STRAIGHTIC PLAN 2020

...THINK FORWARD
MESSAGE FROM THE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

During 2016-2019, the Institute worked to our strategic plan 2016-2021, adjusting yearly as the organisation and the environment around us changed. Our work included developing and implementing our capability and policy agendas, to give clarity and structure to our core commitment to build the capability, status and profile of the profession. This work is still underway, and much of it recognised as ongoing over the next decade. However, in its planning more recently the Board recognised the need to think forward which led to the change of name and rebranding to embrace a wider health and safety community and beyond.

To that end, this strategic plan marks the beginning of a new era for the Australian Institute of Health & Safety, from January 2020 forward...
OUR VISION

Safe and healthy people in productive workplaces and communities.

OUR VALUES

DIVERSITY
We respect each other’s diverse perspectives

LEADERSHIP
We drive positive change within industries, organisations and our community

INTEGRITY
We are ethical, and act with honesty and accountability

LEGACY
We honour the contributions that have built what is here today

HUMANITY
We are passionate about health and safety because we care about people and community

INNOVATION
We think forward and encourage new ways of improving health and safety

“Our purpose, as a trusted network of health and safety individuals, together as a profession, is to shape workplace health and safety in our society. Why? Because we care about people and our communities.”

Naomi Kemp, Board Chair
THINKING FORWARD

ENGAGEMENT BEYOND MEMBERSHIP AND THE PROFESSION

In the past our key focus has been to influence and improve the practice of the people who work in the health and safety profession with our efforts mostly directed towards the members of the Institute. We have reflected on how this limits our impact, and the ability to ultimately achieve our vision. A vision that is shared by health and safety professionals across Australia and beyond our membership.

Thinking forward to engage beyond our members, is about that shared vision between the entire profession, leaders, boards and those who have a responsibility for health and safety. To have a greater impact, our focus will extend to influence the practice of our members and non-members so that we can maximise their collective impact in producing healthy and safe workplaces. Let there be no doubt that our valued members are our most important stakeholder group, their contributions are invaluable to the Institute as they have built what is here today and they will have a major role in what is to follow.

Our purpose has not changed, we have taken a broader perspective towards a more market-focused organisation with the objective of engaging with both members and non-members (through events, networks, social media, policy, advocacy etc) and building the capability of all who work in health and safety through fee-for-service offerings.

Thinking forward is also about engaging beyond the profession to enable our vision for healthy and safe workers in productive workplaces and communities. This means we need to work on ways that will allow the profession to have an even wider influence within their industries, organisations and the community, to positively transform the relationship everyday Australians have with workplace health and safety and its sustainability.

This strategy is designed to continue to challenge us to think forward... so there is no end date.
EVERYTHING WE DO

is about shaping workplace health and safety now and in the generations to come, because we believe that every Australian deserves to be safe and healthy at work.

LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

How we shape health and safety has been translated into these four long-term objectives, which are explained in detail in the following pages.

1. Develop world class health and safety practice through a diverse, influential community of practitioners, professionals and leaders.
2. Build engaged and strategic partnerships with Australian businesses.
3. Build a sustainable organisation capable of powerfully influencing health and safety in Australia.
4. Address complex health and safety issues and improve health and safety outcomes for current and future generations.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

While the long-term objectives are aspirational, to achieve them the Institute must make some fundamental adjustments to our operations. It is these changes, articulated through the six strategic focus areas listed below, that form the body of this Strategic Plan.

1. Cultivating the health and safety Body of Knowledge and building strong development frameworks for practitioners, professionals and leaders.
2. Providing opportunities to connect, contribute and learn from each other, in both social and professional settings.
3. Promoting the role and value of the profession and achieving greater impact by forging industry connections.
4. Creating a sustainable technical and financial base for future growth through agile, responsive and efficient operations with diverse income streams.
5. Advocating with courage on policy to improve legislation, regulation and standards.
6. Improving health and safety knowledge, education and training within the wider community.
LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES

Our strategy will be firmly focused on our long-term objectives to:

Develop world class health and safety practice through a diverse, influential community of practitioners, professionals and leaders.

Build engaged and strategic partnerships with Australian businesses.

Build a sustainable organisation capable of powerfully influencing health and safety in Australia.

Address complex health and safety issues and improve health and safety outcomes for current and future generations.

World class health and safety practice requires robust education, continuing professional development and certification standards linked to the OHS Body of Knowledge and the Global Framework to ensure the integrity. This objective goes beyond engagement with our membership, ensuring that different perspectives and experiences are brought together to find solutions to challenges within workplaces, and influence change within industries.

Through collaborative partnerships we can create the connections and networks necessary to understand the needs of industry, government and the community and work with others to meet those needs. This objective directs us to ensure we focus on working with others – both within the profession, and externally through partnerships and networks to influence policy, change and innovation in Australia and globally.

