



Office of Industrial Relations

The Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) joined the Department of Education in December 2017, reporting to The Hon. Grace Grace MP, Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing, and includes:

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

Electrical Safety Office

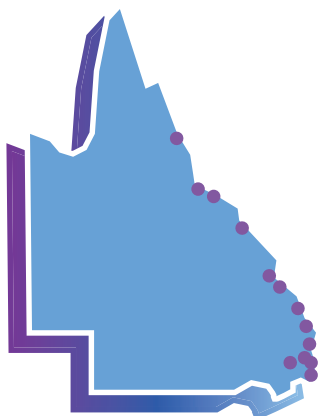
Workers' Compensation Regulatory Services

Industrial Relations

Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) has more than 800 staff in Ayr, Brisbane, Bundaberg, Cairns, Gladstone, Ipswich, Mackay, Maroochydore, Maryborough, Robina, Rockhampton, Toowoomba and Townsville. **Refer to our office locations throughout Queensland.**

We offer a range of policy, advisory, compliance and specialist technical services and initiatives including:

- ensuring compliance with work health and safety, electrical safety, industrial relations, and workers' compensation regulatory frameworks taking any necessary enforcement action and resolving disputes
- designing and implementing targeted initiatives underpinned by data, evaluation, experience, research and consultation
- managing registration, licensing, certification and accreditation regimes for workers' compensation, labour hire, work and electrical safety
- providing advocacy, support and advice.



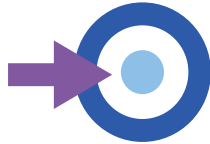
Our Vision

Queensland workers, industry and communities are healthy, safe, fair and productive.



Our Purpose

Delivering contemporary regulatory and other government services to Queenslanders.



Our roles

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

Responsible for improving work health and safety in Queensland and helping reduce the risk of workers being killed or injured at work, through the design, development and facilitation of evidence-informed, preventative education programs and awareness campaigns.

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ) also:

- enforces work health and safety laws
- investigates work-related fatalities and serious injuries and provides support to affected workers and families
- takes legal action when work health and safety laws are broken
- educates employees and employers on their legal obligations.



Visit the WorkSafe website.

Electrical Safety Office

Responsible for delivering electrical safety regulatory services in Queensland, the Electrical Safety Office (ESO) develops and enforces standards for electrical safety and promotes improved safety performance across the community.

This includes:

- advisory and enforcement activities to promote compliance with electrical safety laws and standards to improve electrical safety outcomes
- information, education and training activities to help industry, employees and the community reduce the risk of death, injury and destruction of property caused by electricity
- managing registration, licensing, approval (electrical equipment) and accreditation regimes required under the *Electrical Safety Act 2002*.



Visit the Electrical Safety website

Workers' Compensation Regulatory Services

Responsible for regulating the Queensland workers' compensation scheme, dispute resolution and providing education about the scheme. This includes:



- monitoring the compliance and performance of insurers and deciding self-insurance applications
- dispute resolution, such as reviewing insurers' decisions, managing appeals and supporting the efficient administration of the Medical Assessment Tribunal
- enforcing of workers' compensation laws
- policy, legislation and research advice on state and national workers' compensation matters
- providing information and education to stakeholders to ensure a fair and efficient scheme which balances the needs of workers and employers and facilitates rehabilitation and return to work after an injury.

Visit the WorkSafe website.

Industrial Relations

Responsible for supporting improved productivity and fairness in Queensland workplaces, providing:



- advocacy, advice, and support to government agencies, including government owned corporations, on public sector industrial relations matters and bargaining
- policy, legislation and research advice on state and national industrial relations matters
- compliance and information services on Queensland's industrial relations laws for state and local government, long service leave, child employment and trading hours
- licensing and compliance services to protect vulnerable labour hire workers and promote the integrity of the labour hire industry in Queensland.

Visit the Office of Industrial Relations website.

Achievements in 2020

OIR worked hard to ensure continuity of service in a year of major disruption and change. Highlights of 2020:



