

Harm Reduction Action Plan

For socialisation
2023–2026

Foreword

As two of the lead agencies driving harm reduction in the workplace, ACC and WorkSafe New Zealand are committed to working together to create a safer and healthier Aotearoa New Zealand, where businesses and kaimahi (workers) can thrive.

Together, we have an opportunity to prevent harm by taking a collaborative and evidence-based approach.

This Harm Reduction Action Plan 2023-2026 reflects our commitment to a harm reduction and prevention approach. We recognise that workplaces and kaimahi are exposed to a range of risks that must be managed to prevent negative consequences for individuals, their whānau, and communities.

Harm reduction is a complex and evolving field. Effective harm reduction requires ongoing learning, innovation, and partnership using a system-level approach. Responding to symptoms, and making small improvements, is not enough. To make a real difference to health and safety in the long term, we need to address how mahi (work) is done.

We will collaborate with key stakeholders, including industry associations, unions, advocacy groups, and academic institutions, to develop and implement this plan. We acknowledge that harm reduction requires a shared commitment, and we are grateful for the support and contributions of our partners.

As the primary regulator for work health and safety, WorkSafe's focus is on safe work, healthy work, and equitable outcomes. This includes education, engagement, and enforcement activities to help ensure everyone who goes to work comes home healthy and safe. We work with iwi, communities, businesses, and agencies as we all have a role to play in preventing workplace harm.

ACC aims to reduce the incidence and severity of injuries to improve the quality of life of kaimahi. We concentrate our efforts on working in partnership with businesses and stakeholders to target high-cost and high-volume injuries.

This joint Harm Reduction Action Plan supports coordinated investment and effort to leverage our respective strengths and to complement our other activities. The Plan comprises an overview of our joint priorities and focus areas aimed at preventing work harm in Aotearoa New Zealand.



Phil Parkes
WorkSafe Chief Executive
November 2023



Tane Cassidy
ACC Deputy Chief Executive
– Prevention and Partnerships

About the Harm Reduction Action Plan

Our harm reduction aspirations

We are committed to advancing the aspiration of the Health and Safety at Work Strategy – that work is healthy and safe for everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand.

As leaders and partners in harm reduction, we have an important responsibility to identify and deliver those things that will have the biggest positive impact on preventing harm at work to lift health, safety and wellbeing performance across all of Aotearoa New Zealand.

We strongly believe that by working together, with our partners, we have the ability to significantly improve work, so it is safer, healthier and more equitable, and achieve lasting improvements in harm reduction.

This Plan aligns with the goals and priorities of the Health and Safety at Work Strategy 2018–2028. It outlines our shared priorities, commitment to adopting a system-level approach, and where and how we will take focused action to improve work health, safety and wellbeing over the next three years.

We need to shift the dial

Too many people are still being harmed at work.

A system-level approach is essential if we are to bring about the significant and lasting transformation required to make workplaces safer and healthier for all New Zealanders.

There have been downward trends in most key indicators of acute harm, due to the collective efforts of businesses, kaimahi, agencies, and regulators to improve workplace health and safety, however, progress has slowed.

Unacceptable inequities remain for some groups in our work environments, particularly Māori kaimahi and Pacific kaimahi.

To date, our mahi to reduce harm in the workplace has largely focused on a range of specific tactical initiatives. These interventions have often provided immediate benefits but lacked the scalability and systemic perspective required for long-term sustainability of the gains they have made. This is because they often have limited ability to address the broader system factors and interactions that influence workplace harm in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Figure 1^[1]

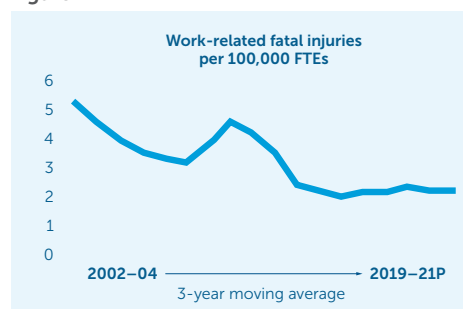


Figure 2^[1]

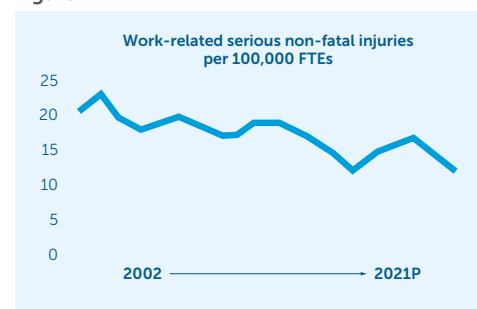


Figure 3^[1,2]