Creating a sustainable financial base will enable the Institute to grow and be genuinely successful in delivering our vision. This objective directs us to ensure we focus on taking calculated development opportunities to be able to build greater organisational capability, diversify income streams, enhance operational efficiency and agility.

When it comes to addressing complex health and safety issues - education matters. In today’s knowledge economy, people with less education are more likely to work in high-risk occupations. This objective directs us to create greater awareness of health and safety issues and ensure we provide the wider health and safety community with the knowledge and problem-solving skills to create change and enable workers to remain safe and healthy.
STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

Our vision of ‘safe and healthy people in productive workplaces and communities’ is ambitious. It requires sustained focus and a commitment to our long-term objectives. To achieve our objectives, we have developed six strategic focus areas. These are designed to articulate where we will prioritise our efforts over the coming years, to ensure that we create the conditions necessary for success.

1. CULTIVATING THE HEALTH AND SAFETY BODY OF KNOWLEDGE AND BUILDING STRONG DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS FOR PRACTITIONERS, PROFESSIONALS AND LEADERS

The Australian Institute of Health & Safety certification of the Generalist OHS Profession program acknowledges the capability and credibility of OHS Practitioners and Professionals though the combination of their education and work experience. Certification of the OHS Profession is a critical success factor in our capacity to build the status of the profession as it sets standards of education, experience, and demonstrated knowledge and skills and evaluates people against those standards. The benefits of certification extend beyond status, it builds increased confidence and guidance to employers, clients, workers and the community as to the competence and standing of the person providing professional health and safety advice.

Having an underpinning body of knowledge, on which education and learning in the science, practice and psychology of workplace health and safety is based, provides a bedrock for the profession, and helps define that profession’s work. Over the coming years, the Institute will invest in ensuring the OHS Body of Knowledge continues to develop and evolve to inform OHS professional practice and remain fundamental to our certification and continuing professional development programs.

Undertaking innovative and evidence-based programs which support the health and safety profession to grow in skills, knowledge and capability, are key enablers to ensure the highest quality workplace health and safety practice. While maintaining our focus on the current capability of the profession, we will also direct attention towards programs that ensure we continue to meet the future needs of the health and safety professionals.

To cultivate the health and safety body of knowledge and build strong development frameworks for professionals and practitioners we will:

- Provide high quality professional development opportunities for the profession, delivered within an effective system of quality assurance.
- A certification program with strong participation from the profession, demand-driven by industry, with greater confidence of regulators, employers and employee bodies in the quality of health and safety advice.
- Maintain a sustainable, fully funded and up to date OHS Body of Knowledge, with related products providing relevance for the profession and for education providers.
2. **Providing opportunities to connect, contribute and learn from each other, in both social and professional settings.**

We will only succeed today, and in the future, by being relevant and supportive of the health and safety profession. Informal engagement and networking are just as important to professional development as the formal programs and activities that the profession undertakes. To be influential in a health and safety role, people need to engage with a range of stakeholders to share ideas, insights and learn.

We will work to widen the range of networking and engagement opportunities available to the profession spanning all states and territories. Because we believe strong connections within the health and safety field, based on shared values and approaches, are vital to building a stronger profession. We seek to increase the level of connection amongst the profession, by fostering greater co-operation and providing a platform for discussion of diverse views, underpinned by shared values.

**To provide opportunities to connect, contribute and learn from each other, in both social and professional settings, we will:**

- Deliver high quality, value for money conferences, symposia and events and endorsed training programs.
- Establish and grow College of Fellows, Branches and Networks that go beyond core disciplines.
- Encourage, support and recognise the contributions of our volunteers and the broader community through AIHS Awards and the Australian Work Health & Safety Awards.
- Enhance professional ethical understanding and behaviour through a revised Code of Ethics, training and associated processes.
3. Promoting the role and value of the profession and achieving greater impact by forging industry connections.

Engagement and collaboration with the community, industry, government and other health and safety related associations, are a critical success factor in our capacity to meet the rapidly changing needs of society. They help us stay abreast of local and global challenges, understand external priorities and expectations, and ensure our Institute remains relevant. By working with groups who have a shared interest in people’s health and safety at work, we are better able to influence systemic health and safety issues.

In recent years, the Institute has developed an enviable network of partners both within Australia and globally. Our international partner, the International Network of Safety & Health Professional Organisations (INSHPO) is the global voice for the occupational safety and health profession and acts as a forum for international collaboration among professional organisations to improve safety and health at work. We also have a mutual recognition of certification programs with the Board of Canadian Registered Safety Professionals (BCRSP).

The benefits of these partnerships extend beyond just recognition, they help to signify the status of the profession. In Australia, our status as a profession, is still in its infancy. Health and safety roles across and between industries are fragmented in their descriptions and standings, creating a lack of clarity about what to expect from people in certain roles.

Improving the status of the health and safety profession is complex and multi-faceted, but the reward would be immense. We must engage with stakeholders in a streamlined and holistic way, ensuring that our depth of expertise is recognised and accessible. The Institute is committed to building engaged and strategic partnerships and the development of a partnership framework and investment in relationship management will be key enablers to this.

