

WHS PROCEDURES

SAFETY Everyone. Everywhere. Every day.

WHS CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

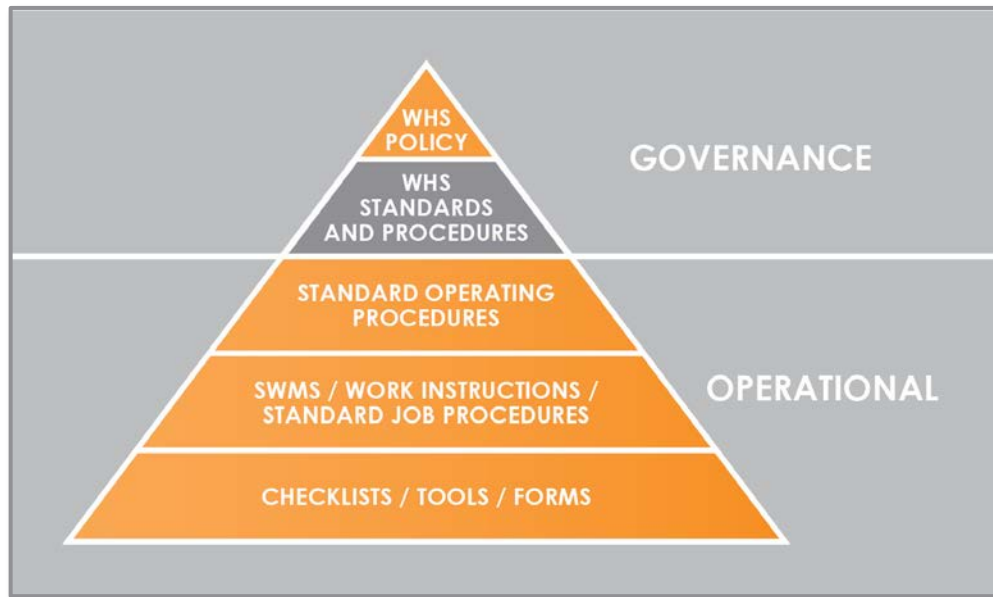
DOC ID	PRO361	VERSION	2	DOC OWNER	Dave Cowan
ACTIVE DATE	16/02/2018	REVIEW DATE	16/02/2020		

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1. WHSMS DOCUMENT HIERARCHY



2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the arrangements for consultation and communication across Queensland Urban Utilities (QUU) when addressing work health and safety (WHS) issues within the workplace.

3. SCOPE

This procedure covers all of WHS-related consultation and communication activities and applies to all employees and any other persons present on QUU-controlled worksites.

4. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

CONSULTATION: in the context of WHS, consultation refers to a two-way exchange of information between employers and employees. Generally this involves:

- sharing information about health and safety
- giving employees a reasonable opportunity to express their views, and
- taking those views into account.
- Employees can be consulted in a variety of ways, including by setting up a health and safety committee or by holding regular meetings.

If employees have elected a health and safety representative (HSR), the HSR must be involved in consultation.

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE: a representative body of QUU employees and managers which is formed to enable the effective consultation and communication on all health and safety related matters.

HEALTH AND SAFETY REPRESENTATIVE (HSR): a volunteer who is elected by their QUU workgroup to represent them in all health and safety matters.

MANAGER: the person/s directly responsible for the workplace activity being performed or the work site where the activity is occurring.

OFFICER: a term used to refer to directors, partners, or anyone else who makes decisions which affect the whole or a substantial part of a business or undertaking.

Under the WHS Act 2011, Officers are required to exercise due diligence when ensuring that their business or undertaking fulfils its health and safety obligations. This means that Officers are expected to:

- have up-to-date knowledge of all work health and safety matters,
- understand the operations of the business and the hazards and risks involved,
- ensure appropriate resources and processes are in place to enable hazards to be identified and risks to be eliminated or minimised,
- ensure information regarding incidents, hazards and risks is reviewed and responded to in a timely manner,
- ensure that the business has, and implements, processes for complying with any legal duty or obligation,
- ensure that these processes are verified, monitored and reviewed.

