



5. GOVERNANCE

POLICY NO:

5.21

POLICY TITLE: SUN PROTECTION POLICY

FILE NO: 2320

ADOPTED: 12 July 2001

MINUTE NO: General Manager's Delegation

PREVIOUS POLICY

ADOPTED: 28/7/97 28/8/00

MINUTE: 147/97 109/00

POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the aim of the Sun Protection Policy to minimise the risk of developing sun-related skin damage in Council staff who are required to work outdoors as part of their duties.

INTRODUCTION

Prior to advertising a new or vacant position an assessment will be conducted to determine the risk of exposure to ultra violet radiation particularly during the critical hours of 10am to 2pm (11am to 3pm during daylight saving time).

Staff identified as being at risk will be educated on the hazards of exposure to ultra violet radiation (UV) and the preventive measures to be adopted to minimise its effects on the skin.

EXPOSURE ASSESSMENT

As ultra violet radiation exposure in outdoor environments may vary depending on the work place and occupation, an exposure assessment identifies those likely to be affected by it. This information can be obtained from the following survey:

- jobs/tasks, including breaks, which involve UVR exposure;
- the time of day which these tasks are carried out and the frequency with which the tasks are performed;
- the shade provided by the physical environment in which the work is carried out;

cont'd over page

- reflective surface, for example, water or unpainted corrugated steel or aluminium roofing, that are part of the environment in which the work is carried out;
- potential photo-sensitising chemicals in the work place or associated with the work.

TRAINING

As a commitment to providing a safe, healthy workforce, Council will conduct a Skin Cancer Education Module to both new and existing employees.

The training module will help participants to be:

- aware of the responsibilities to protect themselves from over-exposure to ultra violet radiation;
- aware of their responsibility to use sun protective clothing and equipment supplied to them by the Council;
- aware of disciplinary actions that will be taken for non compliance with sun protection rules and regulations;
- able to demonstrate the procedures for early detection of skin cancer;
- confident to facilitate informal education amongst co-workers and encourage them to take appropriate sun protection precautions.

RECOMMENDED PROTECTIVE CLOTHING (NSW CANCER COUNCIL)

The protective clothing to be worn by outdoor staff should meet the recommended standards of the Cancer Council and conform to requirements of comfort and safety.

The garments that meet with the required standards will include:

- Hats which provide protection to the head and face;
- Long sleeved and collared shirts;
- Long trousers (exemption due to medical reasons will be considered);
- Until June 2002, knee length short trousers may also be worn.

The selection of hats should be based on the user's requirements however, where possible they should be fitted with an 8-30cm brim which provides protection to the ears and back of the neck. Safety aspects must also be considered and as such broad-brimmed hats should not take priority over hard hats or protective helmets.

A sunscreen is a product which filters out UVR reaching the skin. Sunscreens do not provide complete protection against UVR and should be used to enhance natural protection, not as a substitute. There are various creams recommended for the purpose. Workers who are sensitive to a particular brand would have access to other brands.

The Cancer Council recommends that sunglasses be worn when there is glare and reflected UVR. The wraparound sunglasses provide extra protection and cuts off almost 99% of the light reaching the eyes.

ACTION PLAN

The Employee Relations Branch, in consultation with the Occupational Health and Safety Committee and professionals in the areas of skin protection, will design and implement Skin Cancer Education Training Modules aimed at increasing awareness and knowledge of sun protection issues.

Supervisors and staff identified as being at risk, will be required to participate in a skin cancer education training module. This module will be incorporated with other Occupational Health and Safety training and will be conducted on a regular basis.

Representatives of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee and operational staff, together with management representatives and Employee Relations staff will determine the suitability of clothing and other items to be used in the Skin Cancer Prevention Program.