

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)  
PLANNING AND REPORTING TOOL  
Guidelines

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## 1. Purpose and scope

The purpose of this guideline is to detail the procedures for members conducting CPD planning and reporting through the use of the online CPD planning and reporting tool. The guidelines include an overview of the CPD program, details on who can use the tool, advice on how it is monitored, directions for its use, and general guidance on reflective practice.

## 2. Context: The AIHS Continuing Professional development (CPD) Program

### 2.1 What is Continuing Professional Development (CPD)?

Many professional organisations publish a definition of CPD. These definitions vary but one commonly used is:

The systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skills, and the development of personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties throughout the individual's working life.<sup>1</sup>

Whatever the definition, two consistent features are the systematic and formal elements, and also include the following characteristics. That CPD:

- (a) Is organised in a way that is capable of being made public in a comparable manner or in relation to a standard;
- (b) Is strategic or capable of being understood in a purposeful and comprehensive manner;
- (c) Includes elements of reflective practice;
- (d) Includes development of personal as well as professional development, which distinguishes CPD from just keeping up to date;
- (e) Is a cyclic process based on reflection on practice, planning, action, and evaluation; and
- (f) Is of benefit to others and not just about the career aspirations of the individual.

The AIHS takes a strong interest in CPD because it ensures we continue to be competent in our profession. It is an on-going process and continues throughout our careers. Commitment to CPD ensures individuals routinely reflect and review their current knowledge and skill level to guide and focus building their professional standing.

From a program perspective, well-crafted and delivered continuing professional development is important because it delivers benefits to the individual, their profession and the public. CPD practice within the AIHS is a continued process of learning through reflection and is fundamental to improving ones' contributions. CPD is a commitment to remaining informed and continuously seeking to improve. It is the key to building professional standards and optimising career opportunities.

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<sup>1</sup> Engineers Australia, *Continuing Professional Development*, <http://www.engineersaustralia.org.au>, accessed 20/11/2012.

## 2.2 What is the AIHS CPD program?

The AIHS CPD program is our systemic approach to assisting the profession with continuing professional development.

The aim of AIHS's CPD program is to ensure that employers, clients, regulators and the community have confidence in the currency of the knowledge and skills of those who provide OHS advice and support.

It currently has two components:

- (a) A CPD Planning and Reporting Tool, which AIHS members can use; and
- (b) The OHS Training and Professional Development Framework, articulated against the Global OHS Capability Framework, which provides guidance for training organisations wanting to plan and deliver training to the profession.

Over time the AIHS may add other components to the CPD program.

## 3. AIHS CPD Planning and reporting tool

### 3.1 What is the CPD Planning and Reporting Tool?

The CPD Planning and Reporting Tool is an online form provided for members to plan and report on their ongoing professional development following the guiding principles and process detailed in the sections below.

### 3.2 Benefits of using the Tool

Use of the CPD Planning and Reporting Tool is designed to assist members to extend and update knowledge, skills, business practices and judgement in their areas of practice, including:

- (a) Maintaining and improving their level of technical competence in-line with their certified status;
- (b) Retaining and advancing their effectiveness in the workplace;
- (c) Being able to help, influence and lead others in safety and health related matters;
- (d) Successfully dealing with change(s):
  - i. in their career, and
  - ii. within the business or businesses they serve; and
- (e) Better serving the OHS profession and local community through personal contribution.

### 3.3 Who does the tool apply to?

All members of the AIHS can use the CPD Planning and Reporting Tool if they wish.

However, all certified and previously graded members must use participate in CPD and use the Tool to maintain their grading/certification. Obligatory use applies to the following member categories:

- (a) Certified members:
  - i. OHS Trainees (COHStrainee);
  - ii. OHS Graduates (COHSgrad);
  - iii. OHS Practitioners (COHSPrac);



iv. Certified Generalist OHS Professionals

(COHSProf); and

v. Chartered Generalist Professionals (ChOHSP); and

(b) Graded members – previously graded as:

i. Chartered Professional Member (CPMAIHS),

ii. Fellow (FAIHS); and

iii. Chartered Fellow (CFAIHS)

### 3.4 Guiding Principles for Use

There are a number of key guiding principles that underpin the use of the CPD Planning and Reporting Tool. As CPD is a continuous process that focuses on planning doing and reflecting, and CPD applies throughout the working-life of OHS professionals and practitioners, the principles include:

- (a) Individuals are responsible for planning, managing and recording their own development;
- (b) With due consideration of their certification maintenance requirements individuals decide for themselves their learning needs and how to fulfil them;
- (c) Learning goals should be clearly articulated and well planned;
- (d) CPD plans comprise a balanced mix of activities that include work-based activities, courses, seminars and conferences, self-directed informal learning and include OHS contributions made outside of work;
- (e) All CPD should be planned and recorded;
- (f) The CPD plan should be designed in a way that it can be integrated with an employee's career and development planning; and
- (g) The CPD plan should be simple and pragmatic and the means of recording CPD should be streamlined and simple.