PERSON CONDUCTING A BUSINESS OR UNDERTAKING (PCBU): a term which is primarily used to refer to employers, but which is equally applicable to sole traders, contractors, the self-employed, or anyone else who is responsible for workers.

Under the WHS Act 2011, PCBUs are, as far as is possible, responsible for ensuring the health and safety of:

- workers they directly engage or whose activities they influence,
- anyone else who could be put at risk by the activities the PCBU is undertaking, for example visitors, customers, or members of the public.

QUU EXECUTIVE: QUU's leadership group consisting of the CEO, Executive Leadership Team and General Managers (Officer and non-Officer appointed).

REASONABLY PRACTICABLE: a term which in the context of WHS means that which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done to ensure health and safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including:

- the likelihood of the hazard or the risk concerned occurring
- the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk
- what the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know, about the hazard or risk, and ways of eliminating or minimising the risk
- the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk, and
- after assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, the cost associated with available ways of eliminating

SPECIAL INTEREST WORKING GROUP (SIWG): a working group established by a WHS committee to work on or investigate a specific WHS matter.

SUPERVISOR: a term used to refer to any QUU employee who acts or is appointed as a Supervisor, Coordinator or Team Leader within QUU.

VISITOR: any person present on a QUU worksite who is not a worker, supervisor, manager, officer or PCBU.

VOLUNTEER: a person who acts on a voluntary basis regardless of whether or not they receive out of pocket expenses.

WHS: Work Health and Safety.

WHS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (WHSMS): the comprehensive and integrated system of WHS Standards, Procedures, SOPs, Quick Guides and Work Instructions that allows QUU to effectively manage and control our workplace hazards and risks.

WORKER: a person who carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking. This includes employees, contractors, sub-contractors, apprentices, trainees, volunteers and work experience students.

Under the WHS Act 2011, Workers are responsible for:

- their own health and safety,
- ensuring their actions do not adversely affect the safety of others,
- complying with all reasonable instructions given by the PCBU,
- co-operating with any policy or procedure which has been communicated to them.

WORK GROUP: a group of QUU workers who perform the same or similar duties at one or more of our worksites.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Officers, Managers and Workers have clear responsibilities and accountabilities for WHS outlined in QUU's **WHS Resources, Responsibility and Accountability Standard (STD132)** and **Procedure (PRO359)**. These responsibilities and accountabilities are non-transferrable and critical to achieving QUU's WHSMS goals, objectives and targets.

Outlined below are the role specific responsibilities relating to WHS consultation and communication at QUU:

5.1 PERSON CONDUCTING A BUSINESS OR UNDERTAKING (PCBU)

- Ensure that they have systems in place which enable consultation, participation and representation with all workers including contractors.
- Establish a method of feedback to workers and other PCBUs.

5.2 QUU OFFICERS

- Exercise due diligence to ensure QUU as a PCBU complies with its health and safety duties and obligations as outlined in the WHS Act and Regulation 2011.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that required consultative arrangements are established and function in workplaces under their control and that effective consultation, participation and representation occurs between management, workers and representative work groups.

5.3 EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

- Work in collaboration and consultation with Managers, Supervisors and QUU workers towards the prevention of incidents that may cause injury to people, harm to the environment or damage assets or property at any QUU owned or operated sites.

5.4 GENERAL MANAGERS

- Ensure that appropriate consultative arrangements are in place in all areas under their control.
- Facilitate the availability and use of allocated resources to enable QUU to meet its WHS obligations including making available workers for consultative forums as required.
- Consult with Health and Safety Representatives (HSR) and/or workers regarding WHS issues where there are changes proposed which affect health and safety.

5.5 MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS

- Establish and encourage consultative arrangements at workplaces under their control.
- Implement safe work practices within their area of responsibility and contribute to their improvements.

5.6 WORKERS

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and for other workers and visitors to their workplace.
- Follow and comply with reasonable instruction and co-operate with WHS policies and procedures, including consultation at work.
- Request that their employers establish work groups that will allow the election of one or more HSRs to represent them on health and safety matters affecting the workplace.

