

Outcomes Report Summary

Workplace Consultation and HSR Forums (Regional) 2024

The Workplace Consultation & HSR Forums (Regional) 2024 were held between May and July 2024 and delivered in nine regional locations in NSW: Wollongong, Tamworth, Cooma, Albury, Newcastle, Wagga Wagga, Coffs Harbour, Orange and Ballina.

The forums delivered sessions to focus on workplace consultation requirements and legislation, identify key parties in the consultation process, consultation methods and managing disputes to ensure work health and safety issues are addressed in the workplace. Two key breakout sessions also discussed how to take an effective consultative approach when addressing WHS high risk harms (falls/moving plant) and emerging issues such as psychosocial hazards including bullying and sexual harassment. These key areas were delivered and supported by subject matter experts from relevant SafeWork NSW teams and staff. The target audience was primarily Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs), WHS committee members and workers, however, did not exclude PCBU's.

The forums were open to all industries and all business sizes in NSW.

The forums promoted the suite of educative tools, resources and templates available for HSRs and workplaces, covering consultation methods, workgroups, and the support and assistance that can be provided by SafeWork NSW. Each forum commenced with an official opening by a SafeWork NSW Executive member and specialised industry representative.

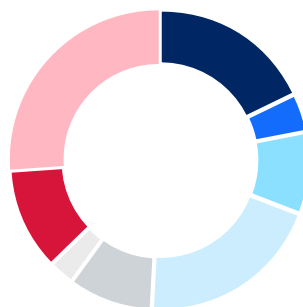
	Number of attendees	642
	Number of locations	9
	Number of evaluations	231
	Psychosocial workshops	325
	High risk harm workshops	283

Participants



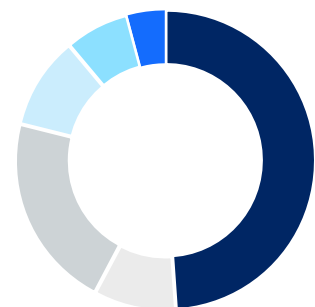
- 9% Other
- 21% Manager/supervisor
- 31% Health & safety reps
- 24% Safety officers
- 10% Employee/worker
- 6% Small business owner

Industry representation



- 18% Construction
- 4% Ag
- 9% Education training
- 20% Govt public admin
- 9% Manufacturing
- 3% Transport
- 11% Health care
- 26% Other

Organisation size (No. of workers)



- 49% 200+
- 9% 110-199
- 21% 20-109
- 10% 5-9
- 7% 1-4
- 4% N/A

Feedback and Evaluations

SafeWork NSW provided an evaluation for participants to complete at each event, with the following results:

The **average rating** for the Workplace Consultation and HSR Forums was **8.79 out of 10**.

Psychosocial Hazards: For 36% of participants this was the highlight of the forum, which aligned with 38% who consider psychosocial hazards the biggest safety concern in their workplace.

The **next highest safety concerns for participants** were **plant and machinery** and **working at heights**.

The **top two key barriers** for addressing work health and safety issues were identified as **'lack of awareness of WHS obligations'** and **'lack of resourcing (human/ time/financial)'**. When asked what SafeWork NSW can do to assist businesses, almost half of the evaluations wanted more workshops and field days delivered to industry across NSW.

Testimonials:

'We need more conversational style presentations at events like these'

'I must admit I was a bit negative in the beginning although the presentations won me over, a great effort by all. More has to be done to improve the image of SafeWork as they are seen more broadly as the 'bad guys'.

'Length of forum was about right' and 'too long on topics that most of the room were aware of. Not enough time to hear from the room'. Participants felt more time or shorter presentations would suit.

'Could have examples of good consultation & good HSC Committee examples best practices for set up and design with good transparency between management and committee members.'

Stakeholder Engagement and Communications

In promoting the forums to external customers, a variety of channels were engaged including:

SafeWork NSW website: nine event pages were created to host each location and registration; and the front carousel of the website included the HSR Forum advertisement.

SafeWork NSW social media (Facebook/LinkedIn).

A SafeWork NSW Wrap article on the HSR Forums and locations was distributed to all subscribers. This article was very successful with **31% of attendees hearing about the HSR Forums via the SafeWork NSW Wrap**.

"An excellent and informative forum. I was so impressed with the number of attendees and the engaging presentations and professionalism from the SafeWork team."
– comment via LinkedIn post.

The media and marketing extended to secondary advertising, with the forums being picked up by stakeholders including business chambers, local councils, health and safety providers and government agencies.

SafeWork NSW has established relationships with key stakeholders in other agencies, unions and within industry. Representatives were invited to participate on the Q&A panels during the series to respond directly to the participants on subject matter areas. These representatives included various unions, industry associations and other co-regulators.

Resources

The key resources promoted over the Workplace Consultation & HSR Forum series were:

- Codes of Practice: Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination; Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work; and Worker Representation and Participation Guide.
- Industry specific resources including SAYV Glove Box Guide, Construction Pocket Guide, A-Z Farm Safety and Respect at Work resources.

Industry Outcomes and Opportunities

Businesses and industry were open and engaging with SafeWork NSW and requested future workshops and field days to provide opportunity to obtain work, health and safety advice from inspectors in a more informal environment. Participants preferred hearing real life examples and scenarios on how other businesses or inspectors have seen high risk harms and hazards addressed in practical settings.

A Health and Safety Representative – Refresher Training Day is scheduled for 30 October 2024 in Sydney.