



victoriantransportassociation<sup>inc.</sup>

# HeadFit BusinessFit Program – Final Report

Submission on behalf of the  
**Victorian Transport Association**

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The VTA also wishes to thank and to congratulate the eight organisations which were actively involved in the Program. They included: Wettenhalls Transport; Xtreme Freight; Cahill Transport; Victoria International Container Terminal (VICT); Secon Freight Logistics; Armstrongs Driver Education; Peter Sadler Removals and Logistics and Hi-Haul Transport.

A special thankyou is extended to the executive and senior management teams, the line management and to all employees of each of the eight organisations who embraced and were activity involved in the Program.

To Brianna Cattanach and Keith Govias from Gallagher Workforce Risk, thankyou for your professional services and commitment to ensuring that the Program was a success for all involved.



## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **HeadFit BusinessFit Program** is an industry specific mental health and psychosocial safety initiative managed by the Victorian Transport Association (VTA). Unlike previous interventions and initiatives undertaken in the transportation and logistics sector, this Program focused upon creating meaningful long-term, operational and cultural change for the participant organisations that could then be understood and replicated across the industry.

The scope of the **HeadFit BusinessFit Program** involved the development of a psychosocial safety profile for each participating organisation and by extension, the industry as a whole. The HeadFit, BusinessFit analysis process, tools and subsequent reporting protocols were developed and facilitated by Gallagher Workplace Risk, who are subject matter experts in this space.

Academically evaluated psychosocial risk assessment tools and best practice guidelines were utilised to inform the design of the **HeadFit BusinessFit Program** (provided throughout this report). This approach resulted in the establishment of an evidence-based assessment with an industry specific lens which was demonstrated to effectively identify key areas of strength, gaps and opportunity for participating workplaces, allowing them to take practical steps to improve compliance, psychosocial risk management, psychological safety/culture and mental health outcomes for their people and organisation.

The **HeadFit BusinessFit Program** comprised of three core analysis processes; a bespoke workforce survey, comprehensive desktop document review and psychosocial risk profiling (stakeholder interviews/focus groups and site visit). Completion of the **HeadFit BusinessFit Program** culminated in the authoring of a psychosocial risk profile report that assisted with validating findings and recommendations across seven key contributors to psychosocial risk management, psychological safety/culture and mental health:

- Mental Health Strategy and Policy
- Mental Health Leadership
- Psychosocial Risk Management
- Capability and Resilience
- Organisational Culture
- Connection and Engagement
- Early Intervention & Crisis Management

Pleasingly, post-intervention follow-up (anecdotal and surveying) along with participant feedback consistently indicated that the Program's objectives were met and that the program methodology, key areas of focus and integrated strategy approach were suitable and effective.

A total of eight organisations were involved in the pilot Program and provided a diverse and representative sample of the transportation and logistics sector. In total 1268 transportation and logistics employees participated in the Program, with some 843 or 67% participating in surveys and experiences being further captured through stakeholder interviews and focus groups.



Through this Program, industry level trends and gaps have been established to help inform future works, funding, legislation and more broadly industry needs. Key strengths of transport and logistics organisations in the mental health, psychosocial risk management and psychological safety space included:

- Leadership commitment
- Culture
- Reward and recognition
- Physical safety approach

While key gaps and opportunities for improvement included the following key themes:

- Formalisation of psychological safety/mental health support approaches
- Engagement of an employee assistance provider and/or establishment of a peer support function
- Management capability
- Assessment, management and reporting of psychosocial risk factors
- Workforce mental health literacy and awareness
- Onboarding and pre-employment processes

Exploration of these findings along with recommendations and strategies to address them are included throughout this report.

Ultimately, the **HeadFit BusinessFit Program** has been a unique but highly effective initiative that focused on the need to implement organisational level 'change management processes' around mental health, psychosocial risk management and psychological safety in the transport and logistics industry, an industry where these areas have been previously lacking and difficult to achieve meaningful engagement and improvement.

While only a pilot Program, the **HeadFit BusinessFit Program** has been hugely successful in its initial aims and impact and provides a clear and practical recommendations for further advancements, cultural change and meaningful interventions for the transport and logistics industry.

