



Commissioner for
**Resources Safety
& Health**

Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee

Annual report 2022–23



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Have your say

The Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee hopes you find this annual report informative. The advisory committee welcomes any comments and feedback about the report. Please send your feedback to commissioner@rshq.qld.gov.au.

30 October 2023

The Honourable Scott Stewart MP
Minister for Resources
1 William Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Minister

In accordance with section 77(1) of the *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999*, I am pleased to submit to you the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee annual report for the year ending 30 June 2023.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kate du Preez', followed by a horizontal line.

Kate du Preez
Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health

Contents

From the Chair	2
Year at a glance.....	3
Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee	4
Membership.....	4
Meetings held	5
Functions of the advisory committee.....	6
Five-year strategic plan.....	6
Work of the advisory committee	8
A safe and healthy workplace	8
A competent workforce.....	15
An informed industry.....	16
An effective advisory committee	17
Expenses incurred	19

Figures

Figure 1: Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee five-year strategic plan 2022–27.....	7
Figure 2: Resources Safety and Health Queensland recognised standards development process	14

Tables

Table 1: Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee members for 2022–23	4
Table 2: Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee substitute members for 2022–23	5
Table 3: Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee meetings in 2022–23	5
Table 4: Recommendations of the Inquiry into coal mining industry safety	10
Table 5: Expenses incurred by the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health in relation to the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee	19

From the Chair

I am proud to present this annual report outlining the achievements of the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee for 2022–23. Over the past 12 months the advisory committee has achieved a number of significant milestones and has successfully advanced its mission *to provide contemporary, evidence-based advice to the Minister that focuses on making coal mine workers safe and healthy.*

During the year, the advisory committee, in conjunction with the office of the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health and the Mining Safety and Health Advisory committee, commenced a survey of the safety reporting culture in Queensland’s coal mining, mineral mining and quarrying industries.

The *Queensland mining industry safety reporting survey* illustrates the effectiveness of the tripartite advisory committee model and its ability to bring together the knowledge and experience of a range of stakeholders to implement a milestone project for the mining industry. The survey will help to identify areas the advisory committee should be reviewing to ensure continuous improvement.

In developing the survey, the advisory committee worked with its tripartite representative groups to form an expert working group to help adapt Safer Together’s *Safety Culture Survey Tool*, which was originally developed for the petroleum and gas industry, to suit the Queensland mining industry.

A survey of this size and scope has not been attempted before in the Queensland mining industry and will provide valuable insight into the current state of the industry’s safety reporting culture.

The advisory committee also undertook the following activities in 2022–23:

- provided advice to the Minister on proposed legislative changes being considered by Resources Safety and Health Queensland in the *Facilitating High Reliability Organisation behaviours in Queensland’s Resources Sector and Modernising Regulatory Enforcement* consultation regulatory impact statement
- updated the site senior executive competencies to set a minimum requirement for the number of years of experience that is required in providing operational and technical services and in providing direct supervision of coal mine workers at underground and surface coal mines
- endorsed a new guideline for coal mines that will reduce the workplace exposure limit for diesel particulate matter from 0.1 mg/m³ to 0.05 mg/m³.

Over the next 12 months, the advisory committee will prioritise providing advice to the Minister on proposed legislative changes and supporting the continued implementation of the Queensland mining industry safety reporting survey and analysis of results.

I would like to thank all members and substitute members for their participation in the advisory committee. Members work many hours out-of-session to review documentation and complete projects and this is reflected in the robust discussions and the quality advice that is provided to the Minister.



Kate du Preez

Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health

Year at a glance

Objective	Key achievements
A safe and healthy workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed and implemented, in conjunction with the Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee and the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health, the Queensland mining industry safety reporting survey. • Explored the application of process safety methodology in the coal mining industry. • Considered the five recommendations of the Transport and Resources Committee <i>Inquiry into coal mining industry safety</i> report. • Considered the findings of an expert report examining fatigue and fatigue management in the Queensland mining industry and its relationship with mental health and safety outcomes. • Observed and reviewed relevant information and data including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – significant accident and injury data, trends and identified audit findings – airborne contaminants data – work program and data concerning mine lung dust disease. • Endorsed a recommendation from Resources Safety and Health Queensland to establish a new guideline for coal mines that will reduce the guideline workplace exposure standard (WES) for diesel particulate matter from 0.1mg/m³ to 0.05 mg/m³. • Considered Safe Work Australia’s decision to reduce the workplace exposure standard for respirable crystalline silica. • Considered the following recognised standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – RSo1—Underground electrical equipment and electrical installations – RSo8—Conduct of mine emergency exercises – RS11—Training in coal mines – RS22—Management structure for the development and implementation of the safety and health management system. • Advised the Minister on the <i>Facilitating High Reliability Organisation behaviours in Queensland’s Resources Sector and Modernising Regulatory Enforcement</i> consultation regulatory impact statement • Advised the Minister on the feasibility of a proposal from the Electrical Trades Union to amend the <i>Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999</i> and the <i>Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999</i> to allow entry permit holders under the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> the ability to access workshops, shutdowns and construction sites on mining leases.
Maintain a competent workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged Simtars to complete a review of the Queensland coal mining competencies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – identify opportunities to remove extraneous or out-of-date qualifications – further streamline competency tables – make it easier for mine workers to access and understand the relevant competencies required for a particular role. • Reviewed and updated competency requirements for site senior executives at surface and underground coal mines.
An informed industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed the Minister about emerging issues, their potential impact and proactive best practice safety and health activities.
Be an effective advisory committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated the advisory committee five-year strategic plan and action plan. • Developed and maintained communication management plans to support strategic objectives.

Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee

The Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee is established by part 6 of the *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999*.

The advisory committee is a tripartite body formed with the primary function to give advice and make recommendations to the Minister about promoting and protecting the safety and health of persons at coal mines and persons who may be affected by coal mining operations. The advisory committee is an integral part of the accountability framework that is in place to manage safety and health in the industry and to ensure coal mine workers arrive home safe and healthy every day.

Under the *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999*, the chair of the advisory committee must prepare an annual report on the committee's operations for the year. The report must be given to the Minister for Resources as soon as practicable, but within four months, after the end of each financial year. The Minister must table a copy of the report in the Legislative Assembly within 14 sitting days.

Membership

The advisory committee consists of 10 members, one of whom is the Chairperson.

Members represent the Queensland Government, coal mine workers and coal mine operators. The independent chair of the advisory committee is the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health. Members are appointed by the Minister for terms of up to three years and there is no limit to the number of terms a member can serve.

The advisory committee includes members nominated by the Mining and Energy Union, Electrical Trades Union, Queensland Resources Council and Resources Safety and Health Queensland. The Chief Inspector of Coal Mines is an *ex officio* member of the advisory committee.^{1,2,3}

Table 1: Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee members for 2022–23

Name	Representing	Organisation	Meetings
Kate du Preez	Independent chair	Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health	4
Creswick Bulger	Queensland Government	Resources Safety and Health Queensland	4
Ian Cribb	Coal mine operators	Queensland Resources Council	2
Fritz Djukic	Queensland Government	Resources Safety and Health Queensland	3
Stephen Evetts	Coal mine workers	Electrical Trades Union	4
Bobbie Foot	Coal mine operators	Queensland Resources Council	4
Jason Hill	Coal mine workers	Mining and Energy Union	4
Jacques Le Roux	Queensland Government	Resources Safety and Health Queensland	2
Vikesh Magan	Coal mine operators	Queensland Resources Council	3
Peter Newman	Queensland Government	Resources Safety and Health Queensland	2
Stephen Smyth	Coal mine workers	Mining and Energy Union	2

¹ Creswick Bulger, Fritz Djukic, Jason Hill and Vikesh Magan were appointed as members on 18 September 2022 for a term of three years

² Ian Cribb, Stephen Everts, Bobbie Foot and Stephen Smyth were reappointed as members on 18 September 2022 for a term of three years

³ Jacques Le Roux became a member when he was appointed Acting Chief Inspector of Coal Mines following the retirement of Peter Newman

Substitute members

Substitute members are appointed to take part in meetings of the advisory committee in place of a member from the same organisation who is unable to attend.^{4,5}

Table 2: Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee substitute members for 2022–23

Name	Representing	Organisation	Meetings
Kylie Ah Wong	Coal mine operators	Queensland Resources Council	2
Clayton McCallum	Coal mine workers	Electrical Trades Union	0
Shaun McKenzie	Coal mine operators	Queensland Resources Council	1
Stephen Woods	Coal mine workers	Mining and Energy Union	2

Meetings held

Under the *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999*, the advisory committee has an obligation to meet at least twice a year. In 2022–23, the advisory committee met a total of four times. Members also worked out-of-session on a number of occasions during 2022–23 in order to ensure the Minister received advice in a timely manner. Advisory committee members met out-of-session six times in 2022–23.

Table 3: Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee meetings in 2022–23

Meeting number	Date	Location
101	26 October 2022	Brisbane
102	1 February 2023	Brisbane
103	19 April 2023	Brisbane
104	21 June 2023	Brisbane

⁴ Shaun McKenzie and Stephen Woods were appointed as substitute members on 18 September 2022 for a term of three years

⁵ Kylie Ah Wong and Clayton McCallum were reappointed as substitute members on 18 September 2022 for a term of three years

Functions of the advisory committee

The primary function of the advisory committee is to give advice and make recommendations to the Minister about promoting and protecting the safety and health of persons at coal mines and persons who may be affected by coal mining operations.

