

Operational Plan

2024-25




Legislative context

Safe Work Australia was established under the Safe Work Australia Act 2008 (Cth) (the SWA Act). In accordance with the SWA Act, this operational plan details the activities to be undertaken by Safe Work Australia and the planned expenditure for the year. Further, it is consistent with, and supports, the strategies in the Safe Work Australia Corporate Plan 2024-2028.

Our purpose

Safe Work Australia has an important national role to achieve significant and continuous reductions in the incidence of work-related death, injury and illness and to improve outcomes for injured workers and their employers.

It is a tripartite forum representing the interests of the Commonwealth, states and territories, as well as workers and employers in Australia to:

-  **collaborate** on national work health and safety (WHS) and workers' compensation policy matters
-  **lead** the development of evidence-based policy and supporting education and strategies, and
-  **promote** consistency in WHS and workers' compensation arrangements.

This collaborative model recognises that national WHS and workers' compensation outcomes are improved when all relevant views and interests are considered. This plan describes the activities to be undertaken by Safe Work Australia in performing its statutory functions during 2024-25. Safe Work Australia will receive total agency funding of \$24.85 million for the financial year.

How we will measure our performance

Our performance in delivering the activities identified in this plan will be measured against the performance criteria and targets included in the Safe Work Australia 2024-25 Portfolio Budget Statements and reported in the Safe Work Australia Annual Report.

The activities we will undertake in 2024-25

The activities we will undertake in 2024-25 support the strategies outlined in the Safe Work Australia 2024-2028 Corporate Plan and reflect the priorities agreed by Safe Work Australia Members and include:

- supporting the implementation of the engineered stone prohibition and the additional regulation of crystalline silica substances, including a review of the prohibition to ensure it is operating effectively
- progressing and finalising agreed amendments to the incident notification provisions, alongside the development of detailed guidance to support implementation
- developing accessible guidance with a focus on higher risk industries such as health care and social assistance
- setting up a dedicated research team to deepen our connections with the research community and support greater evidence-based policy development and evaluation for WHS and workers' compensation
- delivering new data insights including through implementation of a redesigned National Return to Work Survey and new worker exposure survey
- developing and implementing communication strategies that increase awareness of WHS fundamentals, particularly among small businesses and workplaces with a higher proportion of vulnerable workers
- undertaking education and awareness activities to support the transition to new and changing workplace exposure standards
- developing new model WHS Regulations and model Codes of Practice for WHS ministers to consider, including model Codes of Practice on crystalline silica, fatigue and infectious diseases, and
- continuously assessing new and emerging business models, industries and hazards to identify if there is a need for changes to the model WHS legislative framework.

In addition to these key activities, we will also continue performing our core activities by:

- developing accessible, effective and practical material to support the model WHS legislative framework to aid understanding and compliance, particularly for small business
- monitoring the progress of and driving actions in the *Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2023-2033*
- supporting the initiatives in the *National Return to Work Strategy 2020-2030* to improve return to work outcomes for workers with a work-related injury or illness
- collecting, analysing, and disseminating high quality evidence
- collaborating with our national and international counterparts, and
- increasing awareness and education through our online multimedia hub and National Safe Work Month in October 2024.