

# Powers and Functions of a Health and Safety Representative



## About Health and Safety Representatives

Health and safety representatives (HSRs) are workers who are elected to represent the health and safety interests of workers. 'Work groups' are groups of workers formed to elect the HSR who will represent them.

HSRs have greater powers under the new Work Health and Safety Act, won by Union Members. The employer (or the Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking – PCBU) has obligations to consult with and assist HSRs to ensure health workers are safe at work, as well as provide paid time and resources to perform the role and attend training.

## Health and Safety Representative Powers and Functions

Elected Health and Safety Representatives are provided with paid training to undertake their role. Terms are three years. Some powers only apply to HSRs who have completed their training.

A HSR has powers to represent their work group in safety matters and can:

- inspect the workplace with notice, or without notice in some circumstances;
- accompany an Inspector during an inspection attend a meeting between a worker and the PCBU or an Inspector;
- request the PCBU form a Health and Safety Committee;
- request the assistance of another person, and;
- receive safety information that affects the work group.

Once trained, a HSR has the power to:

- issue a provisional improvement notice (known as a PIN); and direct workers to stop unsafe work.

A HSR can only use these powers for the work group they represent, unless the HSR for another work group at the workplace is unavailable and:

- there is a serious risk to the safety and health emanating from an immediate or imminent exposure to a hazard, or
- a member of another work group asks for assistance.

A HSR is not personally liable for anything done or omitted in good faith while performing their role.

**For more information or to nominate as an HSR, contact your HSUWA Organiser or email [union@hsuwa.com.au](mailto:union@hsuwa.com.au)**

