

Th!nk Safe

Health and safety in the workplace

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Inside this issue

Page 3

Agricultural safety

Page 4

Insights from the
Landmark Study
Report

Page 13

Meet James Walker:
HSR of the year

Page 15

New regulations for
all crystalline silica
processes

Page 19

Fraudulent
qualifications in the
WA mining industry



Th!nkSafe

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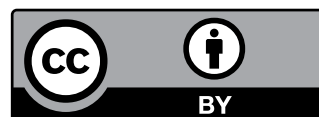
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Cover: Health and safety representative of the year – James Walker (WA Country Health Service) with Hon Simone McGurk MLA (Minister for Industrial Relations)

Page 4: Landmark launch group, photo courtesy of Andrew Richards Photography

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Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Sally North** on her appointment to the position of **WorkSafe Commissioner**



Commissioner's corner

- 2 Engineered stone ban in effect
- 2 Vaping in the workplace
- 2 End of transitional arrangements for plant registration
- 3 Agricultural safety

Health and safety topics

- 4 Landmark Study Report: Insights from the worker survey and interviews
- 5 Protective clothing for welders: Ensuring safety in high-risk environments
- 6 Quad bike safety: A personal story
- 7 Controlling noise-induced hearing loss

Events

- 8 WorkSafe events
- 9 Two industry forums for Safe Work Month 2024
- 10 Work Health and Safety Excellence Awards 2024
- 13 Meet James Walker: 2024 Health and safety representative of the year

WHS essentials

- 15 Engineered stone ban and new regulations for all crystalline silica processes
- 16 Publication update
- 17 Mines statutory position exams are in full swing
- 18 Traffic management on mine sites
- 19 Fraudulent qualifications in the WA mining industry
- 20 Cyanide safety and exposure management

21 Department news

- 21 Spotlight on WorkSafe inspectors

22 Dangerous Goods Safety

- 22 Importance of reporting incidents involving dangerous goods
- 23 Annual analysis of findings and incidents at Major Hazard Facilities (MHFs)
- 23 Australian Dangerous Goods Code

24 Enforcements and prosecutions

- 24 Safety prosecution updates



“Workers are a business' most important asset. This edition of ThinkSafe Magazine aims to assist in making your workplace safer and provides an update on what our WorkSafe team has been working on.”

Engineered stone ban in effect

Silicosis is an incurable and debilitating lung disease that can be fatal.

Australian work health and safety Ministers unanimously agreed to ban engineered stone because engineered stone workers were contracting silicosis in increasing numbers. In Western Australia, the ban came into effect on 1 July 2024.

Banning engineered stone should substantially reduce the exposure of stonemasons to the fine crystalline silica dust that can cause silicosis. However, some materials that may still be used for benchtops; for example porcelain, sintered stone or concrete can contain crystalline silica, and any cutting or grinding must be controlled. For more information, see [engineered stone ban](#).

In September 2024, work health and safety regulations were introduced improving risk controls for silica-containing products (e.g. bricks, tiles or concrete) where dust is generated during work. Safe Work Australia [guidance](#) explains what you must do to keep workers safe.

Respiratory hazards are a priority in our strategy [WorkSafe: The way forward](#) and we are working to drive improvements in the management of asbestos, silica and other dusts in all sectors.

Vaping in the workplace

An estimated seven per cent of Australians have vaped in the past year. Increasing evidence shows [vaping](#) (e-cigarette use) produces carcinogens that can cause lung disease.

Public submissions on proposed work health and safety regulation amendments regarding vaping in the workplace closed on 31 July 2024. To protect workers from adverse health effects, the proposed regulations would treat vaping in the workplace in the same way as smoking tobacco.

WorkSafe recommends that workplace smoking policies be updated in consultation with workers and extended to cover vaping. It's not necessary to wait for changes to the regulations to implement proactive safety policies.

End of transitional arrangements for plant registration

Mine operators should be aware that transitional arrangements for plant registration are quickly drawing to a close.

By 31 March 2025, registerable boilers and pressure vessels categorised as hazard level C (AS 4343:2014) will need to be registered with WorkSafe or a corresponding regulator.

To avoid delays in the registration process, WorkSafe recommends that applications for plant registration are submitted well in advance of the deadline.



Agricultural safety

Quad bike riding and welding are high risk farm activities, and this edition of Th!nkSafe has some insights and tips on these topics.

The independent [Inquiry into the agricultural industry and the WorkSafe Commissioner's response](#) were published in April 2023 after considerable consultation and research. WorkSafe has progressed implementation of most recommendations including:

- improving statistical information. The [Agricultural Industry Fatality report](#) provides statistical insights into the risks and incident types that have caused fatal injuries
- developing the *WorkSafe Agricultural Compliance Program 2023–2025* that began with an information and awareness campaign in the Narrogin region this winter. It will be rolled out to other regions in 2025
- increasing the number of inspectors focusing on agricultural safety
- publishing updated guidance for safety in farming

- visiting agricultural field days to answer queries and offer advice on workplace health and safety.

To those I met at the Narrogin Agricultural College event last August, thank you for your insights into and interest in work health and safety.

I am also excited to announce that WorkSafe's new website will be launching soon. This will make it easier for you to find the information you need on our services.

Finally, thank you to everyone who participated in Safe Work Month events in October, and a big congratulations to the winners of the Work Health and Safety Excellence Awards.

Sally North
WorkSafe Commissioner

Landmark Study Report: Insights from the worker survey and interviews

The Landmark Study is a research and evaluation project on mental health, sexual harassment, emerging mine safety issues as well as workplace initiatives to improve mental health, wellbeing, culture and respect in the Western Australia (WA) mining industry. This project is funded by the State Government's Mental Awareness, Respect and Safety (MARS) Program, undertaken by Centre for Transformative Work Design (CTWD) at Curtin University.

Following the preliminary reports from 2022 and 2023, the *Landmark Study Report: Insights from the worker survey and interviews* was released this year. This reported on the perceptions and lived experiences of 2,550 mine workers, and 60 further workers were interviewed one-on-one.

