

# National Mental Health and Wellbeing Roadmap

An industry-led, industry-specific plan for improving psychological health and safety for road transport, warehousing and logistics.

2025 - 2028

#### Sal Petroccitto OAM

#### **Chief Executive Officer, National Heavy Vehicle Regulator**



Our nation's truck drivers and logistics workers are vital to the wider Australian community, so improving their health, safety and wellbeing is a priority for the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) and is pivotal to keeping the sector moving.

Those who make up our heavy vehicle industry face unique challenges, including enduring long hours on the road covering vast distances, extended periods of isolation away from family and friends, and fatigue.

Both mental and physical health issues are overrepresented within the industry, and with the added pressures of tight schedules and the need for constant alertness while operating a heavy vehicle, it is critical drivers have access to the resources they need to ensure their wellbeing comes first.

The NHVR is proud to have partnered with the Healthy Heads in Trucks & Sheds (Healthy Heads) Foundation to deliver the sector's first single, national mental health plan – the National Mental Health and Wellbeing Roadmap (the Roadmap) in 2021, and now welcomes the review and update of the Roadmap.

The Roadmap provides the trucking workforce and broader supply chain with the tools and resources needed to build healthier and thriving workplaces.

While the heavy vehicle industry is extremely resilient, we need to continue to work together to ensure the entire road transport, warehousing, and logistics sector is supported when it comes to their mental health and wellbeing.

The NHVR is actively working to enhance mental health resources and access for industry, and being a part of this mutual commitment is one of the ways we are improving health outcomes for all.

#### Naomi Frauenfelder

#### Chief Executive Officer, Healthy Heads in Trucks & Sheds



In 2020 Healthy Heads worked collaboratively with industry to develop the National Mental Health and Wellbeing Roadmap 2021–2024 (the Roadmap), as the sector's first national mental health strategy.

We are proud to offer this second iteration of the Roadmap, to span 2025 – 2028, updated to ensure alignment with new legislation and to offer guidance to the industry to promote mental health in the workplace and prevent psychological harm.

The aim of the Roadmap is to support all levels of the sector in starting or continuing on their journey to build psychologically safe, healthy and thriving working environments. As the industry umbrella body for mental health and wellbeing, our role is to coordinate the implementation of the Roadmap, ensuring that everyone has access to the resources and tools they need.

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# Who we are and what we're doing

Healthy Heads in Trucks & Sheds (Healthy Heads) is a not-for-profit foundation that supports the mental health and wellbeing of people working in the road transport, warehousing and logistics industries. We were established by industry, for industry, to address specific challenges faced by the sector.



#### **Our vision**

To provide everyone in the road transport, warehousing and logistics industries with what they need to support their mental health and physical wellbeing, and to ensure these needs are recognised as being vital to support a thriving workforce into tomorrow.

#### **Our mission**

At Healthy Heads, we are passionate about creating psychologically safe, healthy, and thriving working environments for truck drivers, distribution centre and warehouse team members, as well as all other supply chain related staff.

In response to a critical need, Healthy Heads has developed targeted solutions to support the psychological health, safety and wellbeing of those in the road transport, warehousing and logistics industries. Our approach includes awareness programs, support resources, mental health training and industry-specific wellness initiatives. By providing these tailored tools and fostering a community of support, we aim to transform the sector into a safer, healthier workplace, in which all individuals can thrive.

Taking a national, holistic approach, at Healthy Heads we see the solution

to the sobering statistics in our sector as being one of collaboration and leadership at all levels. Facilitating and coordinating this single, National Mental Health and Wellbeing Roadmap (the Roadmap) for the workforce is a true example of industries working for industries.

In addition to providing strategic guidance to all industry stakeholders, the Roadmap will incorporate and inform the psychological health, safety and wellbeing initiatives which sit under the three strategic ambitions of Healthy Heads.

# **Our Strategic Ambitions**

#### **Awareness**

- Driving awareness and reducing stigma.
- Building mental health literacy through education.

#### Support

- Developing industry-specific resources.
- · Enabling access to support.

#### **Advocacy**

- Evidencing and profiling industry mental health needs.
- Advocating for and recommending solutions.

Healthy Heads' work program is guided and informed by an Industry Working Group comprising representatives from the road transport, warehousing and logistics industries, and mental health sector.

Accordingly, the Roadmap is informed by the shared experiences of industry representatives, as well as the most current research and evidencebased approaches for creating psychologically healthy, safe and thriving workplaces across the sector.

### Everyone has a role

The Roadmap is designed for those who are part of the road transport, warehousing and logistics industries, including industry bodies, large businesses, small and medium enterprises, and owner-operators.

Successful implementation depends on the ownership and accountability of all leaders at every level of each industry.

The responsibility of caring for the mental health and wellbeing of employees within a workplace sits with all of us. Every workplace needs to work in unison to identify, plan, execute and review the implementation of this Roadmap.

# The benefits to industry, workplace and workforce

The workplace both influences and is influenced by workers' mental health, positively and negatively.

A report published by PwC Australia in partnership with Beyond Blue revealed that, on average, organisations could expect a return on investment (ROI) of \$2.30 for every \$1 spent on effectively implementing actions that create a psychologically safe and thriving workplace.<sup>1</sup>

The ROI was measured through a variety of proven organisational performance indicators, including absenteeism rates, presenteeism (reduced productivity at work) and workers' compensation claims.



The overall ROI was reported to be even higher for the transport, postal and warehousing industries, at \$2.80 for every \$1 invested by organisations in the mental health and wellbeing of their people.

In addition to the ROI reported by PwC, the benefits of creating a psychologically safe and thriving workplace can be seen in the following ways:

- improved mental health of workers
- improved workforce productivity
- increased workforce engagement and morale
- greater loyalty within the workforce
- becoming an employer of choice
- reduced workplace costs associated with:
  - · absenteeism and turnover
  - workers' compensation claims and premiums
  - fines for breaches of health and safety laws
  - discrimination claims.

When workplaces don't prioritise mental health, we see an increase in costs associated with these factors and a reduction in productivity, morale and job satisfaction.

# A compelling case for small to medium business

The arguments for small and medium organisations investing in mental health initiatives are even more persuasive.



Small essential service providers received an average ROI of \$14.5 while medium organisations showed a consistently high ROI for each mental health initiative.

These findings highlight the financial advantage for small and medium enterprises when investing in mental health initiatives.

