



**WKU**<sup>®</sup>

*Department of  
Environment,  
Health & Safety*

Strategic Plan

2008-2012

## **Statement of Purpose**

One part of WKU's overall strategic plan is to "contribute to the identification and solution of key social, economic, scientific, health and environmental problems" that affect its stakeholders. Such a strong commitment demands a total University effort in ensuring that all units and departments implement programs and processes, which, at a minimum, achieve compliance with health, safety and environmental laws and regulations.

Certain core values identified by the WKU Strategic Plan support a complimentary Environment, Health & Safety (EH&S) plan, including:

- The expectation for all conduct to be characterized by integrity, honesty, and a commitment to high moral and ethical values and principles
- A commitment to providing a collegiate experience that prepares students to be informed, engaged, and socially responsible
- A commitment to contributing to improved quality of life and economic well-being of our local community and the region.

EH&S proposes, with this plan, to establish a collaborative program that will systematically assess University operations which impact our campus health and safety. This plan will also support WKU's teaching and research objectives by promoting a safe working and learning environment. Employing such an interdisciplinary approach will help us to go beyond mere compliance. Instead, we will practice environmental stewardship as part of our social responsibility, thereby improving the quality of life on our campus and in our communities.

The current climate of increasing regulations and accountability has dictated a University need for improving campus health and safety awareness. As such, every member of the University community plays a vital role in the success of this program.

## **Vision**

To provide support that will allow WKU to have a safe and healthful working and learning environment, and to promote environmental stewardship.

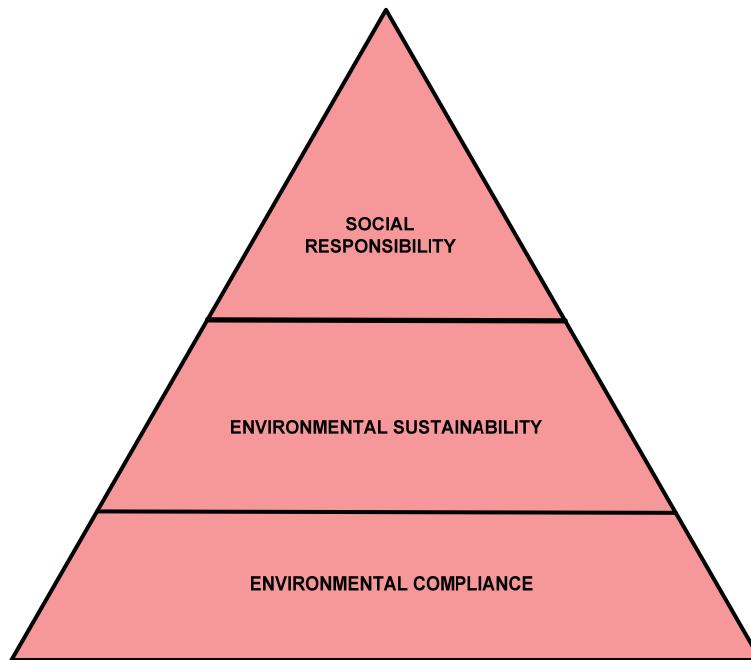
## **Mission**

*The Department of Environment, Health & Safety (EH&S) provides professional guidance and leadership to the University in achieving regulatory compliance, and promotes a culture of safety and environmental stewardship.*

## **Department Philosophy**

We strive to be a high performing organization comprised of dedicated individuals who are empowered, motivated, competent, and committed to improving the communities in which we live and work. We will help other University constituents to be responsible caretakers of the resources that are used in our daily lives, and to manage those resources so that they are available for future generations. We are convinced that a safe working and learning environment is critical to the University's success.