Key findings from the Landmark Study Report include:

- safety remains a strength of the industry – most WA mine workers reported high levels of safety behaviours such as safety compliance and safety participation
- under-reporting of notifiable safety incidents and near misses, while low, continues to exist in the industry
- experiencing positive aspects of mental health at work was reported by 4 in 10 workers
- nearly 4 in 10 workers reported feeling burnt out at work
- levels of bullying are high – while preliminary indicators suggest that rates of bullying have decreased since 2018, 16% of workers reported experiencing bullying at least 2–3 times per month in the last six months
- covert forms of sexual harassment (e.g. sexism, misogyny, sexual remarks) are far more prevalent in the mining industry compared to overt forms of sexual harassment.

Preliminary Report 3 and Final Report 4 are due for release in 2026.



Full reports can be downloaded via: [MARS Program - Understanding the situation](#)



Vanessa Chang (Curtin University), Ivor Roberts (WorkSafe), Leigh Slomp (AusIMM; Arcadium Lithium), Davina Pellicano (IGO Ltd), Sharon Parker (Curtin University - CTWD), Hon Sue Ellery MLC (Minister for Women's Interests; Finance; Commerce), Owen Whittle (Unions WA), Cheryl Yam (Curtin University – CTWD) and Peter Klingner (Purple)

Landmark Launch Breakfast

On 27 June, CTWD hosted the Landmark Launch Breakfast where Professor Sharon Parker unpacked the report findings with over 300 members from the WA mining industry.

The audience also heard from the Minister for Women's Interests, Hon Sue Ellery MLC and gained firsthand insights into improving the mental health and wellbeing of workers from panellists Davina Pellicano (IGO Ltd), Owen Whittle (UnionsWA) and Leigh Slomp (AusIMM; Arcadium Lithium).



Protective clothing for welders: Ensuring safety in high-risk environments

Welding, grinding and working with hot materials pose significant risks to welders. WorkSafe has investigated numerous incidents where welders' clothing caught fire during welding, grinding or contact with hot welded plates which resulted in serious burns requiring medical attention.

Wearing appropriate protective clothing when undertaking welding works is essential in safeguarding welders.

Untreated cotton drill clothing, including high-visibility garments, often claim compliance with standards. However, they are not inherently flame-resistant.

While synthetic materials like nylon and polyester can be difficult to ignite, once ignited, can melt and drip. The melted material can cause serious burns when it drips onto exposed skin.

Undergarments made from loose-weave fabrics are highly flammable and should never be exposed during thermal cutting, grinding, or welding. Ignited undergarments can set the outer garment ablaze, exacerbating the risk.

Flame-resistant cotton drill clothing is highly recommended as protective clothing for welders. While it may cost a bit more, the safety it provides outweighs the investment. Look for clothing labels ISO 11611, ISO 11612, ISO 14116, ASTM F1959 and AS/NZS 4502.2 as they conform with flame-resistant standards.

Guidelines for protective clothing

- **Full coverage:** ensure clothing protects all parts of the body from hot particles or objects.
- **Preferred fabrics:** opt for leather, wool, or flame-resistant cotton drill.
- **Avoid cuffs and open pockets:** garments should be free of cuffs or open pockets that could trap molten metal and cause local burns or fires.
- **Proper fit:** snug wrists but loose-fitting overall, especially in hot conditions.
- **Footwear coverage:** clothing should cover the tops of footwear.
- **Maintenance:** regularly launder clothing as per manufacturer's guidance and check for holes.

Note: This article does not address the requirements for respiratory protective equipment when welding, which must be selected based on risk and in consultation with worker



By following the guidelines and investing in flame-resistant clothing, welders can significantly reduce the risk of burns and injuries. See the [Welding processes: Code of practice](#) for more information.

Quad bike safety



A personal story

Winter 2016, seven years prior to becoming a WorkSafe inspector, I was riding a quad bike on a farm. I was going up a slope in the cow paddock when I hit a hole dug by the bull. The quad bike rolled and I went underneath it. Fortunately for me, the quad bike continued its roll and landed on its wheels again, leaving me a bit sore and very embarrassed. I was a reasonably experienced rider at that stage, and felt comfortable in that situation, but the environment changed, and I was caught lacking.

Since becoming a WorkSafe inspector, I have seen a number of quad bike incidents. Often, like me, the rider is experienced and in a location that they are familiar with. Often, the quad bike has not been fitted with any crush protection device and prior

to operating the quad bike there has been no risk assessment to ask the question, 'Should I be using a quad bike or a different vehicle?'

There are legal requirements in the workplace for PCBUs, requiring them to provide a high standard of health and safety and to mitigate risks as far as practicable. WorkSafe has produced a guide: [Quad bikes in workplaces](#).

I would ask anyone using a quad bike in the workplace to familiarise themselves with this document, the legal requirements for themselves, to do that risk assessment for vehicle selection, and if you still see the need to use a quad bike, put appropriate controls in place to mitigate the risks.



Managing risks

Quad bikes are popular vehicles used within a range of Western Australian industries to undertake tasks quickly and efficiently, but they also present risks, which must be reduced as far as practicable.

Each year across Australia, workplace incidents involving quad bikes result in many injuries and fatalities, leading to a vast emotional and financial cost.

Suitability

Critically assess whether a quad bike is the right vehicle for the job. Check to see whether the operator is physically able to maintain an active riding style over a potentially long time period. Side-by-side vehicles may be more suitable in rural workplaces as the operator remains seated, they have seatbelts and they have rollover protection structures.

Loads

Avoid towing attachments or carrying loads. These could affect the stability and performance of the quad bike. Carrying a moving load such as liquid on a quad bike should be avoided as it will shift, altering the centre of gravity when turning corners and on slopes.

Operator protection devices

The Consumer Goods (Quad Bikes) Safety Standard 2019 requires operator protection devices (OPDs) to be fitted to:

- new general use quad bikes
- imported, second hand, general use quad bikes.

OPDs reduce the risk of serious crush injuries and deaths if a quad bike rolls over. OPDs should be fitted to all quad bikes used in the workplace

If you buy a quad bike fitted with an OPD, you should not remove it.

