

UNION FACT SHEET 4 - TAS

Occupational Health & Safety



OHS Committees and Employees' Safety Representatives (ESR)

Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995, Workplace Health and Safety Regulations 1998

Under the Act, employers are required to consult with their workers on decisions that affect workplace health and safety. Electing an ESR and establishing OHS Committees are ways to do this.

The role of an ESR is to: Represent the health and safety interests of employees; encourage safe work practice and bring to the notice of the employer any safety or health hazard of which that representative is aware.

The ESR can:

- Inspect any part of the workplace as is reasonably necessary
- Request an inspector to conduct an inspection at the workplace and accompany an inspector in the course of his or her inspection of the workplace, if the inspector requests.
- Immediately inspect the whole or any part of the workplace if there is an accident or dangerous occurrence at the workplace or there is an immediate threat one.

The employer must provide the ESR with:

- Training within 6 months of their appointment
- Resources as determined jointly by the ESR and the employer as the most suitable and available
- Time within the normal working hours to carry out their functions
- Reasonable access to certain health and safety information

If an employee requests, an ESR can be present at any meeting about the employee's health and safety at work. Some other issues ESR's may find themselves involved in include:

- Any specific health and safety problems affecting their workgroup.
- The investigation into an accident or incident.
- The return-to-work program of an injured worker.

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) committee

If the workplace has more than 20 workers and the majority of the workers request it, the employer is required to establish a Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) committee. The precise role of the OHS committee will depend on what is agreed in the workplace. Normally, the OHS committee deals with the broader organisational issues that impact on the health and safety of the entire workplace. The ESR would normally deal with everyday health and safety problems for their specific workgroup. **An ESR is not automatically a member of the OHS committee.**

For more information call WorkCover Tasmania on 1300 776 572

Contact us on 1800 060 556 Free call

Authorised by Alex Millar National Secretary CFMEU Pulp and Paper Workers District
148 – 152 Miller Street West Melbourne Vic 3003

Visit our website www.cfmeuffpd.org for more information

Printed on Australian Paper made by Union labour