

Statement of intent

SOI 1 November 2025
to 30 June 2029

PRESENTED TO THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES PURSUANT
TO SECTION 149 OF THE CROWN
ENTITIES ACT 2004



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

WORKSAFE
Mahi Haumarū Aotearoa

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Foreword

Workplace health and safety is everyone's responsibility. As the primary regulator, WorkSafe New Zealand plays an influencing role in the health and safety system, supporting businesses and workers to reduce the critical risks from work.

WorkSafe's Statement of Intent (2025/26 to 2028/29) reflects a reset of our strategic priorities in order to improve the impact of what we do, with a much stronger focus on our **educate and engage** roles together with a more holistic and nuanced approach to our **enforce** role. It supports the implementation of the government's health and safety reforms, with its focus on addressing the critical risks from work in the health and safety system.

What will be different?

To be more efficient, effective and impactful, WorkSafe needs to make choices about where to target effort and resources to make the biggest difference. We will use our data and insights to focus our effort on reducing the risk of acute, chronic and catastrophic workplace harm with particular focus on four key sectors of the economy – agriculture, construction, forestry and manufacturing.

WorkSafe's approach assumes that the majority of businesses and workers want to do the right thing to keep workplaces and workers safe. As businesses are the primary duty holders, we have an important role in ensuring that businesses, and other duty-holders, know when they have done enough to manage their health and safety risks, reducing the potential for over-compliance and unnecessary costs to business. To this end, we will provide greater clarity on the critical risks a workplace must address so that it can be certain it is meeting its obligation under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA); focus on helping duty-holders do what is proportionate to their risks; provide advice and guidance that addresses the realities of work in a practical way that businesses and workers understand; and provide consistent and clear advice and support to duty holders about how to manage their risks, and certainty so far as possible about what is reasonably practicable.

In order to do this, we will:

- work with and support industry in the development of fit-for-purpose guidance and Approved Codes of Practice (ACOPs)
- build the capability of our inspectorate to engage constructively with business and workers
- ensure greater consistency of enforcement action through standardised approaches, including greater use of enforceable undertakings. Prosecution action will be undertaken when there are serious breaches of the HSWA.
- ensure that our authorisation regimes are robust and best practice and that third party certifiers and delivery partners interpret and apply complex regulation consistently.

Where appropriate, we will use AI to drive improvements in our efficiency and effectiveness.

This Statement of Intent outlines how we will go about doing things differently, the impact we want to have, and how we will measure and hold ourselves to account for our performance.

We believe there is the opportunity to significantly strengthen New Zealand's health and safety system over the next four years. We are committed to playing our part by taking a practical, proportionate and consistent approach to our role as the primary regulator in the health and safety system.



Bill Moran
Acting Chair, Board
31 October 2025



Elena Trout
Chair, Audit Risk and
Finance Committee
31 October 2025

Who we are

Our purpose and role

WorkSafe exists to influence businesses and workers to meet their responsibilities to ensure work is healthy and safe.

Our people are focused on building WorkSafe into a trusted, credible regulator that empowers businesses and workers to keep people safe at work.

The consequences of not taking the right health and safety actions are high and very real. We will influence businesses and workers to get it right from the start.

Our functions include providing guidance, information, codes of practice and safe work instruments. We monitor and enforce compliance – including through the authorisation of third parties.

We are redefining how we go about these functions.

Under our health and safety system in New Zealand, businesses and workers have the primary legal duty – as far as is reasonably practicable – to make sure workers are healthy and safe.

They are not on their own. The wider health and safety system has a collective responsibility for health and safety at work.

WorkSafe is a critical part of that system, which relies on people getting on board and involved, and leadership and accountability from business, workers and government agencies.

We will be working with and through others to improve health and safety outcomes and help ensure the safe supply and use of electricity and gas.

What will be different

Our strategic objectives

We are charting a new path to become a different kind of regulator – one that acknowledges that most businesses and workers want to do the right thing and offers them the support they need to do it. To do this, we are transforming our strategic approach.

New Zealand's economy is unique, with a strong foundation of small and medium-sized businesses. To reduce harm and support safer work, we're aligning ourselves to better serve and support these enterprises – meeting them where they are and helping them succeed.

Healthy and safe work environments are better for business, people and the communities they operate in.

This Statement of Intent sets out the purpose and direction of our transformation, why it matters and what it means for the way we work.

We will be working in partnership with businesses and workers to make it simple and clear what they need to be doing. Our support for those who are creating healthy and safe environments will also be demonstrated by targeting critical risks.

Business and workers will find us easy to work alongside as we deliver our functions in a trusted, credible and engaging manner. We want them to be empowered and confident to create healthy and safe workplaces – tapping into tailored, reliable and practical help and guidance.

Our way of working and strategic intent is creating an operating environment where we are able to respond swiftly to future health and safety reform and changes.

The changes we are making align with the Government's priorities, which aim to:

- focus the health and safety system on managing critical risks
- reduce unnecessary costs for businesses, especially small enterprises
- improve outcomes for workers, businesses, and all New Zealanders
- provide greater clarity and certainty around compliance – helping avoid over-compliance
- shift WorkSafe's core objective from 'providing a balanced framework' to 'managing critical risks from work'.

Shift WorkSafe's core objective to 'managing critical risks from work' from 'providing a balanced framework'

Provide greater clarity and certainty around compliance – helping avoid over-compliance

Reduce unnecessary costs for businesses, especially small enterprises

Improve outcomes for workers, businesses, and all New Zealanders

Focus the health and safety system on managing critical risks

What can business, workers and New Zealand expect

Our approach

Better outcomes

Our vision is that everyone who goes to work comes home healthy and safe.

Everyone has a role to play in managing health and safety risks, and we will be working together to make sure we each play our part.

We will be focusing on what makes the biggest impact to reduce harm. That includes lifting capability, so people have the skills and capability to do their bit, being more efficient and timely in what we do and removing unnecessary obstacles to compliance.

