
Date Introduced: 31 August 1988
House: House of Representatives
Presented by: Hon. Ralph Willis, M.P., Minister for Industrial Relations

Digest of Bill

Purpose

To restructure the management of the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission (NOHSC).

Background

The NOHSC was created in 1985 and has the primary functions of developing occupational health and safety policies and advising on these matters. In the performance of its functions, the NOHSC principally relies on negotiation and co-operation, although the NOHSC also issues national standards and codes. For example, a model code of practice for the prevention of occupational overuse syndrome was released in November 1986.

The extent and cost of workplace injuries are often not fully appreciated. NOHSC figures indicate that approximately 550 people are killed in such accidents each year, and that there are an additional 300,000 cases annually which result in an absence from work. The NOHSC estimates that the cost of deaths and injuries, together with indirect costs such as lost time, compensation payments, retraining etc., is $12 billion each year.¹

A review of the NOHSC was conducted in 1987. One of the recommendations that will require legislative change was that the offices of Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer be separated. This recommendation was largely based on the excessive workload of the combined position.

Main Provisions

Section 10 of the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission Act 1985 will be amended by clause 5 to provide for the full-time position of Chief Executive Officer.

The remaining amendments will apply the standard provisions relating to such matters as remuneration, leave etc. to the position of Chief Executive Officer.
References


For further information, if required, contact the Law and Government Group.

31 October 1988

This Digest does not have any official legal status. Other sources should be consulted to determine the subsequent official status of the Bill.

© Commonwealth of Australia 1988

Except to the extent of the uses permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, including information storage and retrieval system, without the prior written consent of the Department of the Parliamentary Library. Reproduction is permitted by Members of the Parliament of the Commonwealth in the course of their official duties.