### 3.5 Using CPD Planning and Reporting tool as part of maintaining Certification/Grading

It is important to recognise that AIHS CPD program is not about earning points. It is about outcomes and whether those outcomes have assisted in a member's growth as a professional.

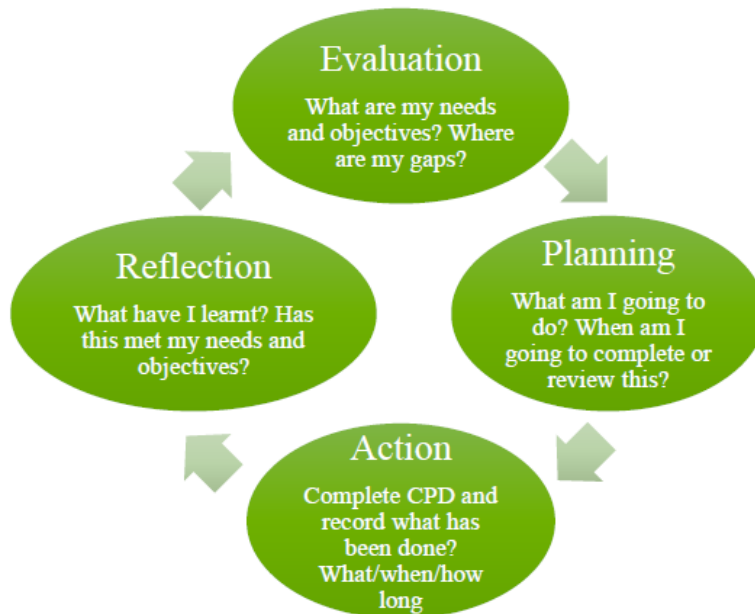
CPD records must demonstrate that the member has:

- (a) planned their CPD for the year;
- (b) acted to implement their plan each year;
- (c) reflected on what they have learned and how that has or can be incorporated into practice; and
- (d) recorded, and is able to verify or provide evidence of CPD activities in the event that their CPD log may be audited.

CPD Planning and Reporting is required at least annually following the CPD Cycle depicted in Figure 1 (below). The CPD Cycle and the requirement to plan and report aligns with the end of each financial year.



Figure 1: CPD Cycle



### 3.6 The CPD planning and recording process

The CPD process centres around five main categories and members must demonstrate, on an annual basis, the completion of CPD activities across all five categories. The CPD Activity Categories include:

- (a) **Learn** – This category is about closing knowledge and knowledge gaps. To bridge these knowledge gaps members may include education, reading and evaluation of journal articles, engagement in professional networks, research and attendance at conferences and seminars.
- (b) **Apply** – This category is about closing technical gaps. To bridge these technical gaps members may include further study, workshops, engagement in professional networks and discussion, reading of research reports.
- (c) **Extend** – This category is about developing the personal skills and attributes members believe they need. It includes non OHS professional development such as management training, public speaking, seeking coaching or mentoring, attending workshops, reading specific literature, gaining training or auditor certification and completion of your CPD logbook.
- (d) **Support** – This category is about how members can/should support the development of other OHS professionals and practitioners such as participation in mentoring programs, etc. It is also about how members can/should support recognition of the profession, the AIHS and committee or community work;
- (e) **Reflect** – This category is about, and part of, categories 1 to 4 above. It is about self-reflection in respect of what members learned from activities in the categories above and how applicable the learning from these categories has been for their practice. It requires asking if the plan was achieved? If not why not? And how can it be improved in the next period?

### 3.7 How to record your CPD plan

An online CPD Planning and Report Form is available from the AIHS CPD webpage at <https://www.AIHSmembership.org.au/forms/cpd-report> and the word-based form (which is being phased out) is available at:

[www.AIHS.org.au/downloads/CPD/PROTECTED\\_AIHSCPDTemplate\\_V2\\_0\\_2017\\_01\\_27.d ocx](http://www.AIHS.org.au/downloads/CPD/PROTECTED_AIHSCPDTemplate_V2_0_2017_01_27.d ocx).

The members with obligations to complete CPD (refer Section 3.1 above) must update their CPD plan and report at the very least on an **annual basis** as part of a **three year CPD cycle**.

The online CPD Planning and Report Tool allows members to report the outcomes of their previous year and to plan the current year's activities. Members can select to either:

- (a) upload their word-based CPD Report for last year and then plan the current year in the online *Tool*, or
- (b) enter and reflect on their previous year's activities, before entering the current year's plan in the online facility.

The word-based CPD Report template is a *forms document* that is being phased out. Members who have not used this document to plan should not start using this form.