The advisory committee must discharge its primary function by periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the control of risk to any person from coal mining operations.

The advisory committee also has the following functions:

- recognising, establishing and publishing the following competencies
 - the competencies accepted by the committee as qualifying a person to perform the tasks prescribed by regulation
 - the safety and health competencies required to perform the duties of a person under this Act
- developing a five-year strategic plan for improving the safety and health of persons at coal mines and persons who may be affected by coal mining operations
- periodically evaluating, and at least once each year updating, the five-year strategic plan
- developing action plans to achieve measurable targets set in the five-year strategic plan
- obtaining information from Resources Safety and Health Queensland to assess the fulfilment of the five-year strategic plan and the action plans
- identifying and prioritising critical risks to the safety and health of persons at coal mines and persons who may be affected by coal mining operations
- providing advice to the coal mining industry about those risks
- providing information to the Minister about the performance of Resources Safety and Health Queensland.

Five-year strategic plan

With the commencement of the *Resources Safety and Health Queensland Act 2020*, the *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999* was amended to broaden the functions of the advisory committee. The advisory committee must develop, and periodically evaluate and update, a five-year strategic plan for improving the safety and health of persons at coal mines and persons who may be affected by coal mining operations.

The advisory committee developed its first five-year strategic plan to improve the safety and health of coal mine workers in 2020–21.

The *Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee strategic plan 2022–27* is described in Figure 1.

Vision and mission

The strategic plan serves as a roadmap for the advisory committee to achieve its vision of:

World leading safety and health for coal mine workers.

To achieve this vision, the advisory committee is guided by the mission to:

Provide contemporary, evidence-based advice that focuses on making coal mine workers safe and healthy.

Values

The advisory committee has five core values which underpin its work:

- people first
- evidence
- collaborative
- responsive
- relevant.

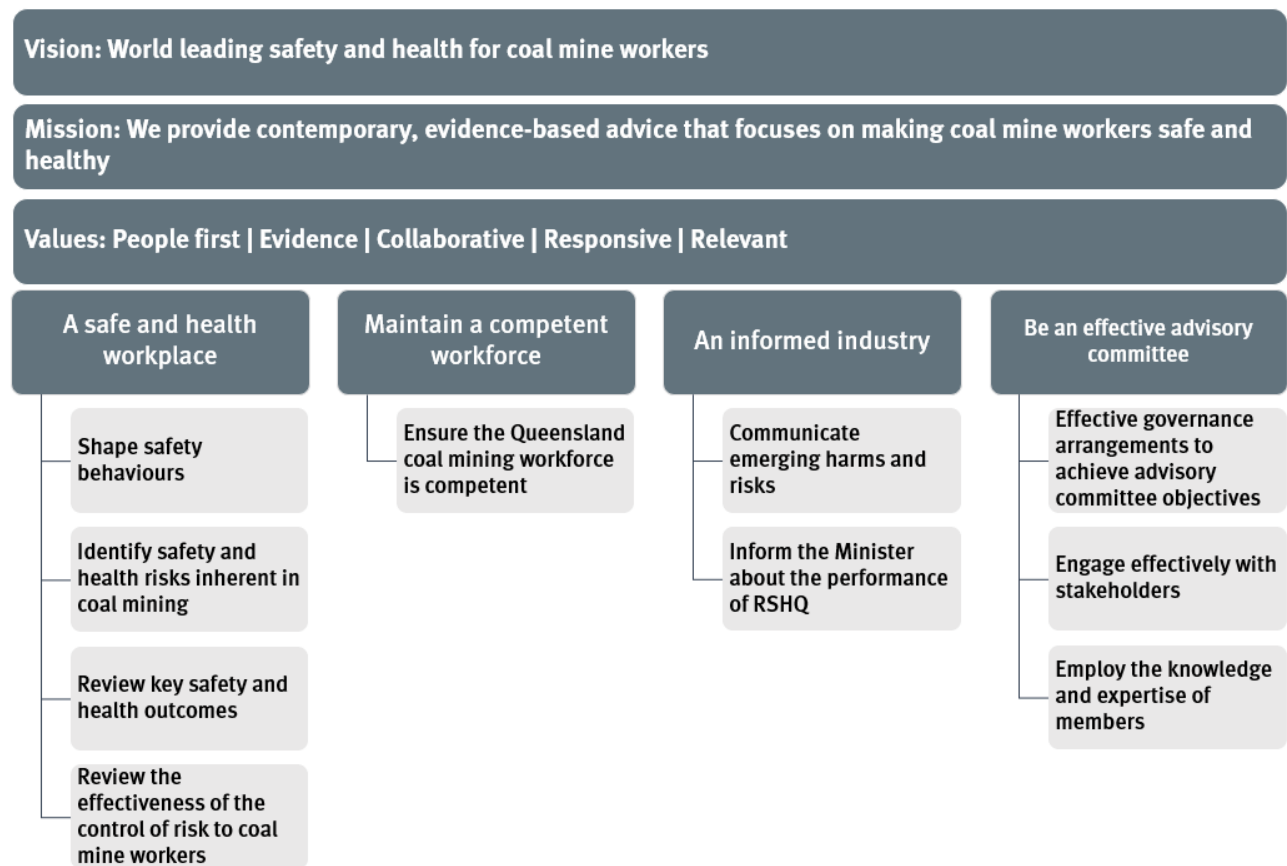


Figure 1: Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee five-year strategic plan 2022–27

