

OFFICIAL



Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2025-2028

February 2025



Government of South Australia
Department for Infrastructure
and Transport

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V1.1	27/09/2024	Initial draft
V1.2	05/12/2024	Amendments to incorporate consultation input and suggestions from internal staff and external representatives.
V1.3	10/02/2025	Amendments to incorporate public consultation outcomes

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Country throughout South Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land and waters. We pay our respects to the diversity of cultures, significance of contributions and to Elders past, present and emerging.



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Statement from the Chief Executive

Suicide and suicide prevention is a complex and challenging topic that can raise fears of 'doing the wrong thing' or 'doing more harm'.

However, like with many issues facing our community, when approached with compassion, patience and kindness, and through connecting people with the right support, even small actions can go a long way.

As a Department, we recognise that we are part of a shared responsibility to make a positive impact in suicide prevention.

We are committed to addressing factors that can contribute to distress or prevent a person from seeking or accessing the help they need. We will work collaboratively with other agencies, key organisational bodies, industry partners and support services to further suicide prevention efforts in South Australia.

Instances of suicide and suicide-related distress have a profound impact on the community. I am committed to taking action to reduce these and create a compassionate, resilient and empowered workforce and community.

I would like to express my gratitude to those individuals who have and will contribute their invaluable stories, insights and experiences to help shape and guide our approach, strategies and initiatives for suicide prevention.

I also want to acknowledge the individual and collective contributions of those with lived and living experience of mental ill-health and suicide, as well as those who care for them.

Each person's journey is unique. All represent valued contributions to Australia's commitment to reform our mental health and suicide prevention systems.

I look forward to continuing to work with you, using every lever within our sphere of influence to prevent suicide and minimise the impact on our community.

Jon Whelan

Chief Executive
Department for Infrastructure and Transport

If you need help

We appreciate that discussing, reading or hearing about suicide can be distressing.

If you are worried about how you are feeling, or you would just like to speak to someone, here are some services you can contact for support.

South Australian supports

Service	Contact	Description
Mental Health Triage	13 14 65	24/7 assistance in a mental health emergency.
Lived Experience Telephone Support Service	1800 013 755	Non-crisis support for mental health conditions. Open 5pm–11:30pm, 365 days a year.
Regional Access	1300 032 186	24/7 counselling for people 15 years and older living or working in regional South Australia.
Grieflink	grieflink.org.au	Information for people who are dealing with grief caused by the death of someone close to them, and for those who are supporting them.

National supports

Service	Contact	Description
StandBy - Support After Suicide	1300 727 247	24/7 support for anyone bereaved or impacted by suicide.
Lifeline	13 11 14	24/7 phone crisis response. Online crisis support chat available each evening.
Suicide Call Back Service	1300 659 467	24/7 professional counselling for anyone affected by suicide.
MensLine Australia	1300 789 978	24/7 advice, therapy and support for men with family and relationship concerns.
Thirili National Indigenous Postvention Service	1800 805 801	24/7 phone support.
Beyond Blue	1300 224 636	24/7 phone, online and email counselling.
Qlife	1800 184 527	Online chat or phone counselling for LGBTQIA+ people. Open 3pm–midnight, 7 days a week.
Open Arms	1800 011 046	24/7 counselling for veterans and their families.
National Relay Service	1800 555 660	Help for people with hearing or speech difficulties.
Mates in Construction	1300 642 111	24/7 support for people in the construction industry.

Acknowledgements

We express our gratitude to the individuals who have and will contribute their invaluable stories, insights and experiences to shape and guide our approach, strategies and initiatives for suicide prevention.

We also extend our appreciation to those members of our Department who contributed their time, ideas and support in the development of this Action Plan.

On both accounts, we recognise the emotional impact and importance of these contributions.

