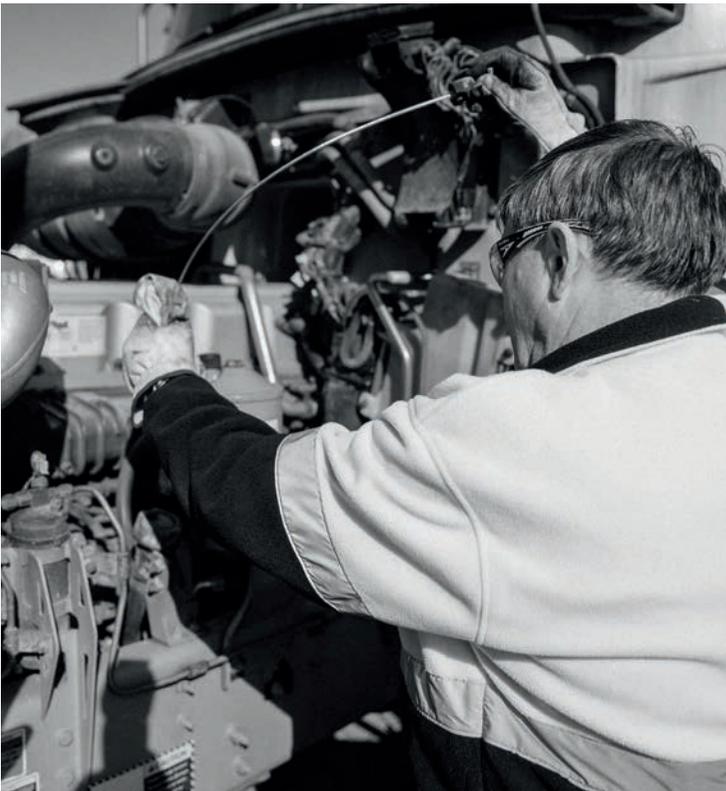
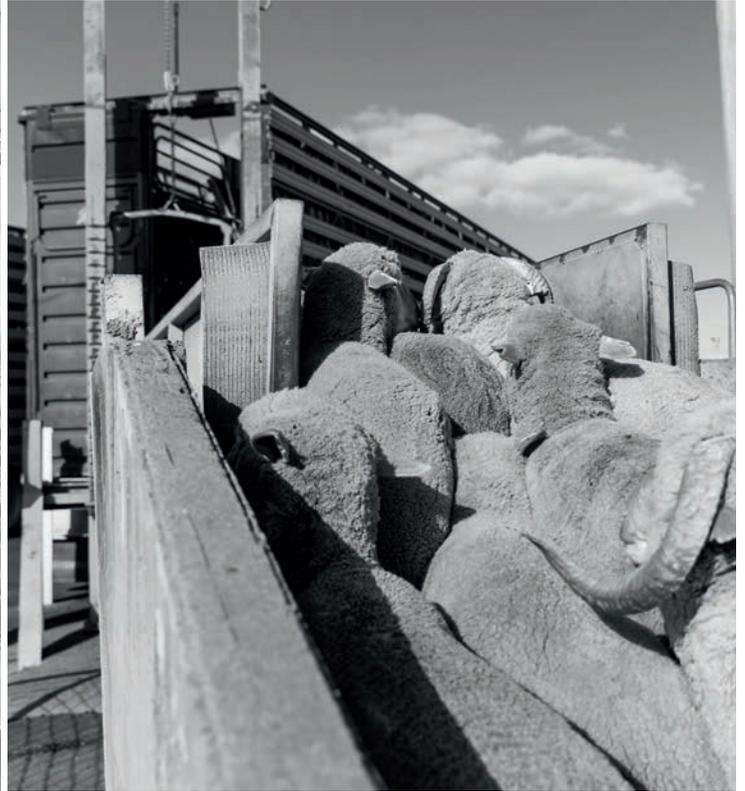


# TRANSPORT

## WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY SECTOR PLAN



## MINISTER'S MESSAGE

NSW is our nation's powerhouse. It is the engine that is driving economic and employment growth across the country. The hard work of this state Government has seen performance improve after the lacklustre years of the early 2000s. We have Australia's best unemployment rate, the best budget position and an infrastructure program that is nearing \$90 billion – the envy of the country.

