



 ecoPortal | Lunch 'n' Learn



Safety Meetings That Engage



Getting Your Workforce Involved as a
Daily Habit



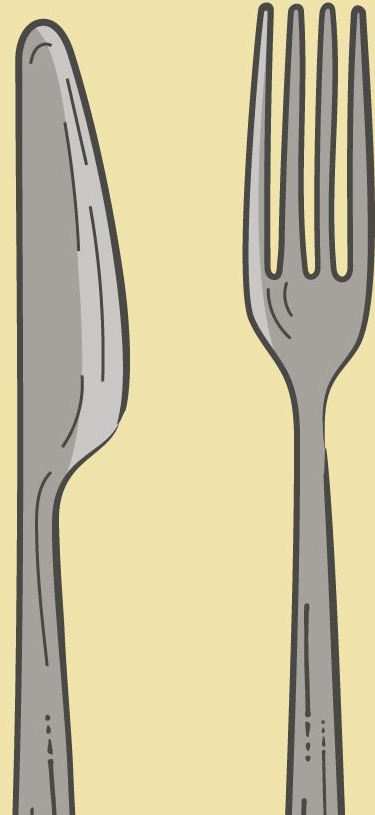
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Agenda

1. Worker engagement legislation recap
2. Business impact
3. How workers engage with H&S
4. Benefits of collaborative safety meetings
5. Meeting agenda essentials
6. Meeting Types
7. Procedural and documentation standards
8. Streamlining meetings with technology
9. See it in action



POLL

**What is your biggest
challenge when trying to
get workers actively
engaged in safety
meetings?**



What does the **law** say?

Duty to engage/consult

A PCBU must, so far as is reasonably practicable, engage with workers who are, or are likely to be, directly affected by a matter relating to work health or safety.

(NZ HSWA 2015 - Section 58(1) | AU WHS Act 2011 - Section 47)

Two-way engagement process

- Share relevant information with workers in a timely manner.
- Give workers a reasonable opportunity to express their views, raise concerns, and contribute to decision-making.
- Take the workers' views into account.
- Advise workers of the outcomes in a timely way.

(NZ HSWA 2015 - Section 59(1) | AU WHS Act 2011 - Section 48)

Worker participation practices

PCBUs must have effective ways for workers to participate on an ongoing basis in improving health and safety. This can be through formal or informal mechanisms.

(NZ HSWA 2015 - Section 61)



What does the **law** say?

Each organisation determines the best way to meet its duties under health and safety legislation.

What is reasonable and effective will depend on many factors, including workers' views and needs, the size of the organisation and the nature of its risks. However, the legislation also requires engagement in the following circumstances:

- Identifying hazards and assessing risks
- Making decisions about how to eliminate or minimise risks
- Making decisions about facilities for worker welfare
- Proposing changes that may affect worker health and safety
- Making decisions on procedures for resolving health and safety issues, monitoring health, or providing training



What does the **law** say?

General Guiding Principles

- **Proportionality:** the nature of engagement and participation practices should be proportionate to the size of the business and the nature of the risks. A large, high-risk organisation will require more formal structures than a small, low-risk one.
- **Communication:** clear, open, and honest two-way communication is essential. This includes providing workers with information in a way that is easily understood.
- **No Discrimination:** It is illegal to discriminate against a worker for raising a health and safety issue or for performing their role as an HSR.
- **Support for Representatives:** PCBU's must provide HSRs with the necessary resources, time, and training to effectively carry out their role without being disadvantaged.





More engaged employees lead to a **greater safety culture**, where there are **fewer workplace injuries and incidents**, **greater productivity levels**, and **higher profitability**.

Source: Verdantix Report: Best Practices Promoting Security Engagement through Technology

More than compliance

When workers are involved, engaged, and represented, they often suggest practical, cost effective ideas and are more likely to put them into use. This leads to healthier and safer work, boosting performance and productivity as a result.



Business-level outcomes, by type of social dialogue



**But... how can workers
feel involved?**



Worker engagement & participation (AU)

38%

of workers feel they are not empowered to participate in health and safety discussions.

37%

of workers said if *WHS was more valued by workers*, it would be the top driver of good WHS practices.