### How to use this document

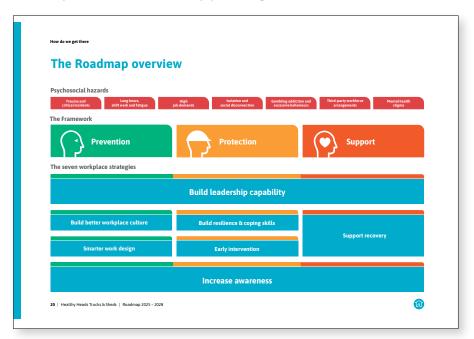
The Roadmap is aimed at all businesses and stakeholders within the road transport, warehousing and logistics industries.

Our intention is to provide strategic guidance and support for creating psychologically healthy, safe and thriving workplaces.

The development of the Roadmap was achieved by drawing on:

- the collective insights and experiences of industry representatives and subject matter experts.
- current research examining the hazards for mental health and wellbeing in the sector.
- an evidence-based framework for creating psychologically healthy, safe and thriving workplaces.
   This has informed the Framework and is outlined in this document.

On page 20 of this document, you will find a visual Roadmap overview that will help you navigate this document.



Additional supporting resources which will assist you can be found on the Healthy Heads in Trucks and Sheds website:

www.healthyheads.org.au

#### Build a Workplace Wellbeing Plan

**Roadmap Planner** 



#### **Workplace Wellbeing Plan Examples**



# **Definition of Roadmap terms**

#### **Blended learning**

Blended learning combines teaching and learning methods from face-toface, mobile and online learning and includes elements of both concurrent and standalone online learning options.

#### **Continuous improvement**

Continuous improvement is an ongoing effort to improve products, services or processes. It is where processes are constantly evaluated and improved in light of their efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility to ensure they are constantly getting better.<sup>2</sup>

#### Controls

Measures that are put in place to minimise psychosocial risks.

# Employee assistance program

This is a confidential, external counselling service offered to staff. Employee assistance programs (EAPs) aim to assist with the early

detection and management of work and/or personal issues, including mental health conditions, which may impact on a worker's performance or wellbeing.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Integrated approach**

The term 'integrated approach' defines three co-dependent actions that prevent, protect and support the mental health and wellbeing challenges regardless of their cause, to create psychologically safe and thriving workplaces.

#### **Mental health**

A state of mental wellbeing that enables a person to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community.<sup>3</sup>

#### Mental health concern

A mental health concern interferes with how a person thinks, feels, behaves and interacts with other people. However, these impacts are typically less severe and of a shorter duration when compared to a person who has been diagnosed with a mental health condition. If it's not effectively dealt with, a mental health concern may develop into a mental health condition.

#### Mental health condition

A mental health condition significantly affects how a person thinks, feels and behaves. It is diagnosed by a health professional and can also be referred to as a "mental illness" or "mental disorder". While the impact on the person's capacity to function can range from moderate to severe, a mental health condition can be successfully managed with the right treatment and support.

#### Mental health stigma

The term "stigma" is associated with being "different". The World Health Organization (2001) defines stigma as: "A mark of shame, disgrace or disapproval which results in a person being rejected, discriminated against and excluded from participating in a number of different areas of society".4

For the purpose of this document, the term "mental health" stigma refers to the stigma associated with mental health concerns or conditions.<sup>2</sup>

#### Peer support program

For the purposes of this document, a peer support program refers to a formalised program or structure which enables and provides access to peer support in the workplace.<sup>2</sup>

#### Psychological first aid

Psychological first aid (PFA) is a supportive and practical response to fellow human beings who have recently been exposed to a critical incident or potentially traumatic event, and may need support. Those affected can experience a range of early reactions (physical, psychological, emotional and behavioural), impacting their ability to cope. PFA can be applied in the workplace and can assist people to cope by identifying their needs, increasing their sense of safety, connectedness and calm, and linking to further specialised help if required.



#### Foreword

#### **Psychological injury**

Cognitive, emotional and behavioural symptoms that negatively impact a worker's functioning.

#### **Psychological safety**

The ability to share feelings, beliefs and experiences openly at work without fear of retribution, loss of status or punishment.

# Psychologically healthy and safe workplace

A workplace in which risks are acknowledged and appropriate action taken to minimise their potential negative impact on an individual's mental health.

#### **Psychosocial hazard**

A hazard arising in the workplace that has the potential to cause psychological harm to a worker. Examples of hazards include excessive work demand; remote or isolated work; poor support and exposure to trauma.

#### **Psychosocial risk**

A risk to the health or safety of a worker that has arisen from a psychosocial hazard.

When psychosocial hazards have been identified, the risks these hazards create then need to be assessed.

Risks are assessed by reviewing the duration, frequency and severity of the hazards.

#### **Reasonable adjustments**

Reasonable adjustments are changes to a job role or workplace that help someone with a mental health condition to continue working, or return to the workplace if they have taken time off. Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, employers must make reasonable adjustments to support people with a disability or a mental health condition, provided the person is able to fulfil the core requirements of the job.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Return to work**

Return to work (RTW) refers to helping workers with injuries recover and get back to work. Legislation in this area provides for the safe and durable return to work of workers with injuries as early as possible, and consideration of their injury. Return to work support should occur for workers suffering any illness, injury or disability, including mental health conditions, both compensable and non-compensable.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Team culture**

A team culture is made up of the values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours shared by a team. It is how people work together towards a common goal and how they treat each other. Team culture is influenced by the overall workplace culture.

#### **Thriving**

Thriving represents a vision to influence movement along the continuum, where workers are engaged, productive and in a personal state of optimal mental health, as described in the WHO's definition of "mental health".

#### **Treatment**

Treatment is an intervention delivered by a mental health professional to assist someone with a mental health condition. Treatment can take many forms, including psychological and/ or medical, and exists alongside workplace support and personal coping strategies.

#### Wellbeing

A state of wellbeing is not just the absence of injury or illness, but is a holistic combination of factors which contribute to a person's overall happiness and capacity to flourish. Wellbeing is generally recognised as being made up of our mental health, social health and physical health.

#### Workplace culture

Workplace culture is a system of shared assumptions, values and beliefs, which influences and is influenced by how people behave in workplaces. Often known as "the way things are done around here" 2

# Workplace psychological health and safety

The factors and structures that influence the mental health and wellbeing of employees. It involves the promotion of mental health in the workplace and the prevention of psychological harm.



Focus on mental health and wellbeing in the transport, postal and warehousing industries has been fast-tracked since the release of our inaugural Roadmap in 2021.