Glossary

The following terms are used throughout this Action Plan:

Term	Description
CCM	Commercial and Contract Management Division
Department	The Department for Infrastructure and Transport
ID	Infrastructure Delivery Division
NSCPDO	North-South Corridor Program Delivery Office
NW	Northern Water Project Delivery Office
PA	Public Affairs Division
PACS	People and Corporate Services Division
PCC	People, Culture and Capability Directorate
PTSA	Public Transport South Australia Division
RMS	Road and Marine Services Division
SPAP Committee	Suicide Prevention Action Plan Committee
SSREM	Safety, Security, Risk and Emergency Management Directorate
TSP	Transport Strategy and Planning Division
TPR	Transport Policy and Regulation Division

About us

The Department for Infrastructure and Transport (the Department) is one of South Australia's largest organisations, whose purpose is to connect South Australians to keep our State moving – now and for the future.

Our work encompasses every part of our State; from cities to regional and rural areas, with benefits for all South Australians.

We are responsible for operating and maintaining thousands of kilometres of roads, managing the State's marine network, road traffic network and public transport system, and providing a range of government, licensing and regulatory services.

We plan, design and build infrastructure as part of a multi-billion-dollar pipeline of transformative infrastructure projects, which strengthen our economy and supports hospitals, schools and other facilities for our communities.

We work closely with industry partners, other government agencies and service providers and engage extensively with our community.

The diversity of our services and operations is reflected in our workforce, with our people working from metropolitan and regional offices, customer service centres, vehicles, vessels, depots, workshops or construction sites in professional, technical and physical labour roles.

The business of infrastructure and transport means some of our people work:

- in rural and remote areas
- shift work
- with difficult or disgruntled customers
- with sensitive or distressing content and imagery
- in response to emergencies, incidents or accidents
- in roles that bring them into direct contact with people who may be considering suicide.

For some, suicide-related distress and/or resilience fatigue are commonplace, placing some of our people at a higher risk of suicide.

Our Suicide Prevention Action Plan

Strategic context

Our Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2025-2028 (Action Plan) seeks to consolidate our existing strategies and initiatives for wellbeing and suicide prevention, whilst laying solid foundations for suicide prevention in the future through new initiatives and actions.

These initiatives and actions aim to prevent suicide and suicide-related distress of our staff and members of the public who interact with our infrastructure and services. Through these initiatives we will:

- raise awareness and reduce the stigma attached to suicide, suicide-related distress and the risk factors contributing to suicide
- empower our employees, and those we engage with, to connect with or connect others with compassionate, safe, and timely support
- promote health seeking and reduce barriers to seeking assistance
- improve our 'postvention' response.

To contribute to achieving the State Government's vision for suicide prevention, existing and new initiatives provided in this Action Plan will focus on five specific priorities:



The Action Plan acts to further the goals of the South Australian Suicide Prevention Plan 2023-2026 through a unified approach to suicide prevention.

It aligns with the key principles of our Strategic Plan for 2023-2024, which focused on respecting, understanding and valuing the people we serve and ensuring health, wellbeing and safety underpin our actions and decisions.

Progress of our proposed actions for suicide prevention will be overseen by our Executive Committee, with continuing support from our Suicide Prevention Action Plan Committee, who will coordinate the efforts of all areas of our Department.

Our vision

Compassionate, resilient and empowered people, who connect with our peers and community in meaningful ways to reduce incidences of suicide and suicide-related distress in South Australia.

Our Action Plan is viewed as a 'stepping stone' in our journey to reducing suicide distress and the incidence of suicide in South Australia and playing our part in furthering the objects of the *Suicide Prevention Act 2021*.

Defining suicide prevention

Suicide is rarely caused by a single event or a single circumstance and we understand that, at present, we may not be able to prevent every suicide.

However, by preventing even one we have made a huge impact not only to that individual but their family, friends and community, and so we will strive to reduce the incidence of suicide in our community.

When defining suicide prevention, we take our direction from the South Australian Suicide Prevention Plan 2023-2026.

"Suicide prevention is taking action to build wellbeing, address all of life's adversities and strengthen the protective factors already in individuals and communities.

It is understanding and addressing the social and interpersonal context of people's lives that may lead to distress (for example: childhood adversities, family violence, community turmoil, social disconnection and financial hardship) and building community awareness and capacity to respond.

All sectors working together to address risk and build protective factors across the lifespan can reduce and prevent distress well before a suicide crisis occurs.

To prevent or respond early to people becoming distressed, a range of cohesive, connected and cross sector approaches are needed, from broad public awareness and community skill building to practical and compassionate supports for individuals."