5.7 QUU'S WHS TEAM

- Manage QUU's WHS management system (WHSMS) which includes establishing, facilitating and monitoring arrangements for consultation and communication to ensure these meet QUU's legal obligations and business needs.
- Advise QUU's management and workers on requirements for WHS consultation and communication.
- Co-ordinate and / or attend Health and Safety Committee and Health and Wellbeing Group meetings.

5.8 HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE (HSC)

- Must meet at least once every three (3) months.
- Facilitate cooperation between the PCBU and workers in the management of health and safety.
- Establish a charter for each committee.
- Retain relevant records of meetings, decisions, discussions and outcomes, including any action items arising from meetings.
- Provide a forum for the PCBU to consult with workers on hazard and risk issues identified, potential changes to work systems, work environments, practices and procedures that may affect workers.
- Provide a forum for resolution of health and safety matters.
- Provide a forum for the discussion and analysis of WHS data.
- Provide a forum for training and education on WHS matters.
- Identify, review and publish procedure in relation to health and safety.

5.9 HEALTH AND SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES (HSR)

- Consult with and represent the workers within their workplace or designated workgroup on health and safety issues. HSRs are entitled to be members of any established local HSC.
- Under the Act, an elected HSR has the capacity to:
 - represent the workers in matters relating to WHS;
 - investigate complaints or anything that appears to be a risk relating to worker WHS;
 - direct unsafe work to cease under Section 85 of the Act; and
 - issue provisional improvement notices (PIN) under Section 90 of the Queensland WHS Act 2011.
- In undertaking these functions the HSR may:
 - undertake workplace inspections;
 - accompany an inspector during an inspection of the workplace;
 - be present at an interview relating to health and safety matters with the consent of the worker/s;

- o request the establishment of and participate in a health and safety committee;
- o report hazards; and
- o review incidents.
- Further, after undertaking an internal investigation a HSR may:
 - o make recommendations in the Hazard Report Form (FOR76);
 - o provide the form to the employer (HSRs must keep a copy); and/or
 - o issue a PIN depending on the circumstances surrounding the issue being investigated.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Health and Safety Committees Quick Guide (REF240)
- Health and Safety Representatives Quick Guide (REF243)
- WHS Consultation and Communication Standard (STD134)
- WHS Documentation, Data Control and Records Management Procedure (PRO362)
- WHS Policy (POL33)
- WHS Resources, Responsibility and Accountability Procedure (PRO359)
- WHS Hazard and Risk Management Standard (STD136)
- WHS Hazard and Risk Management Procedure (SOP363)
- WHS Resources, Responsibility and Accountability Standard (STD132)

7. WHS COMMITMENT, POLICY AND PLANNING

7.1 OVERVIEW

Under Queensland WHS legislation, PCBUs are required to consult with all workers. Furthermore, legislation imposes responsibilities on QUU as a PCBU regarding the establishment of representative work groups, the election of HSRs, agreed issue resolution processes and/or the establishment of other agreed health and safety consultation arrangements.

In addition to the above, QUU recognises the importance of involving workers in the decision making process concerning its health and wellbeing programs.

QUU shall ensure that formal processes are implemented for continual communication and improvement with respect to WHS across the business and that all necessary resources are allocated to ensure WHS responsibilities are understood and are able to be fulfilled. All QUU workers are encouraged to consult with Managers and Supervisors in relation to any workplace issue, incident, or hazard that they identify as being problematic or of risk to their own personal health and safety or that of others.

