Five year strategic plan for work health and safety in Queensland

2019–2023

developed by the Work Health and Safety Board

Work safe. Home safe.

Queensland Government

Five year strategic plan for work health and safety in Queensland

Work Health and Safety Board Charter

Vision

- Healthy, safe and productive working lives for people in Queensland.

Role/Purpose

- Lead, promote and enable work health and safety improvement in Queensland.

Core activities

- Participate (lead, innovate, facilitate, support).
- Promote (engage, educate.)
- Perform (monitor, drive, comply.

Strategic levers

- Embracing innovation and technology.
- Designing healthy and safe work.
- Fostering a culture of health and safety.
- Regulating effectively.

How we deliver it

Our reputation

- Respected leaders in health and safety.
- Innovative facilitators of change.
- Trusted and collaborative.
- Outcomes focused.

Behaviours that support our reputation

- Ensuring work health and safety is integral to all decisions and actions.
- Leading by example.
- Facilitating change through truly innovative thinking.
- Decisions and actions based on evidence and a learning culture.

- Consultative and collaborative approach with all stakeholders.
- Appreciating feedback and maintaining constant connection with industry and government.
- Driving for real, measurable outcomes and change.

Why we do it (value proposition)

Government

- Safe and healthy Queensland workplaces, communities and visitors
- Positive societal and economic outcomes from effective prevention investment.

Industry

- Partnership in work health and safety education
- Innovation in safe and healthy work design and processes
- Support for work health and safety compliance
- Increased business sustainability.

Worker

- Being healthy and safe at work
- Keeping colleagues, family and friends healthy and safe.

Community

- Confidence that work in Queensland is healthy and safe (whether a worker, family member or customer/user).

Overview

Vision
- Healthy, safe and productive working lives for people in Queensland.

Role/Purpose
- Lead, promote and enable work health and safety improvement in Queensland.

Core activities
- Participate (lead, innovate, facilitate, support)
- Promote (engage, educate)
- Perform (monitor, drive, comply).

Values
- Respected leaders in health and safety.
- Innovative facilitators of change.
- Trusted and collaborative.
- Outcomes-focused.

Strategic levers

|	Five year key outcomes	Performance measurement
1. **Embracing innovation and technology**	• Evidence-base to support new technology implementation and work health and safety innovation • Queensland seen as a leader in work health and safety innovation • Industry embraces innovative thinking and adopts innovation to improve work health and safety and productivity • Recurring or persistent harms are tackled • Reduced cost of work health and safety from a collective focus on innovation and technology • Regulator embraces innovation and technology for itself and industry.	• Perception that Queensland is leader in work health and safety innovation • Industry takes up innovative technology and benefits from productivity improvements and reduced work health and safety costs • Recurring or persistent harms are identified, prioritised and solved • Increased understanding and utilisation of technology by Workplace Health and Safety Queensland.
2. **Designing healthy and safe work**	• High industry awareness of healthy and safe work design principles and benefits • Significant industry uptake of healthy and safe work design • The use of building information modelling as a key design tool to identify work health and safety issues • Gap between work as done and as imagined is closed • A culture/mentality that identifies and implements controls that make a difference • Higher order controls are the norm.	• Increased awareness by business of principles and benefits of designing healthy and safe work • Industry increases use of higher order controls in the design of healthy and safe work • Industry takes up recognised practices for designing healthy and safe work.
3. **Fostering a culture of health and safety**	• Agreed system of measurement of work health and safety culture • Well engaged and thriving Industry Sector Standing Committees (ISSCs) who make significant leadership contributions • Government as work health and safety model client and employer • Ongoing support for health and safety representatives and Work health and safety officers • Improved attitudes to work health and safety and work culture (mental and physical) • Increased awareness of work health and safety culture principles and benefits • Increased awareness of work health and safety resources available to support businesses • Reduction in work health and safety harms and Increase in workplace wellbeing.	• New system of measurement is developed and widely utilised to demonstrate improved health and safety culture in workplaces • Improved business, worker and community attitudes to work health and safety • Increased awareness of principles and benefits of work health and safety culture.
4. **Regulating effectively**	• Empowered and effective Regulator • Fully implemented recommendations from 2017 Best Practice Review into Workplace Health and Safety Queensland. • Qualified inspectors with effective and consistent compliance and enforcement skills • High performing team of inspectors statewide • Identifiable and accessible network of inspectors • Increased adoption of advanced work health and safety systems • Reduction in work health and safety harms.	• Regulator priorities that focus on monitoring duty holder compliance with work health and safety obligations and applying serious sanctions or penalties for non-compliance • Perception by business, workers and community that Workplace Health and Safety Queensland inspectors are skilled • Increased adoption of focused and effective work health and safety systems by industry • Queensland achieves a reduction in work health and safety harms which favourably benchmarks nationally and internationally.