Defining postvention

A reality of suicide and suicide prevention is the need for postvention services for family, friends, peers and first-responders bereaved or impacted by suicide.

Postvention refers to a coordinated immediate, short-term and/or long-term response following a suicide, to promote healing and attempt to mitigate effects for the bereaved.

Development of our Suicide Prevention Action Plan

Early activities

In early 2024, we took our first steps towards developing our Suicide Prevention Action Plan by forming a Suicide Prevention Action Plan (SPAP) Committee.

With members from all areas of our Department we began identifying existing initiatives and strategies, partnerships and arrangements that were already in place to prevent suicide across the multiple and diverse functions of our agency.

From this we learnt who in our workforce is at increased risk of being impacted by suicide and vicarious trauma as part of their role, and where and how we interact with the community.

The development of the actions within this Action Plan are the result of extensive discussions along with input from the State Government's Communities of Practice members, Preventative Health and other key stakeholders.

Consultation

We believe in the value of consultation, and the wisdom of lived and living experience, and endeavoured to undertake true and authentic consultation in the development of this Action Plan.

Consultation provides diverse perspectives and viewpoints which enable a broader range and more innovative ideas, options and suggestions than might otherwise have been considered.

We believe that those people with lived and living experience with suicide are uniquely placed to inform us to better identify people before they reach a crisis point, support people through a crisis and support those grieving and/or bereaved.

We engaged internally with all employees through an anonymous survey and self-nominated, professionally facilitated focus groups to discuss current and potential strategies and initiatives. We reached out to our Aboriginal Leadership Group to start discussions on focused engagement with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. We identified and engaged with external partners to gain their thoughts and ideas and to identify opportunities to collaborate.

Our draft Action Plan was then released to the broader community for consultation via the State Government's YourSAy website.

All input from these consultation activities was considered to further develop our draft Action Plan.

Actions

Strategy 1 – Partner

Enable multisectoral and whole of community approaches to suicide prevention.

Why is it important?

Supporting people and promoting hope requires the combined effort of many individuals, organisations and sectors working together and sharing a sense of responsibility. Working together and sharing information will build understanding and create meaningful and timely responses.

Existing Department strategies and initiatives

Partnerships are currently established with key organisations including Mates in Construction, TrackSafe Foundation, Surf Life Saving South Australia and Blue Tree/Flying Flags for Mates.

Wellbeing and suicide prevention support requirements are embedded into contracts with industry partners for civil and building construction projects through Master Specifications.

Department representatives are members of the State Government wide Community of Practice for Suicide Prevention.

Actions	Measure	Responsibility
<p>Build on existing initiatives to develop an internal education program in partnership with key organisational bodies and the Office of the Chief Psychologist. The program will aim to raise awareness and reduce stigma attached to suicide and suicide-related distress, with a focus to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dispel misconceptions and reduce the fear associated with discussing suicide and suicide prevention • provide tools and language for appropriate discussions on suicide, suicide prevention and suicide-related distress • improve understanding of expectations when being approached by or approaching someone in distress, and that this does not require direct help or 'resolution', but connecting them with the right support • raise the profile of workplace options and protections for employees experiencing suicidal thoughts in the event they approach/confide in another member of the Department. 	<p>Perception changes of suicide prevention pre and post involvement in the education program.</p>	<p>Led by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCC <p>Key collaborators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PTSA • ID • RMS • TPR

Actions	Measure	Responsibility
<p>Establish a collaborative group to identify and consider the viability for education and promotion of suicide prevention through the externally facing platforms of the Department, i.e. commercial, public transport and project signage.</p>	<p>Promotional program development</p>	<p>Key collaborators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Department divisions
<p>Review our existing business strategies, programs and contracts with industry partners to consider opportunities for increasing awareness and training across a greater scope of the Department’s activities.</p>	<p>Number of reviews conducted and changes.</p>	<p>Key collaborators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCM TSP RMS TPR
<p>Contribute to the Preventive Health SA Suicide Prevention website as a hub resource to facilitate mental health and suicide prevention strategies.</p>	<p>Number of site visits, downloads and clicks.</p>	<p>Led by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPAP Committee

Actions

Strategy 2 – Respect

Promote social and emotional wellbeing and prevent and respond to suicide risk for Aboriginal South Australians.