## **2.0 VICTORIAN TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION (VTA) & GALLAGHER WORKPLACE RISK (WPR)**

### **2.1 Official title of the Project**

The official title of this Project was *Integrating Mental Health Makes Good Business Sense* (the Project), however, for marketing and practical operational reasons, the Project was referred to as the **HeadFit BusinessFit Program** (the Program) during all stages of its implementation. A total of eight organisations were successfully involved in the Program.

Due to the unprecedented disruptions caused by COVID-19, an official extension of time was granted for the Program with a completion date of 30 April 2023.



## **2.2 Introduction to the VTA**

The Victorian Transport Association (VTA) has over 800 members and is dedicated to the service of members and supporters in all sectors of the transport and logistics industry.

With over 100 years' experience and a specific business focus, the VTA possesses the industry acumen, market knowledge and industry contacts that enable members to capitalise on the current commercial and regulatory environments.

Recognised as Australia's pre-eminent multimodal prime contractor and employer organisation in transport and logistics, the association works with all levels of government, the unions, statutory authorities and the industry to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

The VTA is committed to improving the environment in which the industry operates.

## **2.3 Introduction to Gallagher Workplace Risk (WPR)**

Gallagher Workplace Risk (WPR) management specialists provide workplace risk advisory services to employers and industry through their dedicated team of consultants. They specialise in safety and risk advisory, workers compensation, injury management and training and education via their locally focused but nationally resourced team of experts.

WPR partner with organisations and industry to create working environments that are centred on 'people' as the single most important aspect of business. WPR create strategies and programs that either:

1. Protect or prevent workplace injury through the creation of safe work environments both physically and from a psychosocial perspective; or
2. Mitigate and manage the early intervention of employees' injuries when and where they do occur.

WPR has a proven track record of successful long-term relationships with clients and industry in both the public and private sectors across Australia with a particularly successful and established portfolio in the transport and logistics industry.

To each program, WPR bring experience and technical expertise along with a commitment to proactively improve the culture, performance, and wellbeing of people, organisations and industries.



### 3.0 RATIONALE & SCOPE OF THE PROGRAM

#### 3.1 Introduction

The Transport and Logistics Industry (T&L industry) comprises many vulnerable Victorian working populations including outworkers, older employers, industries in transition, and frontline employers. Research demonstrates that the current commitment to implementing mental health and wellbeing programs is very low across the T&L industry.

One in five Australians are affected by mental illness.<sup>1</sup> Many workers do not seek help because of the stigma associated with mental health. Mental ill-health, along with suicide, are growing issues in our workforces and communities. The transportation industry ranks in the top five for job insecurity significantly impacting upon mental health outcomes<sup>2</sup> and suicide remains the greatest cause of mortality in men aged 15 to 45 at a rate of 6 per day.<sup>3</sup>

The Program's 'preventative' stance and positive *integrated approach* is supported by national and state government initiatives, including current investigations and the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.

Mental health and suicide are 'front and centre' and that a reform of the systems and support networks and a genuine commitment is paramount at all levels.

This Program differentiated itself from other programs from past and currently funded NHVR programs. The VTA noted that these other programs often related to 'awareness raising' and targeting industry specific challenges of drivers and owner drivers. The VTA Program was focused upon a higher order strategy by driving organisational longer-term change within individual organisations and across the T&L industry.

#### 3.2 Scope of Program

The scope of the **HeadFit BusinessFit Program** included a review of psychosocial risk management and organisation mental health factors, in consideration of both the positive and negative impact that they had upon the health and wellbeing of team members, compliance, psychosocial risk management systems and business objectives.

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<sup>1</sup> Ai Group, Implementing mental health initiatives in Australian Business – triggers, facilitators and barriers, January 2020

