

Bendigo Kangan Institute

Modern Slavery Act Statement

2024



Modern Slavery Statement

Bendigo Kangan Institute (BKI) is proud to present its fourth modern slavery statement, as required by the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth). This statement reflects BKI's ongoing commitment to combatting modern slavery and outlines the progress made since our last report in 2023.

Within this statement, we evaluate our modern slavery risk across our operations and supply chain landscape. The statement further outlines how we combat modern slavery using our risk management program, controls, and business practices. We are also introducing a new component: the adoption of an externally procured Modern Slavery Assessment Tool. This tool enhances our understanding of modern slavery risks within our supply chain, allowing us to target specific suppliers or business processes that may be at higher risk.

The Institute's Board approved this statement on 14 June 2024.

About Bendigo Kangan Institute

BKI (the Institute) was established under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) to provide vocational education training services to the community.

The Institute has distinct functions to:

- Provide communities and industries with efficient and effective education programs and services;
- Provide education programs and services that are responsive to the community and industry needs;
- Conduct research, development, education, training and delivery on a commercial basis for other businesses.

The Institute's functions are supported by the Bendigo Kangan Institute Constitution. BKI trains and educates students at eight campuses across regional Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne, and at eight correctional facilities in Victoria. Our footprint stretches from Cremorne to Echuca and also includes Docklands, Essendon, Broadmeadows, Castlemaine and Bendigo.

BKI is one of Victoria's largest and most trusted vocational education and training providers with a proud history dating back to the 1850s. We provide modern specialist training facilities offering courses across more than 40 study areas.

The Institute also operates:

- **VETASSESS** - Australia's leading assessment provider. VETASSESS offers skills assessments for migration purposes delivered across a range of trade and general professional occupations to the Federal Government's Departments of Education and Training and Home Affairs. VETASSESS provides educational research and consultation on assessment standards and curriculum. VETASSESS is located in Melbourne and maintains offices through contracts with partners in India, China, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, France and the UK.
- **eWorks** - One of Australia's leading e-learning delivery and consultancy specialists, offering a range of customised products and services to help organisations maximise the benefits of online education.

Acknowledgment of Country

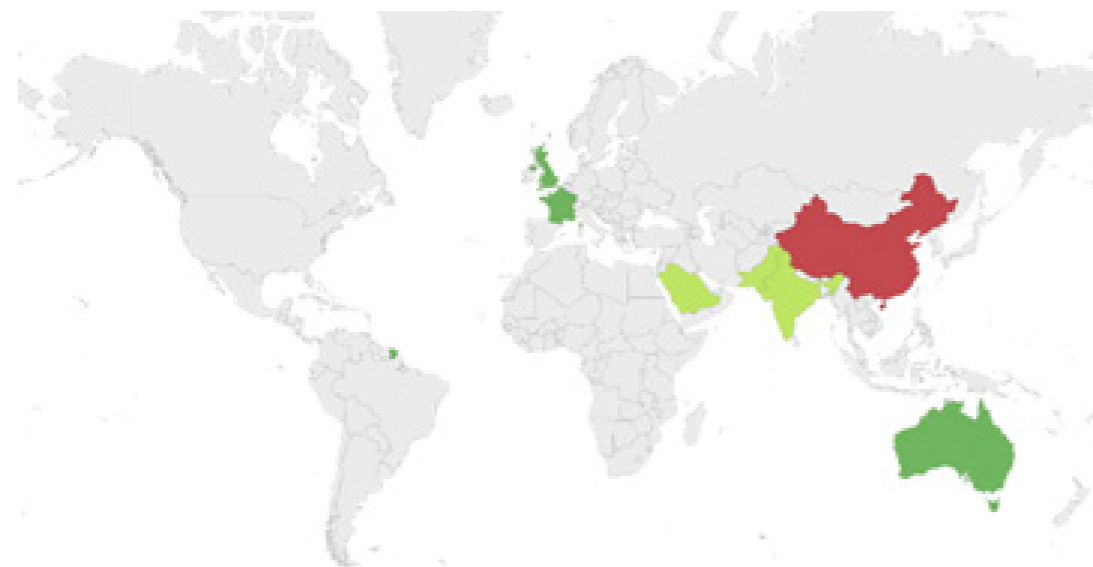
Bendigo TAFE and Kangan Institute acknowledge that their campuses are located on the ancestral lands of the Wurundjeri Peoples of the Kulin Nations, the Djaara people of Dja Dja Wurrung, Yorta Yorta Nations and the Gunaikurnai people.