42%

of workers identified *Communication and consultation with all workers* as the second most impactful enabler of good WHS practices, only after *Strong leadership and commitment*

Worker engagement & participation (NZ)

In 2024, the NZ Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment undertook a series of roadshow meetings and site visits to invite discussion and feedback on the performance of the work H&S regulatory system.

Noteworthy feedback from respondents on how businesses and organisations engage with workers, and how workers participate in H&S

Culture is important and engagement works well when driven by those on the ground, not just formal processes.

Work H&S is sometimes seen by workers as something that is done “to” them, and not something they have a stake in too.

Some organisations do this well by empowering workers to take responsibility, and making H&S practical and about how the job is done.

Worker engagement & participation (NZ)

In 2024, the NZ Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment undertook a series of roadshow meetings and site visits to invite discussion and feedback on the performance of the work H&S regulatory system.

What worker engagement and participation measures do you have in place?

**Elected work H&S
representatives**

**Informal work H&S
representatives or
champions**

**Work H&S
committees**

**A system for
regular work H&S
communications**

**Regular meetings
where work H&S is
discussed**

**Regular work H&S
briefings**

Most respondents (businesses or workers) considered these kinds of participation methods to be **very or quite effective**.

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Collaborative safety meetings, A direct line to worker engagement



Meeting agenda essentials

To ensure your meetings are valuable, compliant, and focused on improvement, your agenda should cover these foundational topics:

Reporting new hazards or raising concerns

Reviewing and responding to incidents, near misses, and corrective actions

Always circle back to previous issues raised by workers

Provide clear updates on audits, inspections, training completion, and any major compliance changes or checks

Let workers drive general feedback and proposed improvements



Meeting types you should consider

PROACTIVE

Forward-looking sessions focused on prevention.

Scheduled to introduce, train, or discuss a specific safety topic before an issue arises (e.g., reviewing a new psychosocial risk policy or risk control measures).

REACTIVE

Immediate, post-event discussions to analyse and adjust. These are held swiftly after specific events, like an incident or near miss, to investigate root causes and revise controls instantly to prevent recurrence.

REGULAR

Scheduled, ongoing forums for consistent participation. These provide a foundational platform (e.g. weekly department check-ins) for general issue identification and continuous safety improvement.



Are your daily/weekly check-ins just ticking a compliance box or are they genuinely building safety habits into your team's day?



Procedural and documentation standards

Your records must be stored and accessible, and you should always keep track of the 5 'Ws':

Who attended and **When**

What was discussed

What was decided

What is next

Your meetings should be **regular and ongoing**, tailored to your risk profile:

High-risk industries

Monthly for formal H&S meetings, often **supplemented by daily/weekly** toolbox talks or pre-start meetings