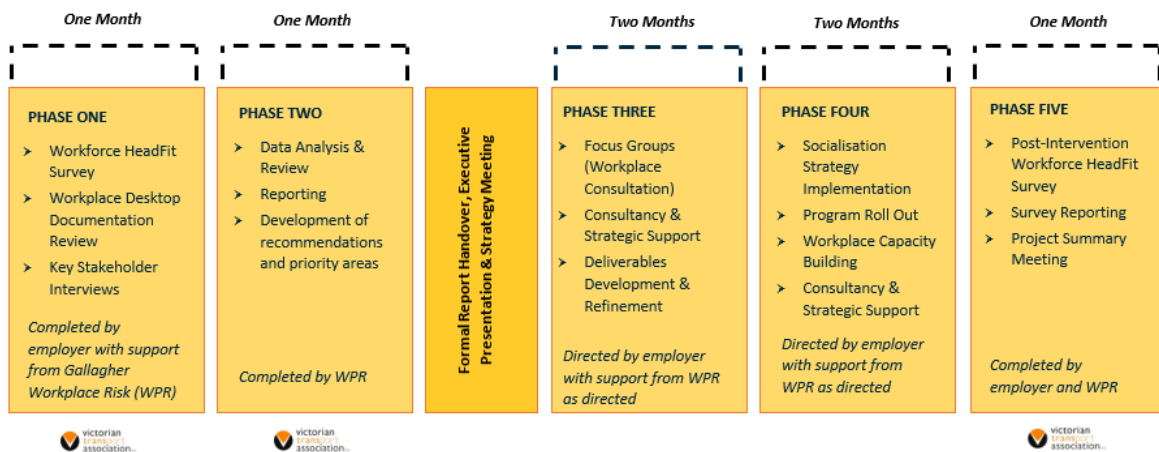
<sup>2</sup> Superfriend Indicators of a Thriving Workplace Survey Report, 2019

<sup>3</sup> Black Dog Institute, 2020



The **HeadFit BusinessFit Program** is comprised of three core analysis processes outlined further in this plan, including; workforce survey, desktop document review and psychosocial risk profile (stakeholder interviews/focus groups and site visit). Diagram 1 outlines the Program Plan and assigned timelines.

**HeadFit BusinessFit**  
**Program Plan & Anticipated Timeframes**



**Diagram 1.** Outline of Program Plan and Proposed Timelines.

Completion of the **HeadFit BusinessFit Program** was designed to assist with validating or realising performance across:

- Mental Health Strategy and Frameworks:** Including a defined mental health strategy that ensures that organisations promote, engage and advocate for positive mental health and psychological safety outcomes and actions. Mental health strategies demonstrate a clear and measurable commitment from organisations to the mental health of their people, the psychological safety of their work and the overall wellbeing of their organisation. This space also includes the role of policies, procedures and other frameworks and how these speak to the execution of positive mental health practices across all functions of an organisation. When mental health and psychological safety are a consideration of all policies and procedures (directly or indirectly), the behavioural, cultural and operational practices that support overall wellbeing become ingrained and habitual within an organisation.
- Mental Health Leadership:** Including defined and documented roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. This includes processes to support effective oversight by the Board, leadership team and consultative structures. Mental health leadership sets the tone and expectations regarding mental health practices and psychological safety within organisations. Leadership involves the communication, governance and assurance mechanisms which provide confidence that all aspects of mental health and psychological safety and being proactively and effectively addressed with an eye to



continuous improvement, high levels of engagement and a commitment to organisational and individual wellbeing.

3. **Psychosocial Risk Management:** Including the robustness of processes that identify mental health hazards/risks and processes for minimisation and escalation. Proactive management and effective communication regarding psychosocial risks and hazards provide the foundation of a mentally healthy organisation. By creating equal visibility, action and commitment to psychosocial risks organisations holistically and effectively support and enhance positive mental health outcomes.

4. **Capability and Resilience:** Including a commitment to building capability and resilience at all levels which ensures that organisations and individuals have the skills and mechanisms to work to their strengths and minimise the impacts of psychosocial risk factors. Capability and resilience programs support continuous improvement, high levels of engagement and accountability to both organisational and individual wellbeing.

5. **Organisational Culture:** Including the organisation's values and their commitment to upholding these standards. The review will gauge the level of understanding and support that reinforces worker experiences at the workplace, and determine if this demonstrates an inclusive and engaging environment to support positive mental health. Culture can be seen and felt at all levels of an organisation and consequentially a positive mental health culture will have benefit and impact from operations, to financials, to talent retention and reputation.

6. **Connection and Engagement:** Including a review of processes that underpin change management, the level and opportunity for employees to have a 'voice' and to play a part in shaping the discussion and decisions towards mental health initiatives and/or outcomes. This will include looking at events, innovations, surveys, engagement opportunities and health promotions.

7. **Early Intervention & Crisis Management:** Including a review of processes that exist to support an organisation, their various departments and individuals with experiences of adverse mental health issues. This will look at mechanisms to support proactive early intervention processes, health promotion, return to work principles, post-incident support/training and crisis management.