If you remove it, you must replace it with something that would provide equivalent or greater protection, such as another type of OPD.

Terrain

Flat terrain is best for quad bikes. You increase the risk of a quad bike incident by riding them on rocky, steep, uneven, sandy or muddy terrain.

Helmets

Always wear an appropriate helmet that fits well when riding a quad bike.



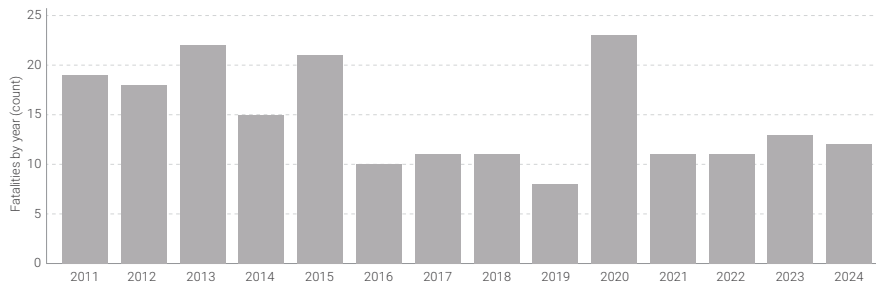
Further information

- [Quad bikes in workplaces: Guide](#)
- [Safe Work Australia Quad bikes - Managing risks](#)

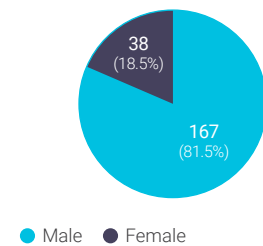
Quad bike fatalities: A snapshot

- There have been 205 quad bike fatalities recorded in Australia (2011 – present).
- Based on current evidence, quad bikes rolling over accounts for sixty per cent of fatalities.
- Eight per cent of fatalities are children under 10 years old.
- Fifty per cent of fatalities are people aged above 50 years old.
- Males make up over eighty per cent of the fatalities.

Statistics from Safe Work Australia
[Quad bikes | dataswa](#)



Quad bike fatalities by gender



Controlling noise-induced hearing loss



Noise-induced hearing loss can occur when workers are exposed to high noise levels in the workplace. Some examples of noisy work include construction work, operating machinery in a factory, lawn mowing, aircraft ground support work, operating shooting ranges and nightclubs. A temporary loss, called a temporary threshold shift, occurs when hearing worsens but recovers over time. A permanent threshold shift or permanent hearing loss is caused by irreparable damage to the ear's cilia.

Regulation 58 of the Work Health and Safety General Regulations 2022 requires a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) to provide audiometric testing to workers who are frequently required to wear hearing protection

to protect against noise-induced hearing loss from noise that exceeds the exposure standard for noise.

An audiometric test must be done within three months of the worker starting the noisy work and at least every two years thereafter.

The initial test establishes the worker's baseline level of hearing. It should be conducted after 16 hours of quiet. Subsequent audiometric tests should be conducted well into the work shift. The tests should be referenced against the baseline test to detect any threshold shift in hearing.

Where a threshold shift is detected, the PCBU must take steps to investigate the cause, implement higher order controls if necessary, and review the workplace hearing protection program.

In so doing, the PCBU can ensure that high noise processes are adequately controlled and reduce the risk of workers suffering noise-induced hearing loss.



For further information, see [audiometric FAQs](#) on the WorkSafe website and the [Managing noise and preventing hearing loss at work: Code of practice](#).



WorkSafe events

As part of helping to educate the Western Australian workforce on health and safety, WorkSafe offers industry and topic-specific events and engages with attendees at agricultural field days and career expos. In 2024, WorkSafe hosted the following events:

- asbestos discussion forum (March)
- radiation management workshop (March)
- registered medical practitioners forum (April)
- engineered stone ban information sessions – tailored to peak bodies and unions and health organisations; government; and the general public (April to May)
- dangerous goods consultants forum (July)
- farm safety education and information session in Narrogin (August).

Agricultural events and field days

WorkSafe inspectors attend agricultural field days to talk with farmers and community members on topics like the Agricultural Inquiry, major hazards in farming and to share helpful resources including the [First steps to farm safety guide](#). In 2024, WorkSafe attended:

- Wagin Woolorama Field Day on 8–9 March
- Mingenew Midwest Expo on 7–8 August
- Dowerin Machinery Field Days on 28–29 August
- Newdegate Machinery Field Days on 4–5 September.



Two industry forums for Safe Work Month 2024

This year Western Australia's theme for Safe Work Month was ***Health and safety is everybody's business***.

WorkSafe hosted two in-person forums, each with the option to join online, featuring expert industry speakers who shared ideas and practical approaches across priority topics. The forums were well attended, with 585 in-person and 503 online registrations across both.

EveryBODY matters – musculoskeletal disorder (MSD) forum



On Tuesday 15 October at Optus Stadium, a range of industry experts discussed this nationally prioritised work health and safety topic.

This forum was for everyone with an interest in making workplaces healthier and safer from a human factors and ergonomics perspective. The topics below were covered:

- a keynote speech on the urgent need to address psychosocial hazards in MSD prevention
- risk management of hazardous manual tasks
- WA's workers' compensation and injury management scheme
- personal impacts of chronic MSD injuries
- manual handling risks, technology and engagement
- MSD factors in handling patients from a health and safety representative's perspective
- scenarios brought to life by actors to explore organisational and personal mindsets and practices around MSD.

Farm safety matters – agricultural safety forum



On Friday 25 October at the Bunbury Mantra, sector experts and WorkSafe's agricultural safety inspectors covered priority topics and provided ideas and practical approaches for establishing good safety practices on farms.

WorkSafe Commissioner Sally North introduced a program of topics based on the priorities in WorkSafe's *First steps to farm safety: Guide*:

- machinery guarding
- quad bikes and side-by-side risk management
- hazardous chemicals
- electrical hazards
- children on farms
- safe sheds.



[Subscribe](#) to our news alerts to find out when the forum videos are ready to view.





Congratulations to all the winners!