The Institutes respect their Elders past present and emerging and cultural heritage and we recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture.

Modern Slavery Statement

As a vocational education provider, the Institute places utmost importance on safeguarding the wellbeing and rights of its people and everyone else who engages with our services. We firmly believe that the protection of every person is integral to our Institute's mission. This commitment extends beyond our domestic operations and into our offshore partnerships and relationships, including our migration skills assessment program (VETASSESS). We commit to upholding the same level of integrity, and protection for individuals internationally as we do locally.

The below graphic represents the geographical regions of our operations. For the context of modern slavery, this map, and the supply chain maps that follow, have been overlaid with the colour tier system of the adopted from the Trafficking-in Persons Report.



Our Role in Fighting Modern Slavery

Every individual deserves dignity, freedom, and fair treatment. At BKI, we uphold the principle that no one should suffer exploitation or deprivation of their fundamental rights.

Modern slavery refers to various forms of exploitation and coercive practices that deprive individuals of their freedom, rights, and dignity. It encompasses situations where individuals are forced or coerced into labour, servitude, or human trafficking. Modern slavery can take different forms, including forced labour, debt bondage, forced marriage, human trafficking, and child labour.

The International Labour Organisation estimates that over 40 million people around the world are victims of modern slavery. In recent years, supply chain transparency is a key policy strategy used by governments to identify and prevent business practices that lead to modern slavery.

BKI is committed to ensuring that modern slavery practices are not engaged in any part of our service provision, which includes ensuring robust supplier procurement through to raising all staff members' awareness on the risks and impact of modern slavery practices.

Our Governance and Public Sector Obligations

As a public sector entity and vocational education provider established under the Education and Training Reform Act, the Institute abides by public sector obligations that operate alongside the Modern Slavery Act to advance civil rights and protections. Consistent with our previous statements, these include but are not limited to:

- The Public Administration Act 2004 (Vic), which reflects the key public sector values of integrity, impartiality, responsiveness, respect for human rights, accountability and leadership. The Institute has adopted these values into its own organisational policies, including its Employee Code of Conduct;

- The Financial Management Act 1994 (Vic), which requires the Institute to adopt governance practices to support compliance with the Victorian Government Risk Management Framework (VGRMF); Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Accountabilities, Sponsorship, Asset Management, Public Construction and financial practices and controls;
- The Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012 (Vic), which operates as the framework for encouraging and investigating reports of public sector improper and corrupt conduct;
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic) which incorporates international human rights principles into Victorian law. Under the Charter, public authorities are required to act in a way that is compatible with human rights. The Institute has adopted a Human Rights Policy to ensure decision making is consistent with these principles.

The Institute's commitment to the above obligations form the foundation of our operations. We continue to work toward integrating protective measures throughout all facets of our activities to ensure compliance with our public sector obligations.

Furthermore, our dedication to advancing the protection of individuals is demonstrated through various policies and controls. These encompass areas such as conflicts of interest, fraud and corruption prevention, public interest disclosures, improper conduct, acceptance of gifts and benefits, discrimination, workplace behaviour, gender equality, occupational health and safety as well as stringent financial practices and procedures.

Our Procurement Practices

At BKI, we prioritise integrity and uphold ethical standards in all aspects of our operations. Our commitment to responsible practice extends to our procurement processes, where we set clear expectations for our contractors and supply partners. We emphasise the importance of engaging with people ethically and have implemented measures to combat modern slavery from our supply chains.

We hold our suppliers accountable, insisting workplaces uphold fairness, respect human rights, and actively address the risk of modern slavery. Our Supplier Code of Conduct reflects our dedication to combating modern slavery and is integrated into our procurement policies and procedures. These policies align with government strategies including the Victorian Government's Supplier Code of Conduct.