As the Government makes decisions on health and safety in the coming years, we aim to strengthen our response to critical risks through the work we do.

Businesses and workers lead their own health and safety investment – with support and guidance from WorkSafe. We will improve awareness of obligations, knowledge of risks and adoption of controls.

There will be more worker involvement in the management of health and safety and more awareness of their role and worker participation.

More businesses will be operating with the appropriate authorisations as they experience more appropriate and proportionate use of regulatory tools.

Our outcomes framework will help us keep track of the impact of our work.

By influencing improved business management of health and safety, improved worker participation, and the public using electricity and gas safely, the risk of the most serious acute, chronic and catastrophic harm will reduce.

Redefining our way of operating

Our strategic approach is changing how we operate, how we engage, and how we influence the wider health and safety system.

Trust and confidence in our advice, guidance, tools, resources, assessments and enforcement action are critical for business and workers as they look to meet their health and safety obligations.

We are prioritising proactive engagement and support, so businesses have the tools and confidence to do the right thing before harm occurs.

We will be helpful and approachable, providing clear and easy to find information so business and workers know what they need to know and what is reasonably practicable.

WorkSafe will be the credible place to come to for guidance. What we do and offer will be useful and useable.

We are evolving our enforcement approach to be more transparent and proportionate, so when action is needed, it is fair and clearly understood.

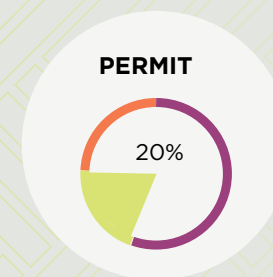
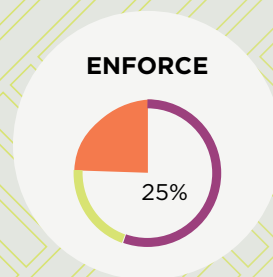
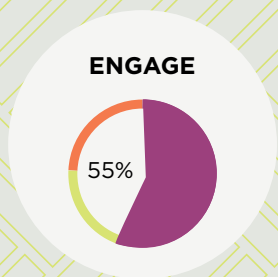
This rebalancing means placing greater emphasis on guidance and collaboration. We will support businesses and individuals to meet their health and safety responsibilities in practical ways, proportionate to risk, and that aren't unnecessarily complex.

We are also building a culture and way of working that enables us to move more quickly to respond to Government health and safety policies and reforms.

While we will deliver on Government priorities and direction, we will also aim to ambitiously exceed what is expected of us as an organisation.

How we influence





We engage – growing understanding of how to meet responsibilities so work is healthy and safe

In 2025/26 55% of our work is engagement: **proactive guidance, partnerships, sector-led initiatives.**

Being clear, approachable, and supportive so people feel confident working with us. We are becoming a regulator that is easy to connect with and trusted to help, by:

- growing a consistent, approachable inspectorate across New Zealand
- increasing inspector presence where it matters most
- ensuring guidance is clear, current and easy to access
- strengthening partnerships to support safer work through local networks
- making it easy for people to confidently meet their obligations through more self service options and better use of digital channels.

We enforce – taking action when responsibilities aren't met so work is healthy and safe

In 2025/26 25% of our work is enforcement: **proportionate enforcement actions, applied consistently across New Zealand.**

WorkSafe supports safe work by applying fair, proportionate enforcement when duties are not met. We tailor our response to the level of risk of harm, using education and guidance, and stronger action when needed.

We're focused on:

- clear expectations and consistent enforcement
- targeting critical risks
- strengthening responses to worker breaches.

We permit – authorising, permitting and monitoring high risk work activities

In 2025/26 20% of our work is permitting: **high-risk activity licensing, oversight of third-party certifiers.**

WorkSafe helps ensure high-risk work is done safely by authorising activities that could cause serious harm. We're focused on making our permitting processes clear, consistent, and easy to navigate. We are:

- strengthening oversight of third-party certifiers
- digitising and increasing the transparency of decision-making
- setting clear expectations for regulated parties.

Energy Safety and Major Hazard, Petroleum and Geothermal Facilities

WorkSafe keeps New Zealand safe by regulating electricity, gas and major hazard facilities. WorkSafe protects people and property through guidance, audits, investigations, and public education. Seasonal safety campaigns help the public use electricity and gas more safely. We work closely with key agencies and contribute to national and international standards to ensure consistent, high-quality safety practices. We work with others to promote good practice in the assessment and management of major hazards.

How we will go about things

Our strategic intentions and priorities

Going where the greatest need is

WorkSafe will be clear about the areas of harm that need to be under the spotlight and where healthier and safer work practices need to be embedded.

We have data, insights and statistics that tell us where WorkSafe's health and safety focus must be - acute, chronic and catastrophic harm and in four key sectors - agriculture, construction, forestry and manufacturing.

Since 2002, there has been a long-term downward trend in work-related acute fatalities (a fatality resulting from a single event rather than from chronic disease). The exceptions to the downward trend reflect the 2010 Pike River mine explosion and the 2011 Canterbury earthquakes.

WORK-RELATED FATALITIES

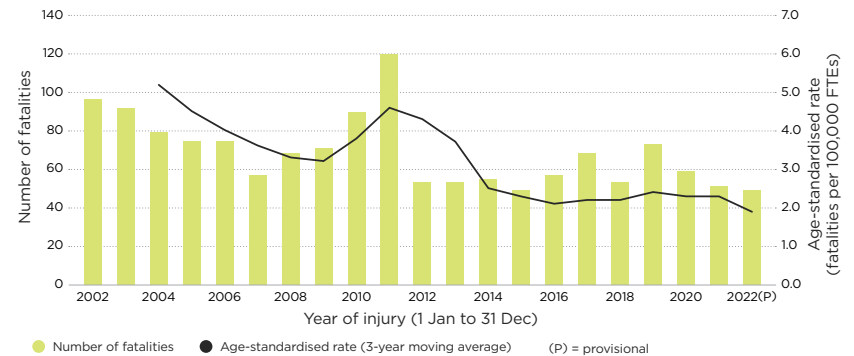


FIGURE 1: Acute fatalities

New Zealand has a growing number of businesses and workers (data source: StatsNZ). WorkSafe needs to make choices about where to target effort and resources to make the biggest difference according to need.