Why is it important?

In building social and emotional wellbeing, the impact of racism and trauma and the social and economic disadvantage many Aboriginal people experience must be addressed. Suicide prevention responses should be culturally sensitive and compassionate, recognising the strengths, skills and resilience of Aboriginal people and the importance of connection to Country.

Existing Department strategies and initiatives

Wellbeing Framework established with specific Peer Support and crisis support for First Nation employees.

Mandatory cultural training for all staff across our Department with the opportunity for staff to attend additional cultural training.

Department-wide commitment to reconciliation through the continued support and activities performed under our Department's Reconciliation Action Plan.

Actions	Measure	Responsibility
Engage with First Nations employees and relevant representatives from organisational bodies to determine culturally appropriate and respectful suicide prevention actions for both First Nations employees and the communities we engage with.	Individual plan developed with relevant input.	Led by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPAP Committee
Based on pilot initiative implemented by the Senior Aboriginal Leadership Committee, consider development of a permanent program which provides or promotes increased Peer Support and/or external support during significant or distressing days for First Nations people.	Implementation of appropriate support programs.	Led by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Aboriginal Leadership Committee

Actions

Strategy 3 – Prevent

Create compassionate, safe and resilient communities.

Why is it important?

Building suicide prevention awareness and skills will help people to feel able and safe to recognise and respond to concerns, provide support, ask for and seek help, and reduce suicide-related distress in their communities.

Existing Department strategies and initiatives

Wellbeing Framework established for our Department, including a suicide prevention module.

The Framework provides:

- options for crisis support, including Integrated Onsite Services, 13 YARN and the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Peer Support (First Nations) and Mental Health First Aid Officers
- a range of wellbeing training and education programs.

Wellbeing protocols established for specific areas within our Department which address activities such as meeting etiquette, role rotation, community engagement, personal location devices and check ins.

Language Modification Program undertaken to modify sensitive written community notification relating to licensing and registration.

Suicide Prevention design elements embedded in refurbishment programs for road, rail, marine and buildings.

Actions	Measure	Responsibility
Engage with key organisational bodies to build and implement a training program tailored to different levels of management and staff roles, to empower them to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise changes in people, identify steps to reduce suicide and connect individuals with suitable and safe support • build staff resilience and manage resilience fatigue. 	Percentage of employees who complete the program.	Key collaborators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCC • SSREM
Engage with key organisational bodies to design a program for delivering 'interrupters' at strategic and relevant sites along our transport networks, and on marine and building assets.	Creation of a program and implementation plan.	Key collaborators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ID • PTSA • RMS • NSCPDO • NW

Actions

Strategy 4 – Respond

Meeting the needs of people and communities when, and in the ways, they are needed.

Why is it important?

Suicide prevention is not 'one size fits all'. Tailoring compassionate and timely suicide prevention responses, with a focus on those who may be more at risk and/or bereaved by suicide, will help reduce peoples' and communities' distress.

Existing Department strategies and initiatives

Wellbeing Framework established with specific suicide prevention information including fact sheets, information and links to services for immediate response.

Actions	Measure	Responsibility
<p>Engage with the StandBy organisation (or similar) to establish a comprehensive 'postvention' response for our employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> where they are bereaved by or distressed by suicide loss, either through their personal lives or in the course of their work responsibilities where they are interacting with a member of our community who is bereaved by or distressed by suicide loss whilst in the course of carrying out their duties and responsibilities. 	<p>Creation and implementation of Postvention Response Toolkit.</p> <p>Increase in number of staff aware of Postvention Response Toolkit (monitor via survey 12 months post implementation).</p>	<p>Key collaborators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PCC SSREM <p><i>* To be delivered in consultation with other relevant government agencies</i></p>
<p>Establish and communicate a clear and visible crisis pathway specifically for staff experiencing suicidal thoughts or suicide-related distress which is quickly and easily accessible by all staff members.</p>	<p>Implementation of a crisis pathway.</p>	<p>Key collaborators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PACS PA
<p>Develop site specific response protocols and plans for suicide-related events.</p>	<p>Number of protocols/plans created and communicated.</p>	<p>Key collaborators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ID PTSA TPR RMS NSCPDO NW

Actions

Strategy 5 – Review

Monitor and evaluate suicide prevention strategies and support evidence informed practice.