- Finalised the prosecution of Ardent Leisure for the deaths of four people at Dreamworld in 2016, sentenced in the Southport Magistrates Court and fined \$3.6m with convictions recorded.
 - Launched People at Work - an online psychosocial risk assessment survey that allows businesses to benchmark and measure psychosocial hazards and factors.
 - Amended plant registration fees for amusement device owners experiencing financial hardship.
 - Amended the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* to include penalties for abusive and threatening behaviour towards WHSQ inspectors to further ensure the safety of our workers.
 - Developed a new WorkSafe website and delivered fully digital programs for Safe Work Month, Electricity Safety Week, Mental Health Week and Asbestos Awareness Week, with record attendances and overwhelmingly positive feedback.
 - Introduced the Criminal Code and Other Legislation (Wage Theft) Amendment Bill 2020 to criminalise wage theft in Queensland.
 - Implemented changes to workers' compensation laws by providing workers access to early intervention psychological treatment and support.
 - Continued compliance audits of the stone benchtop fabrication industry to ensure silica risks are being managed, and developed clinical guidance for health practitioners to support robust and consistent assessment, diagnosis and management of potential cases of silica-related respiratory disease.
 - Held over 350 virtual medical assessment tribunals between April and December enabling continuity of services for the benefit of the Queensland workers' compensation scheme and to meet the needs of injured workers.
 - Created a compliance unit within ESO to work collaboratively with our investigations team for increased compliance and transparency in investigative and enforcement activities, with a focus on unlicensed electrical work through online marketplace platforms.
 - Improved governance and oversight of safety management systems for electricity entities, including Ergon Energy, Energex, Powerlink, and Queensland Rail.
- Operationally we:
- provided pandemic response support to Queensland Health by assessing COVID safe industry plans, event plans and site-specific plans
 - continued support for Injury Prevention and Management registered employers despite the mandated lock down and ongoing restrictions for on-site visits
 - worked with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries interagency group to undertake work health and safety audits before fruit pickers arrived under the Seasonal Worker Programme and Pacific Labour Scheme
 - ensured our people stayed COVID-19 safe through a risk management protocol while continuing to visit workplaces
 - managed 12,000 calls, 4,000 written enquiries and 8,000 licence applications each month
 - reached a significant milestone with the release of the new high-risk work assessor portal
 - coordinated 146 assessor evaluations and commenced 23 investigations involving high risk work (HRW) licence holders and accredited assessors
 - Our Review and Appeals team:
 - completed 2,257 workers' compensation reviews within an average of 21 business days after being allocated to a review officer
 - finalised 220 workers' compensation appeals and reduced the number of open appeals by 11 per cent
 - completed 295 work health and safety and electrical safety internal reviews within legislative timeframes and finalised 21 external reviews
 - aligned workers' compensation scheme education to the National Rehabilitation and Return to Work Strategy 2020-2030.

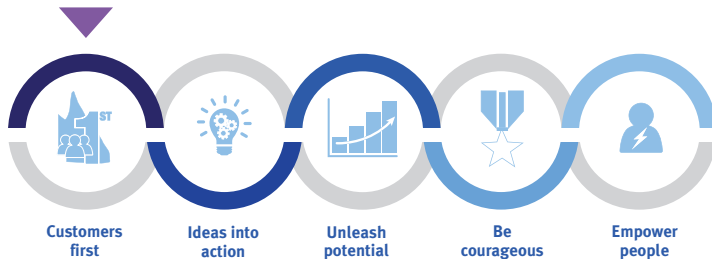
Focuses for 2021

- Boost the Labour Hire Licensing Compliance Unit with an additional eight frontline inspectors.
- Continue to implement initiatives responding to recommendations from the *Best Practice Review of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland Final Report 2017*.
- Review the *Electrical Safety Act 2002* including safety switch requirements.
- Investigate options for a portable long service leave scheme for nurses and midwives working in Queensland.
- Implement the Agricultural Electrical Safety Strategy to reduce electrical incidents in the agricultural industry.
- Finalise engagement and consultation on extending workers' compensation to gig economy workers.
- Implement an action plan to improve the workers' compensation experience and mental health outcomes for first responders with trauma-related psychological injuries.
- Undertake a five-yearly review of the *Industrial Relations Act 2016* including an investigation into protection for workers subject to sexual harassment.
- Invest up to \$5 million over four years for medical research into treatment to support and improve the health and wellbeing of workers suffering occupational dust lung diseases.
- Establish a tripartite industrial relations education committee to assist in the prevention of wage theft and to help affected workers recover lost wages and employment entitlements.
- Work with the Asbestos Disease Support Society and unions to finalise the State-wide Strategic Plan for the Safe Management of Asbestos in Queensland 2020-2023.
- Develop codes of practice and compliance and education campaigns for silica and psychological hazards to ensure clear standards and compliance.

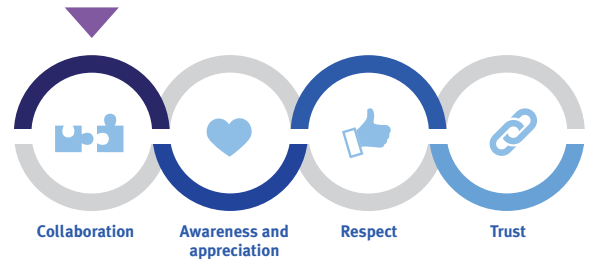


Our values

As individuals we uphold the Queensland public service values of:



As OIR we also live our values of:



Connect with us



Web: oir.qld.gov.au

WorkSafe.qld.gov.au

electricalsafety.qld.gov.au

Phone: **1300 362 128**

Facebook: facebook.com/WorkSafeQueensland

facebook.com/ElectricalSafetyOffice

facebook.com/ReturntoWorkQueensland

LinkedIn: [Workplace Health and Safety Queensland](https://WorkplaceHealthandSafetyQueensland)