

**Work Health and Safety (WHS) Report**

**Quarter 4 2023**

This report provides an overview of WHS performance and initiatives across ACU during Quarter 4 2023.

# Executive Dashboard

Table 1 below provides key WHS indicators for Q4 2023 (October - December). These are aligned with good practice inside and outside the University sector and provide improved visibility as to WHS performance across both ACU overall and at the Portfolio level (where such data currently exists). To ensure that WHS data is contemporary and to allow the University and Portfolios to take action to “course-correct” as required to address WHS performance issues, WHS reports are now provided on a monthly basis, supplemented by quarterly reports (this report) and annual summary reports.

# WHS Performance

**2.1 Notifiable Incidents**

There was one notifiable incident reported to relevant WHS (OHS) regulators during Quarter 4 2023, concerning an employee in NSW losing consciousness after being struck on the head by a falling object. Employee has returned to work on a graduated return to work plan whilst they recover from the injury. Corrective actions have been implemented to avoid a recurrence.

**2.2 Riskware Incidents**

Riskware is the online incident and hazard reporting system used by ACU for reporting safety related matters. Student reports accounted for 38 of 55 (69%) riskware incidents that were logged in Quarter 4. Staff members reported 12 (22%) incidents, whilst 5 visitor reports (9%) were logged.

***Hazard Reports***

* 3 hazards were logged during Quarter 4.
* All 3 hazards have been actioned and closed by P&F as at the date of this report.

***Staff Lost Time Injuries***

* + In Quarter 4, two staff members sustained injuries / illnesses resulting in time lost from work.

**Mechanisms of Injury** (Staff and Students)

* + The top three mechanisms of injury that occurred during the period were:
		- Illness (excluding psychological) including fainting, chest pain, heart palpitations (students),
		- Falls on the same level including slips / trips, and
		- Sharps / Needlesticks

***Open Incidents***

* + Of the 55 incidents lodged during the quarter, 29 remain open in the system, requiring action in relation to completion or finalisation of the action plan.
	+ Portfolio leads are expected to raise the completion of actions and closure of riskware incidents with their teams to ensure these are addressed in a timely manner. Detailed reports on open incidents by Portfolios are available from the Safety and Wellbeing Team on request.

**Table 1 – WHS Dashboard for ACU (October to December 2023)**

|  | **Corporate Services** | **DVC Ethics** | **DVC R&E** | **Provost** | **Vice President** | **Vice-Chancellor & President** | **ACU OVERALL** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Notifiable Incidents** | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| **Total Incidents** | 7 | 0 | 0 | 48 | 0 | 0 | 55 |
| **Number of Employee Incidents** | 4 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 12 |
| **Number of Student Incidents** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 38 | 0 | 0 | 38 |
| **Number of Visitor Incidents** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| **Number of Contractor Incidents** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Total Hazards** | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| **Number of Employee Hazards** | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| **Number of Student Hazards** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Number of Visitor Hazards** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Number of Contractor Hazards** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Incidents Remaining Open** | 5 | 0 | 0 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 29 |
| **WC Claims Lodged** | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 5 |
| **WC Claims Currently Open** | 7 | 1 | 0 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 19 |
| **WC Claims Closed** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| **Total Days Lost** |  | 0 | 0 | 252 | 0 | 63 | 315 |
| **EAP Counselling Sessions Q4**  | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 96Q4123Q3 |
| **WHS Mandatory Training Completion (New staff (2023) / All staff)** | 76% staff completion (new staff since Jan 23)37% staff completion (all staff since Jan 20) |

Note: Data included in this report is aligned with the ACU organisational structure in place prior to the implementation of the Enabling our Future change plans. Organisational units and portfolios will be progressively aligned in future reports with the new structures as these become reflected in our workforce systems.

**2.3 Lost Time Performance**

Figures 1 and 2 show rolling 12-month Lost Time Injury Frequency Rates (LTIFR) and Total Recordable Injury Frequency Rates (TRIFR) respectively for ACU overall, as well as each Portfolio. Note that:

* LTIFR is calculated by dividing the number of lost time injuries (where an employee sustains an injury or illness and they are unable to work their next scheduled shift) divided by the total number of hours worked in the period, multiplied by a million.
* TRIFR is calculated by dividing the number of lost time injuries AND medical treatment injuries (i.e. an injury that is ‘beyond’ first aid and required intervention by a medical professional) injuries, divided by the total number of hours worked in the period.

Lost time performance and related indicators should be used with caution and do not provide a definitive view as to overall safety performance. They are best used in conjunction with a range of other lagging and leading safety indicators, such as those shown in Table 1, to provide a more comprehensive picture of WHS performance within a work area.