Our workers are at the heart of the state's turnaround from middle of the pack to leading the charge. They are our most important asset and we feel the great responsibility to keep them safe.

As the Minister responsible for SafeWork, my priority is to do what I can to make sure that anyone who goes to work each day, returns homes to their families safe at night.

While this is the case in all sectors, it's particularly so when it comes to Road Freight Transport. It is worth \$41.5<sup>1</sup> billion a year to the national economy, and is forecast to rise at 2.5 per cent a year. The number of freight handling movements is also growing every year, highlighting the need for a sustainable transport network that makes sure workers are safe.

Approximately 158,000<sup>2</sup> employees are employed industry wide, 41 per cent<sup>3</sup> of whom are employed in the Road Transport sub-sector. The anticipated employment growth within the Road Transport sub-sector is forecast at 8.2 per cent to November 2020.<sup>4</sup>

We have made ground since coming into office in 2011, with the number of workplace deaths falling by around 25%.

In recent years, a collaborative industry-wide focus has led to an overall reduction in major claims, and a decline in incidence rates.<sup>5</sup> However, we know there is more to do.

Serious injuries and fatalities continue to occur when vehicles are being loaded and unloaded and during routine maintenance activities. Injuries to workers and bystanders also occur through unintentional vehicle roll back, being struck by mobile plant or by falling objects that have shifted from their intended location in transit.

The NSW Government has prioritised the industry as part of the overall commitment to reduce serious injuries and fatalities across NSW workplaces.

Anecdotal evidence and advice from Industry suggests that the use of at risk workers is increasing. Accordingly, SafeWork NSW and industry are developing easy to understand safety induction materials and tools to help those workers understand their rights and responsibilities.

This plan has been developed through extensive consultation with industry and the NSW community who have shared information about risks and recommended safety solutions. From this, we have identified issues and trends and received strong community support for more action.

Commitment from Industry supported by SafeWork NSW will further enhance the delivery of a safer road freight transport industry to meet the demands of the growing NSW economy.

I commend the efforts of those involved in developing this plan.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Kean".

The Hon. Matt Kean MP  
Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation  
Member for Hornsby

## TRANSPORT IS A PRIORITY INDUSTRY

The transport industry is a focus area of the *Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2012-2022* due to the high rates of fatality and serious injury.

Nationally, the transport, postal and warehousing industry accounted for 5 per cent of total employment at November 2017.

On average, the industry recorded the highest fatality rate and accounted for the second highest number of fatalities over the last five years.<sup>6</sup>

## HOW DOES NSW COMPARE TO OTHER STATES AND TERRITORIES?

It is difficult to determine the Industry's true cost of injury and illness due to anecdotal evidence that suggests a culture of non-reporting, particularly from the at risk worker group.

From 2003 to 2015<sup>7</sup>, NSW had the highest number of worker fatalities from incidents within the Transport, Postal and Warehousing industry.

For this reason, the sector is one where NSW has an opportunity to improve.

## INDUSTRY CONSULTATION AND IDENTIFYING HIGH IMPACT HARMS

SafeWork NSW conducted consultation workshops with industry at metropolitan and regional **locations**.

Representatives from transport companies, sub-contractors, sole traders, industry representatives and other government agencies have worked to develop the plan and generally agreed to the following:

- a 'towards zero' focus on working at heights and traffic management;
- working collaboratively with SafeWork NSW and other government agencies to support industry-wide safety initiatives;
- recognising the importance of education and training and the potential for establishing a professional pathway for young workers to enter the industry; and
- focusing on ensuring that parties in the supply chain have capacity to improve work health and safety outcomes industry wide.

## TOWARDS ZERO

During consultation, stakeholders provided examples of work activities that continue to cause serious injuries. These include working at heights without adequate fall protection, inadequate systems and processes to ensure workers are kept separate from vehicles in loading areas, and unsafe access and egress to and from vehicles.

It was agreed that these activities are no longer acceptable, and that action is required to eliminate or significantly reduce these practices.

Accordingly, work will be undertaken to:

- establish the practice of working from the ground when loading and unloading vehicles industry best practice;
- make sure all businesses develop a traffic management plan using industry best practices; and
- promote the principles of 'three points of contact' when getting in and out of vehicles.