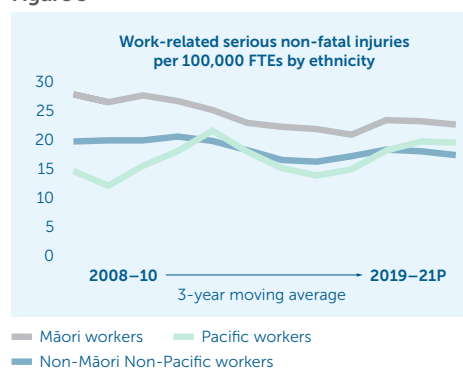
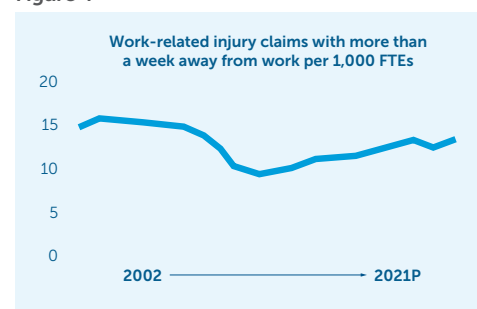


Figure 4^[1]



1. Source: Stats NZ, data published on 16 Dec 2022; [Work-related injury targets at a glance: 2008–2021](#) | Stats NZ. Rates are age-standardised, except Figure 4 which is non-age-standardised. Injury periods are by calendar year. Data for 2021 is provisional.
 2. The rates for serious non-fatal injuries by ethnicity are only suitable for assessment of change over time within each ethnic group, rather than comparison of injury rates across different ethnic groups at any point in time.

Achieving more together through a system-level approach

Taking a system-level approach is an important shift in our harm reduction action planning. It recognises our continued focus on addressing key risk factors to improve health and safety practices at work, while critical, will not be enough to achieve the step change we need for better results.

There are many factors that impact peoples' wellbeing every day, and what is happening in all aspects of their lives actively influences their health, safety, and wellbeing at work. Applying a systems lens to these complex relationships offers the opportunity to better understand how they contribute to exposing kaimahi and the public to unacceptable risk in the work environment.

It will provide greater insight into how different parts of the system, and organisations and agencies within the system, influence each other to impact harm, and generate the rich information and knowledge needed to identify future system interventions with the greatest potential to shift health, safety and wellbeing outcomes across Aotearoa New Zealand.

Driving meaningful progress will come down to the sustained collaboration and shared commitment of system stakeholders to bring together perspectives, expertise, information, and resources in new and unique ways, and to deliver nationally coordinated joined-up responses to the challenges and opportunities in front of us.

The Aotearoa New Zealand Work System

Understanding the Work System

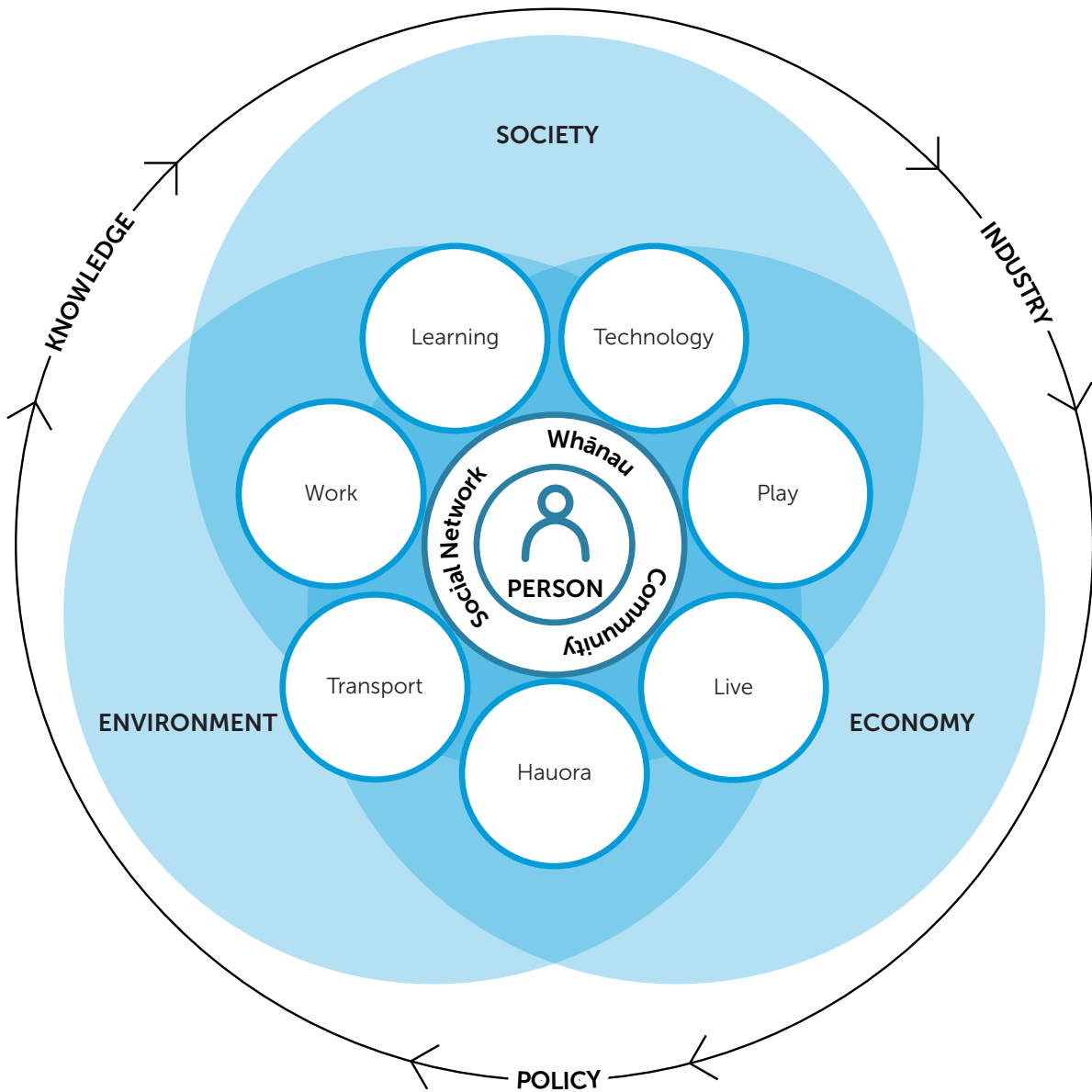
The Work System describes the wider context within which kaimahi and workplaces operate, including the many individual, environmental, societal, and economic factors which impact people and their health, safety and wellbeing at work.