NUMBER OF ENTERPRISES AND EMPLOYEES AT FEBRUARY 2023

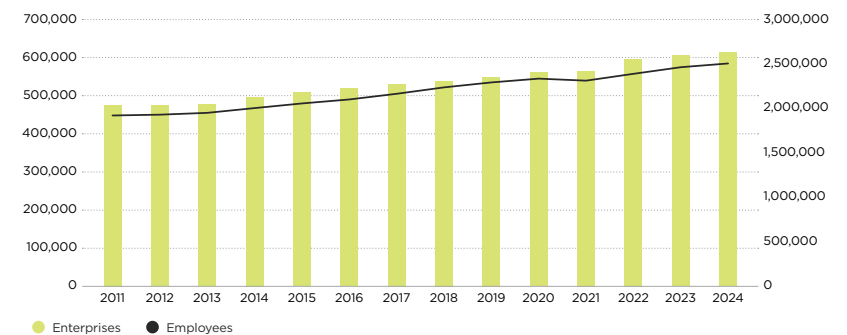


FIGURE 2: Number of enterprises and employees at February 2011-2024

What is it?

Acute harm	Chronic harm	Catastrophic harm
Serious work-related injuries – some resulting in long-term disability 50–60 people are killed at work, and 400–500 are hospitalised each year	Work related ill health that develops over time 750–900 people die each year Leading causes are cancer and respiratory diseases often linked to exposure to hazardous substances such as asbestos and silica	Multiple people suffer serious injury or death from a single event May cause significant economic or environmental damage

How does WorkSafe respond to the risk of harm?

Focusing on critical risks across acute, chronic and catastrophic harm

WorkSafe is committed to ensuring our regulatory activities are proportionate, practical and strategically aligned with the government's reform agenda. A key part of this commitment is our focus on critical risks – those that have the greatest potential to cause acute, chronic or catastrophic harm. Our standardised assessment tools, developed for the four priority sectors (forestry, construction, manufacturing, and agriculture), are designed to guide inspector attention toward the most significant areas of harm. These tools focus on risks of both acute and chronic harm. Risk of catastrophic harm is addressed through our High Hazards Inspectorate and Authorisations function, including the permit programme.

We also recognise that critical risks are present across many sectors, and we support all duty holders to identify and manage their specific critical risks. Our approach encourages mature risk management and helps duty holders focus on what matters most, rather than low-consequence issues. This principle is reflected in our communications resource [What to expect from a WorkSafe assessment](#) which aims to clarify the assessment process and support businesses in preparing for engagement with our inspectors.

	Acute harm	Chronic harm	Catastrophic harm
WorkSafe provides advice, guidance and education to businesses and workers	✓ In higher risk industries like construction, agriculture, forestry and manufacturing	✓ Including in the construction and engineered stone industries	✓
WorkSafe assesses workplaces to ensure risks are being adequately managed	✓	✓	✓
WorkSafe takes enforcement action as needed	✓	✓	✓
WorkSafe inspects major hazard facilities and takes actions			✓
WorkSafe monitors mines, quarries and other dangerous sites			✓
WorkSafe authorises high-risk activities when certain health and safety criteria are met			✓

Working together with others in the system

We will be doing our job alongside, and in collaboration with, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), other designated agencies under HSWA (Maritime NZ and the Civil Aviation Authority), the New Zealand Police, the New Zealand Transport Agency, ACC, the Environmental Protection Authority, businesses, iwi and unions.

WorkSafe's focus will be on areas of critical risk in the health and safety system. We will investigate serious breaches of the HSWA wherever they arise in the system. We will work with other agencies (such as the New Zealand Transport Agency, Maritime NZ or the Civil Aviation Authority) who already influence improvements to health and safety in certain areas, to work as efficiently as possible.

Being proportionate, practical, clear and consistent

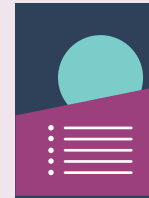
What WorkSafe does, and how it does it, will make a difference for business and workers.

For those who are unsure of what to do to meet their health and safety obligations – they should contact us for information and guidance.

For those who know what to do but need help to make it happen – we can help.

For those who know what to do, and are able to do it – but don't, we will be there to hold them accountable.

Businesses and workers will get:



Easy to understand guidance that addresses the 'on-the-ground' realities of work in a **practical** way



More Approved Codes of Practice (ACOPs)



Help to do what is **proportionate** to the risks and to avoid over-compliance



Consistent and clear advice and support to manage risks, and as much certainty as possible about what is 'reasonably practicable'

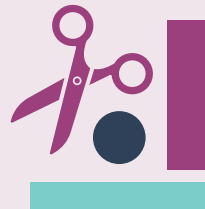


An oversight system so third-party certifiers and delivery partners interpret and apply complex regulation consistently

Businesses and workers will experience:



Collaboration – partnering with others, including industry leaders, businesses and global innovators to make sure our support, guidance and actions are practical, relevant, timely and cost effective. Better collaboration with industry, community advocates and workers to reach the right places, delivering better service and impact.



Tailored, easy to access tools and support – the right information delivered in the right way, through the channel that works for you.



Evidence based actions – a clear consistent enforcement decision making model (EDM), and an enforcement approach focused on clear breaches and causes, and consistent with the Solicitor-General's prosecution guidelines. Better collection and use of data and information, including development of a single source of truth.



A coordinated, consistent and clear experience – better coordination for a consistent experience of WorkSafe. This includes new inspector training and recruitment.



Responsiveness – complaints and inquiries will be resolved quickly, efficiently and in a supportive way. Duty holders will have an easy way to provide feedback on the timeliness and effectiveness of our guidance, inspections and other engagements.