## CURRENT SNAPSHOT OF THE TRANSPORT INDUSTRY

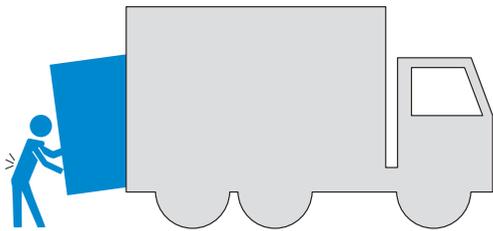
The nature of the work in the transport industry makes it high risk and this is reflected in both the high rates of fatalities and serious workers' compensation claims.

### CLAIMS

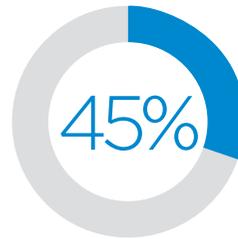
Compared to all NSW industries, the transport sector has a higher percentage of major claims.<sup>8</sup>

**6,407<sup>9</sup>** claims occur on average each year

Hazardous manual tasks is the most frequent cause of claims, accounting for approximately 43 per cent of all claims<sup>10</sup> followed by falls, being hit by or hitting objects and vehicle accidents.



For every 1,000 workers in the transport sector, on average, 41 workers sustain a workplace injury or disease leading to a claim compared to 28 workers in all industries in NSW.<sup>11</sup>



45 per cent of claims were major claims compared to 38 per cent in all industries.<sup>12</sup>

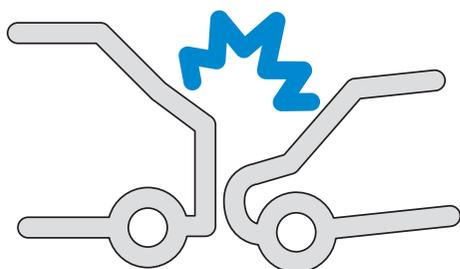
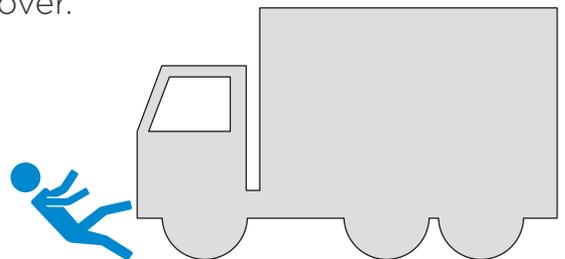
### FATALITIES

Transport, Postal and Warehousing accounted for the largest number of fatalities in NSW between 2003 and 2015.<sup>13</sup>

**34** Between 2012/13 - 2015/16, the total number of fatalities within the Transport, Postal and Warehousing industry in NSW was 34.<sup>14</sup>

The causes of “non road” related fatalities within the transport sector include:

- being hit by moving objects
- being trapped between stationary and moving objects
- rollover.



The predominant cause of “on road” related fatalities are **vehicle incidents**. Accordingly, this plan recognises the importance of promoting a range of safety initiatives with other agencies.

## EMBEDDING A HEALTH AND SAFETY LANDSCAPE

The *Work Health and Safety Roadmap for NSW 2022* (The Roadmap) incorporates the concept of a work, health and safety landscape, that has been developed to assist the transport sector in being able to:

- **improve** WHS systems and practices;
- **respond** to changes in technology and practices in the workplace and environment;
- **recover** from injury through improving work practices; and
- **learn** from incidents in the workplace.

## WHAT MIGHT A HEALTH AND SAFETY LANDSCAPE LOOK LIKE IN THE TRANSPORT INDUSTRY

**Workplace leaders** demonstrating commitment to health and safety through participating in safety meetings.

**Clear and relevant communication** is used when developing safety messages to assist workers from diverse backgrounds.

**Safe practices** are developed with the input of workers.

**A safe environment** takes into consideration both the physical and psychological aspects of the work practices.

**Worker capability** is developed using formal and 'on the job' practices which incorporates adequate supervision.

## IMPROVED RECOVERY AT WORK PRACTICES

On average, injured or ill workers in the transport industry are taking longer than most other industries to recover at work. There needs to be improvements in practices to better support injured or ill transport workers to recover at work.

