

Become a Health and Safety Rep

H S R

Create change in your workplace.
Make it a safer and healthier place to be.

[anmfvic.asn.au/reps](http://anmfvic.asn.au/ reps)



**Australian
Nursing &
Midwifery
Federation**
VICTORIAN BRANCH

HSRs are nurses, midwives and personal carers who create change to improve their health, safety and working conditions

WHAT DOES A HEALTH AND SAFETY REP (HSR) DO?

Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) are the critical consultative link between employees and their employer in raising and resolving OHS issues in the workplace. This link is underpinned and protected by the *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act 2004*, giving HSRs a voice in the workplace, a role in raising and resolving any OHS issues with their employer, and legislated powers to take issues further if unresolved.

HSRs have five key powers under the OHS Act:

1. Inspect any part of the workplace after giving reasonable notice, or immediately in the event of an incident.
2. Accompany a WorkSafe Victoria inspector during an inspection at your workplace.
3. Require a health and safety committee to be established and be a member of the committee.
4. Seek the assistance of any appropriate person on health and safety matters whenever necessary.
5. Issue PINs and directions to cease work.

Five rights of HSRs under the OHS Act 2004:

1. Be consulted about OHS matters in your workplace and be provided with hazard-related information by your employer.
2. Request a review of control measures under regulations (such as manual handling, noise, prevention of falls and confined spaces).
3. Take time off work with pay as necessary for exercising HSR powers.
4. Be provided with necessary facilities and assistance in your role as HSR.
5. Ability to escalate an OHS matter that remains unresolved after consultation requirements have been followed.

Everyone has a role to play in making workplaces safer and healthier, and as an HSR, you have the power to make real change in your workplace.

– ANMF (Vic Branch) and WorkSafe HSR of the year winner 2015, Sean Matthews

IS THE HSR ROLE MUCH EXTRA WORK?

The HSR role is a voluntary position in your workplace and your colleagues and ANMF (Vic Branch) value whatever time and contribution you can make.

We understand that our members have varying amounts of time and energy to commit to the HSR role which is one of the reasons why we have a team of dedicated OHS professionals and experienced industrial officers and organisers, who can provide you with support and guidance every step of the way. HSRs have the added advantage of legislated entitlements allowing them to take time off work with pay as necessary for exercising HSR powers.

What you don't have to do

If you choose to become an HSR, you are not expected to solve every workplace problem, or know everything in the OHS Act. In many situations, you would advise a member/colleague to report their incident or OHS concern via the workplace incident reporting system or call the ANMF to seek the support and guidance they require.

The HSR role is one of consultation and communication, and actively supported by the ANMF.

You can be both an ANMF Job Rep and an HSR.

WHAT IS A DESIGNATED WORK GROUP (DWG)?

A designated work group (DWG) is a negotiated and agreed grouping of workers who share similar workplace health and safety interests and conditions.

Victorian employees have a legal right to seek the establishment of a DWG and to negotiate an agreed number of HSR positions to represent those DWGs.

DWG negotiations must consider the following factors:

- the number of workers at the workplace
- the nature of each type of work performed at the workplace
- the number and grouping of workers who perform similar types of work or working under the same or similar working arrangements
- the areas at the workplace where each type of work is performed
- the nature of any hazards
- overtime or shift work arrangements
- whether other languages are spoken by the workers.

If you already have DWGs but don't feel these are providing adequate representation or meeting the needs of the workers, these can be re-negotiated and/or varied.

Employees also have the right to negotiate a variation of the DWG agreement at any time, particularly if your workplace has changed over time, and the ANMF can be involved in all these negotiations.

Renegotiations and/or variations to DWG may occur due to:

- changes to services your workplace provides
- an increase in the number of employees
- systems of work have changed
- changes to shifts and rosters
- being relocated to a new area or building
- an increase in OHS risks/hazards.

How do I become a Health and Safety Representative?

To be an HSR, or Deputy HSR, there must be a vacant HSR or Deputy HSR position in your DWG which is why it is critical that DWGs are negotiated or renegotiated appropriately.

It is up to the members of the DWG how they will elect HSRs/ Deputy HSRs. The process may be informal (show of hands) or follow a more formal process (ballot papers and ballot box).

If more than one employee is nominated for a vacant HSR or Deputy HSR position, an election needs to take place within the workplace.

All employees in the DWG are eligible to vote in this election.

An employee can fill an HSR/Deputy HSR position for no longer than three years but they can choose to re-nominate at the end of their three-year term.

A key factor to remember is that HSRs are elected by employees, and an HSR represents the interests of the employees to management.

It is not an appointed position, nor does it have any health and safety duties attached to it, like audits for example.

Contact ANMF (Vic Branch) for more information/support about this process.

HSR TRAINING

An elected HSR is entitled to attend WorkSafe approved training of their choice, including a five-day HSR training course, a one-day refresher training course at least once a year and other training approved by WorkSafe Victoria. HSRs are entitled to time off work with pay and the costs associated to attend the course to be paid by the employer, in accordance with the OHS Act 2004.

The ANMF runs WorkSafe approved and industry-specific HSR training to help you learn to become an effective HSR.

