



Meeting No.	38	Time:	9.00am
Venue	Koorling Dandjoo Conference Room, 1 Adelaide Terrace, East Perth		

Work Health and Safety Commission (WHSC) - Minutes – Meeting 4 March 2026

Attendees

Mr Owen Whittle	Chairperson
Dr Lin Fritschi	Deputy Chairperson / Expert member
Ms Michelle Gadellaa	Member – nominated by the Chamber of Minerals and Energy Western Australia (CME)
Mrs Agnes McKay	Member – nominated by Chamber of Commerce & Industry WA (CCIWA)
Mr Cory Harding	Member – nominated by CCIWA
Ms Rikki Hendon	Member – nominate by UnionsWA
Mr Glenn McLaren	Member – nominated by UnionsWA
Mr Antony Pearson	Member – nominated by UnionsWA
Ms Sally North	Ex-officio member (WorkSafe Commissioner)
Mr Tony Robertson	Public service representative with knowledge of, and experience in, mining (Director WorkSafe Mines Safety)
Ms Helen Brown	Executive Officer (Senior Policy Officer, WorkSafe)

Guests

Bec Naylor	Regular guest (WorkSafe General Manager Information and Stakeholder Engagement)
Tony Gray	WorkSafe Team Leader Stakeholder Guidance

Apologies

Dr Matthew Govorko	Expert member
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Ms Tracey Bence

Expert member

Chris White

Regular guest (CEO WorkCover WA)

1 WELCOME, APOLOGIES, AGENDA

1.1 Opening and welcome

The Chairperson declared the meeting open at 9.05am and welcomed members and guests. Sally North and Agnes McKay attended via Microsoft TEAMS.

1.2 Apologies

Apologies were accepted from Dr Matthew Govorko, Tracey Bence and Chris White.

1.3 Confirmation of agenda

The agenda was confirmed as the business of the meeting.

1.4 Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

The following potential conflicts of interest were declared:

Declarer	Conflict of interest	Action
Rikki Hendon Antony Pearson Owen Whittle	Agenda Item 3.1: Application by Unity Training Services for additional HSR trainer Stephen Goodlet	Ms Hendon, Mr Pearson and Mr Whittle will not participate in any discussion or voting in relation to endorsement of the application.
Dr Lin Fritschi	Agenda Item 4.9B: Agenda for Safe Work Australia (SWA) meeting 5 March 2026	Dr Fritschi will vacate the room if the SWA agenda items are discussed.

2 PREVIOUS MEETING/S

2.1 Confirm minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the Work Health and Safety Commission (WHSC) meeting held on 4 February 2026 were **ENDORSED** as a true and correct record subject to the tracked amendments proposed by several members being incorporated.

2.2 Review Action List from previous meeting

The WHSC **NOTED** the Action List arising from the meeting of 4 February 2026.

2.3 Codes of Practice - Update

The WHSC **NOTED** the table providing updates regarding codes of practice and other guidance that have been the subject of a decision by the WHSC.

The WHSC discussed the proposal for an additional consultation process in relation to the draft Code of Practice: *Work Health and safety management systems in the Western Australian public sector* ('Public Sector Code'). Further consultation is needed due to broadening of the scope to include Government Trading Enterprises and Schedule 1 entities (excepting local government and universities) following the previous public consultation process.

In relation to the Public Sector Code, the WHSC **AGREED** that:

- an additional four-week consultation process will be conducted, with the change to the scope highlighted; and
- those who made submissions to the previous public consultation will be contacted by WorkSafe about the amended scope and additional consultation process.

3 AGENDA ITEMS FOR NOTING

(Discussed by exception)

3.1 HSR (Health and Safety Representative) Training - Approvals

The WHSC **ENDORSED** the following approvals relating to the training of Health and Safety Representatives:

- Application to deliver refresher training – Civil Safety
- Additional trainer – ATI-Mirage – Tony Murray
- Additional trainer – DNA Kingston Training – Harry Rahanoo
- Additional trainer – Pinnacle Safety and Training – John Englishby
- Additional trainer – Stark Training – Kelvin Lilley
- Additional trainer – Training Services Australia – Jodie Booker
- Additional trainer - Unity Training Services – Stephen Goodlet
- Additional trainer - WALGA Training – Richard Barna.

ACTION 1: The WHSC **AGREED** that:

- when notifying applicants of approval of their application to deliver HSR training, it will be emphasised that training providers are expected to actually deliver training and failure to do so may result in revocation of approval; and
- all approved training providers will be notified of the expectation to deliver training and the potential consequences of failing to do so.