Every person is influenced by and influences their environment – the societal, economic, and environmental conditions in which they are born, grow, live, work, and age, their lived experiences (spanning learning, technology, play, live, hauora³ transport, and work), and the people and communities who surround them.

This rich and complex interplay of factors is continually in motion and play a critical role in influencing a person's health, safety and wellbeing at work.

3. *Hauora* in Te Ao Māori is a holistic view of health and wellbeing.

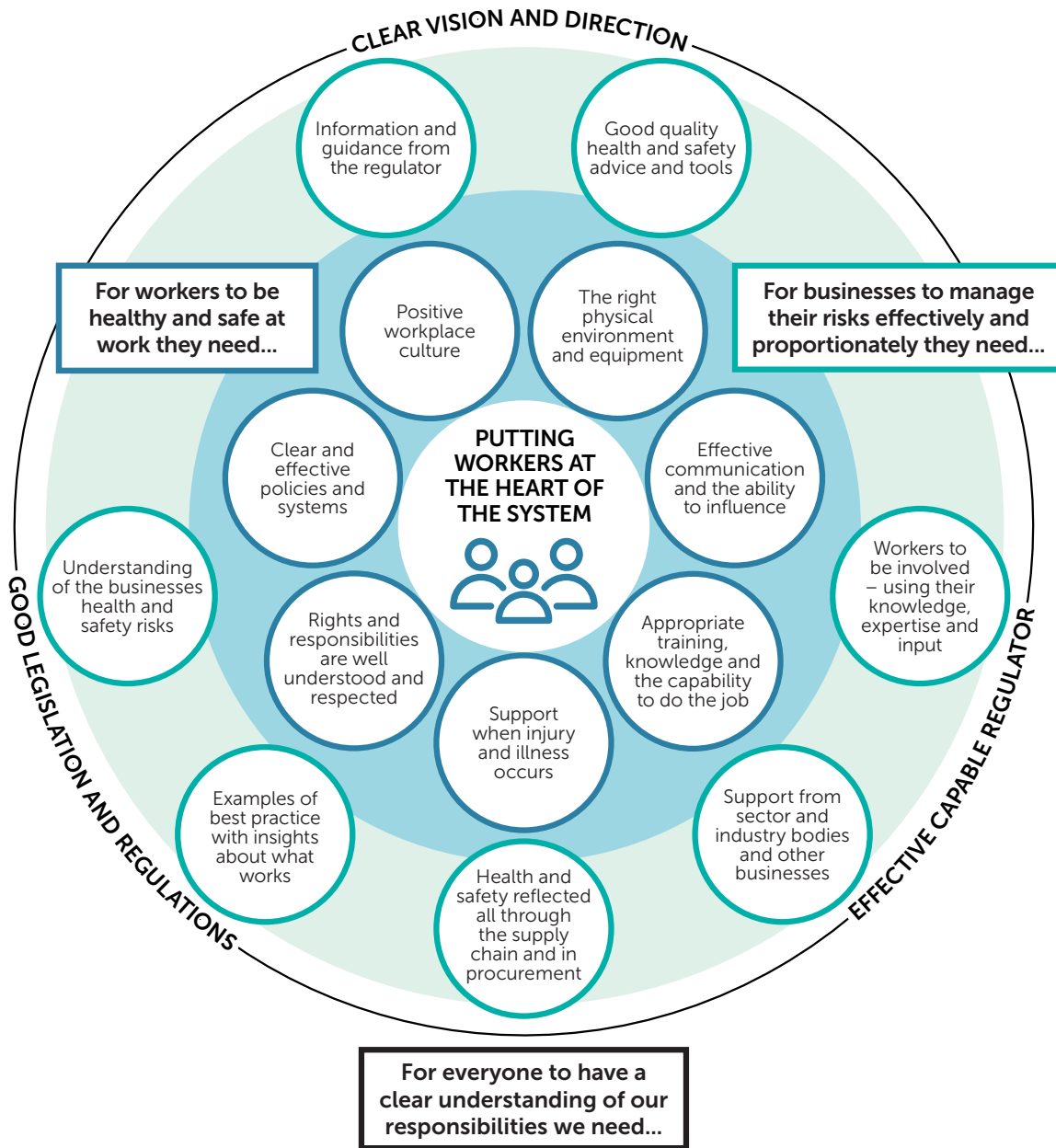
Figure 5: The Work System



Health and safety at work is part of the Work System and focuses on the practical things that businesses and kaimahi can do to ensure that risks are well managed, and people are healthy and safe in their mahi. The Health and Safety at Work Strategy sets out the key factors that contribute to the creation of healthy and safe workplaces by placing kaimahi at the heart of the system.⁴

4. Diagram sourced from Health and Safety at Work Strategy 2018–2028, Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment

Figure 6: Health and safety at work⁴



A well-functioning Work System has the potential for significant impact on kaimahi health, safety and wellbeing outcomes at a broader scale, across industries and sectors. It shifts focus to tackling systemic issues that influence the effectiveness of the factors businesses and kaimahi use to strengthen their culture of safety, reduce risks, and protect well-being at work.

4. Diagram sourced from Health and Safety at Work Strategy 2018–2028, Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment

Our roles in reducing harm

Working together, and with our partners, stakeholders, and other agencies, we are dedicated to building a future where people thrive, businesses prosper, and communities are healthy.

ACC and WorkSafe play complementary roles in leading, working with, supporting, and empowering our partners and stakeholders to create a safer and healthier Aotearoa New Zealand together.

About ACC

