1. Purpose:
The purpose of this procedure is to reduce the risk of Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD) occurring in the workplace by:

- identifying risk factors in workstation design that contribute to MSD work related injuries;
- providing a procedure for evaluation and assessment working environments;
- controlling any risks associated with work design, workstation set up and operation.

2. Scope:
This procedure applies to all Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) workplaces including schools and central and regional offices.

3. Definitions

**Ergonomics:** The assessment and design of the relationships between people and their work, objects, tools, equipment and environments. The working environment may include:
- workstations (sitting and standing);
- equipment layout and operation;
- computer systems;
- maintenance tasks performed on a plant item.

**Management OHS Nominee:** A position nominated by the Workplace Manager to oversee the operational aspects of implementing health, safety and wellbeing initiatives, policies and procedures.

**Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD):** A Musculoskeletal Disorder is an injury or illness that affects muscles, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints, cartilage or spinal discs.

**Workplace Manager:** The Manager or Principal responsible for the school, central office, regional office or other DEECD workplace.

4. References:

- **Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004**
- **Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007**
- **HB59:1994 Ergonomics, the Human Factor – a Practical Approach to Work Systems Design**
- **Officewise – A guide to Health and Safety in the Office, January 2006** (WorkSafe Victoria)

5. Responsibility:

**Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominees** are responsible for:

- ensuring that ergonomic hazards relating to poor design of tools, equipment, work station or work practices are identified and the associated risks controlled;
- ensuring that all employees have been provided with adequate equipment for tasks undertaken;
- ensuring that employees, contractors and visitors have been provided with relevant information, instruction and/or training in the use of equipment and work practices;
- encouraging and reinforcing proper working techniques;
- ensuring that resources are utilised to control hazards associated with workstation ergonomics (e.g. manual handling, MSD) and reviewing suggested risk controls to ensure they are implemented and effective;
ensuring ergonomic assessments of workstations are conducted and controls are implemented;
ensuring that records of the ergonomic assessments of workstations are maintained.

Employees are responsible for:

- not placing themselves or others at risk of injury by correctly using furniture, equipment and accessories with good ergonomic practices (e.g. docking laptops onto support stands);
- participating in the identification of hazards associated with their workstation by completing ergonomic self-assessments and reporting task-related and equipment-related hazards as required;
- participating in training as provided;
- following proper working techniques including safe work instructions.

The functions of Health and Safety Representatives and/or OHS Committees can include:

- encouraging employees to perform self-assessments of their workstation and report task-related and equipment-related hazards as required;
- assisting Workplace Managers and/or Management OHS Nominees and employees in the identification, assessment and control of workstation health and safety risks;
- advising relevant Workplace Managers and/or Management OHS Nominees of any incident and injury trends.

6. Procedure:

6.1 Ergonomic Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

If an employee identifies an ergonomic issue associated with a work process, plant design or operation, it is to be reported to their Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee. The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee are to ensure that the employee completes the Plant and Equipment Risk Management Form or Task Based Risk Management Form.

If an employee identifies an ergonomic issue associated with their workstation set up, it is to be reported to the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee. The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee are to make sure that the employee performs a self-assessment of their workstation using the Screen Based Workstation Risk Management Form.

The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee may contact the DEECD OHS Advisory Service on 1300 074 715 for further advice or information, if required.

6.2 Risk Control

For any ergonomic hazards identified during the assessment, controls are to be established and implemented. The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee in consultation with the employee are to identify appropriate controls to eliminate or reduce hazards as part of the risk assessment process. It is the responsibility of the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee to review the controls and ensure they are implemented. The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee are to maintain records of all agreed controls documented on the Workstation Screen Based Ergonomic Risk Management Form, Plant and Equipment Risk Management Form or Task Based Risk Management Form.
Examples of ergonomic controls, from most effective to least effective, may include:

- eliminating the task;
- changing the nature of the task to remove repetition;
- changing workstation layout which might include repositioning items that are used frequently in close proximity of the user (e.g. telephone);
- changing chairs that do not adjust to the suit the user for suitable alternatives;
- providing flat screen monitors to increase desk space;
- providing information to employees on the importance of rest breaks and stretching.

### 6.3 Review of Controls

Workplace Managers and/or Management OHS Nominees are responsible for reviewing ergonomic hazard controls in consultation with employees. This review is to be documented on the Workstation Screen Based Ergonomic Risk Management Form, Plant and Equipment Risk Management Form or Task Based Risk Management Form.

If the control is deemed inadequate the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee may request advice from the DEECD OHS Advisory Service on 1300 074 715. If deemed necessary the advisory service can engage the services of an ergonomist to identify, assess and suggest controls for the hazard.

If the employee is not satisfied with the controls implemented, the employee may raise this grievance in accordance with the OHS Issue Resolution Flowchart.

### 6.4 Workplace Risk Register

Workplace Managers and/or Management OHS Nominees are to review and update the Workplace Risk Register when ergonomic issues are identified, assessed and controlled.

### 7. Related Documentation:

- Workstation Screen Based Ergonomic Risk Management Form
- Plant and Equipment Risk Management Form
- Task Based Risk Management Form
- OHS Issue Resolution Flowchart
- Workplace Risk Register

### 8. Version Control

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<td>Reviewed in line with 2 yearly OHSMS Review. Some wording changes and reference to Workstation Screen Based Ergonomic Risk Management Form instead of previous form.</td>
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| 3       | All             | Two yearly review as per the |
|         |                  | August     | ESWB |
OHSMS requirements. Change in header to reflect requirements of As 4801.