Work of the advisory committee

In 2022–23, the advisory committee completed a range of projects and activities that were aligned to the four strategic objectives under the *Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee strategic plan 2022–27*:

- a safe and healthy workplace
- a competent workforce
- an informed industry
- an effective advisory committee.

A safe and healthy workplace

The advisory committee takes an evidence-based approach to its work and analyses relevant information and data to review, consider and discuss solutions and research. This approach enables the advisory committee to provide the Minister and industry with advice which fosters continuous improvement in safety and health for coal mine workers.

The advisory committee's priority strategies for achieving this objective are:

- shape safety behaviours
- identify safety and health risks inherent in coal mining
- review key safety and health outcomes
- review the effectiveness of the controls used in coal mining.

Safety reporting survey

In 2022–23, the advisory committee, in conjunction with the office of the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health and the Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee, began a survey of the safety

reporting culture in the coal mining, mineral mining and quarrying industries.

The survey aims to establish a baseline of the safety reporting behaviours exhibited at mine and quarry sites and identify the key opportunities and barriers to achieving a responsive and effective safety reporting culture. It will enable benchmarking of industry safety reporting culture and provide focus areas for industry and the advisory committees to target for further research and continuous improvement.

The development of the survey was informed by an advisory committee working group which was formed to provide guidance and input into the survey project.

The survey was driven by Finding 91 and Recommendation 28 of the *Queensland Coal Mining Board of Inquiry part 2 report*⁶:

Finding 91—An extensive study undertaken by CMSHAC on reporting culture in coal mines would benefit the industry in Queensland.

Recommendation 28—As part of carrying out its functions under section 76A of the Act, CMSHAC considers including within its 5-year Strategic Plan activities that will facilitate improvements in the reporting culture in Queensland coal mines.

The survey was adapted from the *Safety Culture Survey Tool* that was developed by Safer Together as a workforce engagement tool to provide industry with information about the

⁶ https://www.coalminesinquiry.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/1621211/Queensland-Coal-Mining-Board-of-Inquiry-Part-II-Report.pdf

overall safety behaviours of frontline workers, supervisors, and managers.

It is broadly based on safety leadership characteristics defined by the International Association of Oil and Gas Producers in Report 452 *Shaping safety culture through safety leadership*.⁷

The survey questions were designed to understand a respondent's perceptions of the behaviours of their team members, supervisors and managers in relation to safety reporting culture.

The survey was made available as either an online or paper-based survey and significant effort was made to ensure privacy and confidentiality of responses.

The survey opened on 1 June 2023 and was scheduled to run for approximately three months. A report of the survey findings is due to be published by December 2023.

The advisory committee aims to repeat the survey to encourage continuous improvement.

Application of process safety methodology

The Queensland Coal Mining Board of Inquiry in its part 1 report made a recommendation for the industry to adopt strategies and performance measures to address process safety and personal safety separately (Recommendation 18).⁸

The Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health engaged an external resources industry safety expert to prepare a discussion paper that considered the application and relevance of process safety to the mining industry.

The purpose of the discussion paper was to support an informed discussion for the mining safety and health advisory committees and key mining stakeholders—including the Queensland Resources Council—on what adopting process safety strategies involves.

The advisory committee further engaged with the external expert to explore the application of process safety methodology in the coal mining industry.

The advisory committee agreed with the discussion paper conclusions that in the coal mining industry:

- all of the elements needed to deliver process safety strategies are present
- the legislative framework to support process safety already exists and no changes would be required
- the relevant operators and institutions need to work more closely together to implement process safety methodology
- to be effective, this cooperation needs to occur at the senior levels within these companies and institutions, as evidenced in the petroleum and gas industry via Safer Together.

Inquiry into coal mining industry safety

In February 2023, the Queensland Parliament Transport and Resources Committee published its *Inquiry into coal mining industry safety* report which made five recommendations which were directed at, or affected the work of, the advisory committee (Recommendations 2, 4, 5, 8 and 9).