ACC is a crown entity that provides comprehensive, no-fault personal injury cover for all residents and visitors to Aotearoa New Zealand. Our responsibilities span injury prevention, care and recovery.

Our new strategy *Huakina Te Rā*, builds on all that's come before to set out our vision, purpose, and ambitions for the coming decade. It gives effect to *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* (The Treaty of Waitangi) through our *Waka Hourua* dual partnered approach and framing.

Tō Tātou Aronga (our purpose) is to improve lives every day through a focus on prevention, care and recovery for everyone impacted by injury.

Tōnui ake nei (thriving Aotearoa) is our vision for a future where we work together so that all people and their communities can live the lives they value.

We manage incentives that encourage health and safety improvement in the workplace and work in partnership with businesses and stakeholders to target high-cost and high-volume injuries to improve the quality of life of all *kaimahi*.

About WorkSafe New Zealand

WorkSafe is New Zealand's primary health and safety regulator. Our primary objective is to contribute to a balanced framework for health and safety in New Zealand. Our other objective is to contribute to the safe supply of electricity and gas.

In practical terms, contributing to a balanced framework means making health and safety a collective priority for businesses, workers, unions and government (including government agencies). Our regulatory functions can be grouped into three broad categories:

- preventing work harm, including through enforcement and compliance
- promoting better work by publishing guidance, developing approved codes of practice and disseminating best practice
- connecting the health and safety system by fostering productive relationships between workers and employers and sharing health and safety information with interested parties.

Over time, our regulatory focus has shifted from primarily acute injuries and deaths to broader work harm areas including health-related harm, COVID-19 and mentally healthy work.