### 3.8 What do I actually write?

The data required in the CPD Planning and Reporting Tool consists of the following elements:

- (a) **Details of person completing the CPD Report** – allows for uploading of the old (word-based) form or selecting using the new form to enter the name, and job and email details;
- (b) **List Completed Activities, and Reflect and Evaluate** – allows members to enter the activities completed during the previous 12 months, and to ask four reflection and evaluation questions. Although worded slightly differently they require members to answer:
  - i. Did you achieve your plan? (If not, why not? Was it an issue?)
  - ii. What did you learn overall? (Was there any specific activity(s) that had the most impact? If so which one(s)? Why?)
  - iii. How did your learning impact your professional practice? In discussing your plans and achievements with a peer did you gain any further insights? Please describe; and Any other insights?
- (c) **Review and Assessment Section** – used by a member to review his or her previous 12 months work and to reflect on their achievements, challenges and difficulties, and to identify gaps or areas for improvement in terms of their professional development needs to feed into the planning section for the coming 12-month period;<sup>2</sup> and
- (d) **Plan Activities** – allows a member to plan their CPD activities for the coming 12-month period and record when the activities are completed along with their duration.

### 3.9 Reminders to Members About Planning and Reporting

After 90 days, members will receive a reminder to complete their report and new plan if they have failed to do so for the new plan period. Members will then receive reminders every 30

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<sup>2</sup> Section C of the word-based CPD Report form can be used by a member to reflect upon and evaluate the activities undertaken in the last 12-months, but the next 12 month planning period must be entered using the online CPD Planning and Reporting Tool.

days while plans and reports remain incomplete. Members with plans and reports outstanding for more than 180 days may be subject to the audit of their CPD records.

Members will also get annual reminders to update their CPD plans and reports. These reminders are automatically generated by the database.

### 3.10 Audit of CPD Records

#### 3.10.1 Who conducts CPD audits?

The Chair of the AIHS College of Fellows is authorised to conduct CPD audits and may delegate this responsibility. An audit may be undertaken:

- (a) On a random or periodic basis;
- (b) If the member has CPD Reports and Plans outstanding for more than 180 days;
- (c) If an individual is the subject of a complaint; and
- (d) To meet the requirements or priorities set down by the AIHS Board of Management from time to time.

The decision to select an individual or group of individuals for audit is not an appealable decision. 50% of members of the AIHS Ltd Board of Management, the College of Fellows Executive and all members of Divisional Boards of Management will be subject to audit in the first two years of the CPD Program, as these individuals are seen as exemplars.

#### 3.10.2 Audit process

The CPD audit process involves the following procedures:

**Notice of intent to CPD audit.** The Chair of the College of Fellows CPD Committee will notify the member(s) to be audited of the proposed dates at least one month in advance of audit.

**Period to respond with CPD records.** A member who has received an audit notice is required to respond within three months by submitting the required CPD records and a statement of participation in their area(s) of workplace health and safety practice, if not already completed.

**Inability to provide CPD records.** An individual who is unable to provide the information within three months may seek from the Chair of the College of Fellows CPD Committee an extension of time to comply. However, a reasonable explanation must be provided at the time of the request for an extension.

**Unsuccessful CPD audit outcomes.** An individual who has received a notice of an unsuccessful audit outcome may be given a further six months in which to comply at the discretion of the Chair, College of Fellows, who may delegate this authority.

**Notification of leaving the OHS Profession.** Individuals who are no longer in OHS practice and intend to discontinue use of the Certification post nominal or membership post nominal or remove themselves from the *Find an OHS Professional (FOHSP)* Register must respond to the notice of audit by advising the Chair, College of Fellows of this decision.

## 4. General guidance on self-reflection and reflective practice

The CPD Planning and Reporting process incorporates a requirement to undertake reflective practice as part of the CPD cycle (refer to the figure below). Reflective practice is a process requiring members to study their own experiences to improve the way they work. The act of

reflection is a good way to increase confidence and become a more proactive and qualified professional or practitioner.

Self-reflection is the “capacity to analyse every event/situation in which you have been involved, evaluate how you acted in it, then decide what you have learned about *yourself* that you can take forward to be more effective in the future (and this may involve having to develop new technical or ‘person’ skills, or new ways of analysing situations)”<sup>3</sup>

There are plenty of resources available on the internet for members who are not familiar with reflective practice. Members may like to visit some of the following sites for guidance on reflective practice:

- <http://www.businessballs.com/reflective-practice.htm>
- <http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/reflective-practice.html>

Members may also like to undertake some training or other professional development in the area of reflective practice as part of your CPD.

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<sup>3</sup> McCulloch, R., & Reid, A., (2015). Your business degree. 2nd edn. Frenchs Forest, NSW: Pearson Education Australia.