

Mining / Resources

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Health and safety alerts

Current Northern Territory and national Health and [Safety Alerts](#).

Information bulletins

Following is the latest Information Bulletin available for the mining industry:

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[Risk Management plans – mining operations](#)

Safe Work Australia

Safe Work Australia and the Safe Work Australia Council have been established as a replacement to the Australian Safety and Compensation Council (ASCC).

The fifteen member council was formed on Tuesday 31 March and comprises of an independent Chair, representatives from each State, Territory and the Australian Government. The council also includes two members who represent the interests of workers, two members who represent employers and a chief executive. Mr Tom Phillips was appointed Chair of the council on Wednesday 27 May 2009. Ms Laurene Hull, Executive Director of NT WorkSafe represents the Northern Territory on the council.

Safe Work Australia has been established as an executive agency to support the council and is an independent body. Further information on Safe Work Australia and the key functions of the council can be found on the Safe Work Australia [website](#).

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National Standards and Codes of Practice

A function of Safe Work Australia and previously the Australian Safety and Compensation Council is to develop national standards and codes of practice relating to occupational health and safety.

The standards and codes of practice are produced as a model for laws in the States and Territories, with the aim of achieving nationally consistent regulations. These standards and codes of practice are not legally enforceable until the States or Territories formally adopt them as regulations or as a code of practice under the main occupational health and safety regulation.

The National Standard for Storage and Handling Workplace Dangerous Goods was created in March 2001 and the following code of practice has been developed in support for the standards for the mining industry.

[Code of Practice for the Storage and Handling of Dangerous Goods](#)

The Northern Territory Government has approved the code of practice under the Northern Territory Dangerous Goods Act.

The codes of practice are useful guidance materials in assisting employers meet their occupational health and safety requirements and are available on the Safe Work Australia site.

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National Mine Safety Framework

NT WorkSafe is part of a national tripartite group working on the development of a nationally consistent occupational health and safety (OHS) regime for the mining industry. The group has developed a framework that consists of seven strategies reflecting different aspects of the OHS issue. The Council of Australian Governments has approved the implementation report for the framework and work is progressing on the following seven strategies.

- consistent legislation
- industry competencies
- compliance support
- enforcement protocols
- data collection and analysis
- consultation mechanisms
- research

Funding for the implementation of the framework was committed by the Australian, States and Northern Territory governments in July. Implementation of the framework will begin in 2009/10.

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National Licensing System

The Northern Territory has signed an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with other jurisdictions agreeing to begin the implementation process for the National Licensing System (NLS) which is scheduled to commence on 1 July 2012.

The agreement was signed at the Council of Australian Governments on 30 April 2009 in recognition that Australia's overlapping and inconsistent regulations regarding licensing, impeded productivity growth.

The initial occupational areas covered by the NLS are:

- refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics
- building and building related occupations
- electrical
- land transport (passenger vehicle drivers and dangerous goods only)
- maritime
- plumbing and gasfitting, and
- property agents.

Draft legislation is currently being developed and is expected to be released for public comment in late 2009.

More information can be found on the [NLS](#) website.

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Changes to NT Workplace Health and Safety Legislation

The Northern Territory along with other jurisdictions is currently working with Safe Work Australia to harmonise occupation health and safety (OHS) legislation across Australia.

The Council of Australia Governments formally committed to the harmonisation of OHS legislation in July 2008, by signing an Intergovernmental Agreement for Regulatory and Operational Reform in OHS.

The agreement requires each state and territory to pass their own laws that mirror the model OHS laws and adopt them by December 2011.

The model OHS laws have been drafted and will soon be released in late September for public comment.

NT WorkSafe will hold a number of information sessions across the Territory to provide information on the changes to current OHS laws and the implementation. Information sessions will be held in the following regions.