How we work together – collaborating for a better future

Taking our collaboration to the next level

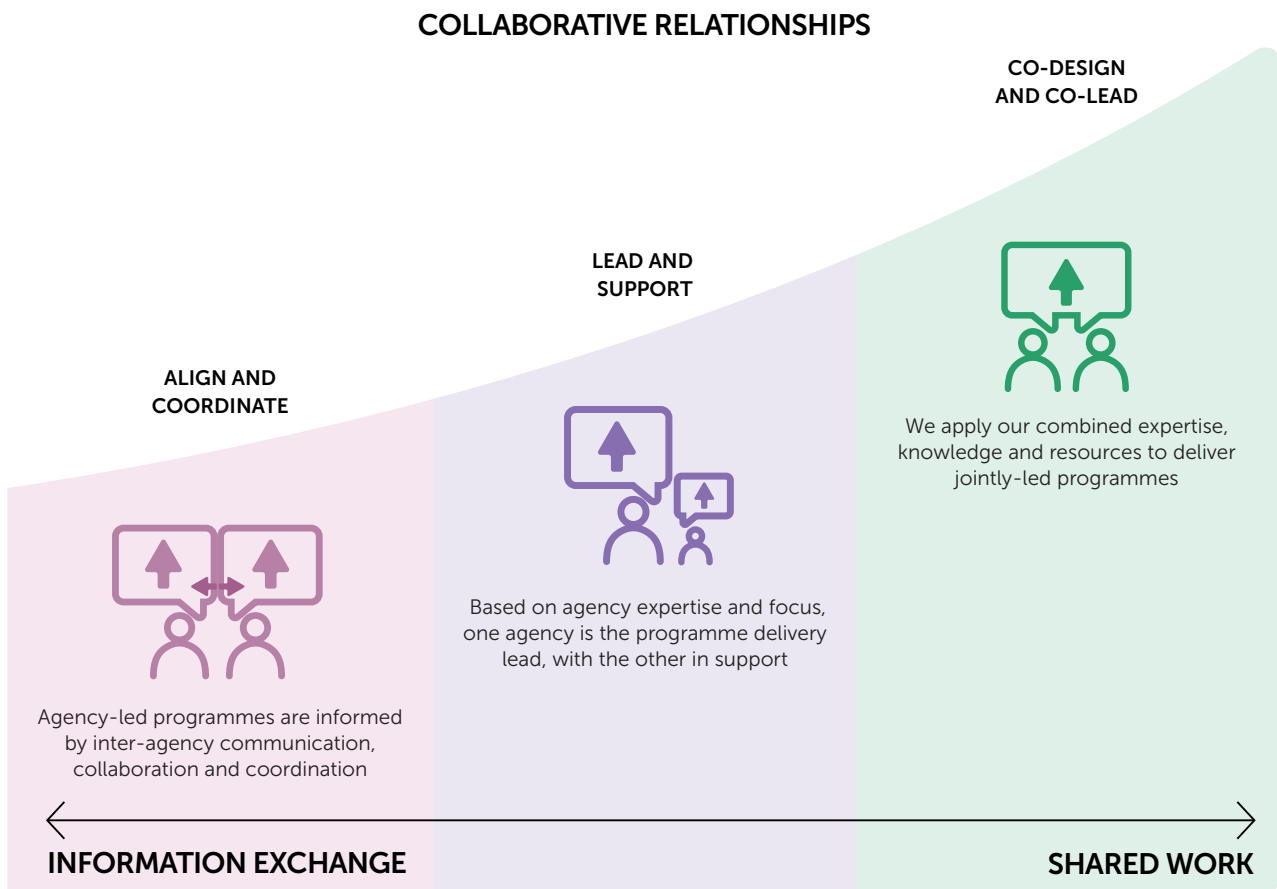
Together we can achieve more. We are committed to embedding collaboration in the way we work together and to accelerate our ability to co-design, collaborate, and connect effectively with our partners.

Collaboration is vital to our harm prevention aspirations. It enables us to build upon our mahi together, and with sector groups, social partners, and others, to advance our shared goals for workplace harm reduction.

Our partnership has already produced good results by setting in motion a joint governance group to oversee the Harm Reduction Action Plan, standing up joint funding panels, sharing reporting methods, and exchanging skills, knowledge, and resources.

We are committed to continuing to strengthen these arrangements and integrating collaboration more deeply into the way we work together so the collective strengths of ACC, WorkSafe and everyone involved in this mahi are focused on accelerating improvements to harm prevention outcomes. Our continuum of collaborative relationships sets out our approach.

Figure 7: Collaborative relationships



The Plan – what we will do

Activating change in harm prevention

This plan describes our aspirations and actions to shift the dial in harm reduction.

Our Harm Reduction Action Plan aligns with and supports the vision and direction of the Health and Safety at Work Strategy.

The plan is built upon two foundational commitments, Partner with Māori and Equity, which guide and span all aspects of the mahi to bring about positive change in harm prevention across the Work System.