3.2 Construction Industry Safety Advisory Committee (CISAC) - Report

The WHSC **NOTED** the report of the CISAC meeting held on 17 February 2026. Key points were:

- publication of the *Information sheet: Managing the risks of falls from roofs in the housing construction industry*;
- the draft *Guide: Work in residential type roof spaces*; and
- discussion of the new model Code of Practice: *Elevating work platforms*, with a view to its adaption and adoption in Western Australia.

The WorkSafe Commissioner ('Commissioner') relayed CISAC's recommendation to adopt and adapt the model Code of Practice: *Elevating work platforms* for Western Australia. The Commissioner commented that CISAC did not support the threshold set in the model code of a boom length of 11 metres or more for requiring a high-risk work licence for a boom-type elevating work platform (EWP).

The WHSC **AGREED** that development of a Western Australian code of practice based on the model Code of Practice: *Elevating work platforms* be prioritised for development in 2026, but this would not take precedence over the current register of priority codes that are currently in development.

Dr Fritschi referred to the draft *Guide – Work in residential type roof spaces* presented at the CISAC meeting, and the requirement for a ‘competent person’ to de-energise the roof space before anyone enters. Dr Fritschi sought views on the suggestion by a CISAC member that the requirement for a ‘competent person’ should be changed to a licensed electrician. The Commissioner responded that the requirement for a ‘competent person’ is not restricted to electrical work but applies to entering a roof space for any reason, and it is unlikely that a licensed electrician would always be available. The Commissioner added that such a requirement could result in the negative effect of people not de-energising the roof space.

3.3 Mining and Petroleum Advisory Committee (MAPAC) - Report

Nil

3.4 Agricultural Safety Advisory Committee (ASAC) - Report

The WHSC **NOTED** the report of the ASAC meeting held on 13 February 2026. Key points were:

- an update into research into agricultural safety by Dr Marcus Cattani of Edith Cowan University; and
- WorkSafe’s *Agricultural education and engagement report 2023-2025* which reports on WorkSafe’s approach, activities, observations and key learnings from engagement with the agricultural sector.

The Commissioner commented that WorkSafe:

- is making progress in producing a final report on the response to the recommendations of the Agricultural Inquiry; and
- now has a substantive team manager for the team of agricultural inspectors.

Dr Fritschi commented on the insightful and thoughtful ASAC report and asked that thanks be passed on to the author. This was seconded by Rikki Hendon, who also asked whether the report on actions in response to recommendations of the Agricultural Inquiry will cover the efficacy of agricultural education and awareness programs. The Commissioner responded that the report is high level and will not cover such matters, but noted that the engagement and education activities have been strong and their effectiveness could be further contemplated when reviewing WorkSafe’s *Way Forward Strategy*.

3.5 Affected Families and Workers Advisory Committee (AFWAC) - Report

Nil

3.6 Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC) - Report

Nil

3.7 WorkSafe events and promotions update

The WHSC was provided with an update on the WorkSafe Safety Education team’s activities including stakeholder guidance, stakeholder relations and digital engagement. Key points were:

- publication of WorkSafe’s [Health and Safety Snapshot](#) reporting on the Abattoir – Meat Processing project where 19 abattoirs were inspected and 562 improvement and 6 prohibition notices issued; and

- o pleasing data on digital engagement with WorkSafe’s [SafetyLine Hub](#), such as 1,376 subscribers to the HSR Matters website, and 6,786 website visitors and 780 views on the RTO five-day training course page since 1 January 2026.

Bec Naylor reported on plans for a Mining Summit, a Dust Summit, and HSR ‘lunch and learn’ sessions run by the Inspectorate for half an hour each month, and a module for the small extractive industry sector.

Cory Harding, Dr Matthew Govorko and Antony Pearson volunteered to be on the judging panel for 2026 WHS Safety Excellence Awards. Michelle Gadellaa also expressed interest, which will be communicated to WorkSafe and MAPAC.

Tony Robertson reported that 27,723 people have passed the legislation exam for mines statutory positions, with the transition period for holders of statutory positions under the former OSH legislation to meet the new criteria expiring at the end of March 2026.

3.8 Regulatory Activity Report

The WHSC **NOTED** WorkSafe’s Regulatory Activity Report for Quarter 2 of the 2025-26 period.

3.9 Exemptions

The WHSC **NOTED** the exemptions from requirements of the Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022 and Work Health and Safety (Mines) Regulations 2022 granted by the WorkSafe Commissioner during the period 12 January 2026 to 10 February 2026 inclusive.