### 3.3 Program approach

The HeadFit BusinessFit Program Psychosocial Safety Gap analysis was developed and facilitated by Gallagher Workplace Risk, who are subject matter experts in this space. The assessment tool and process developed specifically for this Program is based upon academically evaluated psychosocial risk assessment tools; encompassing the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace (the Standard); People at Work Assessment, Superfriend Thriving Workplaces Program, and ISO 45001 and 45003:2018/202 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems principles.





This approach reflects an evidence-based assessment to identify and manage organisation risks to the psychological health of employers.

The assessment process undertaken with each participating organisation consisted of criteria based upon assessing psychological safety governance, risk management and assurance frameworks, applicable to better practice injury prevention, OHS management and leadership capabilities. The scope of the Psychosocial Risk Profile also included a review of existing health, wellbeing, safety and business risks to the extent these affect team member health and wellbeing, compliance, safety management systems and business objectives.

Completion of the Psychosocial Risk Profile assisted with validating findings and recommendations across 7 main elements as outlined above:

- Mental Health Strategy and Policy
- Mental Health Leadership
- Psychosocial Risk Management
- Capability and Resilience
- Organisational Culture
- Connection and Engagement
- Early Intervention & Crisis Management

Phase one to three of the Program aimed to review these areas through analysis of available organisation psychological and mental health data along with anecdotal and qualitative information was considered to establish current management gaps and/or improvement opportunities across the participating organisations. This process included:

- Workforce psychosocial safety, wellbeing and culture surveying (HeadFit Survey)
- Multiple stakeholder interviews (Senior Management, Operational Leadership and other Senior Leaders)
- Focus groups (Frontline Employees and People Managers)
- Desktop review of data and documentation (organisational policy, procedures and other organisation documentation)
- Site visits

Upon completion of the analysis, a comprehensive report was issued to each participating organisation providing their survey data and findings of the subject matter experts and providing practical and structured recommendations for addressing gaps and opportunities for improvement.

Phase four of this Program involved partnership between WPR and the participating organisation to implement a range of the recommended interventions and improvements as requested by the organisation. Interventions were bespoke to each organisation and were implemented utilising the extensive subject matter expertise and experience of the WPR team and in consideration of the current evidence based identified in this space (as laid out later in this report).



#### 4.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

The key objectives of the VTA Program were as follows:

- To raise awareness across the T&L industry that current mental and physical health issues are at unacceptable levels and require attention.
- To promote the business case and the benefits of implementing an integrated mental health and well-being program into an organisation.
- To significantly improve the mental health and wellbeing of the T&L industry by implementing a sustainable awareness, education, and implementation program for the medium to large T&L organisations.
- To facilitate the crucial stakeholder engagement needed to advance the platforms and tools to effectively implement an integrated approach to mental health into T&L organisations.
- To build and reinforce cultural change in T&L organisations to acknowledge and support mental health in the workplace.

Implementing an effective integrated strategy into an organisation involves actions across three key areas: **promotion, protection and support**. Please refer to Diagram 2. To achieve the above objectives, the VTA program involves three key stages for an organisation:

