

Quarterly Newsletter



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The Commissioner's statement

As we reach the midpoint of the year, I would like to acknowledge and thank PCBUs and workers across the ACT for their ongoing commitment to work health and safety, and for their continued engagement with WorkSafe ACT inspectors and staff.

One of the most encouraging aspects of my role is receiving feedback from businesses following workplace inspections. In particular, it is pleasing to hear when interactions are seen as constructive and supportive. While our inspectors play an important regulatory role, a key focus is to work with duty holders to reduce risks and improve safety outcomes in practical and meaningful ways.

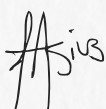
I would like to share an example of this feedback from a recent inspection:

"I'd like to thank the WorkSafe ACT inspector for conducting a professional safety inspection. Their presence and guidance have truly helped our team and the trades understand the importance of safety. I was particularly impressed by how your department balances seriousness and professionalism with a supportive and helpful approach. Your advice and insights were both valuable and appreciated."

Feedback like this reflects the approach we aim to take across all of our interactions—firm in our expectations, but collaborative in supporting workplaces to identify hazards and implement effective controls.

Positive engagement between WorkSafe ACT and duty holders can lead to lasting improvements in workplace practices and safety culture. Taking a proactive, risk-based approach to WHS remains the most effective way to prevent harm and ensure safer workplaces across the ACT.

Stay Safe,
Jacqueline Agius



ACT Work Health and Safety Commissioner



International Worker's Memorial Day

Tuesday 28 April marked International Workers' Memorial Day. The day provides an opportunity to reflect on workplace fatalities and mourn the lives lost across Australia.

Workplace injuries and fatalities are a sobering reminder of the importance of work health and safety. This year's theme focused on psychosocial hazards, which are increasingly recognised as a significant risk in Australian workplaces. While they may be less visible than physical hazards, they can be just as damaging to workers' health and wellbeing and should be managed accordingly.

This year's ACT ceremony was hosted by Unions ACT, with support from WorkSafe ACT. Speakers included Unions ACT Secretary Kasey Tompkins, Work Health and Safety Commissioner Jacqueline Agius, ACT Australian Salaried Medical Officers Federation President Associate Professor Dr Dipti Talaulikar, and Canberra nurse Ann Maree Parker.



"The silence we observe during our moment of reflection can mirror what continues to occur in many workplaces when it comes to psychosocial hazards. Too often, there is silence and under-reporting of injuries and illnesses.

Silence is the challenge we must address. By speaking up, undertaking proactive risk assessments, building a deeper understanding of psychosocial risks and implementing appropriate controls, workplaces can take meaningful steps to prevent harm while balancing what is reasonably practicable."

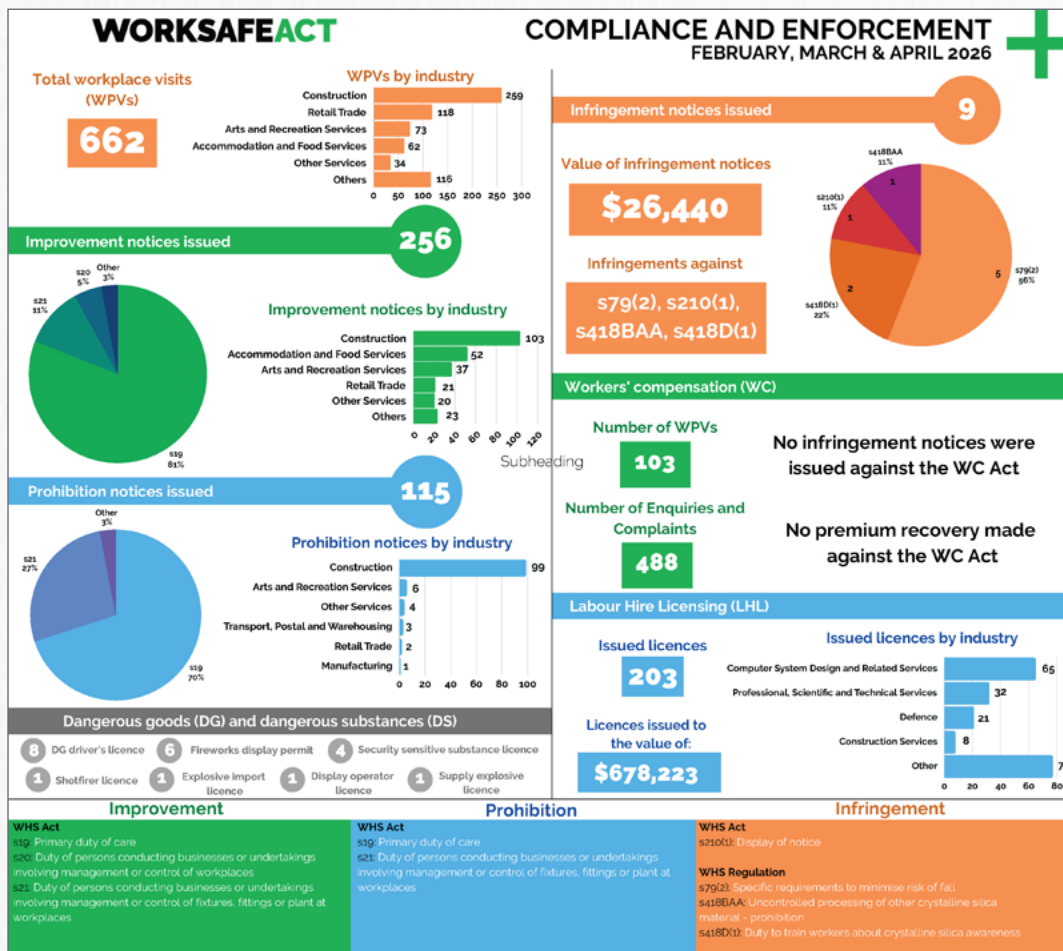
-Work Health and Safety Commissioner Jacqueline Agius

