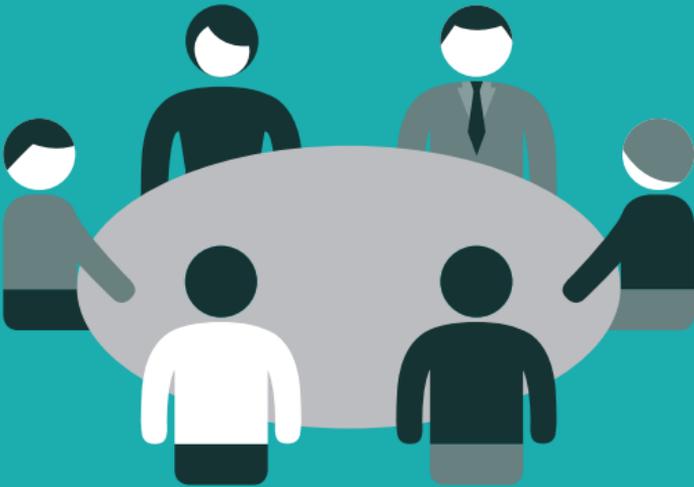




# Health and Safety Committees

---

**UNDER THE HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK ACT 2015**



**HEALTH AND SAFETY  
COMMITTEES ENABLE  
BUSINESSES AND WORKER  
REPRESENTATIVES TO MEET  
REGULARLY AND WORK  
COOPERATIVELY TO IMPROVE  
HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK.**

**WORKERS GENERALLY JOIN  
A HEALTH AND SAFETY  
COMMITTEE BECAUSE THEY  
WANT TO IMPROVE WORK  
HEALTH AND SAFETY.**



## WHAT IS A HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE (HSC)?

HSCs bring together workers and management to develop and review health and safety policies and practices for the workplace.

The main functions of an HSC are to:

- > make it easy for the business and workers to cooperate on ways to ensure workers' health and safety
- > assist in developing standards, rules, and policies or procedures for work health and safety
- > make recommendations relating to work health and safety
- > carry out other tasks agreed between the business and the HSC.

Five or more workers or a Health and Safety Representative (HSR) can request that the business establishes an HSC.

Any business can choose to establish an HSC even if an HSR or workers have not asked for one.

## SUPPORT

HSCs, workers and businesses can ring the WorkSafe Contact Centre on 0800 030 040 for information and advice. You can also use this number – in confidence or anonymously – if you are concerned about an unsafe or unhealthy work situation that could lead to death or serious harm.

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN AN HSC IS REQUESTED?



### The business considers the request

- > Only businesses **with 20 or more workers or in a high-risk sector or industry specified in regulations** must decide whether to establish an HSC within two months of the request.
- > This business can decline the request if they are satisfied their existing worker participation practices meet the requirements in the Health and Safety at Work Act.

**Note:** Any business can voluntarily establish an HSC whether or not one has been requested. Businesses should check with their workers about the most effective way for them to participate in improving health and safety.

### If an HSC is established

While there is no specified size, there are requirements for membership (see next page).

Membership must be agreed by the business and workers.

If necessary, WorkSafe can be asked to make decisions about membership.

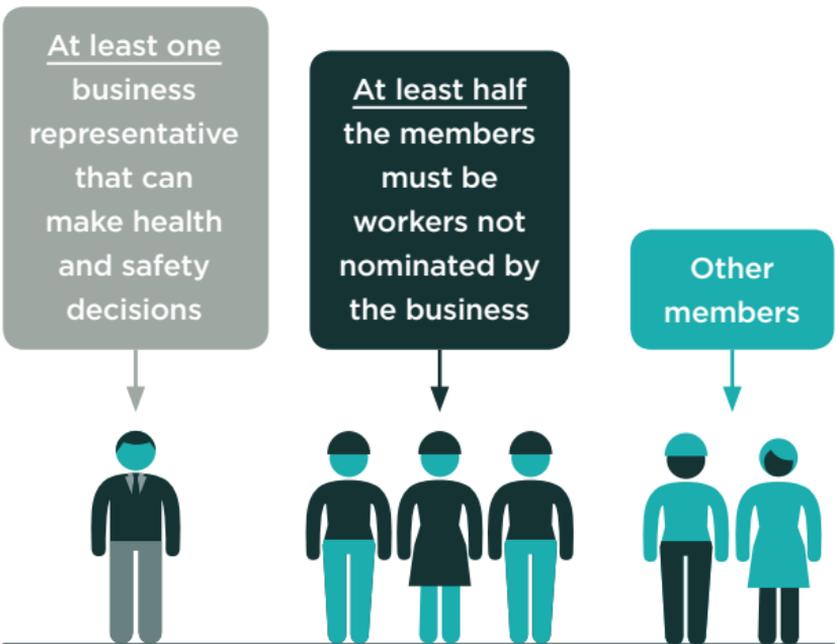
For more information, see WorkSafe's Interpretive Guidelines *Worker representation through Health and Safety Representatives and Health and Safety Committees*.

## WHO ARE THE MEMBERS OF AN HSC?

HSCs bring together workers, worker representatives and at least one business representative who can make health and safety decisions.

HSC membership must be agreed by the business and workers. While there is no specified size for an HSC, there are requirements for membership (see below).

### HSCs need:



**Note:** HSRs are eligible to be members of the HSC.

HSCs must meet at least once every three months. The HSC can also meet at any other time at the request of the majority of the HSC.

WorkSafe can be asked to make decisions about membership or to help resolve other issues **but only** after parties have made reasonable efforts to do so, without success. To request WorkSafe's help, call the Contact Centre on 0800 030 040 or fill in the relevant online form at [www.worksafe.govt.nz](http://www.worksafe.govt.nz)

## WHAT MUST THE BUSINESS DO FOR HSCs?

Generally, the business has to:

- > consult with the HSC about health and safety matters
- > give the HSC the information needed to perform its functions
- > allow members the time needed to attend meetings and carry out HSC functions
- > allow members to carry out their HSC role as part of their paid work
- > respond to HSC recommendations by either adopting them or responding in writing to explain why not.

The business must not allow HSCs to have access to a worker's personal information without that worker's consent unless all identifying information has been removed.

## WHAT HAPPENS WITH INFORMATION HSC MEMBERS RECEIVE?

Any information HSC members receive can only be shared or used to carry out their HSC functions.

If the information is about a person, that person's consent is needed before the information can be used or shared.

HSC members can only disclose information to WorkSafe if:

- > they believe that this is needed for health and safety reasons, and
- > its disclosure is authorised or required by law.

## WHERE CAN YOU FIND MORE INFORMATION?

For more information about worker engagement, participation and representation see the following WorkSafe resources:

- > *Good Practice Guidelines Worker Engagement, Participation and Representation*
- > *Interpretive Guidelines Worker representation through Health and Safety Representatives and Health and Safety Committees*
- > *Worker Representation* pamphlet
- > *Health and Safety Representatives* pamphlet.

---

These resources and other information can be found on the WorkSafe website [www.worksafe.govt.nz](http://www.worksafe.govt.nz)