7.2 WHS CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS

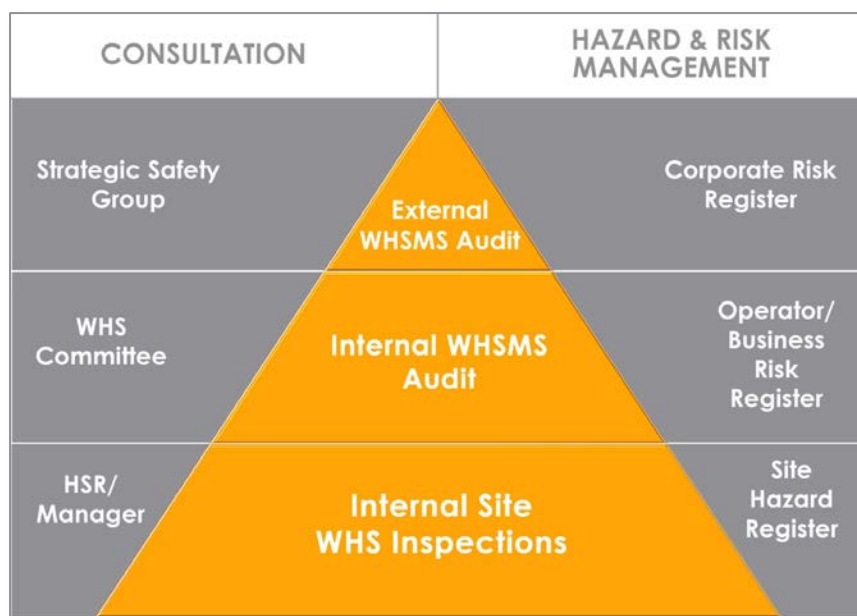
QUU will consult with workers on matters concerning health and safety, such as when:

- identifying hazards and assessing risks to health and safety arising from the work carried out by QUU;
- making decisions about ways to eliminate or minimise those risks;
- conducting incident investigations into incidents or 'near misses'.
- making decisions about the adequacy of facilities for the welfare of workers;
- proposing changes that may impact on employee health and wellbeing.
- making decisions about health and wellbeing programs or initiatives that may be provided for QUU employees;

- proposing changes that may affect the health or safety of workers; and
- recalls of Plant, equipment or other items are advised. (the WHS Team will raise a Hazard in QPulse and advise the relevant business areas) and
- reviewing or establishing procedures for:
 - consulting with workers;
 - resolving WHS issues at the workplace;
 - monitoring the health of workers;
 - monitoring the conditions at any workplace under the management or control of QUU; and
 - providing information and training for workers.
 - Recalls on Plant, Equipment or other items used by QUU

The contributions of workers will be valued and taken into account by management. Management shall ensure that evidence of consultation and decisions made regarding workgroups are recorded and maintained.

In QUU, the consultative framework is as follows:



Consultation on health and safety is a two-way process and should be seen as an opportunity to add value when making decisions. This process involves:

- Talking about issues;
- Listening to and raising concerns;
- Understanding your role;
- Seeking information and sharing views;
- Discussing issues in a timely manner;
- Considering what is being said before decisions are made; and
- Attending scheduled meetings.

Consultation and communication on WHS issues at QUU can occur through:

- Formal committees meetings (e.g. Strategic Safety Group or Operational WHS Committees);

- Team meetings;
- Toolbox talks or prestart meetings;
- QUU intranet, noticeboards or other internal communication channels,
- Special interest working groups formed to address specific WHS issues;
- Active participation and engagement with the QUU WHS Team;
- Project briefing meetings.

7.3 CONSULTATION WITH CONTRACTORS

Contractors are defined as workers under Queensland legislation. As a PCBU, QUU must ensure that contractors are included in consultation and communication processes around WHS issues. This includes provision of relevant information on who to go to in the workplace for assistance with WHS matters (e.g. the HSR or Contract Project Managers).

QUU contractors shall be involved in consultation and communication processes such as committee meetings, project briefing meetings, toolbox talks and prestart meetings as relevant to the work undertaken. Contractors may be involved in the identification, assessment and control of hazards and risks in the workplace.

7.4 HEALTH AND SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES (HSRs)

Workers at a workplace or workgroup may elect a worker as their HSR. A HSR has certain rights under legislation, referred to as powers and functions. QUU acknowledge that effective HSRs are an asset to sound health and safety management and a vital aspect in a functioning consultative process.

Under WHS legislation, workers may request the election of one or more HSR to represent employees. In QUU, HSRs are elected through nomination and election processes in the workplace.