Aligned with the requirements set by the Victorian Government Purchasing Board (VGPB) and Ministerial Directions and Instructions for Public Construction Procurement, our Procurement Strategy serves as a guiding framework. The Procurement Strategy complements our other controls including the contractor prequalification processes, insurance verification protocols, and the Supplier Code of Conduct, to which all our suppliers must agree and comply in the provision of goods and services.

In line with our commitment to social and sustainable outcomes, our Social Procurement Strategy (SPC) demonstrates our dedication to driving positive change within our supply chain environment. The strategy covers various segments, such as Building and Construction, Fleet and Transport, Finance Services, Information Technology, and Professional Services. It incorporates weighted criteria to assess social value and ensures that our procurement decisions align with our social goals and commitments.

Our VETASSESS business provides skills assessments for both migration and national skills recognition and has a considerably more extensive global operating environment. In recognition of their unique operating context, VETASSESS procurement team continues to implement anti-modern slavery practices to address risks that are specific to this business, including:

- Inclusion of a modern slavery clause in contracts, which require annual reports on modern slavery based on a provided template;
- Holding regular meetings between VETASSESS and representatives of overseas offices to promote familiarity with BKI's Modern Slavery Statement;
- Embedding a recruitment policy for overseas offices to align hiring practices with the requirements of the modern slavery clause.

Our efforts to enhance procurement practices illustrate our capability to incorporate a modern slavery perspective into our go-to-market and contract management strategies. With improved due diligence processes and a comprehensive system of checks and balances, our procurement team is now better positioned this year and, in the future, to identify and address instances of modern slavery.

Our Risk and Audit Program

BKI adopts effective risk management, with modern slavery identified as a priority. Our Risk Framework ensures thorough identification, assessment and mitigation of risks including modern slavery.

Monitoring modern slavery risk is covered in our enterprise risk register within our Governance, Risk and Compliance system. This system facilitates risk management by implementing appropriate controls and treatments, with regular reporting updates on the risk status. Reports are shared with our Finance Audit Risk Management Committee (FARMC) of the Board, ensuring informed decision making and actions addressing modern slavery risks as they evolve.

Executive leadership holds responsibility for managing these risks, overseeing strategy implementation and progress monitoring. BKI's Audit Program plays a vital role, coupled with organisation-wide audits, which include fraud and integrity audits in our overseas offices, encompassing modern slavery in their scope. These audits evaluate effectiveness of our approach, identify vulnerabilities and drive improvements in due diligence, supplier vetting and contractual obligations.

To ensure audit program effectiveness and independence, BKI's FARMC review audit findings, recommendations, and oversees progress in implementing actions, including those addressing modern slavery concerns.

Modern Slavery Desktop Audits

One of the commitments in our last Modern Slavery Statement was to establish the desktop audit approach as part of our Contract Management Plan. The requested information includes:

- Evidence of employment contracts;
- Payslips for selected employees;
- Contractor recruitment policy/procedure;
- Contractor grievance mechanisms;
- Policies;
- Training and awareness initiatives that address modern slavery, human rights, and work rights issues.