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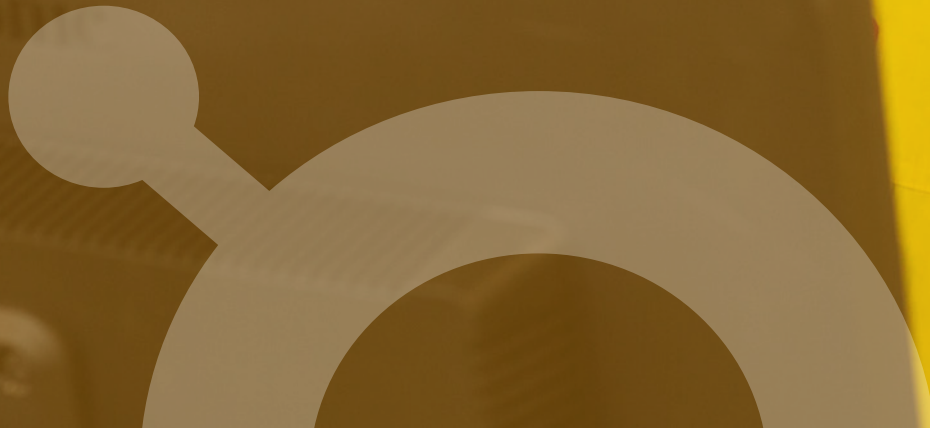
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Strategic levers

Embracing innovation and technology	Designing healthy and safe work	Fostering a culture of health and safety	Regulating effectively

Why this matters

Fostering a focus on innovation and technology helps prepare and respond to the evolving nature and design of work and the associated work health and safety challenges. The research and incentives available through innovation and technology assists to:

- identify current and emerging trends in work health and safety
- identify new and emerging hazards and risks introduced as a result of new technology or innovation
- identify or remove barriers to adoption to enable greater innovation and increase the use of technologies
- encourage others to unleash their potential to innovate and use technology to improve work health and safety at their workplace – (i.e. mitigate hazards or risk).

As industries and workplaces review and adapt their work practices to respond to the changing ways of work and work pressures, they must also consider the impact of change on health and safety practices and the physical and psychological work environment. The application of higher-order risk management controls in the design of the physical workplace, work processes and workforce can optimise worker function and actively make a difference to reduce the potential for workplace injury and illness.

Designing healthy and safe work should be a consideration at all stages of the work lifecycle from the design and layout of the physical work environment, establishment and review of work processes, and recruitment and capability development of the workforce. Decision-making for the flow of work should reflect health and safety considerations across the supply chain in procurement, manufacture or design, dispatch and delivery, and for the end user.

The leadership, attitudes and behaviours of people collectively influence and reinforce the value placed on work health and safety. A culture of health and safety is conducive to generating positive work health and safety outcomes by creating an environment where people and leaders are enabled and empowered to focus on and drive work health and safety improvements.

A culture of health and safety is supported through leaders and people who have a strong awareness and commitment to work health and safety. The emphasis is on increasing the visibility of work health and safety and promoting the resources available to industry and workers to facilitate safety outcomes. Fostering a culture of health and safety includes consideration of cultural and ethnic diversity and individual characteristics of vulnerability of workers.

Businesses should be able to expect sound and consistent advice on how to satisfy their legislated work health and safety obligations and work towards best practice in their workplaces so that workers and others are not exposed to known hazards and unacceptable risk. Effective regulation ensures duty holders comply or face serious sanctions and penalties.

Regulator priorities should ensure duty holders comply with their obligations.