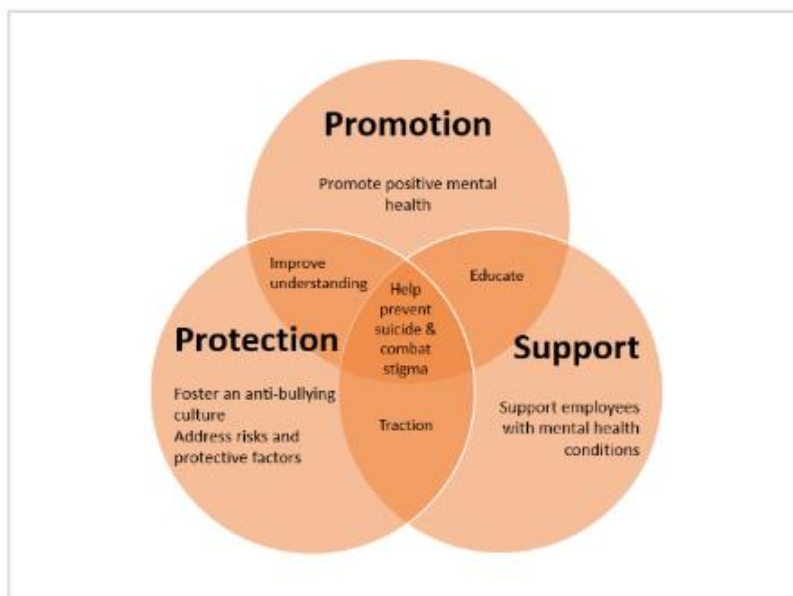


Diagram 2: Based upon Tony LaMontagne’s integrated approach model



## **5.0 ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAM**

### **5.1 Selection into the Program**

At the start of the Program, the VTA pro-actively promoted the Program and prepared a detailed information pack in conjunction with Gallaghers Workforce Risk before approaching interested member organisations.

At the very outset, it was decided that the success of the Program would be heavily dependent upon the 'buy-in' and commitment from the executive and senior management levels of the organisation.

Each of the organisations were clearly briefed about the challenges, expectations, and requirements.

### **5.2 Description of the organisations involved in the Program**

A total of eight organisations were involved as required by the Program. They represented broad range of businesses across the road and transport industry. They also ranged size, structures, and operations. From a broad perspective, the sectors included: local, regional and interstate road transport, national warehousing, wharf carriage, storage and distribution, stevedoring, oversize over mass road transport and heavy vehicle driver education.

#### **XTREME FREIGHT**

Australian Worldwide Logistics Pty Ltd T/As Xtreme Freight is a privately owned freight company in Melbourne dedicated to providing customers with total quality transport solutions. They have been servicing the freight forwarders industry since 1988. Xtreme Freight currently has employees across three warehouses in Melbourne and also engage subcontractors and a fleet of transport vehicles.

#### **WETTENHALLS**

From humble beginnings, Wettenhalls has become one of Australia's most trusted logistics providers based on their strong values: Respect, Innovation, Open Communication, Honesty and Leadership. Dating back to the company formation of Amezdroz and Menzies (A&M) in Colac, Victoria in 1925; the company continued to grow into Amezdroz and Sons in 1984. A number of strategic acquisitions in the early 2000s resulted in all of the group's trucks being rebranded to Wettenhalls in 2004. Today, the Amezdroz family continues its proud ownership of Wettenhalls with the fourth generation of the family actively engaged in the operating of the business.

#### **CAHILL TRANSPORT**

Since its inception, in 1951, Cahill Transport has been a family owned and operated company. Maintaining this ethos, the company began a significant period of growth from 1989 and in the past decade alone the business has doubled their size, capabilities and services with an intention to maintain this this focus and development. Despite the rapid growth Cahill Transport remain an award-



winning business and continue their commitment to creating a leading culture and a supportive working environment.

### **SECON FREIGHT LOGISTICS**

Secon Freight Logistics (Secon) was founded by Jim Seide and Maurie Considine in 1969 and quickly grew into a family business. Maintaining depots in Victoria across sites in Truganina, Secon is a freight industry leader specialising in wharf transport, warehousing, containerisation, side-lifting and the running of Australian Customs and Quarantine (AQIS) approved warehouses and depots. The business completes the handling and forwarding of a variety of goods for the retail, Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), light industrial, bulk plastics, food and dairy industries and more. The business offers a range of services including container cartage, warehousing and distribution and inventory management backed up by cutting edge Information Technology (IT) systems.

### **VICTORIA INTERNATIONAL CONTAINER TERMINAL (VICT)**

Victoria International Container Terminal (VICT) was appointed by the Port of Melbourne in 2014 to design, construct and operate Australia's first fully automated container terminal. As a subsidiary of International Container Terminal Services Incorporated (ICTSI), VICT is ICTSI's first entry point into Australia. ICTSI focuses on operating, managing and developing common-user container terminals worldwide, particularly those in strategically located gateway ports. In every terminal, ICTSI strives for maximum transport and distribution efficiencies, and drive these to continually higher levels, with the long view of continuously building shareholder value.

### **PETER SADLER REMOVALIST AND LOGISTICS**

Peter Sadler Removals & Logistics are a family-owned removals and commercial transport business. They service clients throughout Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. Peter Sadlers has a business philosophy that exceeding the needs of their clients is paramount in achieving business success. They always aim to help their clients prosper across all aspects of their transport and distribution networks; and in doing so create strong, long-lasting partnership. Peter Sadler Removal & Logistics tailor their approach and services to each customer and offer customisation that is not common across the industry. They have several specialised vehicles within their core fleet and a diverse and capable workforce.