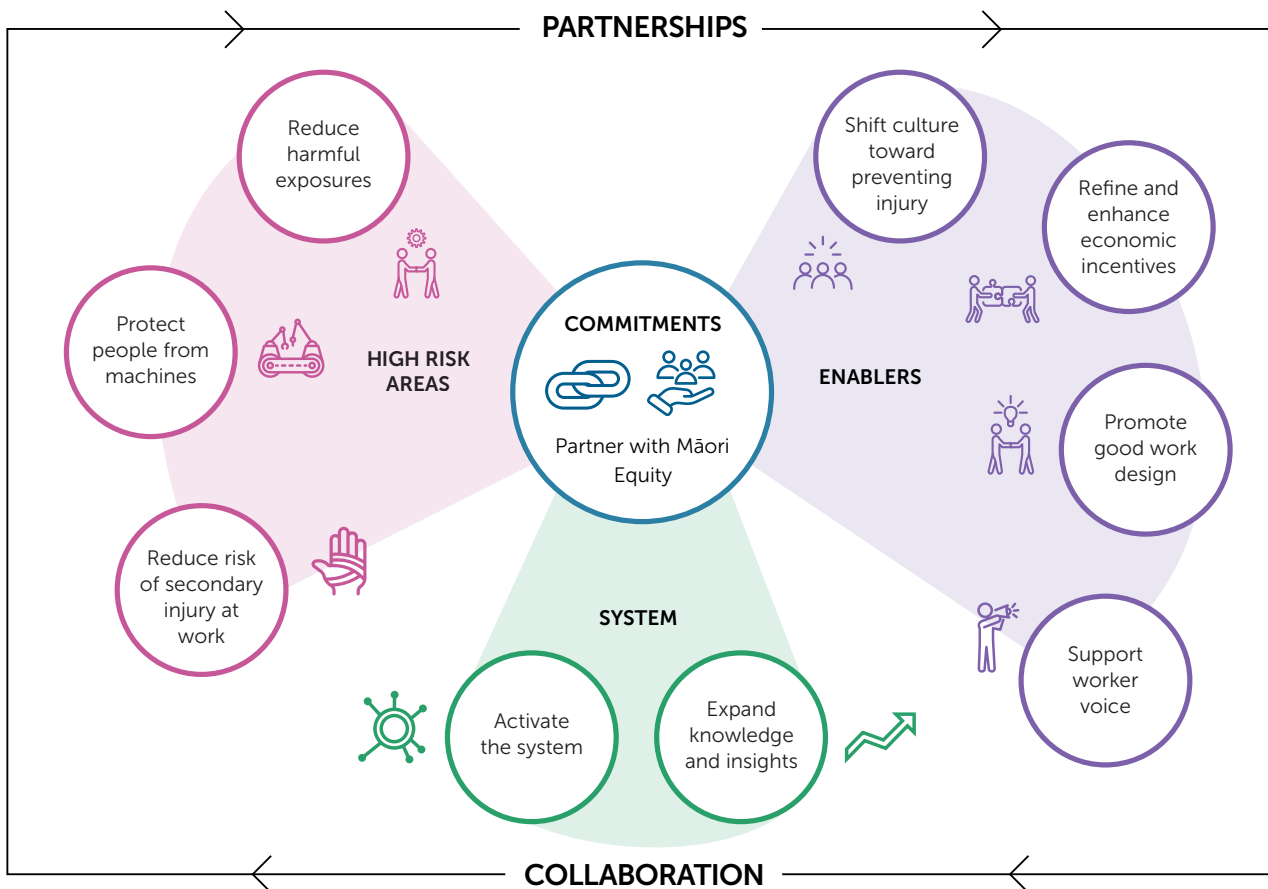
We have designed our work programme around three important areas of focus: ***System, Enablers and High Risk Areas***.

- *System* programmes drive and strengthen a coordinated, informed, and unified response at system-level to achieve sustainable harm reduction outcomes.
- *Enabling* programmes create an environment that supports harm reduction by informing, incentivising, promoting and empowering workplace health, safety and wellbeing.
- *High Risk Areas* programmes primarily focus on sectors and industries with high rates of injury and harm, such as Agriculture, Construction, Forestry, Healthcare and Social Assistance, and Manufacturing.

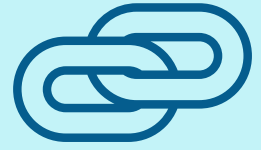
Vital to the success of this plan will be how well we empower and engage our partners and stakeholders to collectively, with us, take an active, preventative approach to harm reduction.

Figure 8: ACC and WorkSafe commitments and focus areas

Work is healthy and safe for everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand



Partner with Māori



Aspiration

We genuinely engage and partner with Māori in our mahi to reduce workplace harm and improve wellbeing.

Actions



Develop and grow our shared understanding of Te Tiriti principles and the ways we can bring our commitment to life in our harm reduction efforts.



Undertake a process of discovery and genuine engagement with Māori rōpū to understand their aspirations, needs and priorities in relation to harm reduction in the workplace.



Continue to collectively establish and foster relationships with hapū, iwi, Māori enterprises and other rōpū (groups).



Seek to partner with Māori rōpū to develop future Harm Reduction Action Plans and grow co-design of key programmes.

Equity



Aspiration

We reduce the disparities in access, experience, and outcomes that impact those groups facing greater risk of harm from work.

Actions



Examine our own internal practices and approaches to identify bias and reduce barriers.



Understand the system drivers that contribute to inequity in the causes of harm and injury risk in the workplace.



Prioritise activity that removes equity bias in injury prevention approaches and programmes for under-served kaimahi and in the high-risk settings that impact these groups.

