

A large orange hand is shown holding a collection of white icons related to health and safety. The icons include a heart, a speech bubble, a warning sign, a magnifying glass, a location pin, a calendar, a fire extinguisher, a shield with a checkmark, a pie chart, a bell, a first aid kit, a hand, a flame, a padlock, an EXIT sign, and a wrench. The background is dark with a dotted pattern.

**Government
Health & Safety Lead**

Health and safety representatives

Making a Difference

What is a health and safety representative?

A health and safety representative (HSR) is an employee of an organisation who represents and assists workers on health and safety (H&S) matters.

Trained HSRs can exercise functions and powers where there is a risk to H&S under the *Health and Safety at Work Act 2015*.

Why is the role of a HSR important?

HSRs are the voice of the workers on health, safety and wellbeing. Through this leadership role, they play an important part in creating and supporting a culture of safety in an organisation, and work closely with senior leaders and unions to do so.

HSRs do not need to be experts in the field of health of safety; they receive formal training to enable them to support and represent workers in the workplace.

Typical tasks and responsibilities

- > Represent and advocate for workers on H&S matters
- > Make recommendations relating to workplace H&S
- > Request and retain information relating to hazards (including associated risks) and the H&S of workers
- > Investigate H&S risks, incidents and complaints

- > Support worker rehabilitation and return to work
- > Monitor H&S measures
- > Promote worker participation
- > Take part in the development of H&S policies and procedures and Employee Participation Agreements
- > Give feedback on H&S compliance
- > Participate in H&S committee meetings
- > Inspect workplaces or accompany inspectors
- > Work with WorkSafe New Zealand on any H&S issues
- > Issue Provisional Improvement Notices*
- > Direct workers to stop work if serious imminent risk(s) identified*

HSRs who are union members or delegates may also attend union committee and/or governance meetings.

In return, HSRs can expect the organisation to provide them with time, training, information and resources to carry out their duties, in addition to their core role. A HSR may choose a training opportunity in consultation with the PCBU (regarding the time, date, location, and the costs relating to the training).

*Can only be used if a HSR has completed initial training.

Resources and Support

Urgent: WorkSafe New Zealand Contact Centre
0800 030 040

Find out more about the HSWA 2015, the roles and powers of HSR:

www.worksafe.govt.nz
www.healthandsafety.govt.nz
www.legislation.govt.nz



WAYS A HSR CAN BE SUCCESSFUL

1

COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

- > Have a clear key message(s)
- > Think about tone and body language
- > Listen and understand
- > Be persuasive; adapt to audience
- > Understand diversity

2

HELP RESOLVE CONFLICT

- > Identify and agree on the issue
- > Brainstorm solutions
- > Choose a solution
- > Verify everyone understands

3

ACT IN GOOD FAITH

- > Be honest and open
- > Be fair
- > Be cooperative
- > Be constructive

4

MAKE 'SMART' RECOMMENDATIONS

- > Specific
- > Measurable
- > Achievable
- > Relevant
- > Timely

5

STAY RELEVANT

- > Maintain knowledge of current risks and issues
- > Attend regular meetings and development opportunities
- > Be consistent and regular with your engagement activities



TOOLS TO ENGAGE SUCCESSFULLY



CREATE VISIBILITY

- > Let people know you are a HSR
- > Be approachable
- > Weave HSR identity into your every day role



SET UP NOTICE BOARDS

- > Electronic or physical format
- > Showcase trainings or important dates
- > Encourage engagement on a HS matter



SCHEDULE H&S ACTIVITIES WITH PEOPLE LEADERS

- > Electronic or physical format
- > Record daily/weekly/quarterly/yearly tasks
- > Checklist



USE THEMES

- > Identify risks
- > Link with key dates e.g. Mental Health Awareness Week
- > Increase engagement



SCHEDULE REGULAR MEETINGS

- > Management
- > Workers
- > H&S committee