Work Health and Safety Excellence Awards 2024



**Work Health and Safety
EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2024**

At the culmination of Safe Work Month, the winners of this year's Work Health and Safety Excellence Awards were announced at the awards ceremony Thursday, 31 October 2024 at Optus Stadium.

The winners are:



**Work health and safety
invention of the year**



200 employees or more (winner)

- Schlamm Payload Industries: Tray stand trolley



199 employees or less (winner)

- Taz Drone Solutions: Prism tripod dropping drone



200 employees or more (certificate of merit)

- Trac Skirt International: Trac Skirt



Best solution to a work health and safety risk



199 employees or less (winner)

- PSM Upstream Solutions: Engineered structural preservation crates



200 employees or more (winner)

- St John Western Australia: Stryker Power PRO stretcher rollout



199 employees or less (certificate of merit)

- Support Vehicles Australia: Off highway tank body pins and clamps



200 employees or more (certificate of merit)

- Bethanie: ember @ risk project





Leadership excellence award



199 employees or less

- Shire of Ashburton: LEADing by example: creating a sustainable healthy and safe workplace for today and tomorrow



200 employees or more

- City of Stirling Volunteer Services: Volunteer work health and safety consultations



- WA Police Force (Children's Crossings Unit): Project Ruth Less



Best intervention to address a psychosocial hazard in the workplace



- Anglicare WA: well @ work



Health and safety representative of the year



- James Walker: WA Country Health Service



James Walker, HSR of the year with Justine Kelly, Director of Nursing, WACHS



Meet James Walker

the 2024 Health and safety representative of the year

James Walker from WA Country Health Service (WACHS) was the winner of the Health and Safety Representative of the Year award at the WHS Excellence Awards 2024.

James, a clinical nurse, was nominated for his outstanding commitment to the role of HSR at Warren Hospital, Manjimup.

Nursing in rural hospitals is very challenging with high exposure to workplace violence and aggression risks, as well as manual tasks risks related to patient care. It can be a stressful work environment due to the physical and cognitive demands of the nursing role, as well as staffing pressures that come with smaller rural and remote hospitals.

James looks for ways to improve his colleagues' physical and psychosocial safety. The initiatives driven by James have been over and above the regular HSR role of assisting with incident investigation, participating in WHS committees and undertaking workplace hazard inspections. James delves deeper into the "why" of hazards and incidents and follows up on reported

incidents to ensure that actions taken are high level and effective at addressing the risk.

He applied this thinking to several initiatives with the aim of making the workplace safer for his colleagues. These include:

- improving psychosocial safety for staff by implementing safety culture surveys (both pre- and post-implementation of action plans)
- establishing and steering working parties to address concerns from the surveys and implementing action plans to address key issues
- developing safety videos to demonstrate how to use equipment safely and prevent injury
- Implementing an easier QR Code process to submit hazards and incidents reports via mobile phones which most frontline staff have ready access to.

Congratulations James from all of us here at **WorkSafe**.





**Work safe for
the moments
that matter**

**ThinkSafe.
WorkSafe.**

What's your most important reason to stay safe at work? By embracing safe practices, we ensure that we can go home safe everyday.

Visit our website or search 'ThinkSafe WorkSafe' for ways to ensure your health and safety at work.





Engineered stone ban and new regulations for all crystalline silica processes

Silicosis is a potentially fatal disease caused by inhaling crystalline silica dust. This can be generated during activities such as cutting, crushing, drilling, polishing, sawing or grinding products containing the substance. Since 2018, WorkSafe is aware of 56 silicosis cases in Western Australia (WA), with 50 of these cases relating to workers who handled engineered stone.

From 1 July 2024, the manufacture, supply and use of engineered stone was prohibited in WA, in alignment with other Australian jurisdictions. The Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022 (WHS General Regulations) define engineered stone as an artificial product containing at least 1% crystalline silica and created by combining natural stone with other chemicals constituents (such as water, resins or pigments) to harden the product. The ban includes benchtops, panels and slabs.

Transitional arrangements will allow the completion of installations until 31 December 2024 if contracts were signed by 31 December 2023. Uncontrolled dry cutting will remain prohibited during this period.

Installed engineered stone does not pose a health hazard. However, working with it requires notifying WorkSafe.

Additionally, the WHS General Regulations have been amended to introduce a stronger regulatory framework for all industries working with crystalline silica. Materials like marble, granite, asphalt, cement, concrete, bricks, pavers and tiles contain silica, and workers in construction, manufacturing, tunnelling, demolition, mining, quarrying and stonemasonry can be exposed to silica dust. New requirements which took effect on 1 September 2024 include:

- a requirement for the controlled processing for all crystalline silica substances (CSS)
- a requirement to undertake a risk assessment for all processing of CSS
- additional duties for any processing of a CSS that is assessed as high risk.



Information about these changes is available and is regularly updated. For more information, see [Engineered stone ban](#) and [Silica](#) on the WorkSafe website and Safe Work Australia's [Engineered stone ban](#) and [Be Silica Smart](#) webpages.

Publication update

Since the last edition of Th!nkSafe magazine, WorkSafe has been busy producing new and updated guidance material. In case you missed any, these included:

Health and safety alerts

- SIS No. 6 *Offshore platform decommissioning near miss*
- SIS No. 7 *Working safely around agricultural equipment: Hobbs Hoist fatal incident*
- HSB No. 15 *Hydraulic fluid contamination resulting in uncontrolled movement: elevating work platforms*
- HSB No. 16 *Incorrect use of a pipe wrench on a drilling rig*

Forms

- *Notification form for permitted work with legacy engineered stone*

Reports

- *Safety performance in the Western Australian mineral industry 2021–22: Accident and injury statistics*
- *Health and safety snapshot: Dust strategy 2023–2024*
- *Mines safety quarterly performance snapshots:*
 - 1 October to 30 December 2023
 - 1 July to 30 September 2023
 - 1 January to 31 March 2023
 - 1 October to 31 December 2022
 - 1 July to 30 September 2022
 - 1 April to 30 June 2022