⁷ <https://www.iogp.org/bookstore/product/shaping-safety-culture-through-safety-leadership/>

⁸ (BOI Report Part 1, p.14)

Table 4: Recommendations of the Inquiry into coal mining industry safety

#	Recommendation
2	The CMSHAC ensure that a genuinely tripartite consensus is arrived at regarding the fulltime nature of the site safety and health representative role at Queensland mine sites; industry should subsequently give full effect to the settled tripartite position.
4	The CMSHAC commission independent research into the impact of coal production rates on safety risk management in Queensland coal mines. Coal mine operators must facilitate sufficient access to, and protections for, members of their workforce who participate in this research.
5	The QRC's lead indicators working group advance discussions on the appropriate use of safety metrics by industry in calculating employee bonuses, and provide a benchmarking report by end November 2023 to the CMSHAC.
8	The CMSHAC review the terms of reference for its current study into coal mine safety reporting culture to additionally address the deficit of research around production and safety conflicts, and reprisal against workers who raise safety issues, which we have raised in this report.
9	The QRC ensure that its coal mine operator members proactively engage and supply data to assist with the research to be conducted by the CMSHAC. The QRC is to report on its website which coal mine operators have participated and data on each coal mine operator's participation (e.g. number of workforce engaged, employment basis of participants, work role of participants) by end November 2023.

Recommendation 2—Site safety and health representatives

The advisory committee unanimously agreed that the role of a site safety and health representative should not be a fulltime role.

The advisory committee believes the true value of a site safety and health representative is enhanced when their role is not fulltime and they are instead part of the workforce, involved in the usual day-to-day production or maintenance work.

This gives site safety and health representatives critical and direct insight into the safety and health issues concerning and affecting workers. The advisory committee believes this practical understanding and insight would be lost if the role was converted to fulltime.

Recommendation 4—Impact of coal production rates on safety risk management

The advisory committee will consider additional independent research into the impact of coal production rates on safety risk management once the analysis of the safety survey results is completed.

Additional financial resources have been budgeted in the Commissioner's budget to conduct this research in 2023–24.

Recommendation 5—Use of safety metrics to calculate employee bonuses

The advisory committee was advised by the Queensland Resources Council that it would respond to the recommendation.

The report is due by the end of November 2023 and the advisory committee will consider it during 2023–24.

Recommendation 8—Expansion of safety reporting survey

The advisory committee agreed that addressing the deficit of research around production and safety conflicts and reprisal against workers who raise safety issues was important.

The Queensland Mining Industry Safety Reporting Survey is a behavioural survey with the objective of understanding the reporting culture of the mining industry. There are some

questions linked to the theme of production and safety conflicts.

Once the survey has been completed, the advisory committee will consider strategies to conduct further research in this area in 2023–24.

Recommendation 9—Industry to supply data

In developing the *Queensland Mining Industry Safety Reporting Survey*, the safety reporting survey working group identified that the privacy and confidentiality of survey respondents was of paramount concern.

All data collected by the Commissioner’s office on the extent of participation of mine workers and particular mines is confidential.

As a result, the Queensland Resources Council will not be able to publish details about the participation of any specific coal mine operation or about the survey results from any specific coal mine operation.

Fatigue management

In its five-year strategic plan, the advisory committee identified fatigue and mental health as an area that required detailed examination through evidence-based research.

In 2022–23, the advisory committee examined a report produced by The University of Queensland for the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health which examined fatigue and fatigue management in the Queensland mining industry and its relationship with mental health and safety outcomes.

The objective of the report was to:

- identify if fatigue remains a hazard in the Queensland mining industry and the extent of fatigue as a hazard

- identify what constitutes good practice in contemporary workplace fatigue management, in mining and similar industries
- establish the current state of fatigue management practices in the Queensland mining industry and focus on any important gaps with the good practice requirements identified in the second objective
- examine the links between worker fatigue, safety and mental health outcomes
- provide a greater understanding of what the Queensland mining industry is doing well and recommend improvement opportunities.

The report established a fatigue management baseline by conducting a targeted review of current information about fatigue management from regulatory, industry, and academic sources; analysis of incident data to better understand fatigue as a hazard in Australian mining; and a gap analysis to assess the likely effectiveness of existing fatigue management processes at a selection of mine sites.

Additional literature reviews in mining then explored the relationships between fatigue, health and safety, and mental health.

The report contained six conclusions:

- Fatigue incident data collection—It is highly likely that registered fatigue incident numbers represent under-reporting, so further work to help collect more comprehensive fatigue incident data in Queensland is advised.
- Fatigue incidents—Prioritised action plans to focus on fatigue risks for heavy vehicle drivers on surface mines during night shifts are proposed, especially during their first few shifts of the roster cycle.