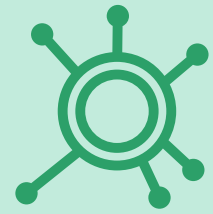


Target harm prevention programmes that increase protective factors and deliver better harm reduction outcomes and experiences for those who are disproportionately affected.



Encourage and enable our partners to put equity on the agenda to achieve better outcomes.

Activate the system



Aspiration

We collaborate with those who are responsible and have influence over system performance to activate, connect, and sustain a coordinated effort that drives positive change in harm prevention and amplifies results.

Actions



Share and sustain our vision and take the lead on bringing parties together to enable system-level direction setting and planning for harm reduction.



Partner with agents of change to grow system capability and deliver impact (for example, Grants and Partnerships) so partners can help drive system-led efforts that deliver cumulative impact.



Embed joint governance, processes, infrastructure, and investment to support effective collaboration in injury prevention and build capacity across the work system.



Activate joint planning with sector partners to develop and enhance programmes that address agreed areas of focus and priorities.



Develop a shared theory of change that can be applied at sector level.



Build capability within the Work System to strengthen workforce development.



Influence and contribute to policy and legislation in health, employment, and economic policy where it relates to the Work System.

Expand knowledge and insights



Aspiration

We empower our partners to harness system knowledge and insights that inform effective prevention efforts and foster healthy, safe, and thriving kaimahi and workplaces.

Actions



Leverage our combined capabilities to enhance the capture, integration and sharing of Work System data to develop knowledge and insights for effective decision making.

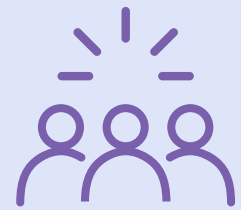


Continue to build understanding of the Work System and the key levers within priority sectors to maximise harm reduction benefit.



Mature the performance framework by supporting system level monitoring, developing lead system indicators for harm prevention, and measuring intervention impact.

Shift culture toward preventing injury



Aspiration

Build high awareness of the need to avoid injury, motivate people to take prevention-focused actions, and create a social movement that connects people to interventions that support their wellbeing and protect them from injury.

Actions



Implement the Preventable 'enhancement phase' – helping more people to recognise the value of preventing injuries and motivating more people to take preventative behaviours, with a focus on the impact of injuries on workplaces and community and local implementation.

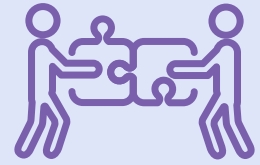


Partner with large businesses and industry groups to reduce non-work-related injuries to kaimahi. Jointly campaign on the activities that expose people to risk outside of work and can lead to time off work.

ENABLER

ACC LED

Refine and enhance economic incentives



Aspiration

Increase workplace harm reduction activity by offering a range of economic incentives that encourage business and people to adopt and maintain behaviours that reduce the risk of work injuries (or re-injury), or that reward and stimulate the development and adoption of effective solutions to workplace harm.

Actions



Review and explore options to improving the efficacy of current performance-based programmes to incentivise businesses to prevent harm for people at work (such as experience rating and No Claim Discount).



Develop and start implementation of an enhanced and strengthened Accredited Employer Programme.

Promote good work design



Aspiration

Stop work harm before it happens by addressing the root causes of poor health and safety outcomes and inequities experienced by workers.

Actions



Build understanding of how the regulator can hold 'upstream' decision makers to account for the health, safety, and wellbeing of people.



Encourage 'upstream' decision makers to follow client leadership frameworks, and best practice guidance for procurement and health and safety governance.



Work with cross government partners to identify and activate levers to lift health and safety performance within high-risk industries.



Work with the worst high-harm, high-risk or recidivist poor health and safety performers, to address harm through targeted interventions.

Support worker voice



Aspiration

Help kaimahi drive change by giving them tools to influence work health and safety, increase the capacity of Health and Safety Representatives in key industries, encourage more workers to undertake Health and Safety Representative training, and influence the perceived value of training for Māori kaimahi and Pacific kaimahi.

Actions



Strengthen the role of Health and Safety Representatives in the workplace.



Address harm inequities faced by Māori and Pacific workers by removing cultural barriers to the Health and Safety Representative role and worker voice system.



Deliver targeted worker voice initiatives in sectors and workplaces identified with low worker participation capability.



Engage and educate to promote better work by highlighting practical methods to improve worker voice processes and practices.

HIGH RISK

WORKSAFE LED

Reduce harmful exposures



Aspiration

Reduce harm to kaimahi by reducing reliance on materials and processes that produce harmful exposures, and by identifying and effectively controlling potentially harmful exposures in the workplace.

Actions



Continue building knowledge of where harmful exposures are occurring and monitor how well they are being controlled.



Implement and enforce regulatory frameworks for substances hazardous to health.



Develop guidance and tools and undertake collaborative initiatives to help businesses identify and control harmful exposures.