Register for HSR training courses online at anmfvic.asn.au/HSR-training

ABOUT DEPUTY HSRs

HSR and Deputy HSR positions are negotiated, and elected into vacant positions, the same way. They are also entitled to the same training - the initial five-day training course and the one-day annual refresher course as per section 67 of the OHS Act 2004. However, there are two key distinctions between an HSR and a Deputy HSR:

1. If the HSR of that DWG is available, the Deputy cannot exercise any HSR powers. Deputy HSRs effectively become the HSR of the DWG with all the powers of that role, but only when the HSR is absent.
2. Deputy HSRs are not entitled to attend any other training, such as conferences or workshops, approved by WorkSafe under section 69 of the OHS Act 2004.

When negotiating or varying DWGs it is important to consider the above distinctions. In many cases, it would be reasonable and appropriate to increase the number of HSR positions, and not have Deputy HSR positions, in order to ensure adequate representation for all staff, especially for those who work outside business hours within the DWG.

Top four reasons ANMF (Vic Branch) members should become HSRs

1

To represent members of your DWG when it comes to health and safety matters in your workplace and have those views considered.

2

To help keep your employer compliant with their OHS obligations under the OHS Act 2004.

3

To improve patient safety which is directly linked to staff safety in their workplace.

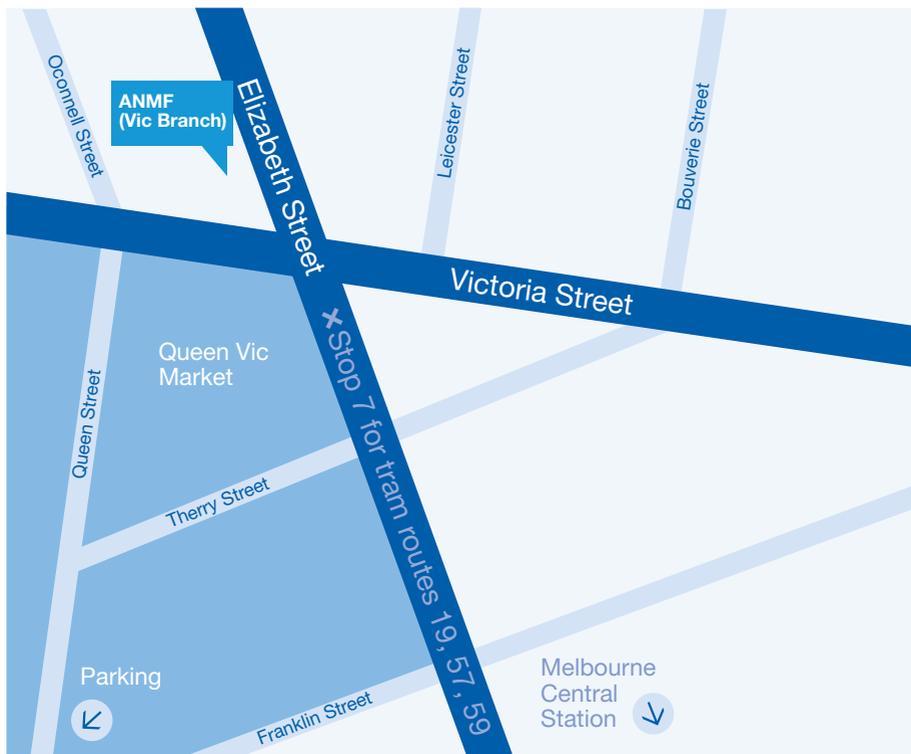
4

To attend the ANMF (Vic Branch) Annual Delegates and HSR Conference and help guide ANMF (Vic Branch) Policy.

Let us know

If you are an HSR or Deputy HSR please complete the notification form overleaf or online anmfvic.asn.au/HSRnotify

This will enable ANMF (Vic Branch) to provide you with information on nursing-and midwifery-and personal care worker - specific ANMF WorkSafe Approved HSR Training, the Annual Delegates Conference, the \$1000 HSR of the Year Award, discounts to ANMF events and a free subscription to 'HSR News'.



Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (Vic Branch)

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HSR notification to ANMF form or anmfvic.asn.au/HSRnotify

1. Details of person who is an HSR

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name			ANMF membership number
Address			
Suburb	State	Postcode	Home phone
Email address			Mobile
Workplace			Work phone
Designated Work Group (DWG)			Date elected
DWG includes (please tick): <input type="checkbox"/> Nurses, midwives and carers only <input type="checkbox"/> Nurses, midwives and carers and other occupations			
<input type="checkbox"/> I am on and have provided a copy of my workplace HSR list, that my employer is obligated to have updated and readily accessible as per s71 of the OHS Act			

Signature	Date
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2. Details of two ANMF members confirming that the person above is a duly elected HSR for the above mentioned Designated Work Group.

Name			ANMF membership number
Workplace			
Signature			Date

Name			ANMF membership number
Workplace			
Signature			Date

Health and Safety Representative training courses

HSR INITIAL OHS TRAINING COURSE DATES

- Course 1: 8,9,10 and 22, 23 May 2019
- Course 2: 7,8,9 and 22, 23 August 2019
- Course 3: 27, 28, 29 November and 10,11 December 2019

HSR REFRESHER OHS TRAINING COURSE DATES

- Course 1: 10 April 2019
- Course 2: 24 July 2019
- Course 3: 23 October 2019