

# Occupational Health and Safety (ACT First Aid in the Workplace) Code of Practice 2006

## Explanatory Statement

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Section 206 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1989* (the OHS Act) provides that the Minister may approve a code of practice for providing practical guidance for the Act. Codes of practice assist duty holders to understand how they can comply with their obligations under the OHS Act. The OHS Act includes a number of requirements in relation to first aid. Under s.37(2)(i), employers' duties in relation to employees include the provision of medical and first-aid services for employees.

Section 206 provides that before approving a proposed code of practice, the Minister must refer the proposed code to the ACT Occupational Health and Safety Council (the Council) for consideration, and take into account any relevant recommendation made by the Council. At its 82<sup>nd</sup> meeting on 17 March 2006, the Council endorsed the ACT First Aid in the Workplace Code of Practice (the Code) and recommended that it be approved as a code of practice under the OHS Act. The Council's specific recommendations have been taken into account in finalisation of the Code.

The Code updates the ACT First Aid in the Workplace Code of Practice approved on 22 April 1994 (Instrument No. 31 of 1994) and varied by Instrument No. 100 of 1997. This Instrument revokes the 1994 Code as varied and approves the new ACT First Aid in the Workplace Code of Practice 2006.

A summary of the main changes between the old and new versions of the Code are as follows:

- The foreword and introduction have been updated and integrated.
- The document has been restructured so that information previously scattered is grouped under main headings and sub-headings.
- Workplace classifications have been aligned with New South Wales.
- Definitions have been simplified and definitions of the workplace types A, B, and C have been aligned with New South Wales.

In relation to first aid kits:

- All information related to kit location, access, construction and numbers are now located together.

- There is new information that kits should be of a type approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration in order to maintain a consistent standard of quality.
- The contents list has been updated to reflect current industry practices and items are listed alphabetically to aid in their identification.
- A personal kit contents list for employees working on foot or in non-motorised transport has been introduced.
- Infection control and clinical waste management information is now provided.
- Guidance on additional contents is now based on an assessment of risks/ hazards in the workplace.

In relation to first aid personnel, there is guidance on the need for workplaces to have a person trained in first aid and on the criteria for determining how many persons may need to be trained for particular workplaces.

The Instrument takes effect on 1 July 2006.

The approval under section 206 is a disallowable instrument.