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Australian Government  
Australian Taxation Office

# ATO's Psychosocial Journey

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Comcare Psychosocial Health and Safety Forum 2024

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# Overview

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In 2018, we started with our **first mental health strategy**, to build mental health awareness and maintain a mentally healthy and supportive workplace.



Implemented our ***Mental Health Risk Framework*** which focused on prevention, early intervention, and rehabilitation.

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**Emphasis on prevention activities** and how to identify and manage factors at work that impact on staff mental health (we now refer to these factors as psychosocial hazards).



After the Model Code of Practice (CoP) was published, we pivoted from the ***Mental Health Risk Framework*** to a ***Psychosocial Risk Framework***.

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# Implementation items 2023-2024



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# Implementation items

## Psychosocial Risk Assessment and Action Plans

- Developed our first enterprise-wide psychosocial risk assessment in 2023, which provided corporately available **risk controls and recommended actions** for each psychosocial hazard category.
- Aimed to **simplify risk management** for business areas to develop their own *psychosocial action plan*.
- The process of developing these action plans also create the opportunity for business to **consult with impacted workers** and seek ideas on practical solutions.

## SES Masterclass

- Our senior leaders have the most **significant influence** on managing psychosocial hazards.
- These sessions covered psychosocial legislative changes and **what they need to do** within the ATO context.
- It's important leaders champion behaviours to **build psychological safety**.
- Provided an **SES Toolkit** and a practical exercise to complete a psychosocial action plan.

# Implementation items

## Capability Uplift

- Updated **mandatory training** for all staff.
- Developed psychosocial resources such as toolkits for **self-guided learning**.
- Promoted resources through various channels.
- Delivered **targeted training** on specific psychosocial hazards such as emotionally demanding work and managing high workloads.
- Offered **eLearn packages** as well as **interactive webinars**.

## Thrive@Work Program

- Series of **bite sized video learning** which focuses on empowering staff by equipping them with **practical and tested strategies** to help them thrive at work.
- Modules on:
  - Thriving at work
  - Deep work
  - Taming your inbox
  - Mastering meetings
  - Planning your day
  - Shutting down your work day
- Designed for **individual or team participation**.

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# Existing 'business as usual' (BAU) strategies

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## Existing BAU strategies



### EAP Services

- Provided by TELUS Health.
- Confidential counselling and coaching.
- Manager Consultation service.
- **24/7 crisis counselling** for mental health emergencies.



### Early Treatment Program (ETP)

- Supports staff with **physical or mental health** issues to access treatment (6) with a provider of choice.
- Expectation that a report is provided addressing **progress of treatment** and **recommended actions** for workplace management of injury after sessions 2 and 6.
- **Reimbursement** of treatment costs and possible leave recredit (maximum 5 days).

## Existing BAU strategies



### Early Medical Management and Advice

- **Contact with treating doctors** within 10 days of a compensation claim, similar premise for all active health cases.
- **Introduction letter** sent to provider outlining ATO's commitment to support recovery at work.
- Participation in **case conferencing** and/or provision of reports invoiced to ATO.



### Inhouse Specialist Support

- **Panel of mental health providers** (psychologists and psychiatrists) established to provide us with services including:
  - **Designing and delivering** interventions to support mentally healthy workplace.
  - **Provision of advice** regarding management of **complex cases** and capability uplift of staff.
  - **Peer to peer consultation** with treating doctors.
  - **Emergency assessment** and support to ensure staff wellbeing and fitness for continued employment.