Information sheets

- *Human factors in the HAZOP process*
- *Information for bystanders of sexual harassment*
- *Sexual harassment at work*

Poster

- *How to take action as a bystander (Provided in English and translated in 10 different languages)*

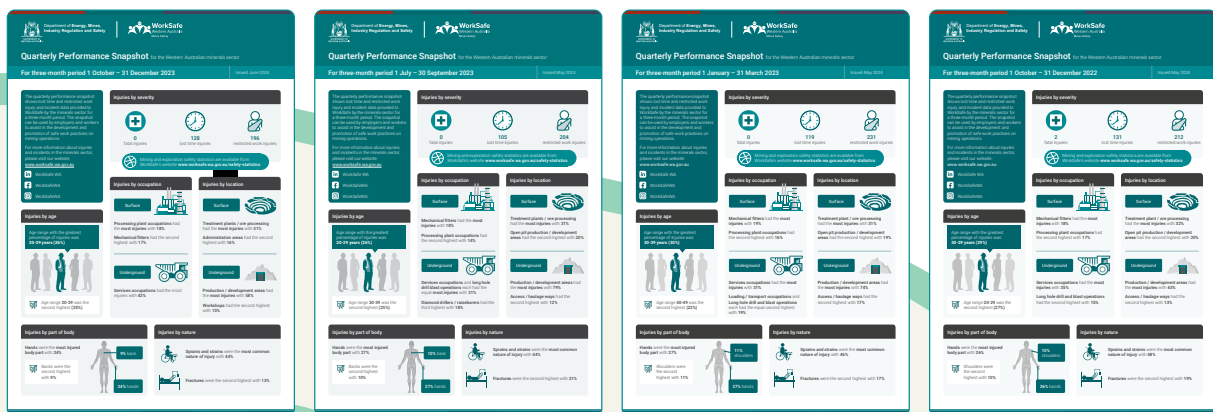
Visit our [website](#) for all our current publications.

Closed public consultations

Consultation has now closed for:

- *Minimising the risk of tyre fires when transporting ammonium nitrate explosion risk goods*
- *E-cigarette regulation amendment*
- *Psychosocial hazards at work for the fly-in fly-out (FIFO) workers in the resources and construction sectors*
- *Managing the risks of falls in housing construction.*

We would like to thank all responders for taking the time to provide valuable feedback.



Mines statutory position exams are in full swing

The Mines Statutory Positions exams have been successfully running for most of 2024, with an impressive turnout. The majority of the exams have been fully booked shortly after being opened for enrolment, demonstrating the commitment and enthusiasm of our mining community.

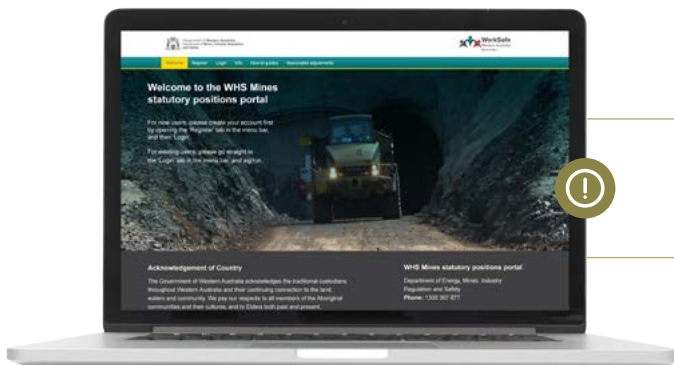
Currently, exams are being conducted at four venues: Kalgoorlie, Bunbury and North Lake and Cannington in Perth. Another regional venue will be set up based on data being provided by mines across Western Australia.

The exams are being released in phases. Recent exams included several key statutory positions: Authorised Mine Surveyors, Radiation Safety Officers, Noise Officers, Mine Air Quality Officers and Underground Ventilation Officers.

Legislative amendments have been made, extending the transition period from 30 March 2025 to 30 March 2026. This extension provides position holders with more time to complete their required legislation exams and any additional mining practice exams needed for their certification.

Industry focus groups have been formed to facilitate outcomes that better suit stakeholders, within the constraints of the legislation to support continuous improvement strategies for the Mines Statutory Positions Program exam design, delivery and associated processes.

WorkSafe remains committed to supporting the mining industry and ensuring that all statutory positions are filled with certified professionals. We appreciate the continued dedication and participation of all candidates and stakeholders in this important process. For more details and updates, please visit the [website](#).



For more information on mining statutory positions visit [Mining statutory positions and certificates](#)



Traffic management on mine sites

The operation of mobile equipment and the interaction between plant, vehicles and pedestrians on mining roads present many hazards and risks to the safety of workers. Understanding the way traffic interacts and is managed on mine roads is vital to the safety of workers. Mine operators should ensure that all risks and hazards have been properly identified and robust controls implemented and continually monitored, maintained and reviewed to improve mine traffic safety.

To aid in the effective management of site traffic, mine operators are required to prepare a traffic management plan. The traffic management plan should address road and intersection design, signage, road rules, human factors, vehicle selection, maintenance of plant and road infrastructure, operating procedures, training, supervision, inspections, auditing and change management.

As part of its investigations into notifiable and reportable incidents related to traffic movement, WorkSafe Mines Safety has identified controls for the most common causes and factors involved in mining traffic-related incidents.



Prevention of uncontrolled movement of mobile plant and vehicles

This includes having suitable and designated parking areas for trucks, vehicles and mobile plant and ensuring they are on flat level ground with suitable parking ditches, humps or parking stops.

Fit-for-purpose barriers should be installed to prevent vehicles and plant going over embankments or into buildings, workshops and other areas where people may be located. It is important to ensure workers are informed on the parking procedures and the importance of fully applying the hand brake when parking.

Always consider driver's line of sight and visibility

The driver's line of sight should be considered when designing roads, ramps and intersections, windrow heights near intersections, and in the placement of signs and lighting including around corners and over crests. Vehicle technology that assists drivers vision by eliminating blind spots and alerting them to the proximity of vehicles or pedestrians should be considered. Replacing Y intersections with T intersections ensures clear visibility at intersections.