To forge industry and government connections to promote the role and value of the profession and improve our capacity to collaborate to achieve greater impact, we will:

- Develop and manage industry and government partnerships guided by a clear framework to create mutually beneficial relationships.
- Pursue an increase in use of the Global Capability Framework to help drive consistency and clarity of health and safety roles including terminology, knowledge and skill requirements at each level.
- Establish collaborative relationships to ensure all businesses have good access to health and safety advice and examples of good practice.
- Identify emerging issues and consider collaborations to assess appropriate responses.
4. **Creating a sustainable financial base for future growth through agile, responsive and efficient operations with diverse income streams**

Our agenda is to create a sustainable financial base to enable the Institute to grow and be genuinely successful in delivering our vision. To do this we must consider how to build an Institute that is capable of powerfully influencing our society in regard to workplace health and safety. This requires a focus on building greater organisational capability and enhancing operational efficiency and agility. It also requires our gatekeepers to have a focus on ensuring governance processes remain responsive and provide integral oversight of both financial and non-financial risks.

With a focus on growth, strong organisational performance and taking calculated development opportunities are essential to be able to diversify income streams and increase the Institute’s revenue and maximise our ability to deliver our vision.

**To create a sustainable financial base for future growth, we will:**

- Establish a Business Development Framework and actively seek growth opportunities.
- Proactively build the capacity and capability of National Office and our volunteer committees and networks to achieve our strategic goals.
- Enhance governance processes and appropriately consider risk and opportunities.
- Simplify, streamline, standardise and automate administrative process and workflows.
5. Advocating with courage on policy to improve legislation, regulation and standards.

The profession has an important role, to work with regulators, government policy makers, business and other organisations to improve health and safety in our society. Our advocacy agenda is for the profession, defined broadly, to have a strong and effective voice which positively influences Australian health and safety policy and regulation. A voice that speaks to and guides effective regulation and the application of standards.

As the legislative and regulatory environment evolves, the profession has a significant role to play to offer its unique voice for the development of good policy and practice. We will also seek a more expansive role for the Institute as a provider of insight and education - initially to build our own visibility amongst wider professions, in workplaces, and in the public eye in regard to matters relating to health and safety.

To advocate with courage on policy to improve legislation, regulation and standards, we will:

- Be a collective voice for the profession, which is respected and influential with government, in the media and in the community.
- Pursue high-quality legislation and regulation, written and applied consistently across federal, state and territory jurisdictions.
- Seek a greater focus on codes of practice and guidance where this reflects the best available evidence to link policy and practice and outcomes
- Assist in the development of technical standards and their wider availability.
6. Improving Health and Safety Knowledge, Education and Training within the Wider Community.

Today’s health and safety training market is fragmented, and of highly variable quality. Beyond our role as a training provider, as the peak professional body, the Institute has an important mandate in improving the standard of training and professional development. We can only assure long-term improvement in the quality of health and safety advice to business by firstly focusing on the quality of health and safety education for those people being educated for future roles.

Our goal to shape health and safety in our society extends beyond our work in educating the profession, we must improve the awareness and knowledge of workers at all levels and the community. Not all businesses or organisations have direct access to health and safety professionals. The benefits of increasing our reach with information, training and education means that a wider group of workers are better informed and can build the problem-solving skills that will keep them healthy and safety in the workplace.

To improve health and safety knowledge, education and training within the wider community, we will:

- Increase mainstream media and social media communication material and interactions.
- Maintain our presence on the Industry Reference Committee for VET Sector training programs and on various government and regulator advisory bodies.
- Through AOHSEAB, ensure OHS professional education is based on strong scientific and technical concepts, evidenced-informed and delivered by suitably competent persons.
- Provide access to information and training for all businesses, organisations and workers.
- Seek improvement to the quality of health and safety Vocational Education Training programs and provide pathways to ensure ongoing competency.
With a more than 70-year history and recently known as the Safety Institute of Australia, the origins of the Australian Institute of Health & Safety (AIHS) belong to a small group of students who enrolled in and attended the first industrial Safety and Accident Prevention course conducted by the then Melbourne Technical College in 1948. This group remained together and formed nucleus of the Safety Engineering Society of Australia and held regular monthly meetings.

Membership of the society expanded steadily and reached the stage where every state had formed a division. With time, it became apparent that the term “Safety Engineering” in the society’s name had an implied bias and emphasised only one of the many disciplines associated with the effective control of accidents, injuries and diseases. As a result, the Safety Institute of Australia (SIA) was incorporated in 1977 with a new constitution and members of the society became members of the new SIA.

AIHS has a long and proud history of working with regulators, employers, unions and government departments in the pursuit of more effective health and safety policy, regulation and in particular, practice. Today across Australia, the AIHS has thousands of members and partnerships with many companies who share our vision of safe and healthy workers in productive workplaces and communities.