

## Health and Safety Committees (HSCs)

HSCs bring together workers and management in the development and review of health and safety policies and procedures for the workplace. HSCs enable a business and its worker representatives to meet regularly and work cooperatively to improve work health and safety.

### Main functions of a HSC

The main functions of an HSC are to:

- make it easy for the business and workers to cooperate on ways to ensure workers' health and safety at work
- assist in developing standards, rules, and policies or procedures for work health and safety
- make recommendations relating to work health and safety
- carry out other tasks that are agreed between the business and the committee.

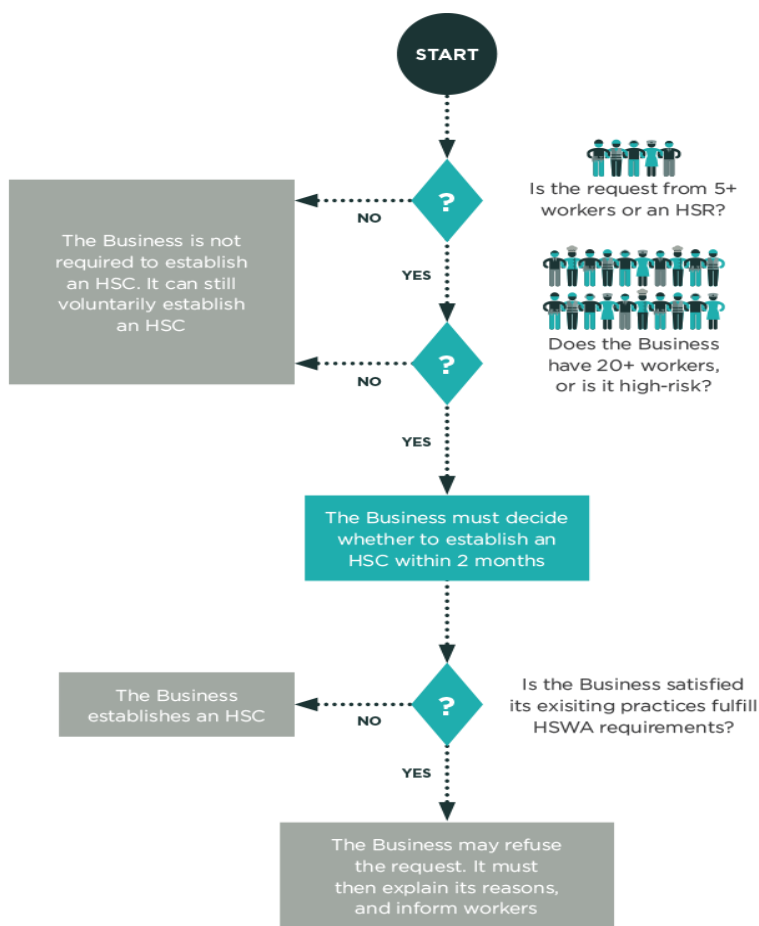
HSCs are particularly effective in workplaces with multiple businesses such as a construction site or university campus, with committee members drawn from each business. This helps a business which shares responsibility for work health and safety with other businesses, to meet the HSWA requirement to consult, cooperate with, and coordinate activities with other businesses.

### When must a business consider a HSC?

A business must consider having an HSC if it receives a request from five or more workers or an HSR. The business can decline if it has fewer than 20 workers and is not in a [high-risk industry](#) as prescribed by the Regulations.

The business may also decline the request if it is satisfied that its existing worker participation practices meet the requirements of HSWA.

The request must be genuinely considered, and valid explanations must be offered for any refusal. Any business can voluntarily establish an HSC



## What are the functions of a HSC?

The functions of an HSC are to:

- Facilitate cooperation between the business and workers in instigating, developing and carrying out measures designed to ensure workers' health and safety at work.
- Assist in developing any standards, rules, policies, or procedures relating to health and safety.
- Make recommendations relating to work health and safety.
- Perform any other functions that are agreed between the business and the committee.

An HSC must meet:

- Regularly, at the times agreed by the members of the committee, but at least once every three months, and
- At any other reasonable time, on the request of a simple majority of members of the committee

## What are the business' obligations to a HSC?

The business must:

- Consult with the HCS about health and safety matters
- Allow each member of the HSC to spend as much time as necessary to attend meetings or carry out functions as a member of the committee
- Provide the HSC with all necessary information to perform its functions, including information relating to hazards and the health and safety of workers at the workplace.

If the HSC makes a recommendation regarding work health and safety, the business must either adopt the recommendation, or provide a written statement advising the HSC of the reasons for not adopting the recommendation.

*The information presented in this document is intended for general use only. It should not be viewed as a definitive guide to the law, and should be read in conjunction with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and associated regulations (where relevant).*