Edge protection to prevent falls of workers and mobile plant

Appropriate controls should be provided to prevent vehicles or workers from falling over road edges such as safety barriers or windrows formed with earthen material.

Road construction and design

To prevent plant and vehicles skidding, sliding or rolling over, road design and construction should provide well-drained and stable base layers. Roads must be properly maintained and graded on a regular basis, and overwatering should be avoided particularly on gradients. Speed restrictions should be implemented when road conditions change.

Human and organisation factors

Drivers should be aware of the risk of distractions, fatigue, inattention or not driving to conditions.



Further information

The WHS Mines Regulations 2022 set out the requirements for mobile plant and traffic management on WA mines. These can be found at www.legislation.wa.gov.au

[Traffic management on roads and other areas where vehicles and mobile plant operate on a mine: Health and Safety Bulletin No. 9](#)

Fraudulent qualifications in the WA mining industry

Persons conducting businesses or undertakings (PCBUs), including mine operators, have an obligation to carefully assess the validity of qualifications, supporting documentation and training competency certificates, submitted by candidates applying for jobs in the Western Australian mining industry.

WorkSafe Mines Safety has identified instances where workers may have gained employment within the mining industry by providing allegedly fraudulent documents that included:

- underground supervisor's certificate of competency
- paramedic qualifications
- mining engineering degree
- Certificate IV in Work Health and Safety
- national police clearance.

Under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*, it is an offence for a person to provide false or misleading information or documentation in order to obtain a statutory position within a mining company. This carries an individual penalty of \$12,500.

Under the Criminal Code, any person who intends to defraud by forging a record, or using a forged record, is guilty of a crime, and subject to seven

years imprisonment, or two years imprisonment and a fine of \$24,000 for a summary conviction.

WorkSafe recommends PCBUs and mine operators at mine sites:

- check training and recruitment documentation and assess the possibility of fraudulent qualifications or supporting documents
- develop a system of work for checking documents submitted during the recruitment process, including requesting and checking original documents rather than photocopies.

Fraudulent certificates and qualifications may have a person's name printed off-centre or in a different font. Additionally, logos and branding, including colours, may not be quite right. The documents might look like they have been scanned or be blurry.

Anyone who has concerns about the validity of qualifications or training certificates should verify the details by contacting the provider that issued the document or the Australian Skills Quality Authority who regulate vocational education and training providers and accredit courses. Verification of qualification validity can also be undertaken utilising the online tools recently implemented by WorkSafe.



- [Health and Safety Bulletin No. 5: Fraudulent qualifications in the WA mining industry for further information](#)
- [WA Online Licence Search](#)
- [Mines statutory positions register](#)

Cyanide safety and exposure management

WorkSafe Mines Safety recently discovered substandard control measures for cyanide use on mine sites. Cyanide is a fast acting, poisonous chemical that can exist as a solid, liquid or gas.

In the mining sector, cyanide salts are used in metallurgy, mainly gold extraction, electroplating and metal cleaning. Hydrogen cyanide is a by-product from blast-furnaces, coke ovens, gas works and petroleum refining. All forms of cyanide are poisonous and hydrogen cyanide is extremely flammable.

The main route of exposure to cyanides is through inhalation resulting in fast absorption and circulation around the body. Within seconds of inhalation, the person may experience:

- facial flushing
- headache, nausea and vomiting
- difficulty breathing
- feeling faint or dizzy
- confusion.

Without immediate treatment, coma, seizures and death may occur within minutes.

Managing cyanide on site

It is essential that mine operators maintain control processes and monitor preventive procedures to reduce the risks of cyanide gas release, and potential for exposure to solid or liquid cyanide.

Key strategies to manage potential risks include:

- limiting exposure to high-risk areas
- maintaining fixed gas monitors and personal detectors
- evacuating to fresh air areas if leaks are detected.

Attention should also be paid to preventing skin and eye contact as well as inhalation. If skin or hair contact occurs, remove contaminated clothing and wash the affected area for at least 20 minutes under running water.

Onsite facilities must have trained medical personnel prepared and equipped to treat multiple patients, with a sufficient supply of antidote on standby in readiness for multiple casualties. Equally, prior agreements should be in place with local hospital facilities to allow rapid response in the event of casualties being delivered.

The uncontrolled release of cyanide into a work area is a notifiable incident requiring a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) to immediately notify WorkSafe on 1800 678 198 (24 hours).

To assist mine operators to improve the safe management of cyanide, WorkSafe is developing new safety and exposure management information for the sector.





To find out more, call
1300 30 78 77 or visit
www.jobs.wa.gov.au

Spotlight on WorkSafe inspectors

WorkSafe believes that every worker should have a workplace free from harm to their health and safety. WorkSafe inspectors play a pivotal role promoting safety within workplaces. Prior to coming to WorkSafe, our inspectors have worked in industries like construction, mining, retail, manufacturing, logistics, education and healthcare and bring with them a wealth of knowledge and experience.

All new inspectors undergo a foundation training program before being mentored by experienced inspectors. Following the successful completion of their training, the new inspectors are assigned to teams based on their area of expertise.

An inspector's duties are diverse. They inspect workplaces, investigate incidents and fatalities, undertake project work, develop industry-specific health and safety content, attend industry events, deliver safety presentations at field

days and expos, and engage with current and future workers. Every day is unique, offering inspectors opportunities to hone their skills in communication, analysis and negotiation as they navigate sensitive and complex situations. They are offered specialised training to develop and enhance their skillsets and are supported by the managers and directors as part of their career development.

Whilst inspectors are assigned to specific teams, they also collaborate across teams to ensure effective work outcomes. Being part of a team allows them to form good working relationships with colleagues who also share their passion for making a difference within the Western Australian workforce.

WorkSafe is recruiting! Check our advertisements on www.jobs.wa.gov.au or chat with us at a field day, expo or one of our WorkSafe events.

