

Workplace Management

Synergising Australian WHS and HR Law

The intersection of WHS and HR laws is the essence of workplace management; where compliance meets culture, and safety converges with support. By aligning WHS protocols with HR strategies, organisations can ensure that:

- Every employee is aware of their rights and responsibilities.
- Workplaces are compliant with regulations and nurturing grounds for employee well-being.
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion principles are purposefully embedded at the enterprise level.

Australia has a dynamic workplace regulations landscape. The integration of Work Health and Safety (WHS) laws with Human Resources (HR) principles should be a priority for every organisation's commitment to fostering a safe, healthy, and equitable work environment.

Developed by Safe Work Australia, the model WHS laws adopted by most jurisdictions is the main support pillar of our national framework. These laws aim to protect workers and other persons from harm by mandating the elimination or minimisation of risks, ensuring fair representation, and promoting continuous improvement in WHS practices.

Parallel to this, Western Australia's multi-faceted and complex industrial relations frameworks via the Fair Work Act 2009 and the National Employment Standards (NES) or Minimum Conditions of Employment Act 1993 and Industrial Relations Act 1975, anchor the HR legal structure by providing minimum entitlements and enabling fairness at work. This legislation, along with state and federal anti-discrimination laws, sets the legal stage for WHS and HR to operate and drive safety culture change.

A quick health assessment of your organisation's safety culture should include collating data on five areas covering:

1. High employee accident/injury rate;
2. Absenteeism linked to ill health, poor focus and/or excessive workload/hours;
3. Low morale evidenced by employees regularly aggrieved about work satisfaction, their colleagues and/or leadership;
4. Attrition due to employees seeking safer working conditions, including upskilling, training, acknowledgement; and
5. Financial loss through increased insurance premiums, legal fees, and safety regulation violations.

If your organisation has evidence of just one of the above areas, this should be considered a strong indicator of an unsafe culture which can easily and rapidly evolve into the other four areas.

One of the most significant WHS/HR reforms is the power to prosecute business owners for safety failures.



Australia has a strong history of fining business owners however amongst significantly increasing these fines, is the jurisdictional powers of the Safety Tribunal to criminally convict. Business owners, WHS and HR leaders are personally liable should they be found guilty of contributing to injuring, or killing, an employee. It is important to note that financial penalties are unable to be insured against should one be imposed.

Delivering Outcomes has strong experience in navigating the complexities of these intersecting domains, and our team remain informed of legislative changes and modern trends to foster a safety culture. This strategic synergy not only mitigates risks but also enhances employee engagement, drives performance, and ultimately, contributes to the sustainable success of any organisation.

Our team has a proven track record of delivering a strategic workforce safety culture in as little as 8 weeks leading to increased productivity, zero accidents/injuries and cost savings; enduring outcomes for all employees and business owners.

Commit to developing and implementing your organisation's safety culture by contacting Delivering Outcomes today.

Delivering Outcomes

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