

13 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

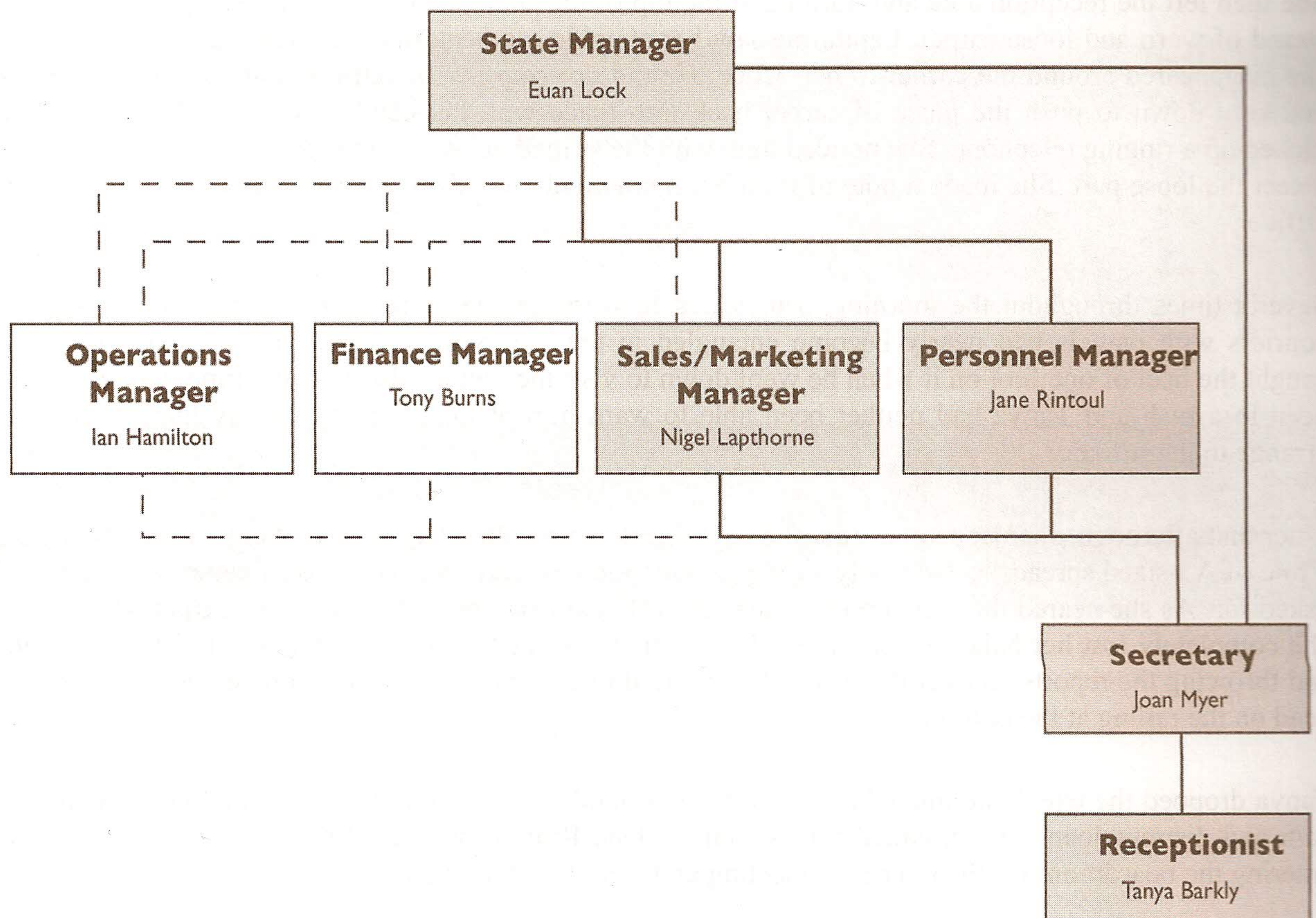


Figure 13.1 Organisational Chart – Melbourne Office



Joan Myer, Secretary to Euan Lock and the other Melbourne managers, was talking to the Receptionist, Tanya, about the forthcoming weekend's activities when Euan and Nigel Lapthorne, the Sales/Marketing Manager, approached. Both were obviously deep in thought. Lock looked up briefly and handed Joan three of the papers he had. He asked her to produce a series of reports and spreadsheets that would be collated and distributed to all managers, before their normal Friday afternoon management and preplanning session for the following week. He and Nigel paused as Joan quickly scanned through the pages.

She then left the reception area and, turning at the top of the stairs, caught one of her high heels under a strand of worn and loose carpet. Lapthorne saw her stumble momentarily and then regain herself before she disappeared around the corner to her office. He did not stop her or call out, but went up to the spot and bent down to push the piece of carpet back into place with his hand. Tanya watched him as she picked up a ringing telephone. She noticed that, with the striped pattern of the carpet, it was impossible to detect the loose part. She made a note of it on her memorandum pad so she could raise it with the Safety Officer.

Several times throughout the morning, Tanya had to warn people of the carpet problem. A couple of couriers with parcels had nearly become entangled in the loose strands. Even Euan Lock had briefly caught the heel of one foot on it when he went down to visit the factory floor. At the time, though, he had been in a rush and Tanya had neither been able to warn him of the problem nor ask him if she could arrange to get it fixed.

Later that afternoon, Joan appeared from the equipment room with a large stack of completed reports and a pile of A3-sized spreadsheets loosely sitting on top. She also carried two reams of paper that Tanya had asked for. As she neared the reception counter her heel again caught in the threads of carpet but this time she completely lost her balance. Joan fell sideways in a very awkward manner, badly twisting her ankle and throwing the reports all over the place. As she tried to correct her fall, she stumbled again and hit her head on the railing at the bottom.

Tanya dropped the telephone immediately and went around the reception desk to help, then, realising the pain and distress Joan was in, called for assistance. Jane Rintoul had heard the commotion as she was entering the boardroom for the afternoon meeting and went to offer a hand.

She asked Tanya where the first-aid kit was and who was the designated first-aid person. Tanya replied that what there was of a kit was downstairs somewhere, and that Mary Kamplowski, one of the packers, was the Safety Officer and the only trained first-aid person. Trouble was, Tanya said, Mary was on sick leave! Tanya then called an ambulance.