Benefits



Flexible working arrangements



Diversity – WorkSafe values diversity and inclusiveness



Making a difference in the community

Importance of reporting incidents involving dangerous goods

Prompt reporting of incidents involving dangerous goods is essential for safety and compliance in Western Australia (WA). Dangerous goods, whether flammable, explosive, toxic or corrosive, can pose risks to people, property and the environment. By promptly notifying the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DEMIRS), we enhance safety standards, prevent future incidents and foster transparency in workplaces. Compliance is crucial, and our ultimate goal is safeguarding both lives and the environment.

Benefits of reporting

Incident reporting enables WorkSafe's Dangerous Goods Branch to stay abreast of safety risks, emerging trends and critical issues, which in turn can be communicated across industry and influence safety improvements. It encourages organisations to conduct thorough investigations, leading to valuable insights and improved safety outcomes.

Regulatory oversight

The *Dangerous Goods Safety Act 2004* and the *Dangerous Goods Safety Regulations 2007* govern dangerous goods safety in WA. These regulations are administered by WorkSafe's Dangerous Goods Branch dangerous goods officers.

Legislative requirements about who to report incidents to often overlap. For instance, some dangerous goods incidents must also be reported to WorkSafe under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020* and to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

What constitutes a reportable incident?

A reportable dangerous goods incident includes any event involving dangerous goods that results in or could potentially result in significant harm. This includes:

- spills and leaks: uncontrolled releases of dangerous goods
- fires and explosions: incidents involving fire or explosion
- transport accidents: incidents involving dangerous goods during transit
- near misses: situations narrowly avoiding serious incidents.

Reporting procedure

If an incident occurs, report it promptly to a dangerous goods officer by emailing dgsb@demirs.wa.gov.au or via the WorkSafe Incident Emergency Hotline. Provide details about the incident, including type, amount of dangerous goods, location, time, date and contact information. Submit a written report within 21 days using the [Dangerous Goods Incident Report Form](#) available on the WorkSafe website.

See [Reporting incidents involving dangerous goods](#) for further information.



DEMIRS/WorkSafe
Incident Emergency Hotline:
1800 678 198



Annual analysis of findings and incidents at Major Hazard Facilities (MHFs)

Western Australia (WA) has some of the biggest, costliest and most complex industrial plants in the world. They supply vital energy, minerals and chemicals that are essential to modern living. Their outputs and exports make immense contributions to WA's economy, enable major downstream businesses, employ thousands of people and support hundreds of local businesses.

These plants handle explosives, flammables or toxic resources like LNG, LPG, ammonia, ammonium nitrate, chlorine, cyanide and other similarly hazardous materials and are classified as major hazard facilities (MHF). Specialist inspectors from the WorkSafe Petroleum Safety and Dangerous Goods Directorate regulate MHFs with a particular focus on the prevention of major incidents. As a proactive measure, an annual analysis of the findings from site audits and reports is published.

In 2023–24, 20 formal safety audits were carried out. Key findings include:

- the need to improve emergency preparedness – this issue was identified in a quarter of the audits
- non-compliances requiring priority action were all related to asset integrity and maintenance.

More than 60 dangerous goods incidents at MHFs were reported. Analyses of 62 incidents identified:

- on average, every fifth reportable incident resulted in some degree of harm to people, property or the environment
- approximately two thirds of incidents which caused harm occurred due to a loss of containment of a dangerous good
- in just under half of the incidents which caused harm, issues with work control systems and personnel competency were identified as the primary cause.

These figures serve as a strong reminder for all sites storing or handling dangerous goods to diligently maintain and comply with their emergency response plans, systems of work, staff competency, and asset integrity and maintenance systems. These will form part of our proactive audit and inspection campaign for the coming year.



See [Safety statistics and other reports](#) for the full report.

Australian Dangerous Goods Code

The National Transport Commission has released the [Australian Dangerous Goods Code Edition 7.9](#). It can be used from 1 October 2024 and will be mandatory from 1 October 2025 in Western Australia.

For a summary of the most important changes, please read [Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road and Rail: Differences between edition 7.8 and edition 7.9](#).

Safety prosecution updates

Recent convictions

Northern Star Carosue Dam Operations,
Whirling Dervish underground gold mine

Sentenced date: 8 July 2024

On 21 February 2020, two workers contracted to do clean up labouring tasks were instructed to remove built-up material with shovels from under the conveyor while the conveyor was still running. The arm of one of the workers became entangled in the return roller and the belt while he was

reaching under the guarding. Apart from minor scratches on his left arm, he was uninjured. The workers' induction did not include conveyor safety or isolations. Big Bell Gold Operations Pty Ltd failed to provide adequate guarding and effective supervision, induction and training. After the incident the guarding around the conveyor was extended all the way to the floor.

Big Bell Gold Operations Pty Ltd pleaded guilty for breaching the *Mines Safety and Inspection Act 1992* and was fined \$400,000.



Highlight on conveyor systems

In 2023–24, 35 injuries were recorded with WorkSafe involving conveyor systems in the mining industry.

Conveyor systems are integral items of plant and are used to transport ores, concentrates and material throughout the various processes in the mining operation. As a transfer point from stockpile to mills they are prone to spillage and accumulation of material underneath the conveyor, requiring maintenance and removal of the built-up material.

The most common and dangerous type of hazard in a conveyor system is the 'in-running nip point'. This is where the machinery motion acts to hold or draw in a human extremity that has come into contact with the components. Unguarded or inadequately guarded conveyor systems may expose workers to the hazard of rotating plant and to risk of entanglement through inadvertent contact with such plant.

Workers tasked with maintenance should also be provided with such supervision, information, instruction and training as is necessary to enable them to safely perform any role related to working near a conveyor, in such a manner that they are not exposed to the hazard.

Persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBUs) should, where reasonably practicable, implement and enforce isolation procedures for the de-energisation of the conveyor systems to ensure that the conveyor is not operating while any worker could be exposed to the hazard.

All PCBUs operating conveyor systems are encouraged to read [Managing risks of plant in the workplace: Code of practice](#) and get a qualified person to assess the guarding of the conveyor system.



2023–2024 Convictions

During 2023–24, workplace safety enforcement proceedings resulted in 14 convictions.

