HEALTH AND SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES, WORK GROUPS AND HSR ELECTIONS

A worker may request that a health and safety representative (HSR) be elected to represent them, or other workers, on health and safety matters at the workplace.

If such a request is received, you, as the business owner or employer, must facilitate the formation of at least one work group for the HSR to represent.

FORMING WORK GROUPS

- Work groups are formed by negotiation between you and the workers - or their representatives (e.g., a union) - who will form the work group.
- You must take all reasonable steps to commence negotiations with the workers within 14 days after a request to elect a HSR is made.
- Negotiations will decide:
  - the number and composition of work groups to be represented by HSRs
  - the number of HSRs and deputy HSRs (if any) to be elected
  - the workplace to which the work groups will apply
  - the businesses to which the work groups apply.
- When forming or changing work groups, consider:
  - the number of workers
  - the views of the workers
  - the type of work carried out
  - the number and grouping of workers who carry out the same or similar types of work
  - the areas or places where each type of work is carried out
  - the extent to which any worker must move from place to place while at work
  - the diversity of workers and their work
  - the hazards and risks to health and safety at the workplace
  - whether workers are employees or contractors
  - whether the work is full-time, part-time, casual or short term
  - the times at which work is carried out and any arrangements at the workplace relating to overtime or shift work.
- After negotiations are complete, you must notify the workers of the outcome, and of any variations to the agreement.

HSR ELECTIONS

- The workers in a work group may decide how an election of a HSR is to be run (e.g., it can be informal with a show of hands, or formal with the use of ballots).
- You must take all reasonable steps to ensure:
  - all workers in the work group have the chance to nominate for the position of HSR (unless they have been disqualified) and vote in the election
  - all workers in the work group and all relevant business owners or employers are informed of the election outcome.
- If there is more than one work group, there must be separate HSR elections for each one.
- If the majority of workers in the work group agree, a union or other person or organisation may assist in conducting the election.
  - You must provide reasonably necessary resources, facilities and assistance to enable elections to be conducted.
  - An election is not required if the number of HSR nominees equals the number of HSR vacancies.
  - A HSR for a work group holds office for three years.