

Alcohol and drug management

Alcohol and Drug Management

The excerpt from the BSA is as follows:

BSA S 56

(2) An accredited bus operator must develop, maintain, and implement an alcohol and drug management policy that—

- (a) is developed in consultation with bus safety workers who are employees, or contractors, of the operator for the purposes of operating the bus service; and
- (b) provides for the matters specified in section 57.

BSA S 57 Form and content of alcohol and drug management policy

(1) An alcohol and drug management policy must—

- (a) be in writing; and
- (b) specify that a driver of a bus must not have alcohol or drugs present in his or her blood or breath immediately before, or while, driving a bus; and
- (c) comply with any guidelines regarding the form and content of alcohol and drug management policies issued by the Safety Director.

(2) If an alcohol and drug management policy provides for testing of the presence of alcohol or drugs in the blood or breath of a bus safety worker employed or contracted by the accredited bus operator, the policy must—

- (a) specify circumstances in which a bus safety worker may be tested for the presence of alcohol or drugs in his or her blood or breath;
- (b) specify the testing procedures for detecting alcohol or drugs in a person's blood or breath;
- (c) specify the persons who may conduct the tests;
- (d) specify how and where the tests are to be stored, handled or destroyed;
- (e) specify that a test for the presence of alcohol or drugs may not be conducted more frequently than—
 - (i) an hour before the bus safety worker is to carry out bus safety work or while the bus safety worker is carrying out bus safety work; or
 - (ii) if there is reasonable cause to test the bus safety worker at another time including—
 - (A) that the bus safety worker has been involved in an accident or incident;
 - (B) that there is reason to believe the bus safety worker is impaired by alcohol or drugs;
 - (C) that in the interests of safety, the bus safety worker ought to be tested;
- (f) recognise the purpose of testing for presence of alcohol or drugs;
- (g) specify measures to ensure that the results of any tests conducted pursuant to the policy are treated confidentially

What does this mean – what do you need to do?

As a school you may already have an alcohol and drug management policy in place. You do not need to have a separate alcohol and drug management policy for your bus operations. Just include your bus operations in your current policy.

If you don't already have a policy, then the alcohol and drug management policy needs to be in writing and needs to ensure it covers the items specified in BSA S 57 (see above excerpt).

A comprehensive alcohol and drug management policy would address, among other things:

- Illicit Drugs
- Alcohol
- Over the counter medications
- Prescription medications – especially those that may cause drowsiness or impair the driver's performance.

The policy needs to be written in consultation with your staff and should be agreed to and signed off by all drivers during induction and training.

If the school intends to carry out their own testing or engage in any testing through a third party, we encourage you to carefully consider the detail of Section 57 (2) in developing a procedure for testing. If you wish to undertake your own testing or engage in any testing through a third party, we encourage you to make contact with our office (information@safetransport.vic.gov.au) to enable us to provide you with further advice.

Reminder – carrying out testing is optional.