Focusing on five impactful regulatory tools



Five areas of focus over the next three years will help us to deliver on our strategy and the health and safety reforms:



1. inspectorate



2. guidance



3. enforcement



4. permit improvement



5. feedback systems

Building up what inspectors do and how they do it

WorkSafe inspectors are often the face of WorkSafe. They are the ones businesses and workers have the most contact with. Inspectors play a critical role if we are to successfully make dramatic shifts in health and safety in workplaces.

Enhancing our inspectorate workforce capability to match the outcomes we are seeking is crucial.

Our inspectors not only provide advice and guidance to support businesses and workers to understand what they need to do to address critical risks in the workplace, they also have a role to build trust and confidence in WorkSafe as a regulator.

We're building on the strengths of our inspectorate work programme, and re-orienting and improving aspects of it. Over time, we expect to see the proportion of proactive assessments (undertaken as part of a planned, targeted campaign of assessment visits such as in our priority sectors) rise as we effectively target risk, rather than responding reactively (in response to an accident, notification or concern received).

We're doing more to ensure our inspectorate expertise is developed and shared, while also equipping inspectors in the field with the right information or the ability to get technical advice from experts when they need it.

WorkSafe inspectors use regulatory tools where needed, such as issuing improvement notices. Inspectors are being trained to take a consistent, fair, supportive, proportionate approach to the use of enforcement tools.

These changes will build confidence amongst businesses and workers through more consistent, collaborative, educative and engaging interactions.

Businesses and workers will see:

- **A more visible and consistent inspection approach**
 - more inspectors on-site, including those shadowing or observing
 - the same assessment process no matter where you are in the country.
- **Improved business experience with inspectors**
 - consistent and informed interactions with approachable inspectors. Inspections will be more predictable and more timely, with clearer guidance and better decision-making
 - more relevant conversations with clearer links between risks and expectations. Advice will be more practical and aligned with current knowledge, helping businesses understand expectations and manage critical risks more effectively.
- **Improved impact**
 - integrated, responsive, and impactful regulatory services that make a difference to business health and safety performance
 - new tools to ensure consistent delivery, evidence and insights, using technology, and an integrated and aligned inspectorate team with the right skills, capabilities, accountability and mindsets to be effective.



Guidance that helps and supports

Operating in a healthy and safe work environment is part and parcel of being in business, employing people and doing a job.

If WorkSafe makes it easy for people to understand how to keep work healthy and safe, and how to manage the risk then they are going to find it easier to do the right thing.

Guidance is one of the tools to do this.

Our guidance is undergoing a major revamp and refresh. We're doing this with industry and stakeholders.

One of the ways WorkSafe provides guidance is through Approved Codes of Practice (ACOPs), which help employers and workers understand how to keep work healthy and safe in high-risk areas such as asbestos removal and forestry. ACOPs outline WorkSafe's expectations and offer a benchmark for what is considered 'reasonably practicable' under the law. WorkSafe will continue to develop new ACOPs and collaborate with MBIE to prioritise them. We also support industry-led ACOPs, offering quality assurance and minimum standards to ensure consistency and effectiveness.

Duty holders and industries will see:

- **Improved guidance and access to information**

- industry will play a clearer role in shaping the ACOP process
- stakeholders will benefit from faster delivery of practical, up-to-date guidance
- outdated materials will be removed, and improvements to WorkSafe's website structure and content will make it easier to find relevant information.

- **Enhanced industry engagement and digital access**

- Industry will have greater confidence in starting and progressing the development of guidance thanks to a clear endorsement and approval process.
- We will support the shift to more industry-led ACOPs.
- Guidance products are becoming timelier and more responsive. Improvements to WorkSafe's digital channels will make it easier for visitors to find what they want, and it will be relevant and useful information.
- Advice will be clear on what is reasonably practicable.
- Technological solutions will support efficient and collaborative development of guidance that is practical, understandable and accessible.



Enforcement that is proportionate and educates

We are shifting to ensure where enforcement action is taken it is proportionate, and we are transparent about it.

Enforcement action can be important to keep a fair playing field. We don't want one company cutting corners and taking risks and trying to get a competitive advantage by doing so. To create fairness across an industry, we will take a proportionate approach to enforcement.

This will see more enforceable undertakings (EUs). An EU is a voluntary agreement between WorkSafe and a duty holder, made under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA). These can be used if there is a breach (or alleged breach) of HSWA. They are legally binding and are generally used as an alternative to prosecution.

This can be a more constructive alternative to prosecution in the right circumstances.

Where non-compliance creates unacceptable risk for workers and others, we assess the gap between how the work is being carried out and how it should be done to keep workers and others healthy and safe.



Addressing the gap may involve informal tools (such as verbal directions and directive letters where the risk gap is low); formal tools (such as improvement or prohibition notices); regulatory sanctions (such as infringement notices and enforceable undertakings where the risk gap is moderate); and court sanctions (such as court orders) where the risk gap is substantial or extreme. WorkSafe also considers factors such as whether there is a history of similar incidents.

WorkSafe's Enforcement Decision-making Model (EDM) provides a framework to guide inspector decisions on an enforcement response what is appropriate to the circumstances.

WorkSafe enforces compliance where businesses fail to meet their obligations, permits high-risk activities where standards are met, and monitors compliance. WorkSafe is reviewing the EDM to improve consistency and ensure enforcement and prosecution policies are consistent with the Solicitor-General's 11 January 2025 guidelines. The review is expected to be completed during 2025/26.

Businesses and workers will see:

- an even-handed enforcement approach, which includes strengthening our approach to duty holders and workers on breaches of duty
- greater and more consistent use of EUs that are strategically aligned, proportionate and clearly guided by established prosecution principles
- clearer expectations and more consistent, proportionate enforcement decisions.