Data Snapshot

WorkSafe ACT collects and analyses data on compliance activities to support transparency and identify trends, emerging issues and recurring hazards across industries.

The infographic below provides a summary of compliance and enforcement activity for the period February to April 2026.

More detailed data, including monthly breakdowns, is available on the [compliance and enforcement webpage](#).



The Safety Spotlight - New episode

The latest episode of WorkSafe ACT's podcast series, The Safety Spotlight, has been released.

This episode features occupational hygienist Kate Cole in conversation with Commissioner Agius, discussing the risks associated with hazardous substances in the workplace. The discussion explores ongoing health and safety issues such as silica and asbestos, including the significant legacy risk posed by asbestos in existing buildings and infrastructure across Australia.

The episode highlights the importance of awareness, effective risk controls and ongoing vigilance to manage exposure to hazardous substances across a range of industries.

You can listen to this episode, along with previous instalments, here: [The Safety Spotlight](#).

Enforceable Undertaking

WorkSafe ACT has accepted an Enforceable Undertaking (EU) from Demolition Environmental Civil Contractors Pty Ltd (DECC). This is the first EU accepted by WorkSafe ACT since 2020.

The EU relates to an incident in January 2023 at the Canberra Centre carpark, where the demolition of concrete hobs resulted in three metal façade panels becoming dislodged from the structure. The panels fell in an area where unrelated workers were present. No injuries were reported.

Following an investigation, WorkSafe ACT commenced prosecution proceedings. DECC was charged with an offence under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (WHS Act) for failing to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of persons was not put at risk from the work being carried out.

DECC subsequently proposed an EU, which the WHS Commissioner accepted in lieu of continuing court proceedings. An EU is a legally binding agreement that may be accepted by the regulator as an alternative to prosecution. It requires the duty holder to undertake specific initiatives that deliver measurable benefits to workers, industry and the broader community, extending beyond compliance with existing WHS obligations.

The EU includes a range of initiatives valued at more than \$225,000

You can find the details of the EU here:

[Enforceable Undertaking for Demolition Environmental Civil Contractors Pty Ltd](#)

Prosecutions

In June, Fed Consulting Services Pty Ltd and its director Stephen Gelo were convicted in the ACT Magistrates Court for failing to comply with their WHS duties following a workplace incident in Gungahlin.

The convictions relate to an incident in November 2022 at a construction site in Gungahlin, where a worker's foot was struck by an excavator bucket operated by Mr Gelo. The worker sustained serious injuries, including the amputation of a toe, and required extensive medical treatment.

Both defendants were found guilty of Category 2 offences under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (WHS Act), after their failure to comply with their duties exposed a worker to the risk of serious injury. The Court imposed a fine of \$100,000 on Fed Consulting and \$10,000 on Mr Gelo. The Court found that both Mr Gelo and Fed Consulting failed to follow their own safety systems, including a Safe Work Method Statement that outlined control measures to protect workers from risks associated with powered mobile plant. The risk of harm from contact with the excavator was found to be obvious, and suitable control measures were available and could have been implemented at minimal cost. Mr Gelo was also found to have failed to take reasonable care to ensure his actions while operating the excavator did not adversely affect the health and safety of others.