Work with others to explore opportunities to eliminate harmful materials and processes from supply chains.

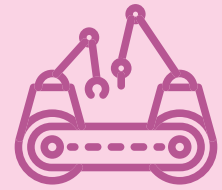


Undertake targeted interventions to ensure businesses meet their duties to identify and control exposures. Invest in workforce capacity and capability and facilitate business access to expert advice.

HIGH RISK

WORKSAFE LED

Protect people from machines



Aspiration

Protect kaimahi from harm caused by interactions with vehicles, machines and working at heights by encouraging use of safer options, reducing worker exposure to safety risks, and supporting safe worksite practices.

Actions



Continue building knowledge of safer worksite practices, including use of technology to support safer practices.



Work with others to explore opportunities to improve access to safer plant and equipment and remove unsafe options from the supply chain.



Undertake targeted interventions to ensure businesses meet their duties to identify and control exposure to safety risks.



Support the plant and structures regulatory reform programme.

HIGH RISK

ACC LED

Reduce risk of secondary injury at work



Aspiration

Enhance awareness and understanding, and influence behaviour to reduce harm caused by re-injury.

Actions



Explore opportunities to strengthen secondary prevention through early intervention at the onset of injury or during injury rehabilitation.

Funding arrangements

How the plan will be funded

Funding for the Harm Reduction Action Plan 2023–2026 will continue to come from levies paid by employers and the self-employed.

ACC will fund ACC-led initiatives from the ACC Work Account.⁵

For the 2023–2024 year, ACC has committed and planned investment of:

- \$10 million for ACC-led and jointly-led Injury Prevention programmes and initiatives; and
- Up to \$15 million to be transferred from the ACC Work Account to WorkSafe under a Partnership Agreement on an accrual basis for the delivery of WorkSafe-led injury prevention measures.

For the 2024–2026 years, ACC will apportion Injury Prevention funds derived from the ACC Work Account, based on priorities, identified needs, ministerial direction, and the combined funding available for this work. This may include the allocation of up to \$15 million per annum to WorkSafe under the Partnership Agreement.

In addition to the above, WorkSafe will fund WorkSafe-led and jointly-led activities from its Crown Funding. This will be set by Government using the Health and Safety at Work Levy collected by ACC on behalf of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and other statutory Crown appropriations.

5. In line with Section 263 of the Accident Compensation Act 2001.

Measuring the success of this Harm Reduction Action Plan

We will monitor and track progress through a combination of system-level and targeted measures, and programme-specific performance indicators.

This plan contributes to reductions in harm across three key system-level measures:

- Fatal work-related acute injuries
- Serious non-fatal work-related acute injuries
- Injuries with more than a week away from work

These measures provide lag (post event) indicators of harm reduction progress.

We will develop indices (combined measures) from the data we collect about:

- Worker Engagement, Participation, and Representation
- Workforce Development
- Business Health and Safety Maturity
- Programme Performance

These measures will provide lead (early) indicators of harm reduction progress to supplement our post-event measures.

As we implement the plan, we will identify and develop additional ways to measure and track the success of our programmes.

Three in particular are important areas of focus in this mahi:

- Knowledge and Insights, where we will expand our suite of system-level lead indicators so we gain earlier insights into the impact of our mahi and can make changes as needed.
- Partner with Māori commitment, where we will seek to work with Māori to identify and develop meaningful measures based on their needs and priorities.
- Equity commitment, where our greater understanding of the system drivers of inequity will help us identify and develop a set of measures relevant to those drivers.

We will validate, adapt, and strengthen our suite of indicators so they remain fit for purpose as we deepen our understanding of the Work System, how our mahi is impacting, and as new system-level measures are developed.

Both agencies are committed to maintaining joint governance of the plan, regularly monitoring and reviewing progress, continuously improving how we collaborate, and making adjustments based on the insights we gain.

Appendix – Our obligations

The Harm Reduction Action Plan (HRAP) meets the legislative⁶ requirement for ACC and WorkSafe to have a workplace injury prevention action plan (Plan), in place at all times and reviewed at least every three years.

It comprises ACC's and WorkSafe's focus areas aimed at preventing work harm and reducing work injuries and fatalities (actual or potential) affecting New Zealanders, irrespective of how the activities are funded.

It acts on the goals and priorities of the Health and Safety at Work Strategy 2018–2028, WorkSafe's Strategy 2016–2026 and ACC's Strategy, Huakina te Rā, and its injury prevention priorities, and is intended to complement the agencies other activities.

The Plan:

1. Outlines all workplace injury prevention programmes that will be undertaken by WorkSafe and ACC (jointly or separately) in the period to which the Plan relates; and
2. States how those programmes are to be funded; and
3. States the amount of funding where funding from one agency is to be used to fund programmes undertaken by the other agency.

6. Section 264A Accident Compensation Amendment Act 2001 and Section 196 Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