- **Fatigue management**—It is proposed that the effectiveness of fatigue management controls should be verified, and that controls need to be regularly reviewed. Well-designed studies to evaluate the efficacy of fatigue management interventions in the mining industry are needed.
- **Industry fatigue management gaps**—Better monitoring of the long-term health effects of fatigue, a consideration of mental health outcomes, a greater use of fatigue detection technologies (with associated psychological safety and health support systems), and a stronger corporate emphasis of the importance of mining fatigue management are proposed.
- **Mental health and fatigue**—Further work by the industry in the mental health area is needed, particularly examining fatigue as a mechanism in mental health outcomes, and mental health as a potential predictor of fatigue and health and safety outcomes.
- **Mentally healthy workplaces toolkit**—Following other states, it is proposed that a toolkit be developed by government and industry stakeholders to assist workplaces to assess psychosocial hazards and risk as they may relate to fatigue and mental health outcomes.

The advisory committee will continue to consider the findings of this report and will hold a fatigue forum in March 2024 to provide an opportunity for industry, universities, fatigue experts and mining industry unions to collaborate to further understand the advances in technology, knowledge gaps and potential practical solutions.

Review of key safety and health outcomes

The advisory committee regularly reviewed information on high potential incidents, serious accidents and airborne contaminants to identify current and emerging safety and health risks.

In 2022–23, the advisory committee received quarterly briefings from Resources Safety and Health Queensland on high potential incident and serious accident data and reviewed significant incidents that occurred in the coal mining industry.

The advisory committee used this information to help it identify trends and to provide advice to the Minister and industry on improvements that could be made to enhance safety and health performance in the industry.

The advisory committee also received quarterly briefings from Resources Safety and Health Queensland on airborne contaminants data on respirable dust, respirable crystalline silica, diesel particulate matter and welding fumes. The advisory committee reviewed this data to monitor the effectiveness of controls in place to reduce risks to coal mine workers.

Diesel particulate matter

In 2022–23, the advisory committee considered a review undertaken by the Institute of Occupational Medicine which found that the potential risk arising from diesel exhaust exposure at the current guideline value of 0.1 mg/m³ significantly exceeded the risk posed by respirable crystalline silica and respirable coal dust.

The advisory committee endorsed a recommendation from Resources Safety and Health Queensland to establish a new

guideline for coal mines that will reduce the guideline workplace exposure standard (WES) for diesel particulate matter from 0.1mg/m³ to 0.05 mg/m³.

The advisory committee unanimously agreed on a 12-month transition period to give mines adequate time to achieve compliance.

Respirable crystalline silica

In March 2023, Safe Work Australia voted to reduce the eight-hour time weighted average workplace exposure standard for respirable crystalline silica from 0.05 mg/m³ to 0.02 mg/m³ with a three-year transition period.

The advisory committee considered this proposal and expressed a number of concerns:

- The sensitivity of analytical equipment is not capable of accurately and consistently measuring respirable crystalline silica to that limit.
- There are technical and practical challenges to implementing effective controls.
- The proposed WES is for a 40-hour work week. However, the mining industry operates longer shifts than the prescribed 8-hour shift, which will result in an even lower WES being applied to the mining industry.
- Respiratory protective equipment will be a control to achieving this threshold. However, there are potential negative impacts that may arise with the increased use and duration of use of respiratory protective equipment.

The advisory committee will continue to consider the available evidence relating to respirable crystalline silica and provide advice to the Minister.

Workplace exposure standards for airborne contaminants review

The advisory committee has continued to monitor Safe Work Australia's review of workplace exposure standards for airborne contaminants.

The advisory committee will examine the impact of any proposed changes and provide advice to the Minister.

Review the effectiveness of controls

The advisory committee analyses the coal mining safety and health regulatory framework and provides advice and makes recommendations to the Minister about promoting and protecting the safety and health of persons at coal mines and persons who may be affected by coal mining operations.

In 2022–23, the advisory committee considered the following recognised standards:

- Recognised standard 01—Underground electrical equipment and electrical installations
- Recognised standard 08—Conduct of mine emergency exercises
- Recognised standard 11—Training in coal mines
- Recognised standard 22—Management structure for the development and implementation of the safety and health management system.

