



# Courtenell

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## The Role of a Health and Safety Committee Member

PCBUs are primarily responsible for ensuring that a workplace is safe and healthy but Health and Safety Committee members can play a key role in helping the PCBU to make it a safe and healthy workplace a reality.

### What is a Health and Safety Committee?

A Health and Safety Committee is made up of workers and management who work together as a forum for consultation on health and safety matters in their workplace with the aim of helping to make it a safe and healthy workplace.

### Who Can be a Health & Safety Committee member?

At least half of the members must be workers and the rest are management members. Ideally the Committee should include senior managers who have the authority to make decisions about improvement and have a good knowledge of the workplace. (see Ref 1)

### What are the functions of a Health and Safety Committee?

A Health and Safety Committee does those actions that they agree upon and are approved by management that will:

- facilitate co-operation between the person conducting a business or undertaking and workers in instigating, developing and carrying out measures designed to ensure health and safety at work, and
- assist in developing standards, rules and procedures relating to health and safety that are to be followed or complied with at the workplace, and
- satisfy any other functions prescribed by the regulations or agreed between the person conducting the business or undertaking and the Health and Safety Committee. (see Ref 2)

### What are the benefits of having a Health and Safety Committee?

*“The benefits of a Health and Safety Committee include:*

- *having regular, planned and structured discussions about health and safety matters*
- *encouraging a co-operative approach to health and safety*
- *bringing together a group of worker and management representatives to collaboratively discuss and develop ways of improving the systems for managing health and safety at the workplace*
- *encouraging the development and retention of corporate knowledge on health and safety matters for the workplace.”* (see Ref 3)

A Health & Safety Committee that is committed and functioning effectively as a team can be a source of significant contributions that help a PCBU achieve a safe and healthy workplace.

## Reference

Ref 1 - Section 77, NSW WHS Act

Ref 2 - Section 77, NSW WHS Act

Ref 3 – SafeWork NSW Code of Practice, WHS Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination, pages 20/21

## Note

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