

# Information on modern slavery for our suppliers



**WaterNSW has a responsibility to protect human rights in our operations and supply chains.**

**This includes taking steps to address modern slavery risks. As a supplier to WaterNSW, you have certain ethical and legal obligations to ensure you are managing modern slavery risks in your business. We are here to guide and support you to understand and meet those obligations.**

**This fact sheet gives you an overview of the key concepts, legal definitions and responsibilities for tackling modern slavery.**

## **Background**

WaterNSW recognises the importance of the protection of human rights and is committed to protecting the rights of our employees and contractors, and those within our supply chain.

WaterNSW supports the objectives of the Modern Slavery Act (Cth) to eradicate modern slavery in all its forms.

A copy of our annual [Modern Slavery statement](#) is available on our website.

**According to the 2018  
Global Slavery Index**

**40 million**

**Victims of  
modern slavery**

## What is modern slavery?

While historical slavery was defined by legal ownership of people, modern slavery is defined by illegal control. The 2018 Global Slavery Index estimates that there are over 40 million victims of modern slavery throughout the world today. This tells us that there are more people enslaved globally now than at any time in history.

The term modern slavery describes situations where offenders use coercion, threats or deception to exploit victims and undermine their freedom.

Practices that constitute modern slavery can include:

- human trafficking
- slavery
- servitude
- forced marriage
- forced labour
- debt bondage
- deceptive recruiting (for labour or services) and
- the worst forms of child labour (i.e. situations where children are subjected to slavery or similar practices, or engaged in hazardous work).

Modern slavery can occur in every industry and sector. It has severe consequences for victims and involves grave abuses of human rights. Often, it disproportionately impacts women and girls. Modern slavery also distorts global markets, undercuts responsible business and can pose significant legal and reputational risks to entities.

## Modern slavery within business supply chains

Long and complex supply chains make it difficult to see who is working where and under what conditions. Exploitation of workers can occur during the production of goods in a business's directly-owned facilities, but also in the facilities of their suppliers, and suppliers of their suppliers, all the way down the supply chain, particularly when parts of that chain are overseas.

Without a clear view of every aspect of their operations and supply chain, businesses may be unknowingly contributing to modern slavery and human trafficking.

## Modern slavery legislation and your business

In 2019, the Commonwealth government introduced modern slavery legislation to ensure businesses managed their modern slavery risks.

This legislation requires some Australian businesses to report annually on the risks of modern slavery in their operations and supply chains. Annual reports, or Modern Slavery Statements, must consider operations on a global basis, not just Australia, and include their supply chain.

Under the law, those businesses are required to report on several criteria relating to modern slavery risks in their business operations, and how they are addressing them. This includes:

- structure, operations and supply chains;
- risks identified in the operations and supply chains;
- actions taken to assess and address risk;
- the effectiveness of those actions; and
- any other information considered relevant.

## Working with WaterNSW

WaterNSW takes our human rights obligations very seriously. Under the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth), WaterNSW is taking appropriate steps to ensure the goods and services they procure are not the product of modern slavery.

We are strengthening the scrutiny we place on our suppliers to ensure there is no modern slavery in the supply chains of any of our business partners. We are doing this by:

- Identifying potential modern slavery risks in WaterNSW's supply chain
- Documenting our high-risk procurement categories and suppliers
- Including modern slavery questions in WaterNSW's request for tenders
- Including modern slavery risk management requirements in new contracts
- Finding suitable support with our suppliers to manage their modern slavery risks
- Monitoring and evaluating supplier compliance with our requirements
- Monitoring our modern slavery risks through our supply chain risk management solution
- Responding to suspected or actual instances of modern slavery