

Permit plan

Our permit plan covers rules and regulations for high-risk work that WorkSafe oversees. We will focus our efforts to make sure permitting requirements are understood, decision making processes are efficient, and regulated safety requirements are met, with emphasis on the areas of highest risk.

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 the regulations and ensures that businesses and individuals permitted to undertake high-risk work meet safety requirements. In some areas, we review whether requirements are met, while in others we designate 'third parties' to do this on our behalf.

Over the next two years we will work to strengthen our permit function. We will set clear expectations for those carrying out regulated high risk work, and for the third parties that we rely on for safety assurance. We will improve the efficiency, transparency, and quality of permitting processes. We will also strengthen our approach to monitoring whether permitting requirements for high-risk work are being met. We will focus our efforts where the biggest improvements are needed and where the health and safety risks are greatest.

WorkSafe's priorities

Priorities	Why	Objectives
Establish clear expectations for regulated parties	If regulated parties have a clear understanding of requirements, they will be more likely to comply with them and risks will be managed better.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved understanding of responsibilities for regulated high-risk work - Improved trust and confidence in WorkSafe among our regulated parties
Establish robust and consistent decision-making processes	Providing robust, consistent, and timely decisions will make it easier for regulated parties to know where they stand and to comply with requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased proportion of applications processed within agreed timeframes and to agreed standards - Increased satisfaction with permitting processes.
Strengthen compliance monitoring for regulated high-risk work	A clear and risk-based monitoring approach will give us better information about compliance with requirements for high-risk work and allow us to take action where needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased confidence that permission is being sought for regulated high-risk work. - Increased confidence that high-risk work is being done according to the rules and regulations.

Types of regulated high-risk work

- Mining and quarrying
- Exploring for and extracting petroleum or geothermal energy
- Adventure activities
- Storing or transporting large quantities of hazardous substances, using explosives, or working with certain flammable or toxic substances
- Removing and disposing of asbestos
- Operating machinery and equipment including high-pressure boilers, pipelines, cranes, cable cars, fairground rides and powder-actuated tools
- Scaffolding over 5 metres high
- Consumer electrical and gas equipment
- Occupational diving

Key challenges

- Clear roles, responsibilities and expectations
- Co-ordinated engagement and communication between WorkSafe and regulated parties
- Clear and consistent decision making
- Specialist workforce capacity and capability
- Consistent, risk-based monitoring of permitted businesses and third parties

Permit plan

What WorkSafe will do:

Priority	Initiative	Initiative description
Establish clear expectations for regulated parties	Strengthen engagement and communication with regulated parties.	Undertake regular engagement with key industry partners. Share data, insights and key messages that they can disseminate through their channels so businesses and individuals doing regulated high-risk work understand how to meet requirements.
	Strengthen relationships with third parties	Engage with regulated third parties to ensure good understanding of roles, responsibilities and expectations. Establish regular engagement and communication with key third-party organisations including accreditation agencies and professional associations.
	Use engagement with regulated parties to inform our system advice	Use engagement with regulated parties to understand their biggest challenges with current regulatory frameworks so we can reflect these in our system advice to MBIE.
Establish robust, and consistent decision-making processes	Establish robust and consistent decision-making processes.	Establish consistent policies and processes for decision making about permits and exemptions. Communicate these to regulated parties, and follow through with decision making that reflects our position
	Improve permitting processes and registers.	Take a structured approach to improving permitting processes and registers so application and renewal is quicker and easier. This includes digitising and automating some processes as this becomes feasible.
Strengthen compliance monitoring for high-risk work	Establish a compliance monitoring framework for regulated high-risk work.	Clearly set out how we will monitor regulated high-risk work and communicate this to stakeholders, including how we will enforce if requirements are not met.
	Take a consistent approach to monitoring regulated high-risk work	Undertake targeted assessments to check that businesses doing regulated high-risk work have the right permits and are meeting safety requirements. If requirements are not met, take action consistent with our position.

How we will track our progress

During Year 1 we expect to see

- Regular engagement between WorkSafe and regulated parties, including third parties.
- Clearer timeliness targets for WorkSafe permit activities.
- Continued audit, quality assurance and compliance monitoring activities in line with current approach.

During Year 2 we expect to see

- Two-way information sharing between WorkSafe and regulated parties, including third parties.
- Clearly communicated expectations for regulated high-risk work.
- Improved efficiency of some permitting processes.
- Consistent approach to monitoring compliance with requirements for regulated high-risk work.