



# Working at Height Association

Reaching new levels in safety

# ANNUAL REPORT

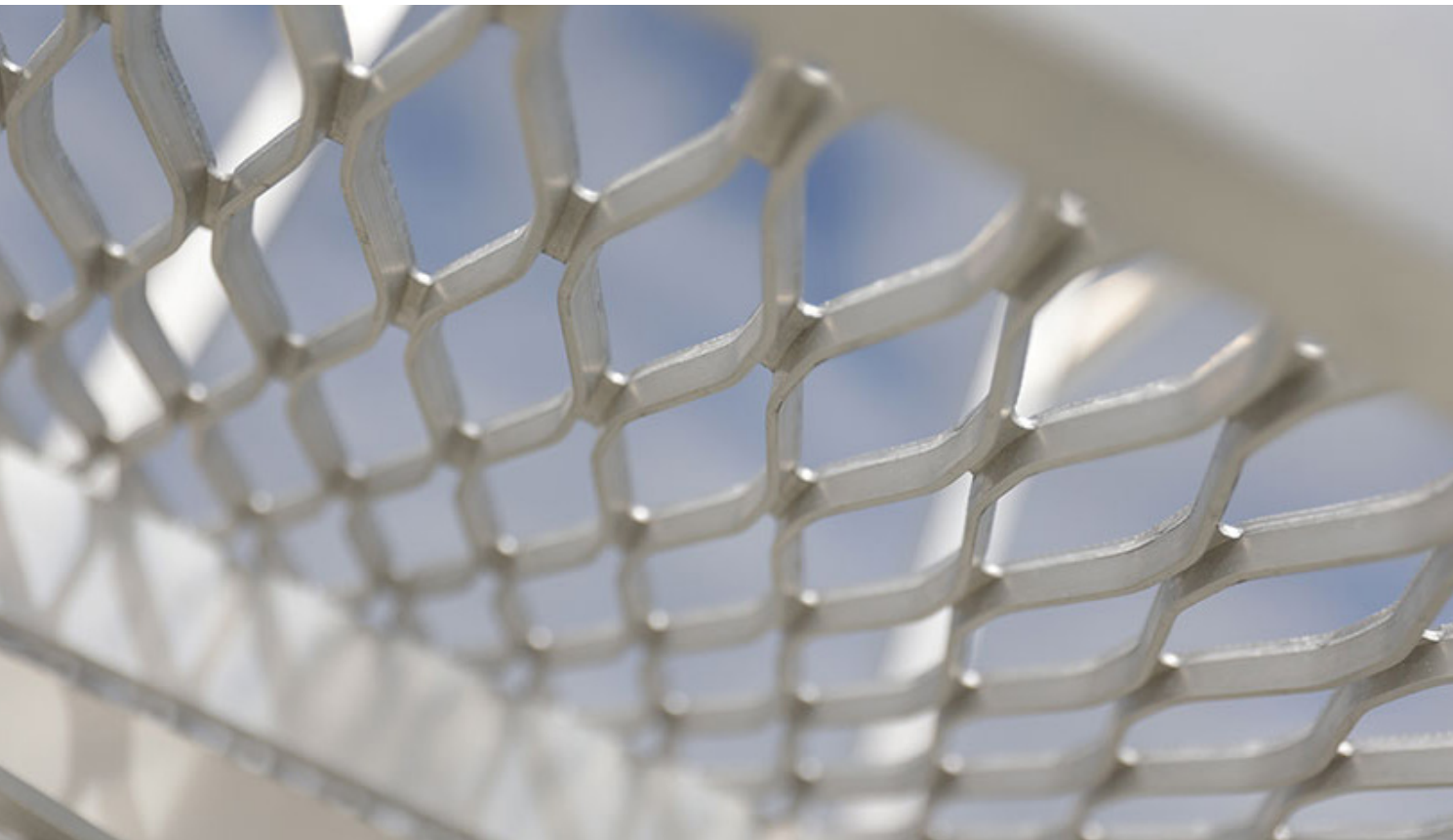
Date Created  
2022

Version Number  
1.0

Approved By  
Michael Biddle

# About WAHA

# 01



## Who We Are

The WAHA is dedicated to supporting and influencing the ongoing development of safe practice, equipment innovation, systems and product design, continuous education of all stakeholders and the operational competency of all persons working at height and in confined spaces.

As a professional membership organisation, WAHA is a centre for the working at heights, safety, engineering and design communities to come together to advance safety, increase knowledge and advocate for best practice in the discipline.

As a voice for industry, our industry tiers of membership reflects leadership in the field, utilising an internal audit process for our Gold and Silver Members to ensure we represent best practice and to help maintain our position as a leading advocate for safety, and agency for change on current and emerging issues. Our Individual and Student Members represent a community of engaged professionals from a variety of industries with an interest and incentive to enhance safety in the workplace.

The aim of the organisation is act as a representative voice for industry, and provide professional alignment and facilitate continuous learning by managing and improving the Body of Knowledge library and building and fostering relationships with all stakeholders.