Strategic lever 1:
Embracing innovation and technology

Priority actions/activities	Resource/responsibility
Participate	
1.1 Investigate and partner in the establishment of a Queensland Safety Innovation and Technology Laboratory (with multi-partnerships).	Board supported by Office of Industrial Relations
1.2 Investigate and support the establishment of innovation scholarships for individuals and organisations.	Board supported by Office of Industrial Relations
1.3 Investigate and support the establishment of a work health and safety grants program to stimulate investment and provide information and advice to eliminate hazards and risks in Queensland workplaces.	Board supported by Office of Industrial Relations
Promote	
1.4 Collaborate with secondary and tertiary educational institutions to leverage the 'future thinking' of next generations (linking students and businesses for knowledge transfer).	Industry Sector Standing Committees (ISSCs) supported by Office of Industrial Relations
1.5 Collaborate with industry and government departments into the feasibility of financial and other incentives for work health and safety innovation.	ISSCs supported by Office of Industrial Relations
Perform	
1.6 Energise the innovation and technology capability of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland.	Office of Industrial Relations
1.7 Research, analyse and adapt trends in work health and safety innovation and technology, including upstream design solutions, to foresee and communicate implications of key developments to industry.	Board supported by Office of Industrial Relations

Five year outcomes

- Evidence-base to support new technology implementation and work health and safety innovation
- Queensland seen as a leader in work health and safety innovation
- Industry embraces innovative thinking and adopts innovation to improve work health and safety and productivity
- Recurring or persistent harms are tackled
- Reduced cost of work health and safety from a collective focus on innovation and technology
- Regulator embraces innovation and technology for itself and industry.

Potential partnerships for implementation

- Universities, international research institutions
- Agricultural colleges
- Education Queensland
- Cross government linkages
- Advance Queensland
- Equipment manufacturers.

Strategic lever 2: Designing healthy and safe work

Priority actions/activities

	Priority actions/activities	Resource/responsibility
Participate	2.1 Partner with industry sector standing committees to develop industry-specific plans to increase awareness of healthy and safe work design principles and outcomes amongst key stakeholders in the supply chain.	ISSCs supported by Office of Industrial Relations
	2.2 Partner with business registration and regulation bodies to promote information/education on healthy and safe work design principles and benefits.	Office of Industrial Relations
	2.3 Partner with industry and government to explore the feasibility of offering grants for the implementation and showcasing of healthy and safe work designs in priority industry sectors.	Board supported by Office of Industrial Relations
	2.4 Promote the incorporation of healthy and safe work design into incident investigations by business.	Office of Industrial Relations
Promote	2.5 Encourage industries to implement focused and effective work health and safety systems, processes and procedures (that are fit for purpose with worker input and involvement, and reflect how work is actually conducted).	Office of Industrial Relations
	2.6 Leverage examples of the application of higher order controls in healthy and safe work design in externally-focused communications: • via campaign educational material and inspection checklists, safety alerts and incident alerts, work health and safety tools, advisory sessions, codes of practice, printed resource material • promoted specifically in emerging industries and aimed where there is a changing nature of work (e.g. gig economy, fissured workplaces).	Office of Industrial Relations
	2.7 Leverage good examples of healthy and safe work design (research, case studies, testimonials, awards).	Board/ISSCs supported by Office of Industrial Relations
Perform	2.8 Research, analyse and adapt trends in the changing nature of work and emerging industries to foresee implications for healthy and safe work design decisions. Communicate findings and recommendations to ensure safe and healthy work processes and controls are evident in the industry.	Board supported by Office of Industrial Relations

Five year outcomes

- High industry awareness of healthy and safe work design principles and benefits
- Significant industry uptake of healthy and safe work design including at conceptual stage
- The use of building information modelling (BIM) as a key design tool to identify work health and safety issues
- Gap between work as done and as imagined is closed
- A culture/mentality that identifies and implements controls that make a difference
- Higher order controls are the norm.

Potential partnerships for implementation

- Building/plant designers
- Asset owners
- Employers
- Work health and safety and human resource management professionals
- Industry sector standing committees
- Business regulation bodies
- Employers and industry associations
- Work health and safety advisors and inspectors.