Recent global events have brought the wellbeing of workers into view like never before, and to help safeguard our working population there have been changes to health and safety legislation, bringing with it heightened awareness and responsibilities.

In 2023, Safe Work Australia released its Key Insights Data report. The transport, postal and warehousing

The transport, postal and warehousing industries received the lowest overall thriving workplace index score of any sector.

industry had the highest fatality count of all sector (i.e. the highest number of fatalities) and the second highest fatality rate (i.e. proportion of fatalities to workers in the industry).6

SuperFriend also released its most recent Indicators of a Thriving Workplace Survey (2023). This report compared the perceptions of employees in the transport, postal and warehousing industries against other sectors.7

- The transport, postal and warehousing industries received the lowest overall thriving workplace index score of any sector.
- The transport, postal and warehousing sector has been the most consistently lowest ranked since 2017.
- Of those with a mental health condition, 48% reported their workplace had caused it or made it worse, higher than the national average.

### Approximately one in five Australians will experience a diagnosable mental health condition each year.8

It is estimated at least nine Australians die from suicide every day, and 75% of them are men.9 This statistic must be addressed in all male-dominated industries, such as ours.

To instigate genuine change, the road transport, warehousing and logistics industries need to work together as one. Shared responsibility and committed collaboration are critical to establishing a psychologically healthy and safe solution.



Truck drivers had the highest number of suicides of any profession between 2008 and 2014.



# Transformation in workplace mental health: Shifting perspectives and regulatory advances

Since the original publication of the Roadmap, there have been significant changes in the landscape of the awareness, understanding and management of mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. These changes include a common understanding of terms of language and phrases along with significant regulatory and legislative changes.

State and federal authorities have updated Occupational/Work Health and Safety (OHS/WHS) regulations to include definitions of psychosocial hazards and codes of practice for managing psychosocial safety at work. A new code of practice and obligation for managing psychosocial safety at work first came into effect on 1 April 2023.

In our industry there is a strong focus on compliance and risk management. Hazards are identified and controls put in place to mitigate these risks. Psychosocial hazards exist just the same as physical and mechanical

hazards. While a hazard may be an event or a situation that has the potential to cause harm, a psychosocial hazard is any workplace condition or factor that could harm an employee's psychological health and safety (mental health or wellbeing).

# **Industry Challenges: Current and future**

#### Skills shortages

52% of small to medium enterprises (SMEs) in the transport and storage sector said labour shortages were a very significant issue for their business in Quarter 1 2023, which was by far the highest of all industries and up sharply from 38% in the previous quarter.<sup>10</sup>

The aging workforce, coupled with a lack of skilled entrants, has created a talent gap impacting the growth of the industry.<sup>11</sup>

Truck drivers and store persons represent 40% of job vacancies in the industry with 14,058 vacancies per month.<sup>12</sup>

#### **Supply chain disruption**

Factors such as increasingly unpredictable weather patterns, frequent catastrophic events, trade disputes and changing government regulations present a significant challenge to our industry.

#### **Environmental concerns**

Consumer and business demand, and government pressure for sustainable deliveries will continue to increase.

#### **Rising costs**

Industrial rent has increased, which combined with increasing construction, wage and land costs and prolonged building lead times presents challenges in building or renting warehouse space. In addition, one of the most significant challenges facing the industry is rising fuel prices.

# The psychosocial hazards motivating this action

The Roadmap prioritises the hazards that directly impact mental health and wellbeing. While some hazards are more applicable to truck drivers, many also impact people working in warehousing and logistics.

#### Trauma and critical incidents

The exposure to trauma as a result of critical incidents in workplaces is a significant hazard in the road transport, warehousing and logistics industries.

A comprehensive three-year Driving Health study conducted by Monash University examined 12 years of data pertaining to the road transport industry. Published research findings in 2018 included the following:

- Truck drivers had a 13-fold higher risk of dying at work than other Australian employees.13
- Over 120,000 injury and fatality claims were accepted from 2004-2015.13

- The rate of workers' compensation claims made by truck drivers was found to be 70.3 per 1000 employees per year, compared to a rate of 21.2 for all other employees.14

From a mental health perspective, the prevalence of depression among truck drivers appears to be higher than the general population.<sup>15</sup>

The potential consequences of mental health conditions and road accidents are clear, with one study reporting longdistance heavy-vehicle drivers with a diagnosis of depression were over six times more likely to be involved in a crash than those without depression.<sup>16</sup>

In warehousing and logistics environments, the use of heavy machinery by transporters and the movement of heavy pallets by operators increases the prevalence of "near misses" and accidents. Despite continuous safety improvements in warehousing environments, serious accidents and injuries do occur in workplaces, and can lead to trauma in victims and witnesses.

46% of all claims for mental health conditions in the transport, postal and warehousing industries were due to "vehicle incidents".17



#### Long hours, shift work and fatigue

The impact of long hours and shift work is common across most driving and warehousing roles, especially during peak periods when the pressure to meet deadlines increases.

It's inevitable the disruption to sleep patterns and the resultant fatigue will negatively affect the mental health and wellbeing of people working in these industries.

Chronic sleep problems and chronic fatigue or low energy are among the most commonly reported wellbeing issues among truck drivers.18 High levels of fatigue in warehousing and logistics roles are due to many factors such as long hours, shift work, rotating rosters and the prolonged concentration required to manage high-volume movements.

#### High job demands

High job demands and low job control are known hazards that can have a significant impact on the mental health of employees, especially those in the front line. It's common for shift workers to have little control over their working hours. Work deadlines and allocated time slots mean drivers also have limited choices in this area.

When combined with high job demands, low job control can further compound the negative impact on mental health.

#### Isolation and social disconnection

A significant proportion of workers within the industry work remotely and can be isolated in their roles. Shift work also leads to minimal contact with colleagues and families for extended periods.

#### Loneliness and depression are among the most common concerns reported by drivers.18

Peak periods for the industries typically occur at times when others are taking holiday leave, which can create a further sense of disconnection from friendship groups and loved ones. In the Driving Health qualitative study, long-haul truck drivers consistently reported that previous relationship breakdowns were due to long periods of time away from their spouses and families.19

Isolation and social disconnection can have a significant impact on mental health as well as social health, thereby creating a broader wellbeing concern.

#### Gambling addiction and excessive behaviours

Excessive gambling and substance use can be considered impacts of poor mental health, as well as hazards for mental health conditions and other health problems.