Permit – reducing regulatory risk

Permitting is a regulatory function to ensure health and safety risks are managed in regulated work and activities. The government has set specific regulations for high-risk work that could result in serious or catastrophic harm if risks are not managed well. This includes mining, adventure activities, asbestos removal, some work involving hazardous substances, and operating equipment such as cranes and scaffolding.

WorkSafe oversees 15 permitting regimes. There are approximately 8,000 regulated parties in New Zealand. While WorkSafe directly authorises some, others are authorised via external providers (for example, third-party certifiers). WorkSafe is responsible for checking that businesses and individuals permitted to undertake this high-risk work meet the safety requirements of their authorised activity.

Strengthening our oversight system

WorkSafe will strengthen its relationships with and improve how it manages performance expectations of third-party arrangements (certifiers). WorkSafe will also improve how it monitors authorisations, with a risk-based approach, to support improved quality and timely authorisation decision-making.

WorkSafe will actively publish regulatory clarifications, which are short technical guidance, to guide certifiers on good practice for meeting regulatory requirements. The development of these clarifications will be informed by feedback from industry bodies alongside monitoring results.

WorkSafe will also publish its positions on particular issues on its website. Our positions will discuss our approach to the interpretation of a key concept of law where there are implications for the regulated sector. This will help enhance transparency and ensures certifiers understand the WorkSafe approach.

The improvements to monitoring coupled with our publications will enable consistency in decision-making and interpretation of legislation by certifiers and ensure they are fulfilling their regulatory role effectively.

Permit holders and applicants will see:

- clear expectations for those carrying out regulated high-risk work, and for third-party certifiers who provide safety assurance
- updated agreements that set out expectations for key designated third parties
- further regulatory clarifications to support decision making of third-party certifiers
- more efficient, consistent and transparent permitting processes
- improved monitoring and assurance that requirements are being met
- practical, understandable and accessible guidance.



Feedback systems

WorkSafe will undertake a full review of its feedback processes to identify areas for improvement – including in our processes and the experience people have of us.

WorkSafe will also pilot a feedback mechanism for duty holders to provide feedback on the timeliness and effectiveness of inspector engagements.

The feedback system programme will learn from the road cone digital hotline pilot operating in 2025/26. The pilot has provided WorkSafe with an opportunity to test a more systematic approach to feedback from duty holders, and these lessons will help develop further opportunities for feedback. Inspectors have been trained in what good looks like, and WorkSafe will continue to work closely with road-controlling authorities to follow up on actions from public notifications.

To deliver this activity we are:

Formalising stakeholder partnerships

Relationships with stakeholders will be stronger and it will be easier to hear industry voices. This will include more structured information, knowledge and tools are shared widely and effectively.

Our stakeholder partnerships will include:

- industry groups, community advocates and workers – to reach more people, make our services work better, and increase the impact of what we do
- business leaders and international experts to use proven health and safety solutions to build and deliver useful, timely and affordable guidance and education tools.

WorkSafe and ACC are required to have a workplace injury prevention action plan (referred to as the Harm Reduction Action Plan or HRAP). The HRAP comprises the agencies' focus areas aimed at preventing work-related harm in New Zealand, irrespective of funding source, and is required to be refreshed at least every three years. Work to refresh the 2023–2026 HRAP is being scoped.

Stakeholders will see:

- a standardised approach
- better coordination
- consistency across all channels including workplace assessments, notifications and the permitting process.

Making the most of digital and cyber technologies

WorkSafe will make significant investment in digital technology to:

- support the development of guidance products and deliver services through digital channels
- help build our understanding of where work-related harm is happening
- make it easier and more efficient to access our products and services.

Data and information

Data is an important enabler of our work. We use it to understand trends and to develop risk models to identify and target areas of greatest harm.

We know that many industry groups and businesses access the data to improve their health and safety responses.

We will improve how we collect and use data and information, have a single source of truth to generate insights and better target our work.

Organisational health

WorkSafe's evolving operating environment and context creates new opportunities and challenges for how WorkSafe operates and delivers core regulatory activities. The commitment and capability of WorkSafe's people will contribute to healthy and safe work for all workers.

WorkSafe's strategy ensures a focus on its core responsibilities as a regulator. WorkSafe is building the culture, capability and capacity needed to achieve outcomes and deliver for New Zealand. Central to this is creating a strong learning culture that enables us to evolve and adapt our work environment to meet future demands. WorkSafe continues to focus on developing a highly skilled workforce.

WorkSafe will ensure it has the right people to translate strategy into action and support the Government's priorities. WorkSafe is mindful that people are at the heart of its strategy and that supporting them to adapt and thrive is essential in a constantly evolving environment.

The way WorkSafe operates, and our activity will be informed and shaped by:

- making choices based on where the greatest risk of harm lies
- choosing the most effective interventions
- measuring what we do
- being set up for success.

Capability – WorkSafe staff have the skills and leadership needed to deliver the strategy. This is strengthened through targeted development, clear expectations, and accessible learning. Leaders are equipped to grow capability, drive performance and support career progression.

Culture – WorkSafe fosters a performance-driven culture aligned with its values. Success is supported through clear expectations, regular feedback, recognition, inclusion and leadership role modelling.

Capacity – WorkSafe has the right people in the right roles, supported by workforce planning and recruitment.

What success will look like

- WorkSafe is a great place to work. The organisation sets a benchmark for healthy and safe working environments that are inclusive and diverse and where organisational values are lived in everyday work.
- Leadership is modelled throughout WorkSafe and harnesses engagement and effective delivery of the strategy.
- WorkSafe's strategy and plans are delivered in a way that are clear and direct. Leaders adapt and lead their teams successfully through a changing environment.
- WorkSafe manages its finances responsibly and transparently.
- WorkSafe understands its place in the health and safety system and influences the system by enacting its responsibility to enforce, engage and permit.
- WorkSafe staff understand how their work contributes to the priorities of the organisation. Teams are clear on the way forward, have a plan in place and know what and how they need to deliver.



