree' with the statement, or '5' if you 'strongly disagree' with the statement – or one of the other numbers if your feelings are somewhere in between.]

For new health and safety training, I would be happy to...	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
(a)...participate in a group with a mix of paid staff and volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
(b)...participate in a group with a mix of volunteers from other areas	1	2	3	4	5
(c)...participate in a group with only volunteers from my area	1	2	3	4	5
(d)...undertake group training if I could have a 'buddy' to help	1	2	3	4	5
(e)...undertake the training only in a one-to-one situation	1	2	3	4	5
(f)...do the training by completing and handing in a workbook	1	2	3	4	5
(g)...do the training 'online' – I'm comfortable on a computer	1	2	3	4	5
(h)...do the training 'online' – but I'd need help with the computer	1	2	3	4	5
(i)...only do training that was led by a City of Salisbury staff member	1	2	3	4	5
(j)...attend training led by an 'external' specialist trainer in that field	1	2	3	4	5
(k)...attend training only in the work area where I volunteer	1	2	3	4	5
(l)...attend training only in City of Salisbury training rooms	1	2	3	4	5
(m)...attend training at a site away from City of Salisbury	1	2	3	4	5
(n)...attend training elsewhere only if transport was provided	1	2	3	4	5
(o)The way I would like to do any new training isn't listed above. I would like to ... [please describe]					
.....					
.....					

Thank you. Now, we just need a little information about you so we know we have responses from a good cross-section of our volunteers...

- (a) Are you...
 - 1 Male
 - 2 Female
- (b) How old are you?
 - 1 Younger than 15
 - 2 15 to 24
 - 3 25 to 34
 - 4 35 to 44
 - 5 45 to 54
 - 6 55 to 64
 - 7 65 to 74
 - 8 75 to 84
 - 9 85 or older
 - 10 I prefer not to say
- (c) Do you have any difficulty speaking or understanding English?
 - 1 Yes
 - 2 No
- (d) Do you have any difficulty reading or writing English?
 - 1 Yes
 - 2 No
- (e) Are you able to perform most basic tasks on a computer?
 - 1 Yes
 - 2 No
- (f) Do you have access to a computer at home?
 - 1 Yes
 - 2 No
- (g) Do you have access to the internet at home?
 - 1 Yes
 - 2 No

Thank you.

Your time and thought in completing this survey is much appreciated and will make an important contribution to our planning process.

Please return your completed form to your Volunteer Coordinator or ask for a Reply-Paid envelope to post to us if you prefer (no stamp is required).

Would you like to participate further in our planning?

As our planning progresses, we may invite a small group of volunteers to a meeting to discuss the results of this survey and our possible plans for health and safety training in the future.

It would take about two hours and we would contact you first to see if you were available on the chosen day.

Would you like us to contact you about this discussion group?

₁ No thanks

₂ Yes

→ Name

→ Telephone or

→ Email(if available)

→ I am most often available in the... ₁ Morning ₂ Afternoon ₃ Early Evening



12 James Street, Salisbury, South Australia 5108
Telephone: 08 8406 8222 TTY: 08 8406 8596 (for people with a hearing impairment)
Email: city@salisbury.sa.gov.au www.salisbury.sa.gov.au