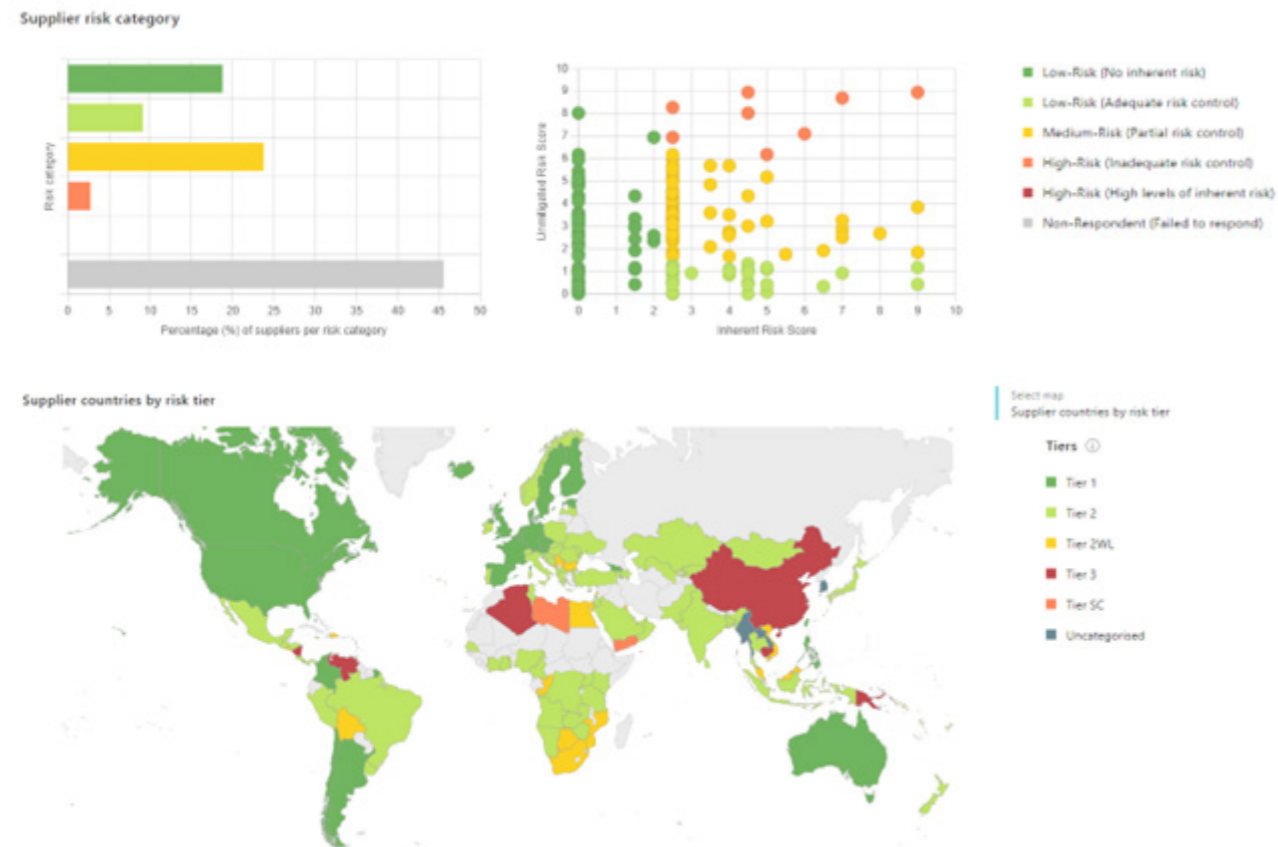
These audits ensure we are actively keeping high risk suppliers accountable. We commenced with an initial audit in line with Contract Management Plan requirements with a new contractor who satisfactorily provided all of the information requested and we were pleased to gain assurance that the supplier had adopted strong controls to combat modern slavery.

As some of our current supplier contracts come to an end, we will be looking to conduct further desktop audits either when renewing contracts with existing suppliers or when entering new contractual relationships. Next steps are to widely adopt desktop audits across BKI, VETASSESS and e-Works, and hope to be able to use the iPro audit to identify high risk suppliers for future desktop audit.

iPRO Modern Slavery Assessment

As part of our continuous improvements to ensure we have taken a robust approach to anti-modern slavery, we have this year engaged iPRO (a third-party provider), who have undertaken a Modern Slavery Assessment on the Institute supply chain based on responses provided by 198 of our identified highest risk suppliers.

The iPRO Modern Slavery Assessment Tool highlights modern slavery risks in our supply chain. Each supplier who completed the assessment was analysed and assigned a risk category based on their responses. The Assessment Tool allows us to view suppliers risk profiles to see their risk categorisation, risk scores, sectors of operation, countries of operation, and recommend risk mitigation actions, which in turn will allow us to make any adjustments necessary to strengthen our anti-modern slavery approach.