Anchoring what
we do in strategy

Government is reforming the health and safety at work system

1

WHAT IS NEW ZEALAND'S HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK REGULATORY SYSTEM?

It is a system of rules created by law that requires businesses,² with support and involvement from workers, to ensure work is healthy and safe.

2

WHAT IS OUR ROLE?

We are the primary regulator, and our main role is to influence businesses and workers to meet responsibilities to ensure work is healthy and safe.

We are focusing more on engagement

3

HOW DO WE DELIVER OUR ROLE?

We influence in three key ways:



ENGAGE

Helping businesses and workers to understand how to meet their responsibilities to ensure work is healthy and safe.



ENFORCE

Taking action against those who fail to meet their responsibilities to ensure work is healthy and safe.



PERMIT

Allowing businesses and individuals to carry out high-risk work activities that require permission to do so.

Our strategy and outcomes framework provide the foundations and flexibility to deliver what is required of us as a regulator

We will focus on high-risk industries such as agriculture, construction, forestry and manufacturing

4

WHERE DO WE FOCUS OUR EFFORT?

Some work is more dangerous, and some workers are at greater risk of harm. We focus our effort on where it will make the biggest difference and contribute to equitable outcomes. We are guided by evidence and insights about the risks that can lead to three types of harm:

ACUTE

Serious injury, illness, or death, that arises from a single event.

CHRONIC

Serious injury, illness, or death, that is caused over time.

CATASTROPHIC

Serious injury, illness, or death, affecting multiple people - usually from a single event.

Our strategic work programme includes:

1. inspectorate
2. future guidance
3. enforcement
4. permit improvement
5. feedback systems

² In this context, we use the word 'businesses' as shorthand to refer to persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBUs) as well as the officers of a PCBU, such as company directors.

5

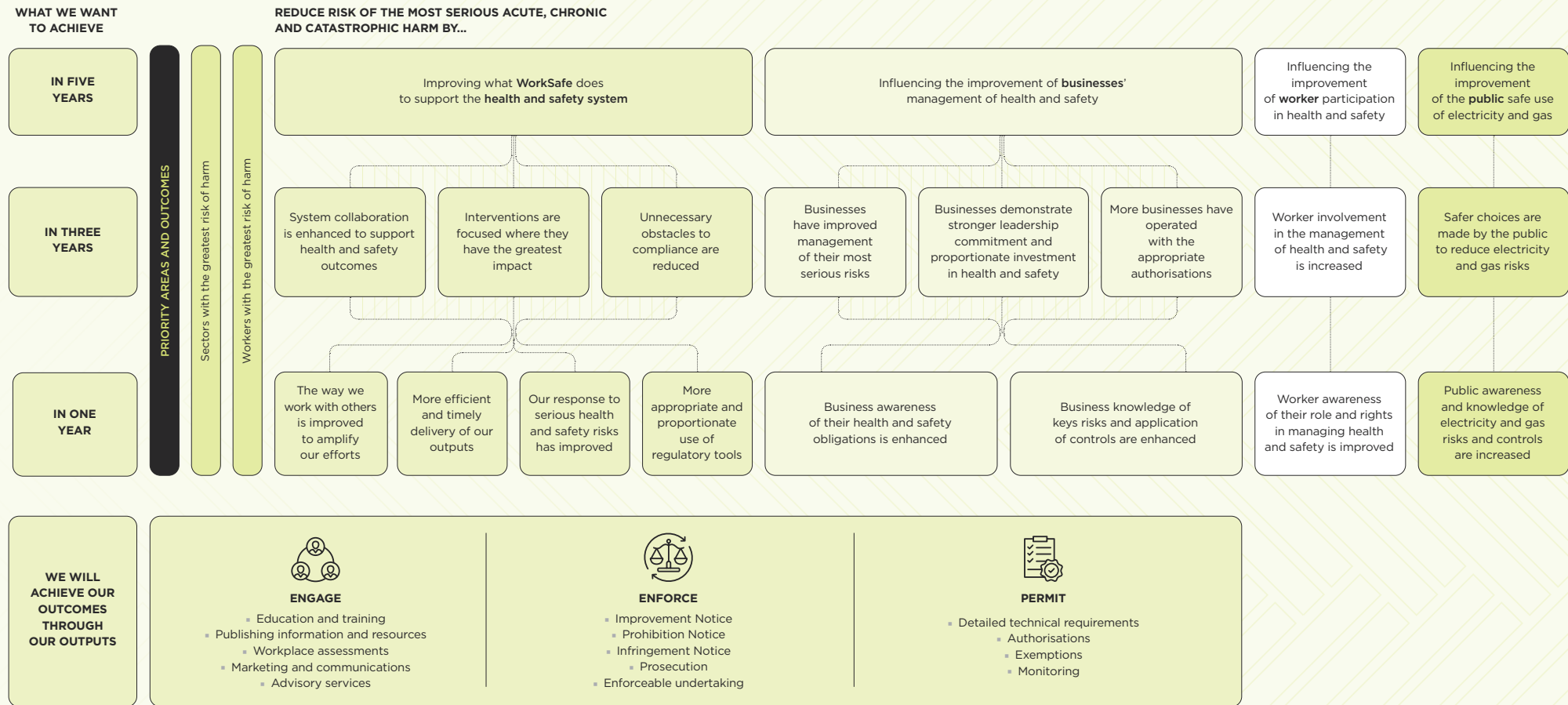
HOW DO WE KNOW WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE?

By measuring the effectiveness of our influencing role in ensuring work is healthy and safe.

Our outcomes framework shows the difference we want to make

Outcomes framework

Our strategy defines our role and vision as:
We are the primary regulator, and our main role is to influence businesses and workers to meet responsibilities to ensure work is healthy and safe



How will we know the difference we have made

Performance measures

Assessing strategic performance

WorkSafe will measure its contribution towards health and safety outcomes in the system through measuring and reporting on:

- the system-level outcomes it contributes to
- the long-term and medium-term outcomes of its activities
- carbon goals
- organisational health.