*Our commitment to health, safety and environmental stewardship:*

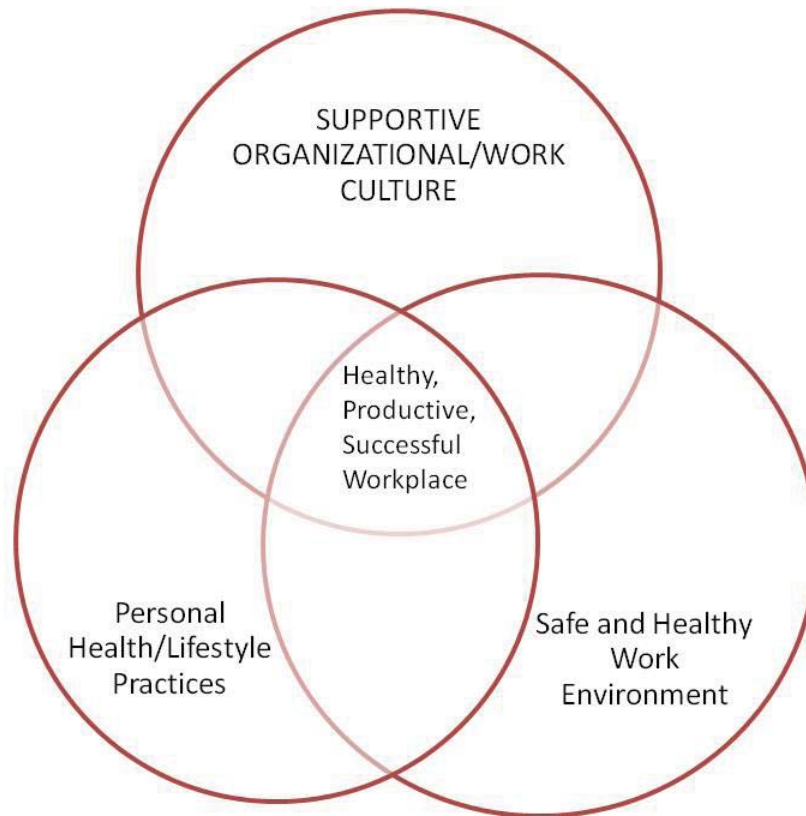


The first step towards social responsibility lies in achieving environmental compliance. Maintaining the foundation of this pyramid is daunting, but necessary to progress to the next level of stewardship. This is by far the hardest part of the pyramid's three steps, since there are thousands of pages of regulations. The task must be completed so the university can address its responsibility to the community and the region.

The second step, environmental sustainability, takes the University beyond compliance to an investment in voluntary programs. This is the next step beyond command and control regulations and requires an investment in voluntary programs. This step will not only create goodwill (with both regulators and stakeholders) but will integrate best environmental practices into the University's culture.

The top of the pyramid is social responsibility. At this level, University members will participate in sustainable development as defined by the Brundtland Commission in 1987, "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." At this stage, the University will be managing both the present and the future.

*A healthy University workplace needs nurturing on three levels:*



A workplace that is healthy, productive, and successful requires three levels of effort. First, a supportive organization and work culture will encourage employees to have a positive effect on the University. Second, a focus on personal health and lifestyle practices will create a University that is more productive. Third, a University-wide commitment to a safe and healthy work environment will create an atmosphere where safety is respected and encouraged.

Other institutions have already discovered that placing safety and health at the heart of their workplace fosters employees who are naturally better at what they do. Safety, then, is not a dictate, but is tied to organizational culture, and can be measured, assessed, evaluated and improved. The most important factor in predicting success of safety initiatives is the quality of leadership combined with the existing culture of safety in the organization. Therefore, it's easy to see why institutions that are successful in safety are also successful in achieving their strategic goals.

Strategic Goal #1: Policy Management and Leadership		Target Date
Objective 1: Promote a culture of safety and environmental stewardship		
○ Task 1: EH&S Policy development and implementation.		6/2009
○ Task 2: Develop a Health and Safety Management Plan.		2/2009
○ Task 3: Collaborate with stakeholders to develop an improved Chemical Hygiene Plan and Hazard Communications Plan.		8/2009
○ Task 4: Develop an aspects and impacts report for environmental compliance.		8/2009
○ Task 5: Develop and implement a Stormwater Quality Management Plan		11/2009
○ Task 6: Promote collaborative processes and team approaches for developing balanced solutions to the University's needs.		
Strategic Goal #2: Process Review and Technical Support		
Objective 1: Increase availability of tools, technology and services		
○ Task 1: Implement an electronic chemical inventory management system.		11/2009
○ Task 2: Develop and implement a plan for improving on-demand training and awareness.		12/31/09
○ Task 4: Develop a EH&S information management system.		12/2010
○ Task 5: Develop and provide Building Emergency Safety Team training for at least 80% of the participants.		7/2009
○ Task 6: Develop a customer service survey system.		8/2010
Strategic Goal #3: Audits and Inspections		
Objective 1: Provide audits and assessments to evaluate risk		
○ Task 1: Develop an audit plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Environmental</li> <li>▪ Health &amp; Safety</li> </ul>		7/2009
○ Task 2: Develop and implement performance tracking metrics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Environmental</li> <li>▪ Health &amp; Safety</li> </ul>		1/2010
Strategic Goal #4: Risk Analysis and Loss Prevention		
Objective 1: Risk analysis		
○ Task 1: Provide quarterly regulatory outlook reports to the VP of Finance and Administration.		6/2009
Objective 2: Track accomplishments and return on investment		
○ Task 1: Develop a standardized report to track accomplishments monthly		12/2009
○ Task 2: Develop a strategy to communicate return on investment for EH&S		12/2010

## **REORGANIZATION PLAN**

Reorganization of the Department of Environment, Health and Safety (EH&S) will assist the University in managing its financial and operational risks by providing better health, safety and environmental services. Reorganizing will also assist the university in meeting its obligations for social responsibility and community stewardship. Improvements are needed in the following areas:

- Continuity in department operations
- Availability of staff for emergency response
- Job roles and responsibilities for more comprehensive coverage of health, safety and environmental laws and regulations
- Retention of experienced and productive employees
- Improved productivity
- Work-related stress
- Professional creativity