### Together with industry SafeWork NSW will:

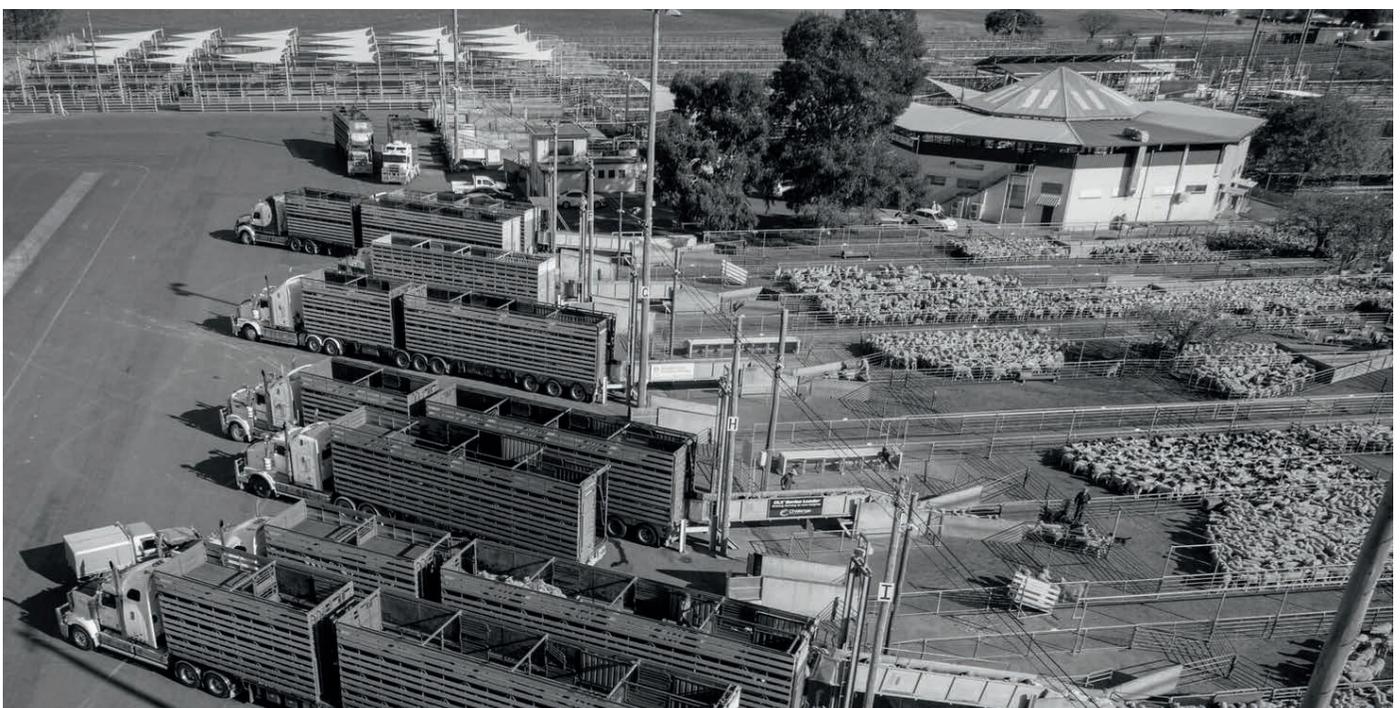
- resource the inspectorate to ensure they are aware of transport specific recovery at work solutions;
- embed the health benefits of work and the importance of recovery at work within the industry;
- disseminate to the transport sector case studies that show how recovery at work strategies can be implemented; and
- promote awareness of SIRA funded recovery at work programs amongst employers and workers.

### SafeWork NSW will:

- work with the State Insurance Regulatory Authority (SIRA) to improve practices to support injured or ill workers return to work and reduce the costs associated with each claim; and
- develop options to recognise transport operators that improve their safety performance.

### We will know if we are on track if:

- there is an increasing trend in return to work rates; and
- there is a decreasing trend in claims costs and duration.



## FOCUS ON KEY PRIORITY AREAS

The second action area in our *Work Health and Safety Roadmap for NSW 2022* focuses on key priority areas where the most significant work health and safety risks exist. Consultation with industry identified specific key priority areas and associated work activities that cause serious injuries and fatalities in the transport industry.

Those key priority areas include:

- at risk workers;
- musculoskeletal injuries;
- working at heights;
- mental and physical health;
- traffic management; and
- ancillary (non driving) tasks.

