

HSR training entitlements

Information for HSRs

September 2010

Background

Elected health and safety representatives (HSRs) play an important role in making Victorian workplaces safer. Where employees are represented by HSRs, employers must involve the HSRs in consultation.

As the elected representatives of a designated work group, HSRs provide employees with a way to have their views and concerns about health and safety heard by their employer.

To exercise your powers and rights as a HSR effectively, it is essential that you (and if applicable, your deputy) receive training. This will provide you with the appropriate skills, knowledge and confidence to represent the people you work with.

Is my employer required to allow me to attend OHS training?

Yes. An employer must, if requested by an HSR, allow that HSR time off work with pay, to attend a WorkSafe approved training course. This is provided that the request is made no less than 14 days before the course date.

How much notice do I need to give my employer, before attending a health and safety course?

At least 14 days notice is required, but ideally it is best to give your employer as much notice as possible. This is so they can ensure your absence is managed and does not cause unnecessary inconvenience to the business.

Do I have the right to choose my preferred training provider?

Yes, however this needs to be done in consultation with your employer. It is desirable for HSRs and employers to agree on which course the HSR should attend.

What happens if my employer refuses to let me attend HSR training or doesn't agree with my choice of course?

If an employer refuses to allow a HSR to attend an approved initial or refresher training course or can't agree on which course to attend, the HSR may request WorkSafe to determine an appropriate course.

The determination will be handled by WorkSafe's Workplace Support and Education Branch, following initial contact to the WorkSafe Advisory Service on 1800 136 089.

WorkSafe will first seek to gain agreement between the employer and the HSR about which course the HSR may attend.

Any determinations made by WorkSafe must be in writing and WorkSafe must ensure that it is made more than 14 days before the course is about to start.

Who pays my wages for the days I attend training?

Your employer must pay your normal/expected earnings including pay entitlements relating to shift work, regular overtime, higher duties, allowances and penalty rates for the days you attend training.

All time spent attending a course by a HSR (including casual employees) is treated as time at work and paid as if the HSR were at work.

Who pays the costs associated with attending the training?

Your employer is required to pay the course fee and any other expenses associated with the training including:

- travel to and from the approved course where it is greater than travel to the usual workplace
- accommodation, meals and incidental expenses where an approved course is remote from the workplace.

Further information

Visit worksafe.vic.gov.au/hsr for information about a HSR support officer in your industry.

Help is also available at ohsrep.org.au

For further information contact the WorkSafe Victoria Advisory Service on **1800 136 089**

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