### **HI-HAUL TRANSPORT**

Operating for more than 30 years, Hi-Haul Transport Pty Ltd is based in Melbourne and provides heavy haulage transport Australia wide. With a large, diversified fleet of prime-movers, low-loaders and rear-end steerable equipment, as well as semi, extendable and step deck trailers are able to handle all specialist transport needs.



Hi-Haul services a wide range of industries including mining, industrial, manufacturing and construction. It transports earthmoving equipment, large pressure vessels, heavy beams or mobile cranes.

**ARMSTRONGS DRIVER EDUCATION**

Armstrongs has developed and delivered training and assessment for the Transport and Logistics industry for over 50 years. Armstrongs is a Registered Training Office (RTO) and a VicRoads accredited heavy vehicle and motorcycle training and assessment centre working under the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF). Armstrongs is also WorkSafe accredited to deliver forklift licence training and testing.

Armstrongs' licencing courses are designed to provide students with skills and knowledge that exceed the minimum standards required to obtain a heavy vehicle licence. In addition, Armstrongs' licencing courses are designed to provide the student with as much practical experience as possible to further develop and consolidate their skills.

A summary of each of the organisation's activities and operations are outlined in Table 1 below.

Organisation	Workforce	Operations			Locations		
		Transport	Warehousing	Stevedoring	Local	Intrastate	Interstate
<b>XTreme Freight</b>	0-100	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
<b>Wettenhalls</b>	100-200	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
<b>Cahill Transport</b>	100-200	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
<b>Victoria International Container Terminal (Stevedores)</b>	100-200			✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Secon Freight Logistics</b>	100-200	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
<b>Hi-Haul Transport</b>	0-100	✓			✓		✓
<b>Peter Sadler Removalist and Logistics</b>	0-100	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
<b>Armstrongs Driver Education</b>	0-100	✓	✓		✓	✓	

**Table 1:** Summarises the key characteristics of each organisation: size of workforce; sectors of the industry and operations.



## 6.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAM

At the very outset, it is important to note that this was a very unique Program in nature. It involved all elements of and the need to effectively implement 'change management processes' into each of the organisations. It involved an 'integrated change management' approach as compared to awareness initiatives or one-off mental health activities within the organisation.

As outlined in the table 2 below, this Program involved a total of 843 participants across 8 organisations. It also achieved an overall survey response rate of 67% with five organisations achieving individual participation rates of well over 75%.

From an independent survey perspective, this was a very good outcome and provided 'rich' data input for each of the final reports along with the desk top reviews and employee interviews. Participation rates in the survey increased throughout the course of the Program. This was due to two key factors, firstly the initial two Programs were undertaken while Covid-19 restrictions remained in place reducing the ability to effectively engage the workforce through activities such as group toolbox talks. Secondly, learnings were taken from the initial surveys regarding the importance of group and in-person socialisation that were then applied to the remaining six organisations.

The three core analysis processes along with the site visits ensure that the Gallagher Workforce Risk team were able to prepare high quality final reports for each of the organisations.

Unfortunately, Covid-19 had a detrimental impact upon the roll-out of the program especially in 2020-2021, however, impacts continued to be experienced throughout 2022. It not only adversely affected the timeline with unprecedented circumstances associated with Covid-19 but it also created a more challenging environment effectively engage with the organisations.

Please note, it was agreed that all data input and the final reports provided to each of eight organisations would remain 'private and confidential' between the specific organisations, Gallaghers Workforce Risk and the VTA.

Through the co-operation, commitment and persistence demonstrated by all the stakeholders, the Program was fully delivered.



Details of the core analysis inputs are captured in the table below.