A HSR, if elected, must consult with and represent the workers within their workplace or designated workgroup on health and safety issues. HSRs are entitled to be members of any established local HSC.

HSRs are not required to have any experience or qualifications. QUU must, if requested by a HSR, allow the HSR to attend an accredited training course and pay the course fees and any other reasonable costs associated with their attendance (e.g. travel expenses). Once elected, HSRs will be:

- able to exercise their powers and functions under section 68 of the Queensland WHS Act 2011 during ordinary working hours;
- allowed to hold office for 5 years and be eligible for re-election;
- consulted on any changes to the workplace (plant, hazardous chemicals/materials, work methods etc.) that may affect health and safety;
- able to undertake inspections as per their powers and functions;
- informed about reported injuries, illness, dangerous incident or other notifiable incidents so that these can be discussed at local WHS committees;
- made aware of the presence of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ) Inspectors at workplaces they represent and of any notices given by WHSQ inspectors.

7.5 WORK GROUPS

QUU will facilitate the determination of a work group through negotiation and agreement with workers as per legislative requirements. Specifically, if a workers request the election of HSRs, then the PCBU must establish work groups which are representative of the workforce. This may include contractors and other workers.

7.6 SPECIAL INTEREST WORKING GROUPS

WHS committees can establish Special Interest Working Groups (SIWGs) to work on or investigate WHS matters. These may be set-up to investigate Group specific issues or be part of larger corporate-wide programs. The SIWGs terms of reference, decision making authority and reporting channels should be established by the relevant WHS committee at the point of formation.

7.7 WHS COMMITTEES (HSCs)

QUU has developed a WHS committee structure (see below) which provides everyone within our organisation with the opportunity to fully participate in our journey towards zero harm.



This structure was developed in consultation with the business and has been specifically designed to enable effective consultation and communication on WHS issues across our entire organisation.

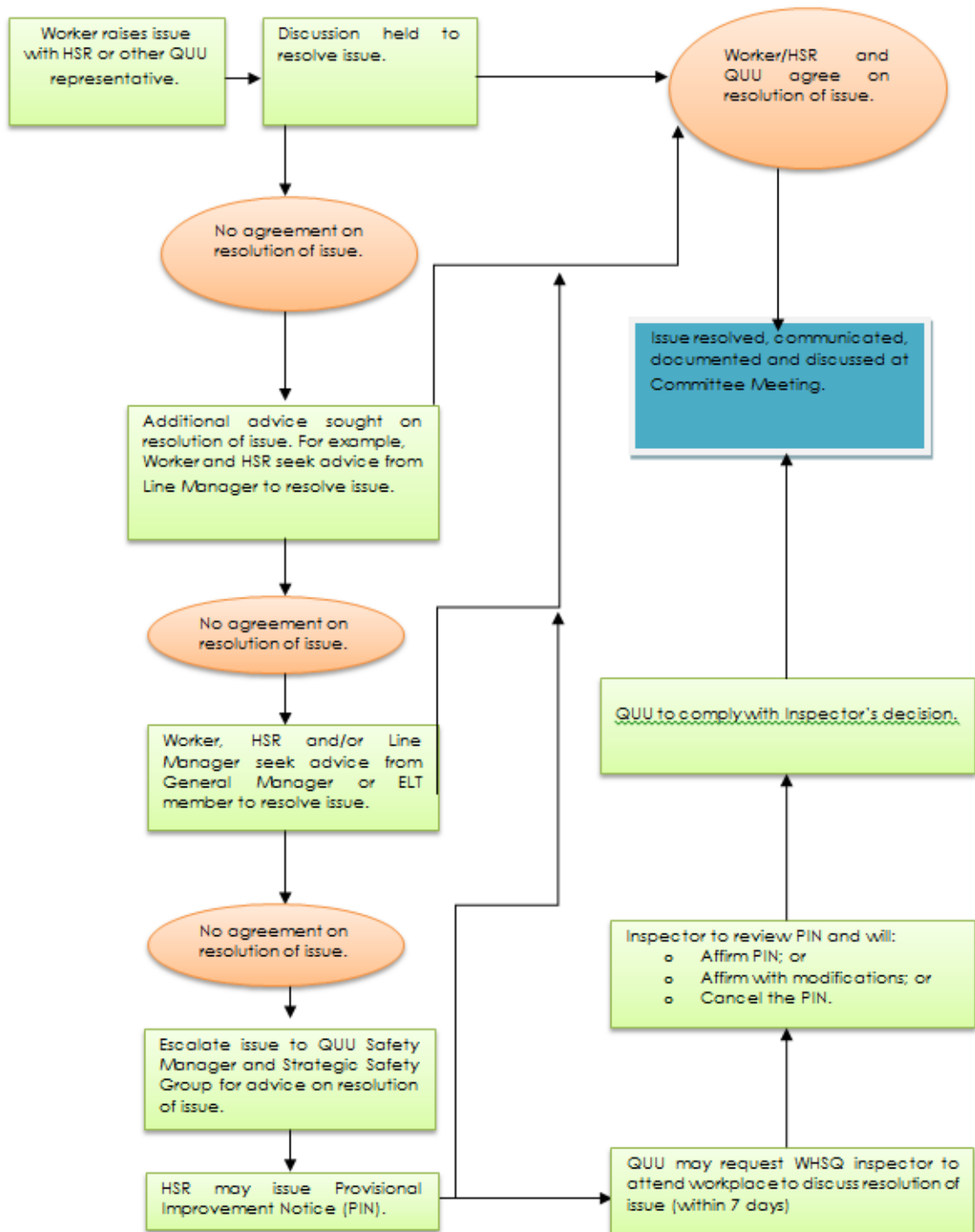
This was achieved by ensuring that all QUU workgroups have access to a committee or advisory group and that at least 50% of our committee members are employee nominated representatives.