WorkSafe's outcomes framework is set out on page 24.

System level outcome measures

Together with others in the health and safety system, over time, WorkSafe contributes to reducing the risk of harm. WorkSafe will contribute to reporting on progress. WorkSafe contributes to reducing:

- the rate of fatal injuries
- the rate of serious non-fatal injuries
- weeks away from work.

WorkSafe annual reports will detail how the rates of fatal and serious non-fatal injuries are changing over time as well as any new system-level outcome measures introduced during the SOI period.

Long-term and medium-term outcomes

Our long-term outcomes outline the changes we want to see over the next five years.

We based our framework on a health and safety system that involves the regulator, businesses, and workers all playing a role in managing health and safety. Businesses manage risks from their work, workers participate in health and safety management, and the regulator influences and holds businesses and workers accountable.

In energy safety, both WorkSafe and businesses have responsibilities. However, the people using energy extend beyond workers to the wider public.

Under four pillars, WorkSafe, businesses, workers and the public, our outcomes seek to achieve a reduction in the risk of the most serious acute, chronic and catastrophic harm.

We have set short-term and medium-term outcomes as milestones to track our progress towards achieving the long-term outcomes. Short-term measures are outlined each year in WorkSafe's Statement of Performance Expectations.

WorkSafe will measure the difference it is making

WorkSafe will track its progress towards its long-term and medium-term outcomes using the following measures, which will be reported in its annual reports. WorkSafe is also developing strategic measures to improve how it tracks and reports its performance in delivering long term outcomes.

In addition, WorkSafe will report quarterly on its progress in implementing the Government's health and safety reforms, as well as the strategic shifts it is making – specifically, becoming more proportionate and practical in its actions, and more consistent and clear in its advice.

The table overleaf which demonstrates how the existing eight measures contribute to each of the four long-term outcomes which are:

1 Reduce risk of the most serious acute, chronic and catastrophic harm by improving what WorkSafe does to support the health and safety system

2 Reduce risk of the most serious acute, chronic and catastrophic harm by influencing the improvement of businesses' management of health and safety

3 Reduce risk of the most serious acute, chronic and catastrophic harm by influencing the improvement of worker participation in health and safety

4 Reduce risk of the most serious acute, chronic and catastrophic harm by influencing the improvement of the public safe use of electricity and gas

The rationale behind the design of these measures reflects a deliberate effort to capture meaningful contributions to long-term outcomes. Further detail on this rationale can be found in the appendices.

	Target	Shifts		Link to long-term outcomes			
				1 WorkSafe	2 Business	3 Workers	4 Public
1. Percent of employers rating WorkSafe guidance/information very or extremely useful	≥65%	Practical, consistent and clear	Guidance		✓	✓	
2. Percent agreeing 'WorkSafe staff helped find practical ways to improve health and safety'	≥70%	Practical, consistent and clear	Inspectorate		✓	✓	
3. Percent of improvement notices closed within the stated compliance period (complied or approved alternative remedy)	≥95%	Proportionate critical risk	Enforcement		✓		
4. Percent of investigations opened in priority sectors (construction, manufacturing, agriculture, forestry; including priority sub-sectors)	≥80%	Proportionate critical risk	Inspectorate		✓	✓	
5. Percent of authorisations that WorkSafe decides and notifies within the agreed timeframes	≥80%	Consistent and clear critical risk	Permit improvement	✓			
6. Percent satisfaction with the application process of people applying for authorisations	≥80%	Consistent and clear	Permit improvement		✓		
7. Percent of Energy Safety investigations completed within 60 working days	≥90%	Proportionate consistent and clear Critical Risk	Energy safety				✓
8. Percent of employers/workers reporting at least one change made after a WorkSafe inspector interaction	≥85%	Practical, consistent and clear critical risk	Inspectorate		✓	✓	



Impacts Effectiveness Monitor

WorkSafe's Impacts Effectiveness Monitor (IEM) survey determines whether WorkSafe's interactions with businesses result in changes to how employers and workers behave, think and feel about work-related harm. The results help WorkSafe to understand its impacts and effectiveness in the health and safety system and support WorkSafe's continuous improvement as an organisation.

WorkSafe will also publish case studies in each annual report setting out key interventions designed and delivered during the year, including collaboratively designed interventions, and the results of any evaluations.

WorkSafe's annual Statement of Performance Expectations will set out how it will measure its outputs each year.

WorkSafe's outcomes framework on page 24 sets out its activities and the system-level outcomes it contributes to.



Appendices

Legislation

WorkSafe operates under a legislative mandate to promote and enforce health and safety in workplaces across New Zealand. Its core responsibilities are defined through:

- **WorkSafe New Zealand Act 2013:** establishes WorkSafe as the primary workplace health and safety regulator and outlines its functions, including developing safe work instruments.
- **Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA):** the cornerstone of New Zealand's health and safety system. It sets out the duties of businesses, workers, and regulators to ensure healthy and safe work environments.
- **Electricity Act 1992 and Gas Act 1992:** provides WorkSafe with regulatory responsibilities for the safe supply and use of electricity and gas.

More information is available on [worksafe.govt.nz](https://www.worksafe.govt.nz)

Funding

WorkSafe is funded primarily through the Multi-Category appropriation (MCA): Vote Labour Market Appropriation: Workplace Relations and Safety – Workplace Health and Safety. The appropriation is limited to information, education, leadership, guidance, support, and enforcement relating to the health and safety of workers and workplaces. This appropriation is intended to achieve healthier, safer and more knowledgeable workplaces (to be updated if required). The MCA covers:

- Supporting Best Practice in Work Health and Safety
- Enforcing Work Health and Safety Compliance
- Authorising and Monitoring Work Health and Safety Activities
- Energy Safety
- Major Hazard Facilities, Petroleum and Geothermal.

WorkSafe also receives funding through the Energy Safety Levy and third-party revenue.