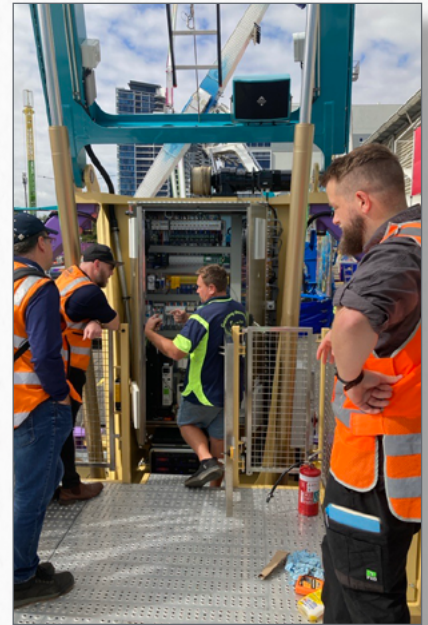
In sentencing, the Court noted that the incident represented an isolated departure from the defendants' usual standards of conduct and took into account Mr Gelo's remorse. This outcome highlights the importance of consistently applying established safety procedures and ensuring effective controls are in place when working with mobile plant. Failure to do so can result in serious harm and significant legal consequences.

Amusement devices inspections

WorkSafe ACT inspectors travelled to Sydney to observe and work with SafeWork NSW with amusement device inspections at the Royal Easter Show and Family Show, held from 30 March to 1 April.

Working alongside SafeWork NSW inspectors and engineers, the inspections focused on ensuring amusement devices complied with relevant safety standards and were safe for public use.

The joint activity provided an opportunity to observe inspection approaches at a large-scale event and to share insights across jurisdictions. It also offered valuable experience for WorkSafe ACT inspectors working alongside engineers to assess complex plant and equipment.



Cross border inspections

In a further example of cross-border collaboration, WorkSafe ACT inspectors joined WorkSafe NSW colleagues in Jindabyne to support construction compliance activities in the Snowy Mountains region.

Construction in the region is often concentrated in the periods surrounding winter due to seasonal conditions, resulting in increased levels of activity. WorkSafe ACT inspectors participated in a two-day inspection program across a range of construction sites. The inspections identified a number of commonly observed risks within the industry, including working at heights, site security and housekeeping.

The joint activity provided an opportunity to share expertise and promote consistent regulatory approaches across jurisdictions, while reinforcing the importance of effective risk management during periods of heightened construction activity.

Vulnerable Workers Engagement

The WorkSafe ACT Vulnerable Workers (VW) team continues to actively engage with workplaces, training organisations and the broader community to promote work health and safety awareness.

A continued focus for the team is supporting young workers and apprentices. In recent months, WorkSafe ACT inspectors have delivered presentations to a range of groups, including GETS Electrical apprentices, Master Plumbers Association apprentices, and CIT hairdressing and barbering trainees.

The team has also presented to participants at Headstart Vocational Training, the Construction Pathways Hub and the Women's Return to Work Program. Programs such as these provide important entry points into the workforce, making them valuable opportunities to engage with workers who may be at greater risk of injury or illness.

Career expos remain an important channel for outreach to young people entering the workforce. WorkSafe ACT inspectors attended the Canberra College and Erindale College Careers Markets, providing information on WHS rights and responsibilities and distributing practical safety resources. Inspectors also engaged with students at Indigenous Allied Health Australia.



Safety Alerts

WorkSafe ACT safety alerts provide timely and practical information to support businesses and workers to manage risks and meet their obligations under work WHS laws. They highlight emerging issues, regulatory updates and recommended control measures to help prevent workplace injuries.

This quarter, WorkSafe ACT released five safety alerts and pieces of advice covering current and emerging WHS issues. These include:

- + [National Asbestos Awareness Campaign](#)
- + [Truck-mounted concrete boom maintenance](#)
- + [Traffic management for truck-mounted concrete booms](#)
- + [Incident notification amendments](#)
- + [Low height falls still carry high risk](#)

You can find all of our [safety alerts and safety advice on our website](#).

Keep in contact

Subscribe for the latest safety alerts and WHS news by using [this link](#).

Connect with us on social media



We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as Traditional Custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connections to the lands of the ACT and region.

We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region



Image credit: Leah Brideson. Winanga-li, 2022.