

## COMMUNIQUÉ

### SAFE WORK AUSTRALIA PROGRESSES MODEL WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY LEGISLATION

29 APRIL 2010

The Safe Work Australia Members met today in Canberra following the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Safe Work Australia Awards ceremony held at Parliament House on 28 April.

Members thanked Safe Work Australia staff for organising the highly successful Awards which focused on individual and organisational achievement in work health and safety.

#### ***Model Work Health and Safety Legislation***

Members agreed by majority to endorse the current version of the amended *Model Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act* and to recommend it to the Workplace Relations Ministers' Council (WRMC) to note.

Members were provided with the revised model WHS Act which contained small technical and drafting amendments.

WRMC has agreed that Safe Work Australia and Parliamentary Counsel's Committee may continue to make further amendments until the implementation of the legislation on 1 January 2012.

These amendments will address any issues that may arise as jurisdictions go through the process of enacting the legislation. Members noted there is no capacity for Safe Work Australia to endorse any amendments that involve policy changes without further endorsement by WRMC.

#### ***National Code of Practice for the Prevention of Falls in Housing Construction***

Members agreed by majority to declare the *National Code of Practice for the Prevention of Falls in Housing Construction* (Housing Falls Code).

The Housing Falls Code will be available on the Safe Work Australia website and will be accompanied by an explanatory statement on its adoption in each jurisdiction.

The Housing Falls Code provides practical guidance on how to comply with the *National Standard for Construction Work* as it relates to the prevention of fatalities and injuries to persons working at height in the residential housing sector.

The Housing Falls Code was developed by the Australian Safety and Compensation Council before work commenced on the model work health and safety legislation. It will provide guidance to those working in the residential sector of the construction industry until the work health and safety legislative framework is implemented.

Members noted that the Housing Falls Code will be used as the basis for the model Code of Practice as part of the model work health and safety legislation.



### ***Safe Work Australia Strategic and Operational Plans***

The *Safe Work Australia Act 2008* requires Safe Work Australia to prepare a strategic plan at least every three years and an operational plan before each financial year. These plans are to be submitted to WRMC for endorsement.

Draft strategic and operational plans were provided to Members for consideration at the meeting. The contents of these plans were informed by the strategic planning workshop held on 18 February where key themes, priorities and challenges for Safe Work Australia were discussed.

Following further consultation, Members will consider the plans out of session. The final plans require the endorsement of WRMC.

### ***Strategic Issues and Advisory Group Reports***

Members noted the progress of the Strategic Issues Group on Occupational Health and Safety, Strategic Issues Group on Workers' Compensation, Communications Advisory Group and Research, Evaluation and Data Advisory Group.

The Safe Work Australia Chair, Mr Tom Phillips AM, thanked these groups for their continued hard work on the model work health and safety legislation and workers' compensation matters.

### ***Next Meeting***

The next meeting of Safe Work Australia will be held on 30 September 2010.