

# Work Health and Safety Policy

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**Policy**



Version 3 | March 2024



Australian Government  
Australian Skills Quality Authority

**ASQA**

**(Working together)**

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# 1 Purpose

The purpose of ASQA's Work Health and Safety (WHS) Policy is to establish and maintain an effective health and safety management system. The WHS Policy is to be read in conjunction with the WHS Procedure document.

ASQA is committed to implementing a structured approach to workplace health and safety to achieve a consistently high standard of safety performance.

This will assist ASQA meet its obligations in accordance with the *Work Health and Safety Act (Cth) 2011* (WHS Act).

This policy applies to all ASQA workers and to other people at risk from the work carried out at ASQA workplaces. Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

## 2 Work Health and Safety Policy

The following Statement of Commitment and the Implementation of Policy Commitment provide the overarching direction for ASQA in pursuit of workplace health and safety outcomes. These commitments are as follows:

### Statement of Commitment

ASQA is committed to providing a workplace that enables all work and work related activities to be carried out safely. ASQA will take all reasonably practicable measures to eliminate or minimise risks to the health, safety and welfare of workers, contractors, visitors, and anyone else who may be affected by our operations.

ASQA is committed to complying with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (the Act). ASQA will also comply with any other relevant legislation, applicable Codes of Practice and Australian Standards as far as possible.

ASQA's WHS Policies document and the WHS Procedures document set out the safety arrangements and principles which are to be observed by ASQA and its workers to ensure compliance with the WHS Act and to provide appropriate mechanisms for continuing consultation and management of WHS matters.

### Implementation of Policy Commitment

ASQA is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of its workers (employees, contractors, labour hire workers, outworkers, apprentices, students or volunteers) while they are at work, and that the health and safety of other persons (e.g. visitors) is not put at risk from our operations. This will be achieved by:

- Providing and maintaining a healthy and safe work environment through the implementation of safe work practices, safe systems of work and the provision of safe work equipment
- Ensuring that workplaces under the control of ASQA are safe, without risk to health, and have safe means of access
- Routinely consulting with stakeholders in order to maintain effective and co-operative relationships between ASQA and its workers, and with other duty holders, on health and safety matters in the workplace
- Reviewing, via appropriate mechanisms, the effectiveness of the safety measures taken.

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ASQA's commitment to providing safe and healthy working environments for ASQA workers includes:

- Providing relevant, up to date WHS information to all workers on matters such as workplace safety and their responsibilities
- Providing expert assistance in WHS matters where necessary
- Providing instruction and/or training in work processes where appropriate
- Developing and implementing strategies which include workplace assessment, hazard identification, and appropriate remedial action to eliminate or control hazards
- Implementing and maintaining appropriate information recording and reporting methods.

### 3 Legislative Basis

- [Work Health and Safety Act \(Cth\) 2011](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulations \(Cth\) 2011](#)
- [Approved Work Health and Safety Codes of Practice](#)

### 4 Definitions

Terminology/Acronym	Definition
<b>Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU)</b>	ASQA as a PCBU has the primary duty of care to ensure: The health and safety of its workers while they are at work The health and safety of other persons is not put at risk from work carried out as part of the conduct of the PCBU.
<b>Officer</b>	The Executive Committee for ASQA will usually be Officers under the WHS Act.  A person is an Officer under the WHS Act only if they “make, or participate in making, decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part, of the business of the corporation; or who has the capacity to affect significantly the corporation’s financial standing”. Whether a person is an Officer or not under the WHS Act will depend on the facts of the particular situation.  It is an Officer’s duty to exercise due diligence to ensure that the PCBU complies with its health and safety obligations under the WHS Act.
<b>Worker</b>	Previously known as ‘employee’.  The term worker includes employees, contractors and sub-contractors and their employees, labour hire employees, outworkers, apprentices and trainees, work experience students and volunteers.
<b>Health and Safety Representative (HSR)</b>	A worker elected by members of their work group to represent them in health and safety matters.
<b>Other persons</b>	Includes any visitors

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## 5 Responsibilities

### 5.1 ASQA

As the duty holder, ASQA as the PCBU must:

- Ensure the health and safety of its workers and others in our workplace
- Ensure the health and safety of other persons is not put at risk from work carried out as part of its operations
- Provide and maintain a work environment that is without risks to health and safety
- Provide and maintain safe plant and structures
- Provide and maintain safe systems of work
- Ensure the safe use, handling and storage of plant, structures and substances
- Provide adequate facilities for the welfare of workers
- Provide information, training, instruction and supervision
- Monitor the health of workers and the conditions of our workplaces.

Specific duties as a PCBU also include:

- Record and notify Comcare of any notifiable incidents arising out of the conduct of the business or undertaking
- Consult so far as reasonably practicable with other PCBUs or persons who have a duty in regard to a work health and safety matter
- Consult so far as reasonably practicable with workers, their representatives and Health and Safety Representatives on work health and safety matters.