The committee structure has two distinct layers, namely:

- **Strategic Safety Group (SSG):** Sets the strategic direction for all QUU WHS initiatives and is responsible for creating and embedding our safety culture.
- **Line Committees:** These committees bring together employees and management to discuss WHS issues and are responsible for implementing best practice WHS solutions for their workgroups.

7.8 WHS ISSUE RESOLUTION PROCESS

The WHS issue resolution process for QUU is summarised below:



7.9 UNION RIGHT OF ENTRY

A WHS entry permit holder is a union official who has completed an approved training course and holds or will hold an entry permit under the Commonwealth Fair Work Act 2009 or Industrial Relations Act 1999.

A WHS permit holder may enter a QUU workplace during normal working hours in the event of a suspected breach of the WHS Act or Regulations. In this instance the permit holder may:

- Inspect anything (e.g. relevant plant, work systems, substances, structures etc.) that may have a bearing on the suspected breach;
- Talk to any worker who may be represented by the union;
- Consult with the PCBU;
- Speak with anyone who may be at risk due to the suspected breach; or
- Request to look at, or make copies of any relevant documentation that is directly relevant to the suspected breach.

The entry permit holder must notify the PCBU of their entry into the workplace. When the entry permit holder intends to consult with workers, they must notify the PCBU at least 24 hours (but no greater than 14 days) before entering the site for the purpose of consultation. A Form 63 – Notice of entry form must be provided.

The PCBU must not prevent the entry permit holder's participation in workplace consultation in the event of a suspected breach. Similarly, the entry permit holder must act in accordance with provisions of the legislation.

At QUU, this means that the permit holder must notify the site supervisor as soon as they enter the site.

8. REFERENCES

- QLD Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- QLD Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011
- AS/NZS 4801:2001 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems – Specification with guidance for use
- OHSAS 18001:2007 *Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems*

9. REVIEW

This procedure is to be reviewed every 2 years or earlier if:

- There is an identified risk to the business;
- A significant WHS or unplanned event occurs;
- Incident investigation or audit results demonstrate that the procedure is failing to deliver the required outcomes;
- There are changes in associated legislation; or
- There is evidence that the procedure is not having a positive impact on WHS-related KPIs.

10. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information, contact your Health and Safety Representative (HSR) or a member of the QUU WHS Team.