Strategic lever 3:
Fostering a culture of health and safety

Priority actions/activities

		Resource/responsibility
Participate	3.1 Develop and adapt methodologies to obtain data/intelligence about the current work health and safety culture in priority sectors (for tracking purposes).	Board supported by Office of Industrial Relations
	3.2 Partner with industry sector standing committees to develop work health and safety culture principles (including signs and symbols of a caring and positive work health and safety culture).	Board/ISSCs supported by Office of Industrial Relations
	3.3 Partner with industry sector standing committees to develop and deliver education change strategies: • driven by data and hard statistics • aimed at national and Queensland priorities • segmented into business lifecycle stage/size • to include Boards and senior officers • delivered by dedicated resources/unit within Workplace Health and Safety Queensland to focus on physical, mental and wellbeing/health care • creatively using messages to encourage snowball effect (re-post/re-tweet) • promoting existing and new Workplace Health and Safety Queensland programs, tools and guidance material • encouraging workplaces to engage with workers directly and via health and safety representatives	Board/ISSCs supported by Office of Industrial Relations
	3.4 Leverage work health and safety culture principles in health and safety representative and workplace health and safety officer training modules and interfaces with licensing authorisation providers.	Office of Industrial Relations
	3.5 Promote, guide and energise training, skills development and maintenance of work health and safety competencies at all levels.	Board/ISSCs supported by Office of Industrial Relations
	3.6 Leverage work health and safety culture leaders/champions/ambassadors, including both industry and government (as client and employer).	Board/ISSCs supported by Office of Industrial Relations
	3.7 Investigate the opportunity for a consultative committee to advance work health and safety outcomes for the Queensland Public Administration sector as a client and employer.	Board supported by Office of Industrial Relations
Promote	3.8 Partner with the industry sector standing committees to leverage real examples of a work health and safety culture at work (e.g. visible leadership).	Board/ISSCs supported by Office of Industrial Relations
Perform	3.9 Research, analyse and adapt trends in work health and safety culture and disseminate key developments to industry (use health and safety representative and work health and safety officers as distribution channels).	Board supported by Office of Industrial Relations

Five year outcomes

- Agreed system of measurement of work health and safety culture
- Well engaged and thriving ISSCs who make significant leadership contributions
- Government as a work health and safety model client and employer
- Ongoing support for health and safety officers and work health and safety officers
- Improved attitudes to work health and safety (as measured)
- Improved work culture (mental and physical)
- Increased awareness of work health and safety culture principles and benefits
- Increased awareness of work health and safety resources available to support businesses
- Reduction in work health and safety harms.

Potential partnerships for implementation

- Educational partners – AICD; Ai Group; unions; CCIQ; QCWA; TAFE; schools; RTOs etc.
- Distribution partners – WorkCover Queensland; Business Registrations; industry peak bodies; safety professionals etc.
- Industry sector standing committees.

Strategic lever 4:
Regulating effectively

Priority actions/activities

Participate

4.1 Support, guide and leverage research to establish a minimum benchmark of roles, skills and competencies of effective advisors and inspectors state-wide.

4.2 Draw on the industry sector standing committees (ISSCs) to identify current work health and safety issues and solutions for industry and provide feedback to Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (e.g. changing patterns of work - dependent contracting, labour hire, regulator jurisdiction).

Participate and Promote

4.3 Develop, promote and defend distinct brand portfolios of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland activities (encouragement portfolio: information, advice, support and encouragement activities; enforcement portfolio: inspector workplace visits, notices and sanctions).

4.4 Develop, promote and leverage a suite of work health and safety assistance 'tools' for industry, ensuring the balance (simplified 'human' solutions for business that are well researched and tested).

Perform

4.5 Oversee the implementation of recommendations from the 2017 Best Practice Review of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland.

4.6 Ongoing review of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland performance against the Queensland Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement Policy.

4.7 Measure and monitor patterns of inspector activity and competencies and provide feedback to Workplace Health and Safety Queensland and advice to the Minister.

Resource/responsibility

- Board supported by Office of Industrial Relations
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Five year outcomes

- Empowered and effective Workplace Health and Safety Regulator
- Fully implemented recommendations from the Best Practice Review of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland
- Qualified inspectors with effective and consistent compliance and enforcement skills
- High performing team of inspectors state-wide
- Identifiable and accessible network of inspectors
- Increased adoption of advanced work health and safety systems
- Reduction in work health and safety harms
- Increase in workplace wellbeing (mental and physical).

Existing projects/resources

- Safety Leadership at Work Program
- Injury Prevention and Management program
- Industry sector standing committees
- Inspectors and advisors.

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