We engaged iPRO during the 2023 - 2024 reporting period to conduct the assessments on our operations, and a survey was sent out to 362 of our suppliers. We intend to carry this process forward as an annual assessment of our operations and supply chain.

Modern Slavery Response Protocol

At BKI, we recognise the importance of maintaining an effective response mechanism to promptly address any instances of modern slavery within our supply chain. We are committed to taking swift and appropriate action upon identifying such cases and conducting thorough investigations.

Our Speak Up program, feedback channels, and risk assessment program are vital components in helping us identify instances of modern slavery. Through these mechanisms, BKI provides a secure and confidential platform for individuals, both within and outside the Institute, to raise concerns and report any suspicions related to modern slavery. We encourage all stakeholders, including staff, students, contractors, and suppliers, to utilise these channels to help us identify fraud, corruption, and instances of modern slavery within our supply chain.

If active cases of modern slavery are detected, our investigation response plan will be activated. BKI's investigation response entails gathering relevant information, conducting interviews, and collaborating with our legal team or relevant authorities and external organisations where necessary.

Our response is guided by the principles of justice, fairness, and respect for human rights, with the aim of providing redress for affected individuals and preventing recurrence.

Modern Slavery Response Mechanism in Practice

One of the commitments of our Modern Slavery Statement is to undertake desktop audits as part of our Contract Management Plan. Every six months we audit one of our high-risk suppliers by requesting evidence of documentation relating to modern slavery/human rights.

The requested information includes evidence of employment contracts and payslips for selected employees. Contractor recruitment policy/procedure, contractor grievance mechanisms, policies and training and awareness initiatives that address modern slavery, human rights, and work rights issues.

These audits ensure we are actively keeping high risk suppliers accountable.

Our Modern Slavery Risk Environment

BKI is committed to ensuring that modern slavery practices are not engaged in any part of our service provision, which includes ensuring robust supplier procurement through to raising all staff members' awareness on the risks and impact of modern slavery practices.

Modern slavery practices include human trafficking, slavery, forced marriage, forced labour, debt bondage, deceptive recruiting, physical abuse, restrictions on the freedom of movement, confiscation of passports and identity records, wage theft and child labour. Any form of these practices are serious breaches of human rights.

The Institute does not tolerate any form of breach of human rights in any part of its operations or supply chain.

Our Supply Chain Environment

Our suppliers operate, produce, and source across several/ different sectors. Some of these sectors can be described as high-risk. High-risk sectors are those in which human trafficking activities are known to occur and were identified in the Global Estimates of Modern Slavery and child labour exploitation that were separately identified in Child Labour: Global Estimates 2020 Trends and the Road Forward (ILO and UNICEF, 2021).

This year we conducted a Modern Slavery Assessment on selected key suppliers to gain an insight on supplier compliance. We asked suppliers to complete a survey on their operations, with 198 responses. These results and any future assessment will enable us to assess, address and reduce modern slavery risks in our supply chain.

As we transition into the 2024 - 2025 period, our commitment to confronting modern slavery risks remains unwavering. Our revised risk assessment focusses on pinpointing specific areas requiring attention, recognising that our most significant vulnerabilities often extend beyond our direct influence.

Despite our zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery, we acknowledge the challenges associated with identifying instances of such practices. The Institute has therefore conducted scenario modelling and reviewed current scenarios to pinpoint potential vulnerabilities within our risk environment.

Our suppliers operate in the following sectors, including but not limited to:












- Accommodation and Food Services;
- Agriculture, forestry and fishing;
- Construction;
- Domestic work;
- Education;
- Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply;
- Finance and insurance;
- Government administration, defence and social security;
- Health and social work;
- Information and communication;
- Maintenance and repair of motor vehicles;
- Manufacturing;
- Mining and quarrying;
- Professional and scientific services;
- Real estate;
- Retail;
- Transportation and storage;
- Water supply, sewerage and waste management;
- Wholesale.

The below graphics are based on the information we have received from our suppliers in addition to our own responses to our Modern Slavery Assessment questionnaire conducted by iPRO. The numbers in the following graphics describe how many suppliers are in the corresponding sectors based on the responses provided.