Lower-risk industries

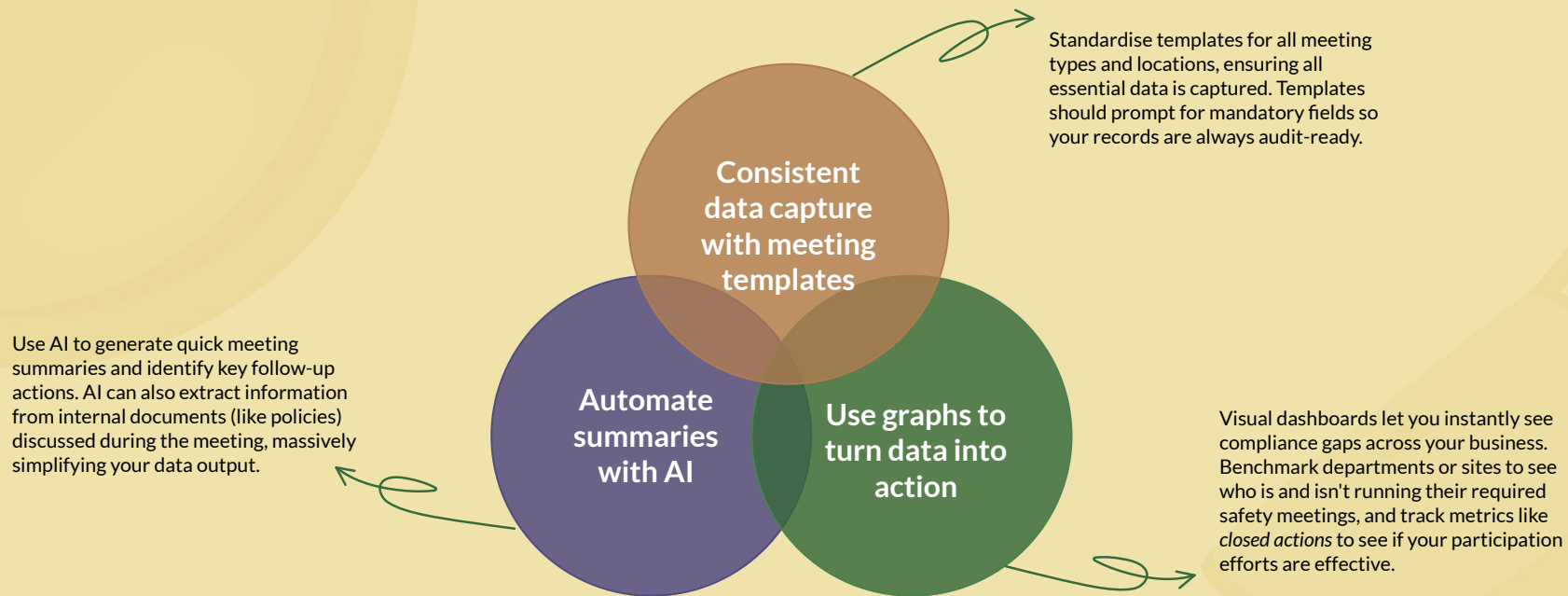
At least **quarterly** formal H&S meetings

Worker mandate

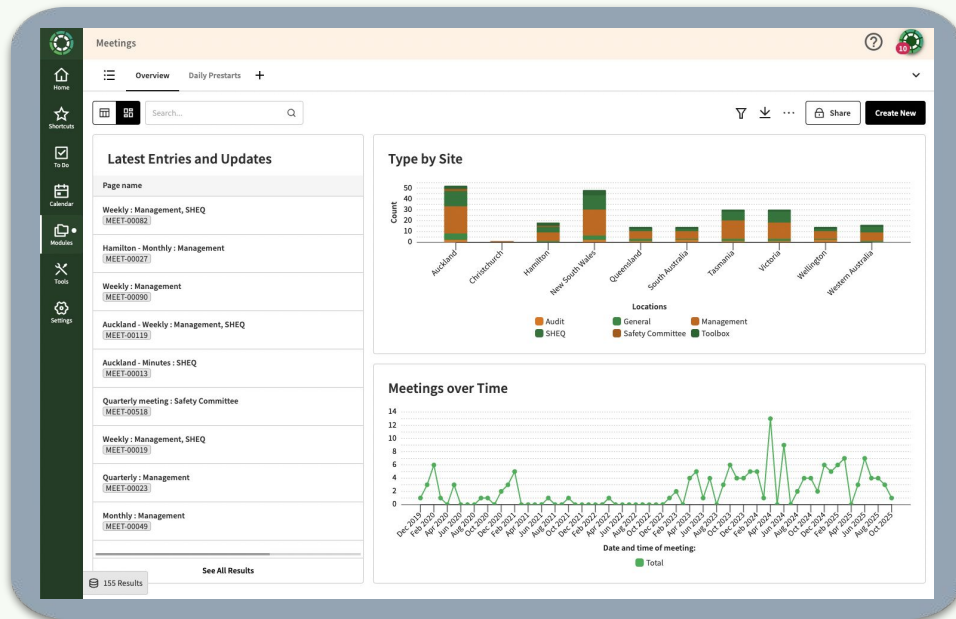
Meetings must occur **whenever requested by workers** or the H&S Representative.



Streamlining meetings to amplify worker's voices



Enhanced safety meetings in ecoPortal



Book a Follow Up Session

A 30-minute session with you and your team to assess how the Meetings module can optimise your processes to boost worker engagement.





Got any feedback?
We'd love to hear



Questions?

Enter them into the Q&A tab



Sam Williams

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