Name	Survey Response			Desktop	Interview	Site Visit
	No. of employers	Completed survey	Percentage received	Completed	Completed	Completed
1.Xtreme Freight	90	45	50%	✓	✓	✓
2. Wettenhalls	380	201	53%	✓	✓	✓
3. Cahills	340	265	78%	✓	✓	✓
4. Secon	140	76	54%	✓	✓	✓
5. VICT	160	128	80%	✓	✓	✓
6. Peter Sadler	80	62	78%	✓	✓	✓
7.Hi Haul	36	29	81%	✓	✓	✓
8.Armstrong	42	37	88%	✓	✓	✓
<b>Total</b>	<b>1268</b>	<b>843</b>	<b>67%</b>			

**Table 2:** Summarises the key characteristics of each organisation: size of workforce; sectors of the industry and operations.

**7.0 KEY FINDINGS OF THE PROGRAM**

As outlined in the objectives of this Program, beyond providing individual consultancy and support to T&L organisations in line with the **HeadFit BusinessFit Program** assessment tool, processes and reporting, this Program aimed to identify industry level trends and gaps based upon the experiences of the diverse and representative pilot participants.

As such, in considering the “big data” derived from the survey responses from some 843 participants (representing 67% of employees across the participating organisations) and common findings from the desktop review, stakeholder interviews, focus groups and site visits. The following key findings and trends were identified throughout the Program.

**7.1 Key strengths**

The key strengths of T&L organisations in the mental health, psychosocial risk management and psychosocial safety space included the following:

**1. Leadership commitment**

While not consistently recognized by employees in the survey results, the genuine commitment from the organisational leaders to creating a mentally healthy and psychologically safe environment was evident through their attitudes and actions as identified in the stakeholder interviewing and the time commitment they made to participating in this Program. In addition, this genuine intent was enhanced through their willingness and investment in the phase four interventions of the Program.



## **2. Culture**

Survey data consistently indicated that most employees had a positive experience of their organisation's culture. This was further supported by commentary gathered throughout focus groups, which typically indicated that team members felt welcomed, supported, and engaged in their working environment and teams. This is a key and foundational aspect of psychological safety and is particularly important in the T&L industry where teams are diverse, and employees work in a highly autonomous nature.

## **3. Reward and recognition**

Review of organization processes routinely identified effective and well implemented reward and recognition programs. The focus on these programs was typically performance and outcome driven, however, this provides an excellent basis for promoting culture and positive team behaviour moving forward.

## **4. Physical safety approach**

Consistently, and as expected, all organisations had highly effective safety culture and compliant safety management systems and approaches to their day to day working tasks and risk/hazard management. Safety management systems typically had a physical task and environmental focus, with key considerations for areas such as Chain of Responsibility (CoR), however, psychosocial risk management and psychological safety were often secondary or absent. This provides an excellent system and cultural foundation for introducing additional strategies and considerations for psychosocial risk management and psychological safety.

## **7.2 Key gaps**

Key gaps and opportunities for improvement of T&L organisations in the mental health, psychosocial risk management and psychosocial safety space included the following key themes, with exploration of recommendations and strategies to address these included below:

### **1. Formalisation of psychological safety/mental health support approach**

Consistently, organisations had a range of effective approaches to supporting mental health and wellbeing and creating a safe working environments and culture, however these were typically of an informal nature and were reliant upon the capability and intent of individual leaders and teams.

A formalisation of these processes and strategies is required to ensure consistency and scalability of existing strengths and to ensure the effective introduction of new processes and interventions.

### **2. Engagement of an employee assistance provider and/or establishment of a peer support function**





Typically, organisations did not have an established employee assistance program (EAP) or peer support function. As such, many organisations were exposed in their capability to respond to mental health crisis, provide pathways for effective treatment of mental health concerns and to offer practical early intervention support or debriefing in the workplace.

### **3. Management capability**

Survey data and stakeholder interviewing/focus groups consistently highlighted that people leaders felt ill equipped to identify the early warning signs of at-risk team members, undertake mental health conversations and offer practical support and information. In addition, while there was a general understanding of psychosocial risk management obligations, most people leaders and senior managers/executives reported that they were not confident in their ability to identify or manage these risks.

### **4. Assessment, management, and reporting of psychosocial risk factors**

Across all participating organisations, there were significant gaps in the way that psychosocial risks were being identified, managed, and reported upon. A range of limiting factors were identified, including lack of awareness, functionality of systems not allowing for data capture, stigma preventing clear reporting and a lack of prioritisation in comparison to physical risks. Given the recent Guidelines issued by Safe Work Australia and the increasing legislative obligations across all jurisdictions this will be an essential focus for T&L workplaces moving forward.