### 5.2 Chief Executive Officer and the Executive Committee

The Chief Executive Officer and other members of the Executive Committee, as officers, are responsible for ensuring that ASQA complies with any duty or obligation under the WHS Act. This is achieved by these officers exercising due diligence and they must:

- Acquire and keep an up to date knowledge of work health and safety matters
- Gain an understanding of ASQA's operations and the hazards and risks involved
- Ensure that information regarding incidents, hazards and risks is received, considered and responded to in a timely way
- Ensure that ASQA has, and implements, processes for complying with its WHS duties and obligations
- Verify the provision and use of the resources listed above.

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## 5.3 Managers

ASQA managers are responsible for providing a workplace that is, as far as reasonably practicable, a safe and healthy workplace for workers and visitors, particularly in the areas of their control. This includes:

- Modelling health and safety leadership
- Demonstrating a commitment to good health and safety performance which may include; talking about safety at regular meetings; ensuring safe work procedures are followed; encouraging workers to report all incidents, hazards and safety concerns promptly and assessing task risk and not allowing an activity to continue until it can be controlled adequately
- Fostering a strong work health and safety culture where worker input is valued
- Promoting and implementing ASQA's WHS Policy and Procedure document.
- Actively supporting the identification and management of hazards and risks
- Proactively managing other duty holders (i.e. contractors), when required.

## 5.4 Workers

ASQA Workers must take reasonable care for their own health and safety while they are at work and take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons. They must comply, so far as they are reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction given by their manager. They must also co-operate with any reasonable ASQA policy or procedure which relates to workplace health and safety. On a day-to-day basis this includes:

- Taking reasonable care to work in a safe manner to the extent of their control over working conditions and methods
- Making proper use of all appropriate safeguards, safety devices and personal protective equipment
- Following safe working practices and rules
- Reporting all known hazards, accidents and incidents as soon as possible.

It is acknowledged that, in accordance with the WHS Act, a worker may cease, or refuse to carry out work if they have a reasonable concern the work would expose them to a serious risk to their health or safety. The WHS Act requires workers who cease work to notify the relevant manager as soon as practicable after doing so. Whilst workers are required to remain available to carry out 'suitable alternative work', they are not required to remain at any place that poses a serious risk to their health or safety. If unable to return to work, workers and their managers are required to speak with People and Capability for guidance on relevant leave provisions.

## 5.5 Contractors

Contractors, sub-contractors and self-employed persons are defined as "workers" under the WHS Act if they carry out work in any capacity for ASQA. They are required to:

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- Comply with the requirements of the WHS legislation
- Have in place any work health and safety policies and programs required under State or Territory safety legislation
- Consult with ASQA about safety matters and comply with ASQA policies.

If any ASQA employee believes that a contractor may be engaging in unsafe work practice, they are required to report this issue to their manager.

## 5.6 Visitors

Visitors to ASQA also have responsibilities to advise by our workplace safety rules and procedures. These responsibilities include:

- Taking reasonable care for their own health and safety and for the health and safety of other persons
- Complying with, so far as they are reasonably able, all reasonable safety directions provided by ASQA staff
- Reporting all safety related incidents to ASQA staff
- Ensuring the adequate supervision of any accompanying children
- Not entering any restricted area without authorisation or escort
- Not bringing or consuming alcohol or illegal drugs at ASQA workplaces
- Not wilfully or recklessly interfering with ASQA property.

## 6 Consultation and Communication Arrangements

### 6.1 Communication

Open communication between workers and managers is important in ensuring a safe workplace. Therefore, workers are encouraged to:

- Raise WHS concerns and questions
- Make recommendations and provide feedback on WHS matters
- Become involved in evaluation of safety issues
- Participate in WHS related problem-solving processes.

It is important that workers help shape decisions about WHS, particularly when:

- Identifying hazards and assessing risks
- Making decisions about ways to eliminate or minimise those hazards or risks
- Proposing business changes that may affect the health and safety of workers

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- Purchasing of new equipment or substances
- Developing or changing job tasks or safety procedures.

All workers belong to a work group and are encouraged to raise any work health and safety concerns they may have with their manager and/or Health and Safety Representative. Issues may be raised formally or informally. If the issue identified remains unresolved, it can be raised directly with the People and Capability team.

## 6.2 Health and Safety Representatives (HSR)

HSRs are elected by members of a work group in order to represent the interests of that work group in matters relating to work health and safety. HSRs may not access personal or medical information about a worker without their consent or unless the information is non-identifying and general in nature. HSRs are required to undertake the following duties:

- Direct workers in their work group to cease work if they have a reasonable concern that doing the work would expose them to a serious risk to their health and safety from immediate or imminent exposure to a hazard
- Consult with workers on a regular basis
- Participate in workplace inspections
- Participate in workplace accident and incident investigations
- Participate in discussions on matters that may affect the health and safety of workers
- Provide advice to managers on the welfare of workers in their work group.

