

## Rural Industry Sector Standing Committee

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The Rural Industry Standing Committee (the Committee) met on 6 November 2024. The Chair, Associate Professor Kelly Johnstone, welcomed Committee members and guests to the fourth meeting.

The key focus of the meeting was an in-depth discussion to provide informed feedback to the WHS Board on improving compliance through improved regulator information. Members identified opportunities to reach specific industry subsectors (with a particular focus on messaging to improve quad bike safety), highlighting variations in population profiles, safety issues and risk appetite, time of year/production cycles, mobile plant/vehicle usage, and cost factors associated with individual sectors and products. The Committee suggested:

- the regulator increase partnerships with key industry peak bodies and commodities groups and provide industry with plain-English information that can be tailored to individual sectors
- a 'boots on the ground', face-to-face approach can be an effective way of engaging with rural industry participants and opportunities to increase this type of engagement should be explored, and
- linking campaigns to incident data and events can be a powerful means of engaging audiences.

Members discussed feedback for the WHS Board on the prevalence of occupational violence and sexual harassment where the aggressor is not a worker. The committee noted potential situations where the aggressor could be a neighbour, third party, or other member of the public (such as when selling directly from the farm) or where workers' accommodation is shared by others. The committee agreed that this is an area where more data is needed in order to make any further informed comment on the issue.

Members were referred to the public consultation process being undertaken by Safe Work Australia and were encouraged to provide feedback on the draft model fatigue Code of Practice. This Code provides guidance for PCBUs on managing fatigue risks at work [Consultation on the draft model Code of Practice: Managing fatigue risks at work now open | Safe Work Australia](#)

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Wednesday, 19 March 2025.