In response to a question from Rikki Hendon regarding the ‘check in mechanism’ for exemptions with conditions attached, Tony Robertson responded that inspectors can cancel the exemption at any time and every mine site gets visited. Smaller mines may be visited once every two years while larger mines may be visited once very two weeks.

3.10 Correspondence

The WHSC **NOTED** the following correspondence:

o 3.10A	Minister McGurk to WHSC	Response re amenities for females on work sites
o 3.10B	Seafarers Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Authority (Seacare Authority) to WHSC	Query re online HSR training
o 3.10C	WHSC to Seacare Authority	Response to query re online HSR training
o 3.10D	WHSC to Civil Contractors Federation	Response to request for representation on CISAC
o 3.10E	Minister McGurk to WHSC	Response re workplace exposure standard for diesel particulate matter
o 3.10F	WHSC to Minister McGurk	Delay in reconstitution of MAPAC

The Chairperson reported that Minister McGurk has shown positivity regarding the WHSC's recommendations concerning amenities for females on work sites.

4 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

4.1 WorkCover WA report (standing item)

The WHSC **NOTED** the Quarterly Dust Diseases Report provided by WorkCover WA.

The Chairperson reported that in future a WorkCover WA representative will only attend WHSC meetings when invited on a needs basis and will otherwise attend annually to present on data and trends.

Tony Robertson commented on the importance of workers compensation data relating to silicosis cases and the opportunity to question WorkCover. The Chairperson responded that the Quarterly Dust Diseases Report will continue to be provided.

The Commissioner suggested an acknowledgement in the meeting minutes of Chris White's many years of attendance as a guest of the WHSC and recognition of his input. This was warmly supported by WHSC members.

ACTION 3: Questions from Tracey Bence relating to the Quarterly Dust Diseases Report will be sent to WorkCover WA.

4.2 Fatality Update Report (standing item)

The WHSC **NOTED** the Fatality Update Report for the month ending January 2026.

4.3 Rationalisation of 'psychosocial codes' – Next steps

The WHSC **DISCUSSED** the rationalisation of the 'psychosocial' Codes of Practice which are:

- *Psychosocial hazards in the workplace*
- *Workplace behaviours*
- *Violence and aggression at work.*

At the previous WHSC meeting members were asked to provide out-of-session comment on the *Model Code of Practice: Managing psychosocial hazards at work* ('Model Code') and the *Queensland Code of Practice: Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work* ('QLD Code'), with a view to potentially developing one overarching 'psychosocial code' based on one of these codes.

Members generally favoured the QLD Code with the exception of CME and CCIWA representatives who liked the content of the QLD Code but preferred the format of the Model Code. They also noted that the QLD code excluded mining.

Rikki Hendon reiterated that UnionsWA's position is that content must not be removed or downgraded during any merging of the psychosocial codes.

Antony Pearson expressed concern about the option of converting the Code of Practice: *Violence and aggression at work* to a guide, given that violence and aggression is one of the main hazards confronting public sector workers. If this is to be done, the issue will need to be comprehensively addressed in the overarching 'psychosocial' code.

The Chairperson summarised the discussion as follows:

- the WHSC likes the content of the QLD Code but not necessarily its structure;

- the issue of structure can be resolved by adopting the WHSC’s agreed new structure for codes of practice;
- the WHSC does not want content diminished in the merging of the ‘psychosocial’ codes; and
- violence is a significant and common hazard and should be covered more comprehensively than in the Model Code or QLD Code.

It was **AGREED** that a working group would be useful when developing a new code. It would consist of three stakeholders nominated by WHSC members, including at least one WHSC member plus WorkSafe subject matter experts.

4.4 Extension of time to comply with Improvement Notice

The WHSC **DISCUSSED** WorkSafe’s four proposed options to amend the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020* (WHS Act) in relation to granting an extension of time for compliance with Improvement Notices. The options relate to:

- s 194 which provides that the regulator can extend a compliance period only if the period has not ended; and
- s 207 which provides that the regulator may vary or cancel a notice in accordance with s 194.

This varies from the model WHS Act and all other harmonised jurisdictions whereby an inspector can grant an extension.

The options aim to solve the problem whereby the regulator (WorkSafe Commissioner or delegate) cannot always decide on applications for an extension of time immediately which can result in the compliance period ending before a decision is made. When this occurs, the regulator is prevented from granting an extension even when there is a valid reason to do so. The Commissioner sought the views of the WHSC on the options, commenting on the unintended consequences of the regulation and explaining the options.