High-risk Sectors of Operation

Table 1 below describes our supply chain environment indicating that out of a total out of 198 suppliers, 91 high-risk sectors of operation were identified in responses. Top three sectors are Construction, Manufacturing and Wholesale.












Table 1 – Supplier by Sector by Operation

 8 Accommodation and food service activities	 5 Agriculture, forestry, and fishing
 25 Construction	 1 Domestic work
 3 Maintenance and repair of motor vehicles	 15 Manufacturing
 4 Mining and quarrying	 2 Personal services
 9 Retail	 9 Transportation and storage
 10 Wholesale	

Production of goods in High-risk Sectors

Table 2 below describes our supply chain environment indicating that a total out of 198 suppliers, 110 high-risk sectors of operations in production of goods were identified in responses. Top three sectors for production of goods are Accommodation and Food Services, Construction and Manufacturing.

Table 2 – Supplier by Sector by Production of Goods

 <p>20</p> <p>Accommodation and food service activities</p>	 <p>2</p> <p>Agriculture, forestry, and fishing</p>
 <p>19</p> <p>Construction</p>	 <p>1</p> <p>Domestic work</p>
 <p>10</p> <p>Maintenance and repair of motor vehicles</p>	 <p>24</p> <p>Manufacturing</p>
 <p>2</p> <p>Mining and quarrying</p>	 <p>2</p> <p>Personal services</p>
 <p>13</p> <p>Retail</p>	 <p>17</p> <p>Transportation and storage</p>
 <p>10</p> <p>Wholesale</p>	

The above insights reveal that approximately half of our suppliers operate in high-risk sectors. The high-risk sector with highest response is in Construction. These insights will inform our focus moving forward.

The below scenario modelling is based on iPRO reporting insights and describe various hypotheticals and our controls/response to address.

SCENARIO MODELLING

Exploitation in the Supply Chain

BKI staff and students use Dell products as part of the Institute's IT infrastructure. Dell, a global technology corporation procure components for their hardware from various suppliers in China. Concerns arise regarding potential modern slavery practices within these suppliers, including lack of transparency, subcontracting to unregulated facilities, domestic and migrant worker vulnerability, cost pressures and weak labour law enforcement in China.

Risk Mitigation: To mitigate this risk, we have conducted rigorous due diligence which includes supplier survey, implementing supplier codes and they will in future be subject to our audit process to ensure consistent compliance with modern slavery measures. All purchases are made via State Purchase Contracts, the overarching aim of which is that suppliers are expected to comply with Modern Slavery Laws.

Labour Standards in Outsourcing

The Institute has needs for formal international conference calling from time to time. Through our survey, some of our suppliers have identified operating in geographical areas where there are higher potential exploitation risks, such as customer support in India and South Africa through to hardware manufacturing in India and China. The conference call supply chain complexity poses significant challenges in ensuring compliance with ethical labour standards.

Risk Mitigation: To ensure that BKI has satisfied itself that ethical labour standards are being adhered to by our conference call suppliers, we have implemented a comprehensive supplier code of conduct that explicitly prohibits modern slavery and encompasses labour standards and workplace safety expectations.

VETASSESS Skills Assessments

Hypothetical Scenario: VETASSESS, as a skills assessment authority authorised by the Australian Government, allows applicants to engage overseas agents to represent them during the skills assessment process. However, it is discovered that one of these overseas agents engaged in predatory practices such as charging excessive fees, confiscating identity documents such as passports, and/or exploiting vulnerable applicants.

Risk Mitigation: While VETASSESS cannot maintain direct oversight of agents chosen by applicants, VETASSESS commits to responding promptly to any reports or evidence of modern slavery practices. In scenarios where applicants may contact VETASSESS regarding any concerns about misconduct of the appointed agent, VETASSESS would direct them to the Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority (OMARA) who has the legislative authority over registered migration agents. In response to the media recently highlighting instances of modern slavery occurring involving private RTOs and migration agents, and although Bendigo Kangan Institute is a public TAFE, the Institute is continuing to undertake a proactive approach to strengthen its controls in this space.