Alice Springs

Thursday 1 October – 12.30pm to 1.30pm – Crowne Plaza
Wednesday 28 October – 5.30pm to 6.30pm – Diplomat Motel

Darwin

Thursday 8 October – 3.30pm to 4.30pm – Holiday Inn Esplanade

Katherine

Thursday 1 October – 1.00pm to 2.00pm – Knotts Crossing Resort
Thursday 22 October – 5.30pm to 6.30pm – Knotts Crossing Resort

Nhulunbuy

Tuesday 13 October – 12.30pm to 1.30pm – The Arnhem Club
– 3.30pm to 4.30pm – The Arnhem Club
– 5.30pm to 6.30pm – The Arnhem Club

Tennant Creek

Thursday 8 October – 5.00pm to 6.00pm – Blue Stone Motor Inn

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Formation of Sub Committees to Workplace Health and Safety Advisory Council (WHSAC)

The Northern Territory Workplace Health and Safety Advisory Council (WHSAC) have established two industry based sub committees to assist the council to carry out its functions under the *Workplace Health and Safety Act*.

The two sub committees are the Transport and Storage sub committee and the Construction sub committee. The duties of sub committee are:

- provide advice to the council on implementation and application of the Act in particular industry sectors
- examine specific issues referred by the council, and
- provide a forum for information exchange and networking opportunities for key stakeholders to work with the Regulator on OHS issues in specific industry sectors.

The council has approved the formation of a Mining/Resources sub committee and nominations are now being sought. For more information contact the WHSAC sub committee secretariat on 8999 5098.

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Proposed changes to OHS responsibilities in Petroleum Act

The Northern Territory Government is currently considering a proposed amendment to remove all remaining Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) responsibilities from the Petroleum Act so that the Workplace Health and Safety Act 2007 will be the primary OHS legislation.

Since 1 July 2008 NT WorkSafe has been the primary agency responsible for OHS matters on all exploration, mining and energy tenements which includes permits and leases. However under S89A of the *Petroleum Act* the responsibility for OHS on production facilities (production Licences) still remained with the Department of Regional Development, Primary Industry, Fisheries and Resources

This proposed amendment will ensure that NT WorkSafe, will have direct legislative responsibility for OHS matters on all Northern Territory worksites, including petroleum production sites.

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Compliance with OHS Legislation

The Northern Territory Mining Industry can improve compliance with several aspects of the Northern Territory *Workplace Health and Safety Act (2007)* and regulations. The following areas have been identified for improvement:

- Mining operations submitting Risk Management Plans
- The application of the NT Dangerous Goods Act and regulations.
- The design registration and licensing of some types of plant.
- Electrical standards at some mine sites.
- Consultation with workers in relation to health and safety matters.

NT WorkSafe will continue to work with mining operations to ensure compliance with Northern Territory legislation.

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Regional visits

Workplace Safety Officers will continue the schedule of visits to regional and remote workplace in the third quarter of 2009. The visits, which were focused on mining operations, have now expanded to include other non mining regional and remote workplaces.

The primary purpose of the visits has been to provide advice and assistance to workplaces on occupation health and safety matters and it has been unfortunate that several enforcement notices have been issued. Return visits have been scheduled to workplaces issued with enforcement notices to ensure compliance.

A schedule for regional and remote visits will be developed annually as part of priorities identified in the NT WorkSafe [2009-2012 Strategic Plan](#).

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Approved Health and Safety Representative (HSR) Training Providers

The following two Registered Training Organisations are now approved to provide HSR training to elected HSR's in the Northern Territory.

- Chamber of Commerce NT
- Electro Jobs Training P/L

HSR's are able to be included on the NT WorkSafe email list in order to receive updates on legislation and other information relevant to their role as a HSR and if they wish they can also join the HSR network to share their experiences.

For further information, please contact the HSR Advisor at NT WorkSafe on 1800 019 115 or ntworksafe@nt.gov.au

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Safe Work Australia Week

25 to 31 October 2009 is [Safe Work Australia](#) Week.

In 2008/09 there were over 3300 claims for workplace injuries and six work-related fatalities in the Northern Territory.

All Territorians, whether you're an employer or a worker, are encouraged to get involved and focus on health and safety in the workplace.

Workplace safety is everyone's business.

NT WorkSafe have created a Safe Work Australia Week navigation button on the Home Page of the website www.worksafe.nt.gov.au to keep you informed of activities during the campaign.

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Statistical data

A range of statistical data has been collated by Safe Work Australia and NT WorkSafe in order to identify poor performing industries and high risk activities to assist in developing targeted industry programs.

Data is also collected and reviewed by NT WorkSafe to improve programs that facilitate Territory workers being covered by equitable and practical workers compensation scheme allowing them to return to suitable work as soon as possible.

To access the data, follow the [Statistics](#) link on the NT WorkSafe website.

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