Why is it important?

Evaluating strategies will provide information on what is working and how to best target, deliver and maximise impact on suicide prevention.

Existing Department strategies and initiatives

Work, health and safety reporting expanded to capture and inform mental health related incidents, hazards, etc. and to inform proposed changes and understanding.

Development and implementation of an initial Engagement Strategy consulting with people and groups who represent lived and living experience of suicide and suicide-related distress and priority populations to inform the development of the Action Plan.

Actions	Measure	Responsibility
Implement a feedback mechanism which allows staff to provide anonymous feedback on suicide prevention support and activities as and when they use services or seek support.	Implementation and communication of a feedback mechanism.	Led by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PACS
Review the appropriateness and visibility of suicide prevention support mechanisms for people experiencing suicide-related distress.	Change in responses in subsequent consultation process.	Key collaborators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PCC SSREM
Consider recommendations from the Chief Psychiatrist relating to our specific infrastructure and services as appropriate.	Number of implemented recommendations.	Led by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPAP Committee
Develop and implement a subsequent consultation process to allow further consultation and ongoing refinement of our Action Plan with people and groups who represent lived and living experience of suicide and suicide-related distress, or populations which are disproportionately represented, once some actions commence.	Implemented revised consultation process.	Key collaborators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPAP Committee PA

Actions	Measure	Responsibility
Develop specific consultation process for returning rail employees, to allow input to the Action Plan.	Implemented consultation process.	Led by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PTSA
Engage with the Suicide Prevention Council to source relevant data on emerging priority populations to improve preparation, prevention, response and recovery protocols.	Incorporation of subsequent priority populations.	Led by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPAP Committee
Implement ongoing monitoring and reporting on the progress and benefits of the actions within this Action Plan to the Suicide Prevention Council for South Australia.	Reporting to Suicide Prevention Council for South Australia.	Led by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PACS • SPAP Committee

Strategic alignment

Relationship to other policies, strategies and frameworks

The intent and vision for suicide prevention for our Department draws from our overall mission '*to build with purpose, move with care and connect with communities for all South Australians*'.

The direction and initiatives outlined in this Action Plan are closely aligned with our existing [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy](#), Wellbeing Framework and Mental Health Support Programs and services.

Opportunities to align further Department strategies and frameworks with this Action Plan and the State Government's Suicide Prevention Framework will be considered and implemented as part of the actions outlined within Strategy 1 – Partner.

We will also endeavour to implement further expectations of the Suicide Prevention Council as initiatives are developed and with the next iteration of this Action Plan.

Implementation and progress

Implementation

A forward plan will be created to guide a coordinated and appropriately resourced approach to implementing the initiatives across the four-year period of the Action Plan. This will be supported by individual implementation plans for each initiative, which define the approach, timeframes and responsibilities.

The forward plan and implementation plans will be overseen and agreed in consultation with the Suicide Prevention Action Plan Committee.

Our existing communication channels will be utilised to notify employees, external representatives and industry partners of the progress and implementation of new initiatives where relevant.

Monitoring

Updates on the progress of each initiative will be provided at the bi-monthly Suicide Prevention Action Plan Committee meetings by the lead representative.

Barriers, concerns or issues will be escalated to the Executive Committee Safety Toolbox for consideration, direction and advice.

Amendments

Where required the Action Plan will be updated to reflect any changes in organisational structures or Department responsibilities. Any additional versions of the Action Plan will be made available to all stakeholders and provided to the Suicide Prevention Council for reference.

Reporting

The Executive Officer of the Suicide Prevention Action Plan Committee will collate and develop annual progress reports. Reports will be reviewed and approved by the Committee Chair before distribution to the Suicide Prevention Council prior to 31 October of each year.

Contact details

Email: DIT.SPAP@sa.gov.au

Chair
Suicide Prevention Action Plan Committee