Approach to carrying out functions

WorkSafe has adopted a continuous improvement cycle that focuses on understanding work-related harm, designing targeted interventions to reduce that harm, delivering services that support businesses and workers to meet their health and safety responsibilities, and measuring the impact of those services. These core functions are underpinned by robust corporate services that enable effective delivery.

Governance

WorkSafe is a Crown entity, governed by a board whose expertise includes public sector governance; central government processes; New Zealand's work health and safety environment, including work illness and occupational disease; perspectives of workers; perspectives of businesses; administration of work health and safety legislation and risk management frameworks; and business generally. Board members are appointed by the Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety.

Sustainability

To reduce its environmental impact, WorkSafe has developed a Strategic Approach to Environmental Sustainability. This outlines how it will cut emissions and adapt to climate change as part of a government-wide effort. WorkSafe aims to reduce emissions by 25% by 2025 and 45% by 2030, from a 2018/19 baseline. These targets will be regularly reviewed. In 2024/25, emissions were 791 tonnes CO₂e – 61% lower than the baseline.

Performance measures

Alongside the three system-level outcome measures (rates of fatalities, non-fatal serious injuries and injuries resulting in more than a week away from work) on page 25, we also evaluate progress toward our long-term outcomes. The table overleaf outlines the specific long-term measures selected to demonstrate progress for each outcome. It also provides the rationale behind each measure, explaining how it supports ongoing performance tracking and contributes to a clearer understanding of our impact over time.

Outcomes

1. Reduce risk of the most serious acute, chronic and catastrophic harm by improving what WorkSafe does to support the health and safety system
2. Reduce risk of the most serious acute, chronic and catastrophic harm by influencing the improvement of businesses' management of health and safety
3. Reduce risk of the most serious acute, chronic and catastrophic harm by influencing the improvement of worker participation in health and safety
4. Reduce risk of the most serious acute, chronic and catastrophic harm by influencing the improvement of the public safe use of electricity and gas

Measure	Target	Shift	Rationale: Why these measures are selected	Link to long-term outcomes*			
				1	2	3	4
1. Percent of employers rating WorkSafe guidance/information useful	≥65%	Practical, consistent and clear Guidance	This measure helps assess whether our products are practical and genuinely useful for businesses – which is key to reducing over-compliance and increasing certainty. It also reflects progress toward the long-term goal of supporting people to become self-sufficient and responsible for their own health and safety.		✓		
2. Percent agreeing ‘WorkSafe staff helped businesses find practical ways to improve health and safety’	≥70%	Practical, consistent and clear Inspectorate	This measure reflects how effectively we engage early and constructively, and whether inspectors are supporting proportionate and practical improvements. It also aligns with the reform priorities, which emphasise early engagement and encourage businesses to take responsibility for their own health and safety.		✓	✓	
3. Percent of improvement notices closed within the stated compliance period (complied or approved alternative remedy)	≥95%	Proportionate Critical risk Enforcement	This measure is a leading indicator of progress toward long-term outcomes. Verified notice closures confirm that appropriate controls have been implemented following regulatory action. This demonstrates that compliance efforts are translating into meaningful improvements in workplace safety. By driving reductions in acute, chronic, and catastrophic harm over time, this measure plays a critical role in tracking and influencing outcome movement.	✓			

Measure	Target	Shift	Rationale: Why these measures are selected	Link to long-term outcomes*			
				1	2	3	4
4. Percent of investigations opened in priority sectors (construction, manufacturing, agriculture, forestry; including priority sub-sectors).	≥80%	Proportionate Critical risk Inspectorate	This measure is a leading indicator of progress toward long-term outcomes. By focusing investigations on high-risk sectors such as construction, manufacturing, agriculture and forestry, it ensures that regulatory efforts are strategically targeted where they can have the greatest impact. This alignment supports effective resource use and drives reductions in acute, chronic, and catastrophic harm over time. As a result, the measure plays a critical role in tracking and influencing outcome movement, demonstrating that operational activity is contributing to meaningful improvements in safety and compliance.		✓	✓	
5. Percent of authorisations that WorkSafe decides and notifies within the agreed timeframes	≥80%	Consistent and clear Critical risk Permit improvement	This measure acts as a long-term enabler. Timely authorisations help build trust, reduce over-compliance, and ensure that appropriate controls are in place before hazardous work begins. Over time, this shifts behaviours in ways that reduce harm and improve safety outcomes.	✓			
6. Percent of satisfaction with the application process of people applying for authorisations	≥80%	Consistent and clear Permit improvement	This measure improves system efficiency and trust by providing a clear, accessible permitting pathway. It reduces unnecessary regulatory burden while maintaining safety standards, encouraging timely and proactive engagement. Over time, this fosters a shift toward early implementation of controls, helping prevent harm and reduce workplace injuries - key indicators of long-term health and safety outcomes.		✓		

Measure	Target	Shift	Rationale: Why these measures are selected	Link to long-term outcomes*			
				1	2	3	4
7. Percent of Energy Safety investigations completed within 60 working days	≥90%	Proportionate, consistent and clear Critical risk Energy safety*	The primary long-term indicator is Energy Safety timeliness. Faster investigations drive earlier product recall, warnings and hazard removal – shortening public exposure windows and improving long-run safety outcomes. We'll complement this with narrative on recalls/alerts in quarterly/annual reporting.				✓
8. Percent of employers/workers reporting at least one change made after a WorkSafe inspector interaction.	≥85%	Practical Consistent and clear Critical risk Inspectorate	This measure shows whether inspector interactions lead to meaningful changes in workplace practices. It reflects how well we engage early and constructively, and whether inspectors support proportionate, practical improvements. It also aligns with the Minister's reform priorities, which focus on early engagement and encouraging businesses to take responsibility for their own health and safety.		✓	✓	

* Energy Safety is funded separately through energy safety levies.

Disclaimer

WorkSafe New Zealand has made every effort to ensure that the information contained in this publication is reliable, but makes no guarantee of its completeness. WorkSafe may change the contents of this publication at any time without notice.

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