### HSR Training

HSR training is available to newly elected HSRs however it is not mandatory for this to be completed before commencement in the role. If the HSR elects to attend training, leave to attend the course will be paid in full by ASQA. The initial HSR training is a 5-day course. A one-day refresher course is also available to attend yearly should the HSR feel this is required. Please contact [peopleandcapability@asqa.gov.au](mailto:peopleandcapability@asqa.gov.au) for more information on booking training.

## 6.3 Health and Safety Committee

ASQA's Health and Safety Committee provides the forum for the constructive discussion of measures to ensure health and safety in the workplace. At ASQA, the Health and Safety Committee meets quarterly to:

- Facilitate co-operation between ASQA and workers in the initiation, development and implementation of WHS policies and procedures
- Assist in developing standards, rules and procedures relating to health and safety
- Consult with workers regarding their WHS concerns
- Consult with management regarding worker WHS concerns including change that may influence WHS more broadly

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- Ensure and review the conduct of regular workplace inspections
- Review the quarterly Work Health and Safety Report.

Minutes of the latest Health and Safety Committee meeting are available for all ASQA workers to review on Reggie.

More detail on the functions of the Health and Safety Committee can be found in the ASQA Health and Safety Committee Terms of Reference.

## 7 Training

ASQA has identified WHS training needs based on an analysis of each role. The “WHS Training Register” specifies the training that will be offered based on each role.

All workers are provided with an Induction Handbook which includes WHS information.

Additionally, workers and their managers may identify other WHS training and address these needs via ASQA’s Performance Development Framework.

ASQA is committed to ensuring workers are adequately trained for safety sensitive tasks and training will be arranged as required.

## 8 WHS Risk Assessment

The purpose of any WHS risk assessment is to ensure that, for any identified hazards, appropriate control measures are implemented in order to protect workers, contractors and visitors from risks to their health, safety and welfare.

Control measures for WHS hazards should be implemented as required using the following hierarchy of control, in order of preference these measures relate to:

- Elimination (removal of the hazard)
- Substitution (substitute the hazard for something which is less hazardous e.g. replace a hazardous chemical with one that is not hazardous)
- Isolation (isolate the hazard from people e.g. place a noisy piece of equipment in another location)
- Engineering (e.g. guarding on machinery)
- Administrative (e.g. provision of training, policies and procedures, signage)
- Personal protective equipment (e.g. use of hearing, eye protection, high visibility vests).

Outcomes of WHS risk assessments will be documented and the control measures reviewed at least annually or earlier should a task or activity be the subject of a WHS incident or change of process. Current WHS risk assessments will ensure that ASQA achieves the goal of eliminating or minimising the risk workers may be exposed to.

The list of ASQA policies and procedures in place to manage workplace risk include:

- [ASQA Risk Management Framework](#)

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- [ASQA Risk Management Procedure](#)
- [ASQA Bullying, Stalking, Cyber-Bullying and Violence Policy](#)
- [Early Intervention, Rehabilitation and Return to Work Policy](#)
- [Working in the Field Policy and Procedure](#)

## 9 Right of Entry

A WHS Permit entry holder must also hold a current *Fair Work Act 2009* entry permit. Their WHS entry permit and photographic identification must be available at all times for inspection. Where there is a suspected workplace WHS contravention, a permit holder is not required to give prior notice. However, as soon as reasonably practicable they must give notice of their entry and the suspected contravention to ASQA or the person with management or control of the workplace.

The permit holder may, in relation to the suspected contravention, inspect any work system, substance or structure; consult with ASQA and its workers; be allowed to inspect and make copies of relevant documents (unless to do so would contravene a State or Commonwealth law) and warn any person of a serious risk to health and safety if immediate or imminent.

Otherwise a permit holder is required to give at least 24 hours of notice (and no more than 14 days) to ASQA before entering a workplace to consult on WHS matters or provide advice on those matters to relevant workers.

ASQA must not, without reasonable excuse, refuse or unduly delay a permit holder's entry into a workplace or obstruct them from exercising their rights under the WHS Act.

The permit holder must not intentionally and unreasonably delay, hinder or obstruct any work at a workplace or otherwise act in an improper manner.

## 10 WHS Issue Resolutions

Wherever possible, WHS concerns should be resolved through consultation between workers, their representatives and/or their manager. If the concern cannot be resolved in this manner, it may be referred to People and Capability for resolution. Ultimately any WHS issue remaining unresolved may be referred to the Executive Committee. Where the issue remains unresolved the default procedure for issue resolution set out in the WHS Act 2011 must be followed.

If reasonable efforts have been made to resolve an issue and it remains unresolved, any party to the issue may ask Comcare to appoint an inspector to assist in resolving the matter.

## 11 Records

WHS Records are stored electronically in Objective, ASQA's Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) in accordance with ASQA's Records Management Policy and QMS 004 Records Management.

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