Work health and safety

NSW has more than 34,000 Crown reserves—land set aside on behalf of the community for a wide range of public purposes such as environmental and heritage protection, recreation and sport, community halls and open space.

The Crown reserve system is owned by the NSW Government on behalf of the people of NSW. The broader community expects that Crown reserves will be managed with transparency, integrity and good governance. The NSW Department of Industry appoints Crown land managers (CLMs) who are responsible for the care, control and management of Crown reserves.

This resource on work health and safety (WHS) is part of a suite of tools designed to help CLMs administer their duties and enable a consistent approach to the governance of Crown reserves. The resource provides a brief overview of WHS for Crown reserves as well as a sample policy document and an incident form template.

This resource is aligned to the Crown reserve code of conduct—a guide for a minimum standard of behaviour and ethical decision-making. For WHS, the code states:

“We are responsible for the health and safety of individuals working, volunteering and/or using the Crown reserve.”

The department expects all Crown reserve stakeholders to uphold these values and comply with the code of conduct in the performance of their duties.

Manage and comply with health and safety requirements

WHS legislation aims to reduce the personal, social and economic impact of work-related accidents and incidents. Effective management of workplace risks also makes good business sense. It can help improve morale, enhance the reputation of the Crown reserve, avoid costs associated with injury and illness and minimise disruption to Crown reserve activities.

The department is committed to promoting legislative compliance and good WHS practice within Crown reserves. For the purposes of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (WHS Act), CLMs are required to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all engaged or caused to be engaged by the CLM. This includes others who come onto the Crown reserve, such as the Crown reserve users, members of the public and volunteers.

The attached templates are provided as examples that may assist CLMs in developing or enhancing their WHS risk management framework.

Obligations of Crown land managers who do not have employees (i.e. volunteer associations)

While volunteer organisations may be exempt from WHS legislation in regards to the duties imposed on Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU), applying the same safety framework will enhance safety outcomes for the organisation and enable it to clearly demonstrate due diligence should an incident occur.

Other resources

Information and other resources for CLMs are available on the NSW Department of Industry website: www.industry.nsw.gov.au/lands/reserves/resources

SafeWork NSW is the regulatory authority for WHS. Refer to their website for practical information, to assist compliance with work health and safety legislation www.safework.nsw.gov.au

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