Business Development

Hypothetical Scenario: During business development activities within our China, India and Pakistani markets, it becomes clear that some of our partners are outsourcing their administrative and support services to third-party providers. By doing so, there could be issues with bonded or forced labour, particularly among marginalised communities. Additionally, recruitment practices for teaching and administrative staff in these regions may be susceptible to exploitation, with migrant workers facing deceptive recruitment fees, passport confiscation, and restricted freedom of movement.

Risk Mitigation: In order to mitigate modern slavery risks in our business development activities across China, India and Pakistan, we have to implement robust supplier due diligence on all partners and suppliers, including background checks and assessments of labour practices to ensure compliance with ethical standards, whilst also ensuring there are clauses in contracts with suppliers and partners that explicitly prohibit modern slavery, requiring adherence to international labour standards and human rights principles.

Our Anti-Modern Slavery Actions

A Year in Review

Our previous modern slavery risk assessments have provided us with valuable insights, enabling us to adopt a more coordinated approach to reducing the likelihood of slavery occurring within our operations. Through continued assessments, we are able to identify clear actions and are pleased that we were able to achieve most of our planned commitments.

In 2023 - 2024 we:

- Implemented iPRO – a third-party, Modern Slavery Assessment Tool to assess modern slavery risks in our operations and supply chain;
- Conducted Modern Slavery desktop audit of one of our highest risk suppliers;
- Updated our Human Rights Policy which encompasses the relevant obligations outlined in Section 11 of the Human Rights Charter, including the right to freedom from forced work as outlined in the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth);
- Continued to raise awareness of modern slavery institute-wide by providing our staff with information about modern slavery: what it is, its risks and implications;
- Updated our due diligence and probity checks in our contract review process to ensure that our contracts all contain the Modern Slavery Clause and undergo a robust analysis on modern slavery risk during our supplier evaluation and engagement process;
- Developed a bespoke e-learning training module for all staff to complete on understanding modern slavery to raise institute wide awareness and knowledge with an expected roll out end of 2024;
- Undertook quarterly risk reviews of modern slavery risks which includes evaluation of effective controls and progression of key treatments.

Our Future Commitments and Actions – Addressing our Modern Slavery Risks

In the coming year, the Institute commits to advancing its anti-modern slavery initiatives through the following actions:

- Expanding our modern slavery audit schedule to include further contractor audits of our highest risk suppliers;
- Work closely with suppliers identified at highest risk based on insights gathered using the iPRO Modern Slavery Assessment Tool and monitor progress against agreed anti-modern slavery initiatives;
- Further develop intelligence exchange with our TAFE Community of Practice Partners to manage modern slavery as a shared risk;
- Increase engagement of the BKI Board and senior leadership team on modern slavery issues through continued tailored messaging and training;
- Roll out bespoke learning modules on modern slavery for all BKI staff;
- Mature our Modern Slavery Risk Assessment to align with the UNGP's Continuum of Involvement via adopting the three-column risk assessment (cause/contribute/directly linked) when considering how BKI could be involved in modern slavery risk;
- Embed our anti-modern slavery processes within our Institute wide approach to Environmental and Social Governance (ESG) integrating our ESG procurement criteria into existing BKI procurement framework.

Approved by Bendigo Kangan Institute's Board of Directors on 14 June 2024.



Margaret O'Rourke
Board Chair
Bendigo Kangan Institute

Kangan Institute campuses

Broadmeadows

Pearcedale Parade
Broadmeadows VIC 3047

Docklands

1 Batmans Hill Drive
Docklands VIC 3008

Essendon

38 Buckley Street
Essendon VIC 3040

Cremorne

85 Cremorne Street
Cremorne VIC 3121

Bendigo TAFE campuses

Bendigo City

154 Hargreaves Street
Bendigo VIC 3550

Bendigo Charleston Road

62-104 Charleston Road
Bendigo VIC 3550

Castlemaine

65-67 Templeton Street
Castlemaine VIC 3450

Echuca

Corner Hare and Darling Streets
Echuca VIC 3564

VETASSESS and eWorks

85 Cremorne Street
Cremorne VIC 3121