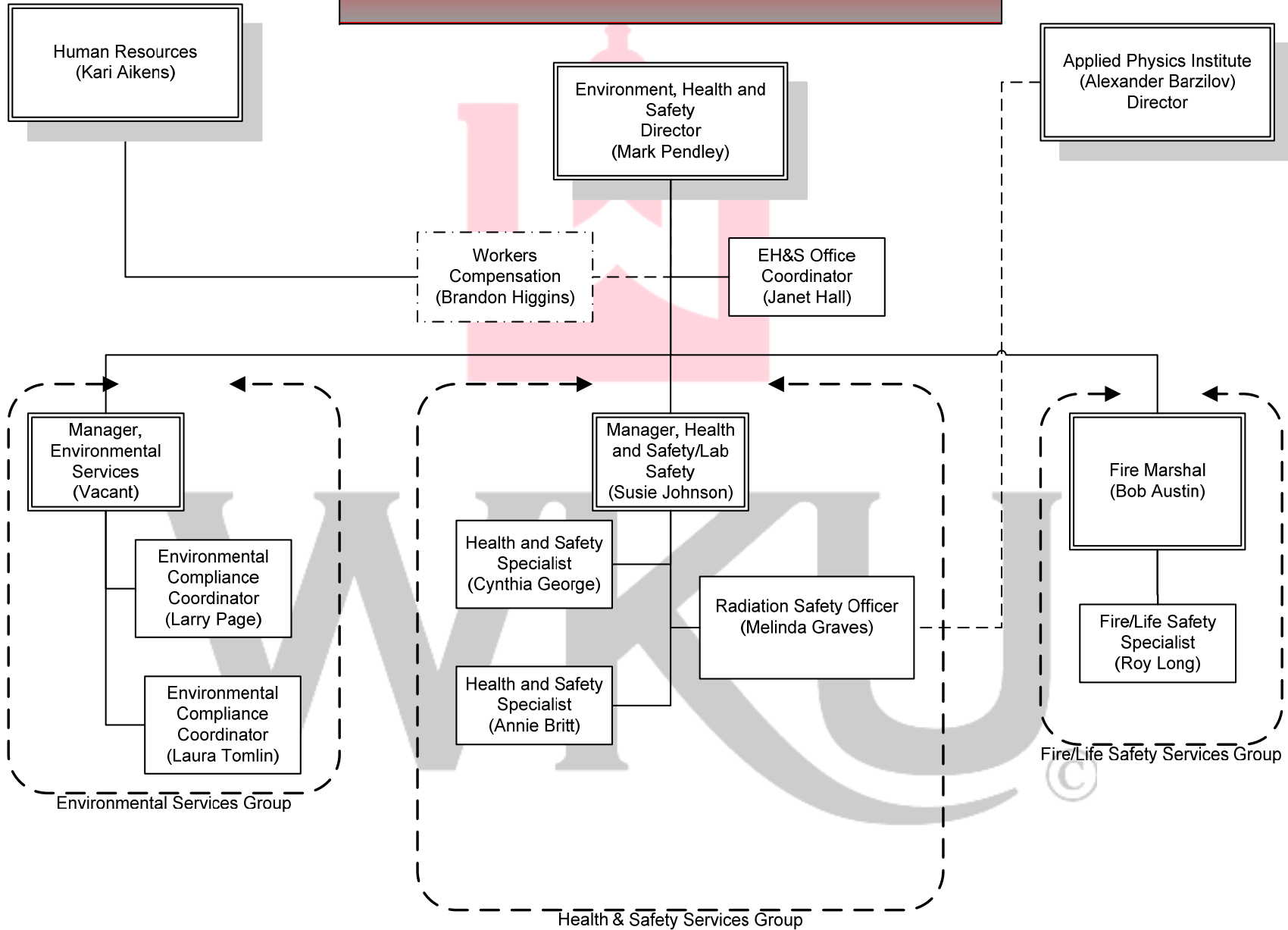
The change allows the department to move from a very flat organization of multiple, silo-like departments to a more vertically integrated structure organized around functional teams. The proposed changes are the result of an in-depth review of the mission-critical functions. It creates a more dynamic organization that empowers staff members and encourages cross-functional collaboration between departments. This plan supports the strategic plan which in turn supports the University's core values and strategic goals.

The original commitment to fund the annual salary (\$55,000) for the Lab Safety Officer position allows for the reorganization without additional funding. At the same time, the reorganization allows the department to operate more efficiently and provide additional services to the University with the same number of staff members currently allocated. The reorganization also allows EH&S to provide equitable compensation to personnel and improve retention of a qualified workforce.

This plan allows each EH&S staff member to take on additional responsibilities and provide services for the growing University community. In addition, EH&S will cover the increased demands of grant providers, who now require validation of University compliance programs, due to increased emphasis on social responsibility and accountability. Finally, EH&S will provide a buffer against the increased risk of penalties from regulatory agencies, due to their compliance enforcement strategy for colleges and universities.

# Environment, Health and Safety

Revised February 1, 2009



Staff Count = 11 (10.2 FTE)