A survey found drivers experiencing symptoms of depression and anxiety were 27% more likely to abuse substances.20

Drivers were two to three times more likely to report using stimulant drugs when paid on a payment-by-results or contingency-payment basis.21

The financial pressures in both road transport and warehousing roles may also lead to problem gambling. The ease of access to gambling through mobile phone technology while working in isolated environments can contribute to the issue.

#### **Third-party workforce arrangements**

Contract work arrangements, such as those through third-party contractors, is commonplace in the industry. Consequently, part of the industry workforce is transient. While benefits to the industry exist for workplaces and workforce alike, there continue to be some challenges to providing a consistent and at times equitable experience for all workers in the industry.

Specifically, the varying nature of contractor and casual work contracts across industry workplaces can limit opportunities to access mental health and wellbeing-related resources - due to the entitlements offered in the temporary work arrangements by the contracting workplace.

This reflects differences in workerrelated entitlements across pay, non-monetary and other reward and recognition areas offered to contract and temporary workforces, when compared to their permanent and salaried counterparts.

These differences not only prevent this section of the workforce from possibly accessing needed supports in relation to mental health and wellbeing, but can negatively impact general workplace experiences where this may contribute to mental health and wellbeing challenges.

#### Mental health stigma

It is important to recognise the culture of stigma surrounding mental health in the road transport, warehousing and logistics industries. It means those within our male-dominated industries are less likely to utilise existing mental health and wellbeing services and resources.

The low likelihood of the workforce voicing concerns and seeking help is a significant contributor to mental health and suicide statistics.

### **Everyone will benefit** from change

The evidence demonstrates the hazards outlined here have a considerable impact on the road transport, warehousing and logistics industries, and that there is a clear need for action.

The Roadmap aims to address this through workplace actions underpinned by an evidence-based psychosocial hazard controls framework.

These actions are designed to support all people within the road transport, warehousing and logistics industries, ultimately creating psychologically healthy and safe workplaces. Taking action will be good for everyone and good for business.



# Psychologically healthy and safe workplace

### **Prioritising the** wellbeing of all workers

This means a workplace which takes a systemic and integrated approach to supporting mental health positively and seeks to create an environment where the mental health and wellbeing of all workers is prioritised and cared for.

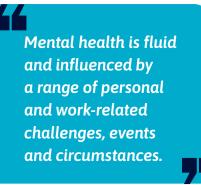
Psychologically healthy and safe workplaces move beyond awareness of mental health and simply adhering to work health and safety laws, which state the requirement to prevent and manage psychosocial risks where practicable.



A psychologically healthy and safe workplace promotes mental health and wellbeing. It supports those who already experience positive mental health, and contributes to stopping or lessening movement along the mental health continuum.

# **Understanding mental health**

It is important to better understand and define mental health at the individual level. Historically, the stigma around mental health in part stems from the negative perceptions associated with the term. In fact, mental health is something that we all possess and by definition is a positive attribute where a person is thriving.



These can be termed mental health hazards, and the person's ability to recognise, manage and cope with these hazards will also influence their mental health. Importantly, workplace and personal factors impact each other, which requires all workplaces to identify the strategies and action that will best support their people.

### The mental health continuum



Thriving represents a vision to influence movement along the continuum, where workers are engaged, productive and in a personal state of optimal mental health.

#### **Mental health**

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as: A state of mental wellbeing that enables a person to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community.

#### Mental health concern

A mental health concern interferes with how a person thinks, feels, behaves and interacts with other people. However, these impacts are typically less severe and of a shorter duration when compared to a person who has been diagnosed with a mental health condition. If it's not effectively dealt with, a mental health concern may develop into a mental health condition.

#### Mental health condition

A mental health condition significantly affects how a person thinks, feels, behaves and interacts with other people. It is diagnosed by a health professional and can also be referred to as a "mental illness" or "mental disorder". While the impact on the person's capacity to function can range from moderate to severe, a mental health condition can be successfully managed with the right treatment and support.

UNWELL **THRIVING** 

Optimal mental health Mental health concern Mental health condition Positive and healthy Moderate to severe Mild or temporary functioning at work impact on functioning impact on daily functioning and home at work and home at work and home



### **The Framework**

### **Prevention. Protection. Support.**

To guide the development towards psychologically healthy and safe workplaces in the road transport, warehousing and logistics industries, Healthy Heads in Trucks & Sheds has adopted the Framework.<sup>23</sup>

The Framework, developed to improve psychological health and safety in Australian workplaces, is built around the components of preventing harm, intervening early and supporting recovery.

The Roadmap will provide a strategic direction based on this integrated and evidence-based approach to creating psychologically healthy and safe workplaces.



Proactively prevent or reduce the impact of psychosocial hazards.



**Protection** 

Enhance employee strengths and capabilities, and encourage early help-seeking behaviour.



Positively support and manage all mental health and wellbeing concerns, regardless of their cause.

# The seven workplace strategies



**Prevention** 



**Protection** 



Support

Research-informed workplace strategies support this integrated approach to creating psychologically healthy and safe workplaces.<sup>23</sup>

The seven workplace strategies support one or all of the components of the Framework. They will also have an effect on lessening the critical hazards identified earlier in this document.

#### **Build leadership capability**

Leaders set the standard in the workplace. Provide your leaders with appropriate training and support to manage psychosocial hazards at work and to increase their confidence in navigating mental health and wellbeing. This will help create a workplace culture where employees feel psychologically safe and empowered to look after their own mental health. Everything happens from the top down.

#### The benefits

Prioritising leadership capability in the area of psychological health and safety drives and creates significant impacts on each of the remaining strategies in the workplace.

Building leadership capability will have a bearing on workplace cultures and reduce mental health stigma. This improves the mental health and wellbeing, productivity, engagement and morale of workers.

#### **Increase awareness**

Awareness of how psychosocial hazards can impact mental health and wellbeing contributes to all of the strategic actions, and requires us to be aware and accepting of mental health, and to recognise the importance of prevention, protection and support in our workplaces. Nothing can be addressed without awareness.

#### The benefits

Increasing awareness is one of the first ingredients required in reducing the mental health stigma in the road transport, warehousing and logistics industries.

For people leaders, increasing awareness of mental health and how psychosocial hazards can impact it leads to improved confidence and capability to support others, which leads to positive behaviour change.

For the workforce, increasing awareness of our own mental health leads to improved coping mechanisms and willingness to seek help, particularly if positive attitudes have been rolemodelled by people leaders and the broader workplace.

