

First Annual Report

to the Associate Minister of Labour



**National Occupational Health
and Safety Advisory Committee**

Komiti Tohutohu Mahi Ā-Motu Hauora me te Haumarua

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Foreword

This is the first annual report of the National Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Committee (NOHSAC).

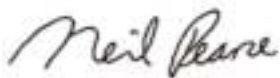
NOHSAC was established to provide independent contestable advice to the Minister of Labour on major occupational health and safety issues.

The Committee is implementing a work programme agreed with the Associate Minister of Labour. It has launched a Committee website www.nohsac.govt.nz, and will shortly publish its first report on the burden of occupational disease and injury in New Zealand.

The Committee has been established at a time when it is increasingly being recognised that occupational injury has received disproportionate attention from OSH, at the expense of occupational health, which accounts for a much greater burden of occupational morbidity and mortality. The work of the Committee will help to redress this imbalance and to provide the Minister with advice on the major current occupational health and safety issues, the policy measures that are likely to yield the greatest benefits, the occupational health and safety workforce needs, and the associated training needs.

Continued...

These issues are not without controversy, but it is intended that the Committee will play a positive role in building on our current strengths, and addressing our current weaknesses, so that the major occupational health and safety hazards can be addressed in an appropriate and effective manner that is to the benefit of all New Zealanders.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Neil Pearce". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Prof Neil Pearce

Chair
National Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Committee

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The National Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Committee

The National Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Committee (NOHSAC) was established in June 2003.

The Committee's function is to provide independent advice directly to the Minister of Labour (or Associate Minister of Labour) on major occupational health and safety issues.

Terms of Reference

The key tasks for the Committee are to:

- provide an independent assessment to the Minister on the major occupational health and safety issues for the New Zealand workforce.
- advise the Minister on measures that would deliver the greatest benefit for the prevention of occupational injury and disease.
- develop an evidence-based approach to occupational health and safety issues.
- develop and implement an annual work programme approved by the Minister, including a research agenda.
- have due regard for available resources and how the Committee's advice might impact both on occupational health and safety and on economic development.
- advise the Minister on such other matters as the Minister specifies by notice to the Committee.

Membership of NOHSAC at June 2004

The membership of the Committee represents a range of expertise within the broad fields of occupational health and safety. The Committee meets at least five times a year to discuss issues related to its Terms of Reference and to review progress on its work programme. Members have been appointed for periods of either two or three years. The Committee is supported by a Secretariat, within the Department of Labour, comprising of a project manager and a part-time administrative support officer.

Professor Neil Pearce (Chair)

Professor Neil Pearce is currently the Professor and Director of the Centre for Public Health Research, Massey University. Professor Pearce has extensive research experience with particular interests in occupational epidemiology, asthma epidemiology and more general public health research. Professor Pearce has previous experience in chairing committees, including chairing the Health Research Council Public Health Research Committee. Since 1988 Professor Pearce has been appointed to numerous committees advising Government, including the Occupational Health Technical Advisory Committee and the Ministerial Advisory Panel on Work-related Gradual Process, Disease, or Infection.

Dr Evan Dryson

Dr Evan Dryson is a practising occupational medicine specialist, lecturer and the immediate past President of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians – Faculty of Occupational Medicine. Dr Dryson has significant expertise and experience in the clinical practice, diagnosis, management and rehabilitation of people with occupational disease. He has strong affiliations with a range of international occupational health/disease bodies. Dr Dryson has also published widely in New Zealand and overseas on original research into occupational medicine.

Professor Anne-Marie Feyer

Professor Anne-Marie Feyer is a Director of Health/Risk Management Practice at PricewaterhouseCoopers in Sydney. She also has a professorial appointment in the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine, University of Otago. Professor Feyer has extensive experience in occupational health and safety in both New Zealand and Australia. Her research interests are in occupational injury epidemiology, fatigue management and work-related determinants of health and well-being.

Professor Philippa Gander

Professor Philippa Gander is currently the Director of the Sleep/Wake Research Centre, Massey University in Wellington. Professor Gander's research interests are in circadian and sleep physiology, and its implications for occupational safety and health, particularly in shiftwork. She has extensive international experience in developing and implementing fatigue and shiftwork management programmes with the transport sector.

Selwyn McCracken

Selwyn McCracken is currently completing a PhD funded by the Health Research Council focusing on improved construction industry health and safety through surveillance system development. Mr McCracken is of Maori descent and has links to the Ngai Tahu Maori Health Research Unit, University of Otago. He has published an epidemiology of work-related fatal injuries involving Maori.

Summary of the Committee's 2003–2004 Work Programme

NOHSAC has commissioned two reports as part of the 2003 – 2004 work programme.

NOHSAC's first report, "The Burden of Occupational Injury and Disease in New Zealand", is a review of the New Zealand and international literature on the burden of fatal and non-fatal occupational injury and disease. The report will determine the main areas of concern and national priorities for prevention and research, including quantitative estimates of the number of deaths from occupational disease and injury in New Zealand annually and recommendations for future priorities.

This report is currently being prepared and is due to be completed and published by October 2004.

NOHSAC has also contracted a second report entitled "Review of the Methods and Systems used to Measure and Monitor Occupational Disease and Injury in New Zealand".

This report will provide a thorough and critical review of methods and systems used to measure and monitor occupational disease and injury in New Zealand.

It will be completed and published by March 2005.

Secretariat to the National Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Committee at June 2004

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