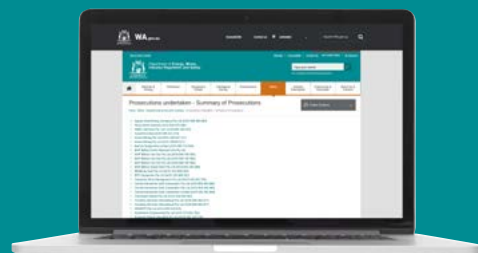
Where incidents occurred prior to the introduction of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*, prosecutions were actioned under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1984* and the *Mines Safety and Inspection Act 1994*.

<i>Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984 and Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996</i>			
Offender	Section	Regulation	Penalty
1. CAVANAGH Brett Sidney	19(1) & 19A(2)		\$47,250
2. Element Bros Pty Ltd		4.37(1)(f)	\$15,000
3. Firm Construction Pty Ltd	23D, 19(1) & 19A(2)		\$600,000
4. Halifax Crane Hire Pty Ltd		4.54(8)	\$12,000
5. Jinning Pty Ltd		5.59 & 5.56	\$30,000
6. Lisson Nominees Pty Ltd	19(1) & 19A(2)		\$400,000
7. Visy Board Pty Ltd	19(1) & 19A(2)		\$275,000

<i>Mines Safety and Inspection Act 1994</i>			
Offender	Section	Regulation	Penalty
8. Billabong Gold Pty Ltd	15B, 9(1) 9A(2)		\$550,000
9. Byrnecut Australia Pty Ltd Linked 2 of 3	9(1) & 9A(2)		\$850,000
10. KORZHOV Arsen	10 & 10A(2)		\$120,000
11. L'Haridon Bight Mining Pty Ltd	9(1) & 9A(2)		\$48,000
12. Northern Star (Carosue Dam) Pty Ltd	15A, 9(1) & 9A(2)		\$700,000
13. Sandfire Resources Ltd	13 & 13A(3)		\$551,250
14. Silver Lake Resources Ltd	9(1) & 9A(3)		\$30,000

! For information on the WorkSafe prosecutions under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1984* and its regulations see the [Summary of Successful Prosecutions](#) on the WorkSafe website.

For information on WorkSafe Mines Safety prosecutions see the [Summary of Prosecutions](#) on the WorkSafe website.



SafetyLine Hub

The SafetyLine Hub is a single platform for individuals and work health and safety (WHS) professionals to connect with WorkSafe, and discover what's happening in the WHS space.

Get to know our six initiatives



SafetyLine Engage

Register for WHS events and access podcasts, videos and other resources.



SmartTools

Access WHS training modules and hazard-specific information and resources in collaboration with other Western Australian agencies.



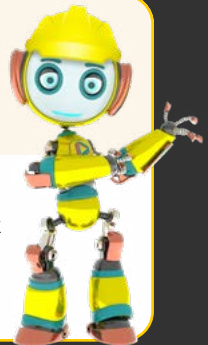
SafetyLine News

Read feature articles, meet our WorkSafe team and find out about public consultations.



WorkSafe SmartMove

Learn WHS skills for your new or first job with our friendly mascot, SAMM.



HSR Matters

Information on how elected health and safety representatives from all industries can contribute to WHS matters in their organisations.



WorkSafe Plan

Enhance your organisation's safety management system with industry-based tools, recognition programs and other resources.

Visit SafetyLine Hub today safetyline.wa.gov.au



What's next?

Now that you've finished reading all about **health and safety in the workplace**, here's what you can do.

Revisit the insights from the Landmark Study Report



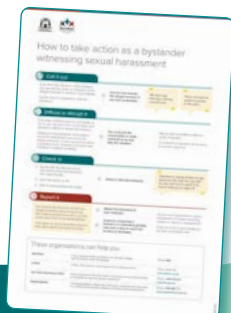
Refresh your knowledge of the engineered stone ban for all crystalline silica processes

Read about [Engineered stone ban](#) and [Silica](#) on the WorkSafe website.



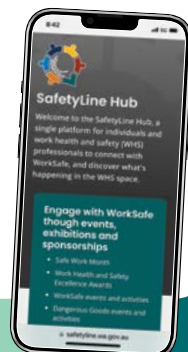
Download the How to take action as a bystander poster

Available in English, Arabic, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Filipino, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Punjabi, Thai and Vietnamese.



Visit the new SafetyLine Hub

A platform for individuals and work health and safety (WHS) professionals to connect with WorkSafe, and discover what's happening in the WHS space.



Th!nkSafe

Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety

Postal address: Locked Bag 100 EAST PERTH WA 6892

WorkSafe

For general industries, mines safety and petroleum safety

Telephone: **1300 307 877** (general enquiries)
1300 424 091 (licensing)
1800 678 198 (24 hours serious incident and fatality reporting)

Email: WSCallCentre@demirs.wa.gov.au (general enquiries)
WSLicensing@demirs.wa.gov.au (licensing)

Mine plans

Telephone: **1300 307 877**
Email: rsdmineplans@demirs.wa.gov.au

Dangerous Goods Safety

Including explosives and fireworks

Telephone: **+61 8 6251 2300**
Email: dgsb@demirs.wa.gov.au (dangerous goods safety enquiries)
cso@demirs.wa.gov.au (dangerous goods licensing enquiries)

Safety Regulation System (SRS)

Telephone: **1300 307 877**
Email: SRManager@demirs.wa.gov.au

Safety Education

Including publications and events

Telephone: **1300 307 877**
Email: safetycomms@demirs.wa.gov.au

Notifying WorkSafe

Call WorkSafe immediately on **1800 678 198** to report a notifiable incident.

Notifiable incidents include:

- if a worker dies, is seriously injured or becomes very ill because of their work
- dangerous incidents such as chemical leaks, explosions, fires, fall from heights, collapse of a structure.

Information about reporting an incident and definitions are available at www.worksafe.wa.gov.au/notify-worksafe



For a **non life-threatening dangerous incident**, preserve the site and immediately notify WorkSafe **online**



To report a **death, serious injury or illness, or life-threatening dangerous incident**, preserve the site and immediately call **1800 678 198**