

The Role of Health and Safety Representatives:

A guide for People Leaders and Organisations



WORKSAFE
Mahi Haumarū Aotearoa

Foreword

Waka serves to connect people to the land, the sea, and to connect people with history and whakapapa. Each person within the waka has a specific role to play to ensure the smooth operation and movement.

Kaihautū = The Leader (at the centre)
Kaiwhakaterere = The Navigator
Kaitia = The Steerer (at the stern)
Kaihoe = The Paddlers (throughout the waka)

We consider the role of the H&S Rep within the waka as that of the kaiwhakaterere, the Navigator. Kaiwhakaterere work at the intersection of the kaihautū, senior leaders, management and workforce (kaitia and kaihoe) throughout an organisation. Just like the kaiwhakaterere, an H&S Rep needs to consider the mission at hand – where are we rowing to? While also being aware of what the potential dangers the workers, kaihoe, might encounter, ensuring this information is passed to the leaders of the waka to allow the kaihautū to take the safest course possible for everyone, so they can arrive at their destination.

He Waka Eke Noa

We are all in one canoe, with no exceptions

The GHSL would like to thank the representatives from Fire and Emergency New Zealand, Ministry for Primary Industries, Ministry of Social Development, Kāinga Ora, and Te Puni Kōikiri for their willingness to engage with and provide guidance for the Te Ao Māori view on this piece of work.



Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua



Health and Safety Representative (H&S Rep) Role Principles:

For People Leaders and Organisations:

The principles below are to provide a common understanding of what organisations need to provide your H&S Reps:

 <p>To enable reps to fully understand, develop and perform their role</p>	 <p>How you can support your reps to be successful in their roles</p>	 <p>Clearly understand what workers can expect from their H&S Reps</p>	 <p>What your organisation should expect from your H&S Reps</p>
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They are intended to provide a common understanding of what the organisation should provide to support an elected H&S Rep to be able to do their role successfully and what the organisation can expect from their H&S Rep.

1. Organisation Vision for H&S Reps:

For our workers to respect and understand the role of H&S Reps; for our H&S Reps to have confidence in the commitment of our organisation to support them to undertake their role in supporting the wellbeing, health, and safety (WHS) of everyone in our organisation, for the H&S Rep to be a sought-after role.



2. H&S Rep Purpose

To support the organisation to create a physically and psychologically healthy workplace so that everyone can go home safe and well at the end of the day.



- Acknowledge the mana held by the H&S Rep in providing leadership through representing and advocating for workers in wellbeing, health, and safety.
- Support the H&S Rep to help the organisation to identify WHS risks and issues.
- Help the H&S Rep to actively engage with the workforce and promote good practice and initiatives in WHS.
- Recognise the value of H&S Reps working collaboratively with workers, people leaders and union representatives.
- Engage in open and transparent communication with your workers and their reps on H&S matters or changes that affect them.

3. H&S Rep Support



What commitment can your H&S Rep expect from your organisation.

- A clear statement of the time commitment made by the Organisation to the H&S Rep to perform their role – built into their core hours and not expecting it to be in addition to their day job.
- A clear statement of expectations on their People Leader and other managers across their Organisation.
- Clear and accessible escalation processes, including in-confidence processes for sensitive situations.

4. Generic Role Requirements



What should your organisation expect from H&S Rep

- Representation and advocacy of WHS on behalf of other workers.
- Fostering good WHS practice and worker engagement – supporting workers and encouraging reporting.
- Supporting the Organisation with the identification and notification of risks and hazards and monitoring controls
- An understanding and correct enacting of the provisions of Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) 2015 as a H&S Rep.
- Actioning provisions of HSWA 2015, including Provisional Improvement Notice (PIN) notices.
- H&S Reps may participate in H&S audits, inspections and incident reviews; however, they may not lead them as responsibility for this sits with the Organisation or Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) as defined in HSWA 2015.

5. Training and Development



- Provide a clear statement of what training all H&S Reps are expected to complete and how they will be supported to attend; for example:
 - Clear statement of mandatory minimum training requirements under HSWA 2015.
 - Clear identification of variations to training requirements (e.g., offshore posts) and support to participate.
- Clear acknowledgement of the minimum training and development requirement per annum, for all H&S Reps, as per the HSWA 2015.
- Encourage additional skills and training for H&S Reps – both specific and generic e.g., higher level New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) standards, Risk Management, injury management, leadership, negotiation, communication.
- Support H&S Rep participation in appropriate internal opportunities e.g., shadow Health and Safety (H&S) team members, attendance at H&S Governance Committee.
- Support H&S Reps to participate and engage with the wider WHS community through event opportunities such as SafeGuard H&S Rep Conference, GHSL H&S Rep Awards Conference; GHSL Early in Careers Workshops, Health and Safety Association of New Zealand (HASANZ) biennial conference.

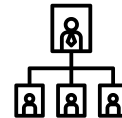
6. Performance and Recognition



- Incorporate role objectives in performance reporting e.g., performance objectives and annual performance reporting.
- Ensure People Leaders of H&S Reps understand their role in supporting and managing those H&S Reps.
- Support appropriate development objectives and incorporate them in the H&S Reps annual Development Plan.
- Develop, promote, and utilise organisation specific initiatives to recognise the value and achievements of H&S Reps through awards, shout-outs, additional development opportunities etc.

7. Governance and H&S Committees

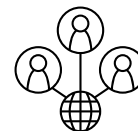
Ensure access to appropriate and clearly identified working level and governance H&S committees.



- Details and purpose of H&S Committee structure, systems and procedures.
- Clear guide as to how to go about becoming a committee member – for each different level of committee.
- Local H&S committees, including co-location committees.
- Clear understanding of how to access other H&S Committees – Regional, national, specialist work area etc.

8. Networking and Engagement

Recognising and supporting the importance of networking to deliver positive WHS outcomes.



- Facilitate H&S Reps to work together – within the organisation and externally.
- Facilitate H&S Reps to actively engage with fellow workers.
- Facilitate H&S Reps to work with Unions.
- People Leaders and Senior Leadership Teams working collaboratively with H&S Reps

9. Using Tools and Resources

Ensure appropriate and clearly identified tools are available to support H&S Reps



- Worker participation agreements, policies and procedures, including a clear statement of intent recognising the need to clearly communicate and engage with workers and their H&S Reps on WHS matters and any changes effecting workers at the beginning of any design and planning stage.
- Provide guidance on a simple and accessible nomination and election process for becoming a H&S Rep, with clearly defined responsibilities and expectations for this role.
- Provide access to clear organisation WHS policy/strategy/vision/charter and supporting Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), including any references to the H&S Rep role.
- Appropriately sized and located WHS Noticeboards and other effective communication tools to disseminate WHS information across the whole organisation, such as safety notices.
- Ensure that H&S Reps have the opportunity to participate in reviewing and developing supporting WHS materials and tools e.g., job safety assessment checklists.

Worker is defined within this document as:

A worker means an individual who carries out work in any capacity for a PCBU, including work as:

- an employee; or a contractor or subcontractor; or
- an employee of a contractor or subcontractor; or
- an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the business or undertaking; or
- an outworker (including a homeworker); or
- an apprentice or a trainee; or
- a person gaining work experience or undertaking a work trial;
- a volunteer worker; or
- a person of a prescribed class.