#### **Build better workplace culture**

Workplace culture is defined as the values and behaviours acceptable in a workplace. A psychologically healthy and safe culture promotes the positive values and behaviours that support mental health for everyone.

#### The benefits

Better work cultures are characterised by psychological safety and create more open and engaged work environments, where people feel safe in speaking up and hazards for industries are addressed proactively and collaboratively. A better work culture creates a workforce with improved mental health and wellbeing, morale, productivity and engagement.

#### **Smarter work design**

Smarter work design requires a proactive approach towards creating psychologically healthy and safe workplaces within the industry



through redesigning job-related hazards impacting mental health and wellbeing.

#### The benefits

Actions which focus on improving work design and increasing the level of individual ownership and control have been shown to improve the mental health and wellbeing of people, as well as improvements in operations and productivity.

#### Build resilience & coping skills

Building workplace resilience and coping skills increases workers' capacity to cope with and adapt to hazards within their job roles and industries as a whole.

#### The benefits

There are significant improvements in the engagement, productivity and performance of workers when targeted initiatives and supports are offered to enhance their knowledge and skills.

#### **Early intervention**

Early intervention involves protecting the psychological health and safety of workers through the promotion of resources and support services that encourage positive mental health, and in the response to workers experiencing early signs of mental health and wellbeing concerns.

#### The benefits

This strategy can have a significant impact on promoting positive helpseeking behaviour, reducing mental health stigma and improving workplace cultures. If workers receive help at an early stage, the severity and duration of mental health concerns experienced can be significantly reduced.

Early intervention approaches may require reasonable adjustments to roles. However, the long-term benefits to the mental health, productivity and engagement of workers is likely to outweigh any temporary impact on operations.

#### **Support recovery**

Support recovery involves responding to known mental health concerns as well as diagnosable mental health conditions. It involves taking appropriate actions to ensure the recovery and return to work (RTW) of workers, for both compensable and non-compensable mental health conditions, in a supportive manner. Ideally, workplaces should encourage and lead the practice of making reasonable adjustments whereby people remain connected and engaged to their workplace and co-workers.

#### The benefits

Returning to work in a safe and sustainable manner is beneficial to mental health and considers how psychosocial hazards can impact it, and the wellbeing of workers. It is also known that as time off work increases. the likelihood of a successful RTW decreases.

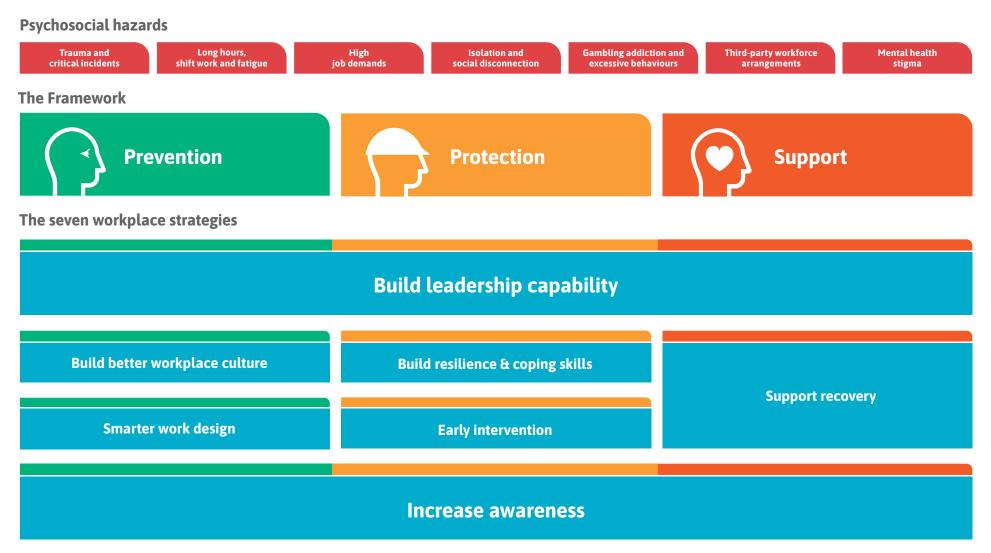
By engaging with workers early and facilitating their recovery and RTW in a proactive and supportive manner, workplaces can have a significant and positive impact on RTW outcomes and their workers' compensation claim costs and premiums.

### **Psychosocial hazards**

Every one of the seven workplace strategies positively addresses the following hazards contributing to poor mental health in the road transport, warehousing and logistics industries:

- trauma and critical incidents
- long hours, shift work and fatigue
- high job demands
- isolation and social disconnection
- gambling addiction and excessive behaviour
- third-party workforce arrangements
- mental health stigma.

# The Roadmap overview





# The seven workplace strategies are designed to provide a structure to develop actions which create psychologically healthy and safe workplaces.

Workplaces that have existing mental health and wellbeing initiatives can incorporate and align them to the seven strategies to maximise the positive impacts for their people.

### **Build leadership capability**

# Leadership commitment and engagement

- Gain a commitment from all leaders to prioritise and support the mental health of their people.
- Establish clear expectations around leadership's role in creating a psychologically safe and thriving workplace.
- Ensure all leaders support the mental health of their people with the same attention they give to physical health and safety.
- Confirm compliance with relevant legislative requirements such as the Work Health & Safety, Equal Opportunity, Privacy, Anti-Discrimination Act.
- Encourage leaders to prioritise the mental health of their people by making reasonable adjustments to duties when required.

- Develop clear roles and responsibilities for all leaders in position descriptions, performance management and development plans (where applicable), and ensure mental health is a focus in their performance evaluations.
- Avoid recruiting leaders solely based on their technical and operational skill and knowledge. Make people and communication skills a key requirement of recruitment. This will support the quality of interpersonal relationships, and increase the quality of conversations around mental health and wellbeing.

# Build leadership capability cont.

#### **Training and support**

- Provide targeted training programs for leaders in psychosocial hazard management, mental health and broader leadership capability skills.
- Tailored mental health training and support programs should aim to meet the following requirements:
- Contain content specific to the unique needs of industry requirements, the workplace, and the specific job demands of both leaders and frontline workers.

- **Embrace the Framework** (prevention, protection and support).
- Provide practical information which can be applied by leaders within the context of their own positions.
- Involve leaders in case scenarios. activities and skills around the key hazards of the sector. These could include responding to critical incidents, suicide awareness and response, and creating a connected workforce.
- Embed behaviour-change practice through follow-up coaching sessions or the establishment of "champions" within the organisation.
- Take training into areas of broader leadership capability training, e.g. having effective conversations, giving feedback or managing performance for success.