UnionsWA representatives sought information regarding the number of extension requests received, the time taken to process requests and the number of times an extension is granted, expressing concern that some PCBUs (persons conducting a business of undertaking) may consistently seek extensions. The Commissioner responded that it is not often that extensions are sought repeatedly and such requests are likely to be refused, and there is often a practical reason for an extension being sought (e.g. a part for equipment has not arrived).

The Commissioner emphasised that for each option, the PCBU must apply for an extension *within* the compliance period.

The WHSC generally favoured Option 2 but it was **AGREED** that members would have a week in which to make submissions to the Commissioner on the matter. Option 2 incorporates Option 1 which is that the inspector decides whether to extend the compliance period if the request is made *before* compliance ends. Option 2 involves amendment to both ss 194 and 207, with key elements below:

- Includes Option 1, combined with amending s. 207 to remove “in accordance with section 194”.
- Differs from Model WHS Act.
- Regulator (WorkSafe Commissioner) can extend the compliance period, even after compliance date has expired.

- Tiered approach: Inspectors constrained by time limits; Regulator not constrained.

4.5 Feedback on FIFO Code

The Code of Practice: *Psychosocial hazards at work for fly-in fly-out (FIFO) workers in the resources and construction sectors* (FIFO Code) was presented to the WHSC for endorsement for gazettal. This followed the previous WHSC meeting when late requests for amendments were received, followed by a final opportunity to submit requests for amendment out-of-session.

In relation to feedback received at such a late stage, the Chairperson reported that he had discussed the matter with WorkSafe and it was agreed that only minor requests for amendment would be incorporated, with the exception of case study 2. This is because there were several previous opportunities to provide feedback and the need to finalise the FIFO Code for gazettal.

It was **AGREED** that the WHSC will **ENDORSE** the FIFO Code for gazettal with the exception of the case studies.

ACTION 2: It was **AGREED** that the case studies for the FIFO Code, which contain tracked changes made by WorkSafe, will be circulated to WHSC members who will be given one week to provide feedback/endorsement, with the Chairperson to make the final decision on incorporation of suggested amendments.

4.6 Review of WorkSafe Way Forward Strategy

The WorkSafe Commissioner sought the views of the WHSC on the strategy [WorkSafe: The way forward 2023-24 to 2025-26](#) which highlights WorkSafe priorities, noting that a report on how the aims of the strategy have been met has not been released yet. Future strategies will need to align with strategies of the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety.

It was **AGREED** that any feedback should be sent through the Executive Officer of the WHSC.

4.7 Tightening criteria to become a HSR training provider

At the February 2026 WHSC meeting, it was agreed that the criteria to become an approved HSR training provider be amended. This included that:

- new applicants will only be approved for a one-year term, with continuation of approval dependent on a review of the first year; and
- applicants will be asked to justify why their application to deliver HSR training should be approved.

Accordingly, the WHSC was asked to approve amendments to the *Guide: Operating as an approved provider of health and safety representative (HSR) training in WA* ('the Guide') to make clear that there must be a genuine commitment to HSR training. Also presented for approval was a new form to be submitted towards the end of a training provider's first one-year term seeking continuation of authority to deliver training.

The WHSC **AGREED**:

- with Dr Fritschi's suggestion that the amendments to the Guide emphasise the importance of quality HSR training in Western Australia;

- that there will not be a specific renewal form to be submitted after one year - the existing renewal form will suffice; and
- that the existing renewal form will be modified to seek further information from training providers which will help the WHSC make an informed decision on renewal and eliminate training providers who do not have a genuine commitment to delivering HSR training.

ACTION 3: Ask WorkSafe to action amendments to the *Guide: Operating as an approved provider of health and safety representative (HSR) training in WA* to reflect the agreed tightening of criteria to become an HSR training provider.

4.8 UnionsWA nominee for membership of ASAC

The WHSC **ENDORSED** the nomination of Mr Jeff Pratt by UnionsWA for membership of the Agricultural Safety Advisory Committee, to replace Antony Pearson who resigned upon appointment to the WHSC.

4.9 SWA update (standing item)

The WHSC **NOTED** the:

- Safe Work Australia (SWA) Agency Work Plan (which the WHSC had previously requested access to); and
- SWA agenda for the 5 March 2026 meeting.

In relation to the agenda items for the forthcoming SWA meeting regarding regulation of crowd platforms and software designer duties, the Commissioner commented that it was important that proposed new duties do not “double up” on existing duties under the WHS laws.

5 OTHER BUSINESS

5.1 Members to advise

Members did not advise of any other items of business.

6 CLOSE

The next meeting is scheduled for 1 April 2026.

There being no further business, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 11.15am.