



A•S•U

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Safety and Health Representation

What is the Role of a Workplace Safety and Health Representative (SHR)?

To accommodate the workplace safety and health changes in Western Australia, Safety and Health Representative's (SHR's) were given powers to carry out their role under Sections 33 and 35 of the *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984*. Specifically SHR's deal with Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) roles including the role of representing their work colleagues in OSH matters and to participate in consultations between employees and employers.

In the event that a workplace does not have a SHR, then employees can refer OSH matters to a WorkSafe Inspector for action.

What is the election process to become a Workplace Safety and Health Representative?

If an employee(s) would like an SHR within their workplace then the employee(s) needs to provide notice to their employer stating that they want a SHR elected for their workplace. Under the legislation the employer then has 21 days to start the electoral process by asking employees to appoint delegates with whom the employer can consult with about the election.

If only one employee is nominated then an election is not required, however, should an election be required then the parties are required to discuss the following matters prior to the election:-

- how and when the election will be conducted;
- who will run the election;
- how many SHRs are required within the workplace;
- whether a 'scheme' will be introduced (if applicable);
- how to fill any vacancy arising during a SHR's term; and
- the areas, matters and types of work over which the SHR will have OSH powers.

The election should then be held within a reasonable time of the initial request. SHRs are each elected for a term of two year, unless they cease employment with the employer, or they cease to work in the work group that they were elected to represent, or they are disqualified from being an SHR.

More than one SHR may be required in a workplace, particularly in large organisations with numerous work areas or departments, or where various shifts operate.

Safety and Health Representative Training

The Act provides that SHR's are entitled to be formally trained in paid time. When an elected SHR wishes to attend a formal training course then they must provide 21 days written notice to their employer advising that they want to attend the next available training course.

In order to facilitate the continuing business operations, the employer may decline to approve the first available training date, however they are not entitled to decline approval for the next available training course.

Need Further Advice?

If you would like further information on SHR training, please contact your ASU Organiser or Member Service Centre on (08) 9427 7777 or 1800 064 657 (Country Callers).



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