# Build leadership capability cont.

#### Tools, resources & support services

#### The actions

- Complement leadership training programs and provide ongoing support.
- Provide the appropriate tools and resources to help people leaders engage effectively on matters relating to mental health. A blended learning approach will maximise their confidence and capability.
- Resources for people leaders need to cover the following topics:

- Holding supportive conversations with workers about their mental health and wellbeing.
- Connecting with workers at an individual and team level to promote and encourage seeking help early.
- Having conversations around the personal and work-related hazards for industries, e.g. isolation, fatigue, high job demands, critical incidents and suicide.
- Managing the performance of teams and people.
- Making reasonable adjustments to support a worker's mental health and return to work.



As each situation will likely come with a unique set of challenges and uncertainties, support options for people leaders may include:

- people and culture or HR business partners
- health and safety specialists
- injury management specialists
- employee assistance programs and manager support programs
- support services such as Beyond Blue, Black Dog Institute, etc.

#### **Increase awareness**

Mental health awareness programs and resources

- Provide programs and resources that increase awareness of mental health, reduce stigma around mental health, develop coping mechanisms and encourage seeking help.
- Establish mental health awareness programs that address the risk for industry and protective factors. Topics need to include:
- Understanding the prevalence of mental health conditions, including substance use and suicide awareness with industry-specific references.
- Identifying personal and work-related specific hazards for mental health.
- Recognising common signs and symptoms of mental health concerns and the importance of seeking help early.

- Developing skills around effective and supportive conversations about mental health.
- Improving coping mechanisms to look after one's mental health.
- Becoming familiar with the internal and external resources and support services available.
- **Continually improve awareness** training programs, tools and resources by evaluating their suitability and accessibility.
- Regularly review the uptake and feedback for existing programs and initiatives.
- Consistently progress the methods of mental health promotion, including the digital capability of programs and initiatives.
- Ensure all of your people, including remote workers, have the opportunity to participate.

- **Communicate expectations for** people leaders to take an active role in promoting mental health awareness programs within their teams.
- Provide people leaders with the operational support that will enable them to promote and support engagement in mental health awareness initiatives and programs.
- **Encourage the workforce to attend** and engage in the mental health programs offered.
- Collaborate with them to identify specific training and education needs based on job roles, working environments and known hazards for mental health.
- Provide targeted training and education programs where required.

### **Build better workplace culture**

#### **Policies and** procedures

#### The actions



**Establish policies and procedures** aligned to legislative requirements that protect the rights of workers and promote better workplace cultures defined by a focus on voice, trust, care and compassion, civility, fairness and respect.



Establish policies in the following areas to promote better workplace cultures:

- workplace psychological health, safety and wellbeing
- bullying and harassment prevention
- code of conduct
- disability
- equal opportunity and antidiscrimination
- diversity and inclusion
- fatigue management
- other.



Set up procedures which reduce the impact of industry specific hazards and promote protective factors. These include fatigue management, critical incidents, substance use and inappropriate workplace behaviours.

### **Build better workplace culture cont.**

#### A psychologically healthy and safe environment

- Communicate a clear set of values which promote and support workplace mental health and wellbeing.
- Create a workplace culture of trust where mental health and wellbeing is prioritised, and workers feel safe voicing their concerns and seeking help.
- Demonstrate the importance of trust, open communication, fairness, civility and respect. Show care and compassion in supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing.
- Give your people a voice through regular wellbeing conversations, and demonstrate it's safe to discuss the impact of hazards of industry and other issues related to their personal and workplace experience.
- Ensure support is offered in response to any mental health concerns communicated.
- Encourage your people to prioritise their mental health and wellbeing.
- Inspire your workforce to engage in healthy behaviours to protect themselves against hazards for industry.

## **Build better workplace culture cont.**

#### **Management** of change

#### The actions

- Lead effective workplace change with transparency, openness, respect and fairness.
- **Demonstrate openness and fairness** in communicating decisions that affect the workforce. Give your people a voice in the changes that impact them.

#### **Reward and** recognition

- Acknowledge workers' efforts, and show they are appreciated in a fair and timely way.
- Recognise and reward high performance through internal communication channels, policies and procedures, and performance plans.
- Provide acknowledgement and gratitude for the efforts of your people on a regular formal and informal basis.

### **Smarter work design**

#### Job flexibility

#### The actions



Apply a degree of flexibility to working hours, working conditions and the way in which work is carried out.

- Develop leave policies and entitlements which protect the rights of workers to access all forms of leave, including for mental health reasons.
- Give your people flexibility within a job by constantly reviewing working hours, working conditions and the way in which work is carried out.
- Let your people have a degree of control over working hours or rosters. This will help improve work-life balance and maximise time spent with loved ones.

#### **Autonomy and** decision-making

#### The actions



**Encourage independence and** support your people's ability to make decisions about the way work is carried out.



**Encourage your people to** develop appropriate control and independence around how their roles are performed. Establish their level of decision-making in how they carry out their work.



Engage your people in communication around workdesign hazards. Let them speak to their people leaders and the broader workplace.



Arrange regular one-on-one sessions, as well as working on team-based or industry-shared solutions to minimise the impact of work-design hazards.

### **Smarter work design cont.**

#### **Job characteristics**

#### The actions

- Aim to create variety within the type of tasks performed and the meaning attached to the job.
- Assess all job characteristics including work variety, purpose, meaning, control, feedback, learning opportunities and connection with others to improve workforce engagement.
- **Review resource allocation** across the workplace, particularly during peak periods. Wherever possible, address the needs and gaps identified in a timely manner.

#### **Exposure to trauma**

- Develop a critical incident response framework, policy, guidelines and plan that include supportive mental health and wellbeing solutions.
- Offer support when the job includes regular exposure to traumatic events and effective evidence-based solutions, e.g. psychological first aid (PFA).

### **Smarter work design cont.**

#### **Job demands**

#### The actions

- Meet relevant work health and safety legislative requirements to reduce risk of harm to mental and physical health
- Understand the impact of jobspecific physical, emotional, cognitive and time demands in people's roles.
- **Target specific hazards** and implement a plan to address them.
- **Continually review and improve** operational procedures with regard to the transport of goods, packing, loading, delivery schedules and resource allocation, particularly during peak periods.
- Implement strategies to help your people manage the impact of environmental factors outside their control, e.g. road delays, wait times associated with loading/ unloading, and inadequate parking and facilities for drivers.