**Figure 1 – LTIFR for ACU (Overall and Portfolios)**

Notes to Figures 1 and 2:

* LTIFR is best viewed as a trend over time and over large employee populations.
* Rolling 12-month data for any given month takes into account WHS performance for the current month as well as that over the preceding 11 months.
* As calculations are based on hours worked, a single lost time incident in a portfolio with considerably smaller numbers of staff can have a large relative impact on LTIFR/TRIFR.

**Figure 2 – TRIFR for ACU (Overall and Portfolios)**

**2.4** **WHS Performance Commentary**

In reviewing and comparing data for Quarter 4 against the previous period, the following observations are made:

* Overall, the Quarter 4 performance has seen some improvement from Quarter 3 with less lost time injuries being recorded and less workers compensation claims being lodged.
* At the end of Quarter 3, the ACU Overall LTIFR was 3.26, whilst at the end of Quarter 4 this has only slightly increased to 3.27.
* At the end of Quarter 3, the ACU overall TRIF was 7.11, whilst at the end of Quarter 4 this has reduced slightly to 6.24.
* In Quarter 4, 5 workers compensation claims were lodged: 1 was for a psychological injury, the remaining 4 were lodged for physical injuries.

# WHS Achievements

WHS achievements for the quarter are highlighted below:

* **ACU Staff/Student Mental Wellbeing Strategy** - Initial discussions have commenced internally and externally around consulting support for the development of an ACU Staff/Student Mental Wellbeing Strategy in 2024. A VCAC paper is proposed.
* **Enabling our Future Support** - Support for staff impacted by the Enabling our Future changes continued to be provided. Three additional EAP-led Self Care through Change live sessions took place in November and December and R U OK? and Accidental Counsellor on-demand webinars were also extended until 31 December 2023.
* **New EAP Provider** - Acacia EAP was selected as the new EAP provider for ACU for 2024-2026 following a competitive tender process. Transitioning from the current provider and into the new provider is currently underway. Initial staff communications as to the transition arrangements occurred in December 2023 with a full launch planned in Quarter 1 2024. Ensuring continuity of care for ACU staff members seeing a clinician with the existing provider at the time the previous contract ended remains a key consideration.
* **Occupational First Aid** - One Safety and Wellbeing team member completed the Occupational First Aid Course, becoming the first accredited first aider of this type within ACU. As a result, they will be better able to support the first-aider network across ACU and advise on advanced first aid techniques.
* **“People at Work” psychosocial hazards survey** - The SafeWork Australia sponsored “People at Work” psychosocial hazards survey was launched within People and Capability (P&C) in October and closed November 2023. Results will be reviewed by the P&C Executive prior to conducting focus groups within P&C to consider the results, suggested actions and the process overall, with a view to a wider roll-out across ACU in 2024.
* **Riskware Upgrade** - An initial meeting between ACU and the Riskware vendor was held to commence the upgrade project for Riskware slated for 2024. In preparation, the Safety and Wellbeing team has started mapping “as-is” and “to-be” business processes for incident and hazard reporting, WHS risk management and WHS audits and inspections to inform the software implementation processes.
* **WHS Risk Assessment tender** – The tender closes 25 January, with responses to then be considered by the evaluation panel.
* **WHS Training** - Trial improvements in WHS training course accessibility were made, with a Manual Handling module (previously provided to ACU staff via an external website) imported into and made available via ACU’s Learning Management System (LMS). Next steps are to expand the WHS training offerings available within the ACU LMS to cover a range of hazards and safety topics.
* **WorkSafe Victoria Visit** - WorkSafe Victoria (OHS Regulator) attended the ACU Melbourne campus on 26 October and 29November for a “proactive intervention program” visit focused on consultation, psychosocial hazards and manual handling as part of a program of visits taking place across the Victorian higher education sector. Some minor improvement opportunities were identified, though no significant issues were raised.
* **WHSMS Training and Competency Procedure** - The Procedure has been updated following an update of the training needs assessment and review of AS/NZS ISO45001 requirement; it now includes consideration of training in psychosocial hazards. The draft Procedure is currently circulating for review and consultation.
* A draft paper has been prepared for VCAC outlining how the in-principle agreement to fund **HSRs** for 2 hours work per week and triple existing HSR numbers in 2024 will be achieved from a policy standpoint.
* The **Riskware mobile application** has gone live after months of planning and preparation. A Staff Bulletin article was published on the 6 December 2023, and more internal communications are to follow.
* Review completed of all current State-based and Commonwealth **COVID** safety recommendations to support the development of an updated ACU COVID safe approach moving forward.

# 4. Further Information

More detailed data regarding, and advice on improving, WHS performance for Portfolios, Faculties, Directorates and other work areas, is available on request from the Safety & Wellbeing team at healthsafetywellbeing@acu.edu.au.

Submitted for information by

People and Capability

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