## AT RISK WORKERS

The transport industry is diverse, made up of people of different ages and cultures, with different skills and experience, who work under different employment arrangements.

### Together with industry, SafeWork NSW will:

- promote the benefits of supervision, mentoring and consultation at the workplace;
- promote the importance of clear site-specific inductions;
- develop safety strategies to support inexperienced workers; and
- develop education pathways for young workers to enter the transport sector.

### SafeWork NSW will:

- develop tools and support materials that help at risk workers understand their rights and obligations;
- research and collaborate with other agencies to develop initiatives that improve health and safety outcomes; and
- work with industry to identify innovative ways of delivering safety messages using the latest technologies.

### We will know if we are on track if:

- the number of injured workers aged 15-25 years falls by 10 per cent; and
- there's an increase in the number of young workers participating in formal training.

## MUSCULOSKELETAL INJURIES

Muscular stress while lifting, carrying and putting down objects accounts for a significant number of workers compensation claims within the transport sector, the majority resulting in soft tissue injury.

### Together with industry, SafeWork NSW will:

- conduct research to identify innovative solutions to address those work activities that contribute to musculoskeletal disorders (MSD);
- explore options to eliminate or reduce the need to do loading and unloading 'at heights';
- explore options to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with connecting and disconnecting trailers;
- consider ergonomic principles for vehicles during the design stage;
- raise awareness of the risk factors and preventative measures associated with managing MSD related risks; and
- work with industry to increase the reporting of hazard and near miss incidents.

### SafeWork NSW will:

- partner with SIRA to improve insurer and health provider practices, to reduce the cost and duration of claims for injured transport workers;
- develop initiatives that focus on identifying, assessing and controlling the risk of MSD;
- develop a range of support materials to promote safety solutions in response to known industry harms; and
- develop an awareness and education campaign that focuses on older workers.

### We will know if we are on track if:

- there's a 30 per cent decrease in the incidence rate of MSD related claims;
- there's an increase in the number of transport workers who attend MSD specific education initiatives; and
- the incidence rate of serious claims associated with young workers aged 15-25 years falls by 10 per cent.

## WORKING AT HEIGHTS

Workers continue to be placed at risk when getting on top of transport equipment to restrain and or unrestrain loads which places them at significant risk of a fall from height.

### Together with industry, SafeWork NSW will:

- engage with manufacturers to ensure vehicles are designed to incorporate ground level engineering solutions;
- promote a 'working from the ground' approach when loading and unloading vehicles; and
- promote the use of work platforms, fall arrest and travel restraint systems, where working from the ground is not reasonably practicable.

### SafeWork NSW will:

- promote our 'working at heights' strategy with a transport focus;
- develop support materials to promote safety solutions for known industry harms; and
- develop a communication strategy to raise awareness of the risks associated with working at heights.

### We will know if we are on track if:

- there's a reduction in the number of fall-related claims; and
- there's an increase in the use of control measures.

## MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

A working environment that includes working alone, tight scheduling, and demanding customer expectations are factors that may contribute to poor mental and physical health.

### Together with industry, SafeWork NSW will:

- assist industry to develop capacity to identify and manage work related psychological hazards; and
- promote a workplace culture that encourages workers and managers to talk about mental and physical health in the workplace.

### SafeWork NSW will:

- promote our mentally healthy workplace initiatives across the transport sector;
- partner with organisations to make sure practical support is available in rural and remote locations; and
- implement a mental and physical health awareness and compliance program, with inspectors visiting workplaces across NSW.

### We will know if we are on track if:

- industry performance, as defined by the NSW benchmarking tool,<sup>15</sup> results in an upward trend
- there's an increase in the number of workplaces that have developed a mental and physical health plan for their workers.



## TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Whenever vehicle, mobile plant and pedestrian traffic interact the potential for injury increases where traffic management arrangements are inadequate.

For example, death or permanent impairment is the likely result if hit by a forklift or shifting load when adjusting or removing restraints.

### Together with industry, SafeWork NSW will:

- promote the development of a traffic management plan based on best practice.

### SafeWork NSW will:

- develop a communication and education strategy to help businesses identify practical ways to manage traffic management risks; and
- research and evaluate innovative ways to improve on site safety messaging across the supply chain.