#### **Physical work environment**

- Address specific work conditions as well as the broader work environment.
- **Review operational** environments and facilities with these actions:
- Assess specific work conditions and the broader work environment for all road transport, warehousing and logistics roles.
- Be aware of how these factors impact on your people, and how to minimise any negative impacts, e.g. inadequate breaks during shifts, challenges in self-managing fatigue levels while adhering to policies and regulations.
- Ensure you include your people in the review processes. Give them an opportunity to voice their opinions on potential strategies to address the issues.

## **Smarter work design cont.**

#### **Role clarity**

#### The actions



Be clear on specific task requirements, as well as overall expectations around job roles.



Clarify performance expectations around specific task requirements, as well as the overall expectations attached to job roles.

#### **Social supports** and connections

#### The actions



Assess the level of interpersonal working relationships, and the level of support received from leaders and peers.



Establish new or improved ways to increase the level of support and connection between your leaders, your people and members of your workforce with each other.

### Build resilience & coping skills

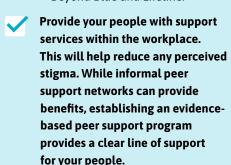
# Evidence-based programs and resources

- Enhance the resilience of workers by targeting industry-specific hazards, e.g. fatigue management, critical incidents and physical health.
- Implement evidence-based programs which provide targeted training programs to address hazards. These have proven effective in improving the resilience of workers at an individual level. Choose the key areas to cover the major hazards identified for your industry:
- Implement personal support programs,
   e.g. financial support, building healthy
   personal relationships with loved ones.
- Develop and communicate policies and initiatives which support and promote work-life balance.
- Establish targeted physical activity programs to promote healthy lifestyles which positively impact mental and physical health.

- Provide resources, including practical tools and support services that complement other evidence-based programs. These need to be designed specifically to assist in building resilience and coping skills.
- Establish a blended learning approach to ensure greater learning impacts for your people.
- Implement digital tools and resources to increase access to all workers, including remote workers.
  - Develop and promote multiple ways to seek help in response to individual preferences for support.

    This can include support for and from:
    - people leaders
    - people and culture or
       HR business partner
    - health, safety and wellbeing representatives

- peer support networks
- employee assistance program (EAP)
- manager assist program (for people leaders)
- Healthy Heads network
- GP, counselling services and support services such as Beyond Blue and Lifeline.





## Build resilience & coping skills cont.

#### **Coaching, mentoring** and support

#### The actions



Provide coaching, mentoring and support for your people with regular and planned check-ins. These can be team or group based, and one-on-ones with people leaders. The check-ins should include opportunities for workers to connect on an informal and formal basis.



Check-ins are to occur in person, by phone or on digital platforms for remote and mobile workers. Touchpoints should include a focus on general wellbeing.



Provide regular, planned activities and initiatives to improve work-life balance, workforce engagement and connection. Some examples are development activities, charity events, team building activities, social events and training.

# **Early intervention**

### **Check on wellbeing**

#### The actions

- **Conduct regular wellbeing** checks to assist leaders in staying connected with their people and creating a safe environment that is trusting, caring and open.
- Provide clear expectations and targeted training for your people leaders in order to build their skills and capability in providing early intervention support.
- Train people leaders on how to have effective mental health and wellbeing conversations, develop suicide awareness and response, and provide supportive coaching discussions that address protective factors related to work design.
- **Encourage your workforce to** share concerns with their leaders, and to make wellbeing checks a part of the role requirements and day-to-day interactions.

### **Critical incident response**

#### The actions

- Implement a best practice approach to offer immediate and effective support to workers exposed to potentially traumatic events.
- Develop and implement a critical incident response framework.
- **Ensure early and appropriate** support is provided for people in roles with regular exposure to potentially traumatic events, e.g. roles exposed to physical risks, such as the use of heavy vehicles or machinery.
- Continually review and improve formal and informal critical incident response procedures.
- Establish a best practice psychological first aid framework.
- Provide people leaders with training and support to help them effectively communicate with workers exposed to critical incidents.

# **Early intervention cont.**

## Tools, resources and support services

#### The actions

- Provide tools, resources and support services for people leaders.
- Facilitate workers' early access to mental health and wellbeing supports where possible, including employee assistance programs (EAP), Healthy Heads and other supports.
- Explore additional resources to train and educate leaders in early intervention, and assist them in supporting their people. This includes operational support for early intervention approaches, e.g. making reasonable work adjustments.

- Offer and promote a range of mental health and wellbeing resources and support channels for your workers.
- Make a range of resources available to remote and isolated workers.
- **Collaborate with EAP providers** to establish proactive support options for workers, e.g. regular awareness sessions. Increase the provider's knowledge of industry-specific hazards.

# **Support recovery**

## **Return to work** (RTW) support

#### The actions

Establish strong and supportive RTW programs and processes with ongoing support, and a strengths-

based capacity focus.

- Design RTW policies and procedures to protect the rights of workers suffering any injury, including mental health concerns and conditions, and ensure they are understood, promoted and applied effectively within the organisation (both for compensable and noncompensable conditions).
- **Ensure policies and procedures** include the following in relation to supporting recovery:
  - injury management and RTW
  - workers' compensation
  - leave management
  - reasonable adjustments.

- **Ensure policies and procedures** include support for workers experiencing non-compensable mental health conditions.
- Make sure policies and procedures include a focus on capacity rather than incapacity where possible, including "stay-at-work" approaches, and the provision of modified hours and duties.

# **Support recovery cont.**

## People leaders successfully managing RTW

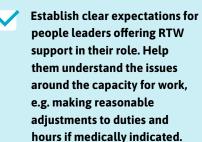
#### The actions



Ensure people leaders are typically the first point of contact, and with training and practical support, can significantly influence the likelihood of a safe and sustainable return to work.



Develop the knowledge and skills of people leaders through the provision of training programs, tools and resources. This will assist them in supporting recovery from mental health concerns and conditions (compensable and noncompensable).



- Make sure people leaders understand the importance and benefits of regular contact and engagement with their people while they are off work.
- Increase options regarding alternative or modified duties.
- Provide leaders with the operational support required to enable them to successfully achieve the above actions.

# **Support recovery cont.**

## **Graded exposure of RTW programs**

#### The actions



Establish a best practice approach for trauma-related claims to maximise the likelihood of a safe return to work.



Work closely with RTW teams and treating specialists to support the worker's gradual exposure to triggers when putting a RTW plan in place.



