



Purpose

This Position Statement clarifies the role, scope and boundaries of Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) at the Australian National University (ANU).

It ensures alignment with the **Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)** and supports consistent application of the HSR role across the University.

Scope

This document applies to:

- Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs)
- Deputy HSRs
- Managers and supervisors
- Safety & Wellbeing team members
- Workers across ANU

Role of HSRs

HSRs are elected worker representatives for work health and safety matters.

The role of an HSR is to:

- represent workers within their work group on WHS matters
- raise health and safety concerns
- participate in consultation processes
- support the identification and escalation of hazards and risks

HSRs contribute to consultation — they do not assume responsibility for managing WHS risks.

Responsibility for managing WHS risks remains with ANU as the PCBU.

Work Group Representation

HSRs:

- represent **only the work group for which they are elected**
- exercise powers and functions in relation to that work group

HSRs must not:

- act as the elected or nominated representative for another work group
- provide ongoing or general representation outside their work group

Assistance to another work group may occur only:

- where permitted under the WHS Act
- on a **case-by-case basis for a specific matter**

- where a worker requests assistance

HSRs are elected for a term of up to three years in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth) and are eligible for re-election.

At the conclusion of a HSR's term, or where a vacancy arises, a nomination and election process must be undertaken for the relevant work group in accordance with ANU WHSMS requirements.

Absence and Deputy Arrangements

Where an HSR is unavailable:

- only an elected **Deputy HSR** may act in the role

Where no Deputy HSR exists:

- the HSR role is temporarily vacant

There is no provision for informal or temporary substitution of the HSR role.

Boundaries of the Role

HSRs:

- are not duty holders under the WHS Act
- are not responsible for resolving WHS issues
- do not manage risks or determine outcomes
- are not investigators of incidents or complaints

HSRs must not:

- act as counsellors, mediators or case managers
- provide clinical, legal or specialist advice
- take ownership of complex or sensitive matters

Raising and Escalating WHS Issues

HSRs:

- raise WHS issues through established ANU consultation pathways
- support workers to report hazards and concerns
- escalate matters where required

All WHS matters must be:

- managed through appropriate organisational processes
- recorded in Figtree where required

Psychosocial Hazards and Disclosures

Where workers raise psychosocial concerns, including distress or sensitive matters:

HSRs must:

- listen and acknowledge
- refer the matter to appropriate support pathways
- escalate through ANU processes

HSRs must not:

- take on ongoing support responsibilities
- manage individual wellbeing matters

Psychosocial risks are managed by ANU as the PCBU through formal systems and support services.

Support for HSRs

ANU recognises that HSRs may be exposed to complex or distressing information.

HSRs can access:

- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- WHS team support
- manager or supervisor support
- peer support through HSR networks

Relationship to WHSMS

This Position Statement supports:

- WHSMS Handbook Chapter 3.20 (HSRs and Committees)
- Chapter 3.15 (Psychosocial Risk Management)
- WHS consultation and issue resolution procedures:
 - ANU Procedure: Work health and safety committees and representative ([ANUP_015808](#))
 - ANU Procedure: WHS Communication and consultation ([ANUP_015809](#))
 - ANU Procedure: Work health and safety responsibilities (ANUP_015820)

Training for HSRs

HSR training is optional but strongly encouraged to help you perform the role effectively. Until you complete the approved training, you cannot issue PINs or direct unsafe work to cease.

Approved Commonwealth HSR training can be found at [Comcare HSRs](#) and for additional training, see the [Comcare Learning Management System](#) for E-Learn courses, for example:

- An Introduction to HSR
- WHS for Workers
- Effective health and safety committees

Evidence of completion of HSR training is to be provided to Safety & Wellbeing to enable central recording and assurance of competency. This supports compliance with legislative requirements and ensures the University maintains an accurate and up-to-date register of trained HSRs.

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