Key areas of psychosocial risk that were consistently identified across the participating organisations, and which require a dedicated approach, included:

- Role clarity (especially of people management and other leadership tasks)
- Fatigue management as it pertains to mental health and well-being
- Occupational violence and aggression
- Exposure to trauma (on road)
- Task rotation and scheduling

### **5. Workforce mental health literacy and awareness**

While survey data captured information regarding 'organisational stigma' towards mental health experiences, analysis indicated a positive improvement in attitudes from previous surveys and it was noted that mental health literacy was typically low, especially in drivers.

### **6. Onboarding and pre-employment processes**

Review of organisation processes and feedback from focus groups consistently highlighted onboarding processes for new staff members as underwhelming, especially in consideration of their induction to culture, mental health support and peer support. Similarly, pre-employment processes did not take



into consideration psychological capacity required for work.

## **8.0 INDUSTRY LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS & NEEDS**

Given the consistency in organisations' strengths and gaps identified throughout the Program (survey, desktop documentation evaluation, organisation surveying/focus groups and site visits) some common trends in recommendations and needs were identified.

The recommendations were piloted by many of the participating organisations throughout phase four of the Program to significant impact and tangible improvement. As such, these recommendations could be considered as transferable across the T&L industry (with an organisation's specific customisations) and they are recommended to form the basis of future work in this space and the development of an industry specific psychosocial risk management toolbox.

Recommendations for industry specific essential improvement opportunities are:

1. Development of a strong organisation commitment and framework across the mental health, psychological safety and organisational culture space, including development of a dedicated mental health and psychological safety strategy and/or policy (and updating of other organisation policies to include mental health and psychological safety considerations)
2. Provision and formalisation of a range of mental health and wellbeing supports, including as a priority engagement of Employee Assistance Program providers and/or establishment of a peer support program.
3. Build on existing processes and systems through the inclusion of mental health considerations. For example:
  - Review of existing organisation systems, processes, and documentation to incorporate factors relating to mental health and psychological safety.
  - Include physical and psychological demands in position descriptions.
  - Revise incident reporting processes to allow for more immediate and effective reporting of on road and customer facing incidents.
  - Introduce more formalised processes, resources and supports to address the following: mental and physical fatigue; occupational violence and aggression; exposure to trauma; rotation of tasks and role clarity.
4. Enhance organisational engagement, opportunity and capability across the mental health and psychological safety space through participation and upskilling, with particular focus placed upon the role of frontline people managers.



5. Continue to reinforce behaviours which support culture and mental health through the establishment/continuation of organisation social programs/events and reward and recognition systems.
6. Re-administer the HeadFit Survey upon implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations and perform brief pulse checks to measure improvement in targeted areas as an ongoing self-benchmarking process.

Although there are many demands which can detract from employee wellbeing and psychosocial safety, investment in worker health and safety should be prioritised (Pricewaterhouse Coopers, 2014).

According to a seminal 2014 study, a 280% return on investment is possible for transport and logistics organisations who invest in the mental health of their employers (Pricewaterhouse Coopers, 2014).

Similarly, where companies are required to prioritise interventions due to operational or financial considerations, it is recommended that focus be placed upon enhancing capability and role clarity of direct people managers.

## 9.0 SUMMARY

Ultimately, the **HeadFit BusinessFit Program** has been a unique and highly effective initiative that focused on the need to implement organisational level 'change management processes' around mental health, psychosocial risk management and psychological safety in the transport and logistics industry.

It is an industry where these areas have been previously lacking and difficult to achieve meaningful engagement and improvement. There remain significant challenges to continue to raise awareness and implement effective change management processes to achieve better outcomes for employees, organisations and the industry.

The three core analysis processes along with the site visits ensured that the Gallagher Workforce Risk team were able to prepare high quality final reports for each of the organisations. Throughout the Program, the VTA was directly involved in all aspects of the management of the Program and worked closely with the Gallagher Workforce Risk team and the VTA member organisations.

The Program involved an 'integrated change management' approach as compared to awareness initiatives or one-off mental health activities within the organisation. The success in driving 'effective change' was also dependent upon the genuine commitment and support of each of the executive and senior management teams from each of the eight organisations.

The Program was fully delivered, and it was rewarding to witness the on-going and positive impact that the Program has had upon the eight organisations involved.