Offer a flexible and supportive work environment which assists the worker to engage in graded exposure strategies in line with their treatment plan.



# The seven strategies small business checklist

Ask the questions that will help you identify the high-risk areas in your workplace and the actions that will create the greatest change. These actions require little or no resources, and will have a high impact on creating a psychologically healthy and safe workplace.

#### **Build leadership capability**

- Do our people leaders show a visible, active commitment to mental health and wellbeing?
- Do we treat mental health and wellbeing the same as physical health, and make an effort to reduce negative comments and reactions?
- Do we comply with relevant, existing legal requirements?

#### **Increase awareness**

- Have we provided mental health awareness training programs and resources for all our people? (Consult with Healthy Heads.)
- Have we offered information that challenges the way people think about suicide and mental health conditions? (Consult with Healthy Heads and other organisations like Beyond Blue, the Black Dog Institute for additional support.)
- Have we done enough to help our people understand the importance of mental health and wellbeing in the workplace? Have we encouraged open conversations through events and programs?

  E.g. R U OK? Day,

  World Mental Health Day.

#### Build a better workplace culture

- Are we an anti-bullying workplace?
- Have we held regular wellbeing or toolbox talks to discuss concerns and encourage people to seek help?
- Do we praise effort as well as results?
- Have we developed mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures aligned to legislative requirements?
- Is there a clear set of workplace values and behaviours?
- Do we promote healthy living?
- Can our people speak up when changes affect them?

#### **Smarter work design**

- Can our people talk about the things they believe create risks?
- Do we take a close look at the nature of each job and point out the meaningful aspects of the work?
- Have we made sure the physical work environment is safe?
- Do we review and improve operational procedures?
- Are there ways we can support our people to manage job demands?
- Do we have a critical incident response plan? Does it support mental health and wellbeing?
- Have we clearly explained everyone's role?
- Do we assist them with digital know-how as a way to plug into social support, connection and participation?
- Do we meet relevant work health and safety and legislation requirements?

# Build resilience & coping skills

- Do we address hazards for the industry, e.g. fatigue management through programs created for us? (Consult with Healthy Heads.)
- Have we provided our workers with the practical tools, advice and support to manage self-care and develop positive coping strategies?
- Do we set an example of self-care and a good work life balance?
- Does everyone take part in psychological first aid training?
- Have we considered coaching and mentoring support for our people?
- Are there physical activity programs to help everyone make healthy lifestyle choices?
- Do we work together, share our knowledge and coping skills, and stay connected through face-to-face and digital platforms?

#### **Promote early intervention**

- Do we carry out regular wellbeing checks?
- Will our workers seek early help for any mental health and wellbeing concerns?
- Can we have the conversation when a worker may be struggling and know how to provide early intervention support?
- Do we understand how to manage the privacy around what our workers tell us?
- Do we understand how to respond to trauma and critical incidents?
- Are there tools, resources and support services we can offer? (Consult with Healthy Heads)

#### **Support recovery**

- Do we have return-towork policies, procedures, programs and supports?
- Have we provided training to support recovery?
  (Consult with Healthy Heads.)
- Can we make workplace modifications when necessary?
- Do we keep in touch with our people while they are recovering from injury?
- Do we involve the worker in their recovery planning?
- Are workers who have personal experience of, have recovered from or are managing a mental health condition encouraged to share their story in the workplace?



# A clear workplace action plan will start with the following four steps



### STEP 1. **Identify Hazards**

Find out what could cause harm. Review available information to identify potential hazards in your workplace.

- Review quantitative sources such as internal employee survey results, claim data and EAP usage data to identify themes.
- Consult with your people either during the course of daily work or in specific meetings and ask them about how they are experiencing work.
- Observe your people e.g. how do people interact? What are your people saying about their work and how it is impacting them?

### STEP 2. **Assess Risks**

Understand the nature of the harm the hazard could cause.

To assess a risk, use a matrix similar to a physical hazards matrix.

- Consider hazards collectively rather than in isolation.
  - Psychosocial risks increase when exposure is more frequent, longer in duration and more severe.

# A clear workplace action plan will start with the following four steps

#### STEP 3. **Control Risks**

Implement the most effective control measures that are reasonably practicable.

- Use the seven workplace strategies to help you identify what controls you might already have in place.
- Use the Roadmap Planner and supporting documents to create your action plan.
- Identify what can be done to control risks through consultation with your people.
- Consider the effectiveness of the controls. Controls that are reliable and offer the highest level of protection are the most effective.

### STEP 4. **Review Controls Measures**

Review the effectiveness of implemented controls to ensure they are working as planned. Review of control measures should happen regularly and is required:

- When the control measure is not working.
- Before a change that is likely to give rise to a new or different health and safety risk against which the existing controls may not work.
- If a new hazard or risk is identified.
- If the results of consultation indicate a review is necessary.
- If a Health and Safety Regulator (HSR) requests a review.

# **Conclusion**

## Any start is a good start

Every workplace is different. To make the most of the Roadmap, consider your size, location, workplace structure, the specific hazards for the sector and the challenges you face.

Imagine what your future thriving workplace looks like.

You may already have a psychological health and safety, mental health or wellbeing plan in place, along with initiatives to support your people. In this case, the Roadmap can be used to identify any gaps, and help you review and increase engagement across your workplace.

If you are a small business or just starting your journey towards psychological health and safety, you might not have the resources to jump into everything straight away. Start with low-resource, high-impact options across the seven strategies and build your plan. Any start will be a good start.

Check out the Roadmap Planner for more information on how to commence a Workplace Wellbeing Plan

Our intention is for this Roadmap to support you in addressing the mental health of your workforce.

You'll now be in a position to address the troubling hazards for the industry that might be affecting your workers and your business.

Psychological health and safety in your workplace will become a priority, and you'll identify what's needed and address it appropriately.

Our industry and everyone in it will be better for the efforts you'll make for your workforce and business to thrive.



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APPCS is an organisational psychology and consulting firm that specialises in improving psychological safety in the workplace, through sustainable evidence-based solutions.

They have been the architects behind the National Mental Health and Wellbeing Roadmap, Guidelines and Handbooks, and Roadmap Planner.



## **Founding** partners

Thank you to our founding partners who had the vision to stand up and bring industry together to tackle an issue of this magnitude.















With the support of





And many thanks to our foundational partners for their support, and all other Corporate partners and supporters of Healthy Heads in Trucks & Sheds.













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