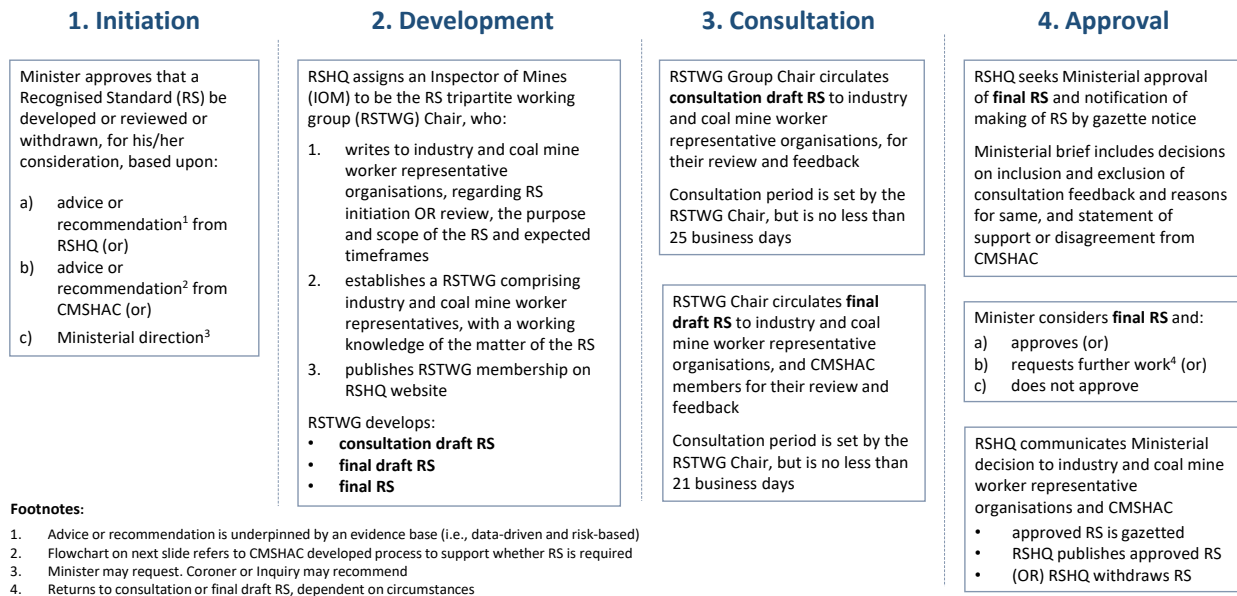


Figure 2: Resources Safety and Health Queensland recognised standards development process

Recognised standard o1—Underground electrical equipment and electrical installations

The advisory committee reviewed the draft revisions to recognised standard o1 and provided feedback to the Recognised Standards Tripartite Working Group on where greater clarity was recommended.

Recognised standard o8—Conduct of mine emergency exercises

The advisory committee reviewed recognised standard o8 and recommended making a revision to require that a Level 1 exercise be undertaken at a surface coal mine every three years, and twice every three years at an underground coal mine.

In recent years, the number of surface coal mines has increased, with many becoming more complex, operating at greater depth, and employing larger workforces.

Of the nine fatalities that occurred in Queensland coal mines since 2018–19, five occurred at surface mines, requiring external agencies to respond in a coordinated approach.

The proposal would increase the performance of surface coal mines in their emergency response capability and capacity and enable learnings to be broadly shared with industry.

Recognised standard 11—Training in coal mines

The advisory committee reviewed the final revisions to recognised standard 11 that were made by the Recognised Standards Tripartite Working Group and advised the Minister that the advisory committee fully supports its approval.

Recognised standard 22—Management structure for the development and implementation of the safety and health management system

As agreed as part of the transition to recognised standard 22, the advisory committee received an update from Resources Safety and Health Queensland on the results of an audit requested by the advisory committee on industry’s progress in implementing the recognised standard.

Consultation regulatory impact statement

On 12 October 2022, the Minister wrote to the advisory committee requesting advice on the *Facilitating High Reliability Organisation behaviours in Queensland’s Resources Sector and Modernising Regulatory Enforcement* consultation regulatory impact statement.

The decision regulatory impact statement was released for public consultation on 30 May 2023 and the advisory committee began its initial review of the content at its meeting on 21 June 2023.

The advisory committee will provide its advice to the Minister in early 2023–24.

Proposal for work health and safety permit holders to access mine sites

In April 2023, the Minister wrote to the Chair of the advisory committee requesting advice on the feasibility of a proposal from the Electrical Trades Union to amend the *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999* and the *Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999* to allow entry permit holders under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* the ability to access

workshops, shutdowns and construction sites on mining leases.

The advisory committee will continue to consider the proposal and provide its advice to the Minister in 2023–24.

A competent workforce

The advisory committee has responsibility for establishing, recognising and publishing the competencies qualifying a person to perform the tasks prescribed by regulation and ensuring the Queensland coal mining workforce has the competencies needed to keep people safe and healthy.

The advisory committee’s priority strategy for achieving this objective is to ensure the Queensland coal mining workforce is competent.

The advisory committee will achieve this by monitoring, evaluating and developing competencies.

Monitor, evaluate and develop competencies

In monitoring, evaluating and developing competencies, the advisory committee regularly reviews the *Competencies recognised by the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee*⁹ to ensure they remain relevant and current.

When developing or changing a competency, the advisory committee considers the following factors:

- Is there an identified risk?
- Is there evidence of need?
- Are there alternatives?
- Can registered training organisations deliver the quality of outcomes required?

⁹ <https://www.commissioner.rshq.qld.gov.au/advisory-committees/mining-competencies/coal-mining-competencies>

In 2022–23, the advisory committee made amendments to the competencies for:

- site senior executives
- underground ventilation officers
- underground assistant shotfirers
- persons in charge of winders.

