

'It's No Accident' is the OHS newsletter of the AMWU. Feedback and story ideas to amwu@amwu.org.au

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Support



AMWU Care
A counselling service for members and their families **1800 206 316**

Join Us

AMWU closed Facebook group for AMWU HSRs:
www.amwu.org.au/hsrgroup

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Authorised by Steve Murphy, AMWU National Secretary 05/21.
Proudly printed by AMWU members at Minuteman Press Abbotsford; 7 Reeves Street, Clifton Hill Victoria 3068.

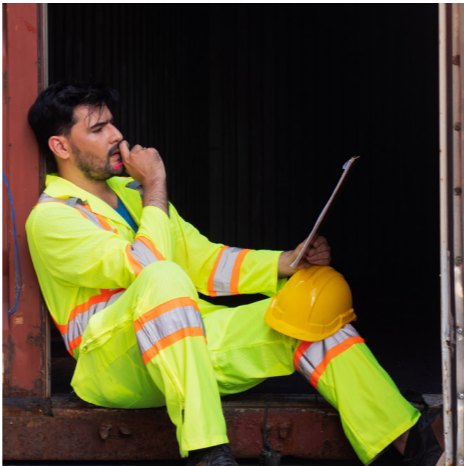
Are workplace changes stressing you out?

Change management is a common process undertaken in the workplace, yet when it is undertaken hastily, communicated poorly and without meaningful and sufficient consultation with workers, it can constitute a psychosocial hazard.

From time to time, organisations institute changes to the structure or process of work that can have an impact upon health and safety. The process of change management needs to be carefully managed by the organisation and well thought out. However, all too often change management processes are conducted poorly and without genuine consultation with HSRs, delegates and workers.

Poor change management can create unnecessary stress for workers and lead to confusion, frustration and uncertainty in the workplace. However, when the process is managed well and HSRs, delegates and workers have meaningful input into how changes are implemented, better outcomes can be achieved and workplace changes are likely to be sustained over time.

Under the WHS Act, organisations have a duty to consult with workers who are (or are likely to be) directly affected by a health and safety matter. Workers are entitled to take part in consultations and to be represented in consultations by an HSR who has been elected to represent their work group. This duty to consult is based on the recognition that worker input and participation improves organisational decision-making and assists in reducing work-related physical and psychological injuries.



Despite employers legal obligation to consult with workers on organisational changes that affect them and clauses on consultation for major workplace changes included in many workplace agreements, often it is left up to HSRs and delegates to ensure that they are included in the change management process. HSRs and delegates must insist on the need for meaningful consultation with management on workplace changes, pointing out that employers are legally obligated to consult with workers on workplace changes and that without genuine consultation with workers, the new processes or initiatives are likely to be poorly understood and inconsistently implemented.

Improved organisational and health and safety outcomes can be achieved when management routinely collaborate with HSRs and delegates as part of the change management process and genuine input and consultation with workers occurs. Further information on change management can be obtained from your workplace health and safety regulator. ●

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AMWU Health and Safety News



May 2021

Know your rights Health and Safety Representative Training

The role of Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) is recognised in all of Australia's Health and Safety laws. Unlike delegates, whose workplace rights vary depending on what is negotiated in the Enterprise Agreement, all HSRs in a jurisdiction have the same rights and powers.

One of the most important rights HSRs have is the right to union-run health and safety training.

Newly elected HSRs are entitled to an initial five days of health and safety training. Following this, HSRs are entitled to one day of refresher training each year. In South Australia, HSRs are entitled to three days of refresher training in the second year of their term, and two days of refresher training in the third year of their term. The right to undertake HSR training only arises from the time an HSR requests this training.

"I would recommend all HSRs do the union training, as safety is the main focus of unions and working people. We must do what we can to ensure everyone's health and safety."

If you're a newly elected HSR, or an existing HSR who hasn't done a refresher course this year, get in touch with your organiser or the Helpdesk on 1300 732 698 to get a training session booked in. To find out more about how to request training, head to https://www.amwu.org.au/health_safety_reps_training

Health and Safety laws give HSRs the right to choose the course they want to attend for their HSR training. Our union strongly recommends HSRs choose to attend union-run training. All union-recommended HSR training is approved by the relevant State or Commonwealth health and safety regulator.

AMWU OH&S Committee member, Glenn Brown, says "Union run health and safety training provides up to date, unbiased training aimed at people across all industries with a focus on real world experience, issues, and solutions.

"The training gives participants the knowledge and confidence to carry out their duties as an HSR – that benefits the workforce they represent and the company they work for.



"I would recommend all HSRs do the union training, as safety is the main focus of unions and working people. We must do what we can to ensure everyone's health and safety."

Attending union-run training means that HSRs get training designed to empower them to be a strong voice for safety on site. They learn how they can use their rights and powers under health and safety laws to make sure the boss keeps the workplace safe and healthy for our members. They also get to meet other union HSRs and share tactics and ideas.

Make sure all your HSRs are making the most of their rights to attend HSR training and register for their union training today. Research has shown that where HSRs are union trained and supported, they help create workplaces that are more than twice as safe as the average comparable workplace. ●

FOR WORKPLACE NOTICEBOARD

I've got my HSR's back.



**Support your elected HSRs –
the same way your HSRs look after you.**