### We will know if we are on track if:

- there's a reduction in the incidence rate of serious claims caused by hitting, or being hit by, an object; and
- site-specific inductions are developed using simple and easy to understand safety messaging.

## ANCILLARY (NON DRIVING) TASKS

Checking loads or performing maintenance on the roadside are risk factors to both the driver and other road users.

### Together with industry, SafeWork NSW will:

- encourage the use of safe areas to undertake ancillary tasks;
- promote the use of 'maxi brakes' and wheel chocks to prevent unintentional roll back when performing activities by the roadside and performing planned or unplanned non-driving activities; and
- develop guidelines to help drivers manage the risks when working by the roadside.

### SafeWork NSW will:

- work with the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) to make sure roadside rest areas are promoted; and
- develop a communication and education strategy to help businesses identify practical ways to manage roadside risks.

### We will know if we are on track if:

- there's a fall in the number of fatalities and serious injuries associated with performing ancillary tasks.



## EXEMPLAR REGULATOR

The third action area in our *Work Health and Safety Roadmap for NSW 2022* focuses on a commitment by SafeWork NSW to set an example as a leading regulator.

Accordingly, SafeWork NSW will work to ensure that the following is achieved over the next four years:

- continue to build a customer focussed approach to the way we work with the transport industry;
- build the capability of our frontline officers by partnering with industry on industry based training programs in order to better understand transport risks and provide better advice, assistance and engagement with transport workers;
- continue to work with other agencies to improve collection of data and information sharing to inform future harm prevention activities; and
- work to better understand the relationship between death and injury rates in the transport sector and the human behaviours and decisions that may contribute by applying human centred design principles.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The monitoring and evaluation process helps us to continuously improve and is important to check the effectiveness of our strategies. It is also necessary to ensure that the plan is being rolled out as intended and that changes in the reduction of incidents are in line with our targets.

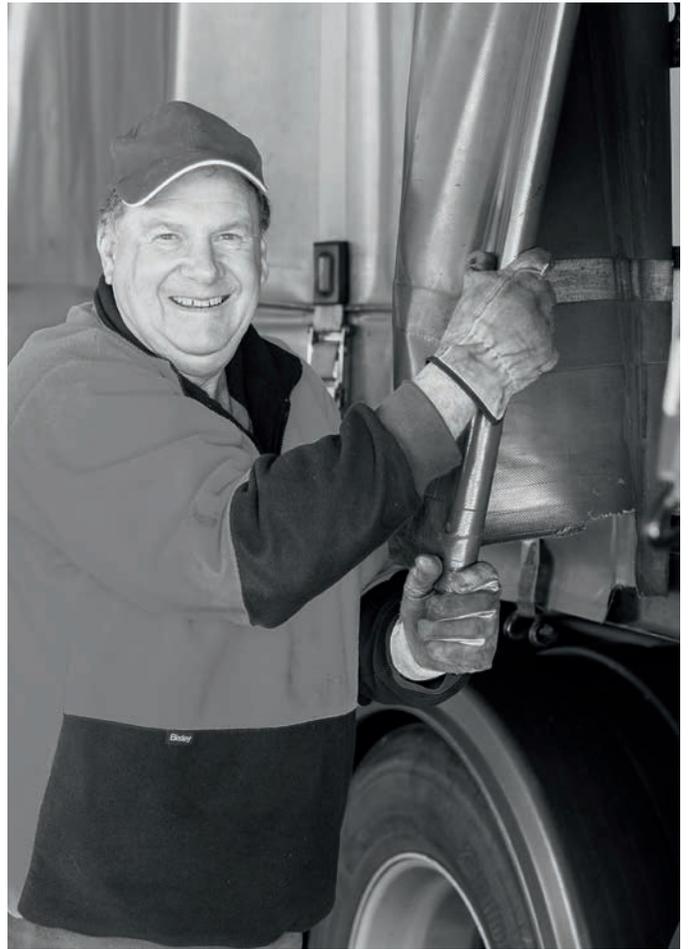
SafeWork NSW and industry will review this sector plan every two years and commit to working together to check its progress, consider changes and new opportunities and ensure new sector specific harms are identified and addressed.

The monitoring and evaluation process will include SafeWork NSW, industry partners and an industry advisory group, using a range of measures including data analysis, information from other agencies and stakeholder feedback.



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