Site senior executives

The advisory committee updated the site senior executive competencies for both surface and underground mines to require site senior executives to demonstrate at least five years of experience in operations—of which two years must be in a supervisory position—and at least two years of supervisory experience involving the direct supervision of coal mine workers.

These changes bring the competencies for coal mine site senior executives in line with those in mineral mining.

Review of published competencies

A project to review the published table of competencies was completed in October 2022 with a final report delivered to the advisory committee for action.

In 2022–23, the advisory committee analysed the results of the review to determine if the original intent of the competencies was being met and to assess if updates were necessary. The advisory committee reviewed a total of 34 competencies that had been significantly altered since they were first established to ensure they still met the same level of competency (or better) as when they were originally established.

Competencies related to self-escape training

The Queensland Coal Mining Board of Inquiry in its part 2 report made a recommendation that the industry and Queensland Mines Rescue Service (QMRS) consult to determine whether it is viable for the QMRS to provide self-escape training for all underground coal mine workers, as well as generic inductions, site-specific inductions and refresher training. The advisory committee consulted with QMRS regarding the feasibility of implementing the recommendation and possible alternative actions.

QMRS recommended an alternative approach may be to require QMRS *Underground Coal Mine First Response* course as a competency for nominated mine site trainers and assessors. QMRS could then audit these trainers and assessors as necessary to ensure ongoing competence.

An informed industry

Engaging and communicating with the industry and the Minister about emerging issues and promoting relevant learnings from reviews of evidence-based data and research are essential parts of the advisory committee's roadmap towards *world leading safety and health for coal mine workers*.

The advisory committee's priority strategies for achieving this objective are:

- communicating emerging harms and risks
- informing the Minister about the performance of Resources Safety and Health Queensland.

Performance of Resources Safety and Health Queensland

In informing the Minister about the performance of Resources Safety and Health Queensland, the advisory committee aimed to provide timely, accurate and relevant information to the Minister on the regulator's performance.

In 2022–23, the advisory committee provided advice on a quarterly basis to the Minister about the performance of Resources Safety and Health Queensland against a number of specific characteristics that define effective regulators in high-hazard industries including:

- regulatory activity and enforcement are risk-based
- the regulator identifies and monitors trends and uses this data to direct compliance activities
- effectively communicates with duty holders, workers and other stakeholders.

Advice to the Minister was based on performance reports that were provided to the advisory committee by Resources Safety and Health Queensland.

An effective advisory committee

To be an effective advisory committee and achieve its objectives, it is essential to have clear governance arrangements and for members to work together on building tripartite collaboration.

The advisory committee's priority strategies for achieving this objective are:

- ensuring effective governance arrangements are in place to maintain the advisory committee's strategic focus

- engaging effectively with stakeholders
- ensuring the knowledge and expertise of members is employed.

Five-year strategic plan

The advisory committee updated its five-year strategic plan and action plan to ensure that it remained on track to meet its objectives.

Advisory committee members reiterated their support for the vision and mission of the advisory committee and refined the action plan to ensure that work remained on track for completion.

Engagement with stakeholders

The advisory committee has continued to communicate and engage with stakeholders through communication channels available to the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health and by taking advantage of the networks of members.

In 2022–23, the advisory committee continued to communicate with stakeholders through a dedicated page on the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health's website¹⁰ and via the Commissioner's LinkedIn channel.¹¹

In total, six news articles relevant to the advisory committee were published on the Commissioner's website and 14 articles posted on the Commissioner's LinkedIn channel.

Employ knowledge and expertise of members

The advisory committee establishes working groups as needed to explore key strategic issues and engages expert groups to support its strategic focus.

¹⁰ <https://www.commissioner.rshq.qld.gov.au/advisory-committees/cmshac>

¹¹ <https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/queensland-commissioner-for-resources-safety-&-health/>

In 2022–23, the working group formed to support the development of the *Queensland Mining Industry Safety Reporting Culture Survey* continued to meet to provide guidance and input into the survey project.

The advisory committee also engaged with external experts on the following topics to support its strategic focus:

- advice on the general role of statutory bodies and the specific statutory functions of the advisory committee
- advice on proposed legislative amendments that were put before the advisory committee for consideration.

Advisory committee members often work out-of-session to complete actions.

Expenses incurred

Advisory committee members are not entitled to any remuneration other than the reimbursement of reasonable expenses and travel allowances to attend meetings.

The total expenditure incurred by the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health in 2022–23 in relation to the advisory committee was \$3770.90 including GST.

Table 5: Expenses incurred by the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health in relation to the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee

Expense	Amount
Travel and accommodation	\$2194.33
Meetings (venue hire and catering)	\$1576.57
Total	\$3770.90



Commissioner for
**Resources Safety
& Health**