

# Occupational Health & Safety: The Proposed New 'Harmonisation' Laws The Effects for Netball in South Australia



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## What are the new Work Health & Safety (WHS) 'Harmonisation' Laws?

South Australia is due to adopt new Work Health & Safety (WHS) laws in 2012. The laws are part of the health and safety "Harmonisation" process being adopted nationally.

In June 2008, all jurisdictional governments, including the Commonwealth, agreed to harmonise Australia's Work Health & Safety laws (WHS) to achieve a more uniform approach and eliminate confusion. The harmonisation process is also aimed to reduce the regulatory burden for a business operating in more than one state or territory, reduce costs and improve the nation's health and safety records in relation to workplace disease, injury and death.

The new WHS laws commenced in NSW, QLD, ACT, NT and the Commonwealth on 1 January 2012.

Within South Australia however, the proposed new WHS laws did not pass State Parliament in time for the planned 1 January 2012 start date. This means the new laws are yet to come into effect and the State Government is yet to announce a commencement date for the proposed new laws.

As a result, organisations now have more time to understand and comply with the requirements under the new legislation before it becomes law.

The model WHS legislation consists of an integrated package of a model WHS Act; supported by model WHS regulations, model Codes of Practice and a National Compliance and Enforcement Policy.

To achieve a seamless transition to the new WHS laws requires a commitment to improve health and safety at all levels. This starts with effective and committed leadership and cascades to every worker and includes volunteers, taking responsibility for their own health and safety outcomes. Gaining a clear understanding of the new WHS laws is a shared responsibility.

## Where can I get a copy of the model Act?

The model Act is available on the Safe Work Australia web site. [www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au)

## What is Netball SA doing to support the implementation of the model legislation?

Netball SA has engaged the services of EQAS Management Consultants.

A gap analysis has been conducted on our health and safety management system at Netball SA Stadium to determine how Netball SA is placed to manage WHS and what needs to change to achieve compliance. We are currently in the process implementing a comprehensive WHS management system which is on track to meeting the new laws.

## What action do you need to take?

It is essential that your organisation understands its obligations and duties under the proposed new WHS legislation. If and when the laws come into effect, organisations will need to comply from the first day or face non-compliance and associated penalties.

The penalties for non compliance and enforcement are onerous and cannot be ignored.

Business SA and Safe Work Australia can provide information to organisations on the regulatory reforms that are being introduced and what action organisations need to take to ensure they are compliant with the new WHS laws.

There are numerous WHS consultants in South Australia that can be engaged to assist your organisation in this area if required.

Netball SA has engaged the services of EQAS Management Consultants to assist with their WHS management system. Please refer to their web site should you wish to contact them to discuss your WHS needs. [www.egas.com.au](http://www.egas.com.au)