LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE UNDER THE AUSTRALIAN WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY STRATEGY 2012–2022

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Background Leadership, and organisational and community culture are significant ‘new’ entries into the second national Australian strategy for work health and safety: The Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2012–2022 (the Strategy). The absence of attention on leadership and culture in the previous Strategy was assessed as a potential barrier to achievement of targets. The Strategy aims to improve work health and safety outcomes through communities and their leaders being proactive in driving work health and safety improvements; through leaders in organisations taking a collaborative and consultative approach; and by raising the priority of health and safety in all work decisions and processes.

Aims/Objectives/Purpose Culture and leadership were included as a key action area in the Strategy in order to raise awareness of health and safety and create a supportive context to improve workplace outcomes.

Safe Work Australia conducted national consultation workshops during 2011 and commissioned three papers by leading academics on these topics.

Significance/Contribution to the Field The Strategy requires outcomes associated with leadership and culture that will ensure national attention is paid to these over the next 10 years.

The inclusion of organisational and community culture and leadership in the Strategy will raise these issues at a national level. The evidence-based approach taken by Safe Work Australia will ensure that the focus of leadership and culture results in improved systematic management of risks, and improved health and safety outcomes.