# Mission

1. To maintain our position as the peak body for height safety, representing the interests of all those involved in providing products, services, training or advice relating to safe Working-at-Height and Confined Spaces.
2. To promote and maintain the highest standards in safety, work quality and working practices for the Working-at-Height and Confined Spaces industries.
3. To facilitate increased knowledge and compliance with safety Standards for all those involved in Working-at-Height and Confined Spaces.
4. To promote the continuous improvement of education and training in Working-at-Height and Confined Space to meet the changing needs of industry and increase the competencies and professionalism or practitioners.
5. To facilitate and encourage the exchange of technical knowledge and to encourage further research into industry issues based on co-operation and collaboration with related industries and professions.
6. To work with industries to:
  - *Reduce the number of injuries and fatalities as a result of falls from height and the risks involved in confined space works.*
  - *Drive compliance in the areas of equipment design, selection and use, and training competencies;*
  - *Provide a forum for industry-based discussion, issue identification and resolution;*
  - *Be a primary source of information for members, the industry, safety, engineering and all stakeholders involved in working at heights and confined space.*
  - *To encourage engagement from stakeholders across industries to ensure the continuous improvement of safety as work methods evolve.*



# Aims & Objectives

- Support members and facilitate the transfer of knowledge to all stakeholders.
- Organise annual networking events for the Working at Heights and Confined Spaces community.
- The regulation of the WAHA Internal Audit system as used by our members.
- Continually review and update policies and procedures related to Standards and audit and assessment tools/procedures to ensure they remain relevant and fit for purpose.
- Promote and maintain a high standard of Working at Heights and Confined Spaces activities in terms of safety and work quality.
- Provide guidance on training and certification of personnel involved in Working at Heights and Confined Spaces industries.
- Produce publications and guidance on safety, best work practice, training and other related topics.
- Prepare submissions and provide informed and evidence-based review and advice to Australian Government departments, Regulatory Authorities and other engaged organisations on matters concerning work-at-height and confined space health, safety and training.
- Development of Codes of Practice for industry to reflect and map best practice expectations.
- Assist working parties charged with reviewing, commenting on and discussing existing and draft Australian Standards.
- Provide a forum for the free and informal exchange of experience and opinion.

# Leadership Team



## Chief Executive Officer & Strategic Design Manager

### Scott Barber – Melbourne

Scott is a qualified Safety Professional with extensive operational, consultant services, engineering, and manufacturing experience in working at height, confined spaces, rope access and rescue applications. As CEO, Scott's focus is the design of the WAHA engagement and education strategies targeting all our professional members, the broader safety community, and operators at height and in confined space across all industries to best facilitate positive change and ultimately safer workplaces.



## Secretary, Strategic Development & Programs Manager

### Deborah Chick – Sydney

With over a decade of experience in business management, Deb has extensive experience in IRATA International rope access operations and training and is a former IRATA Health & Safety Committee member. Deb specialises height safety compliance, IRATA and ISO accreditation, the development of internal company policies and procedures, rescue planning, business plans and initiating roadmaps for the continued growth of organisations.



## Association Chairperson

### Michael Biddle – Perth

Michael has been the Chair of the WAHA for over 10 years. Michael is the current Managing Director of RIGCOM Pty Ltd. a leading provider of technical services and engineered solutions at height. RIGCOM specialise in the design, installation, and recertifications with a focus on height safety and rope access across a variety of industry sectors including commercial and wind energy. Michael brings 20 years in the height safety industry to the association, with industry experience ranging from manufacturing, product development, training and operational height safety and confined spaces, company management and business management and marketing.

# WAHA Directors



## **Simon Pedretti**

**SafetyLink – Brisbane**

Director of SafetyLink Pty Ltd., designers and manufacturers of height safety equipment that is utilised in a wide variety of sectors including construction, wind energy, oil & gas, transportation, and telecommunications industries. Simon is also a representative on the Standards Australia SF015 Committee.



## **John Dollisson**

**IRATA Australasia – Melbourne**

Director of Vertigo Specialist High Access Services Pty Ltd, an IRATA International rope access member company, façade and general contracting company. John is representative of the IRATA International Regional Advisory Committee: IRATA Australasia.



## **Brendan Sutton**

**ALTURA Height Safety Professionals – Perth**

Managing Director of ALTURA – Height Safety Professionals, a specialist consultant firm performing design, inspection and compliance review services for height, façade and confined space access solutions.

# WAHA Directors



## **Mark Anderson**

**Anchored Height Safety – Melbourne**

Director of Anchored Height Safety, Mark brings a wealth of experience from over 20 years in Automotive development, engineering, senior project manager (PMI PMP certified), safety implementation and quality auditing.



## **Mark Whitehurst**

**MSA Safety – Perth**

Senior Business Development Manager of MSA Safety, a manufacturer of specialist technical safety equipment covering PPE and Engineered Fall Protection Systems. Mark is a qualified Safety Professional with extensive operational, consultancy, engineering, and manufacturing.



## **Ashley Campbell**

**Sky5 – Sydney**

National Business Development Manager – Strategic Division of Sky5, a rope access and height safety specialist in commercial cleaning, façade maintenance and repairs, as well as the delivery of training and assessment of a variety of working at heights and confined spaces industry courses through the Sky5 Academy. Ash is also a representative on the Standards Australia SF015 Committee.



# Chairman Report

Dear Members,

The 2021/2022 financial year has been a very challenging one for many companies and associations.

The after-effects of the COVID-19 shutdowns, including supply chain challenges, interest rate adjustments, escalating demands from customers, pressure on margins from wage rate increases, international freight delays and the impact of the Ukraine war have had far reaching impacts on the psyche and practicalities of doing business.

In saying all these things, the WAHA Membership has remained relatively consistent and the work being done in the background by both Deb, Scott and the board has been significant. The fact the WAHA is becoming increasingly recognised by Members, Industry and Regulators, reflects both the desire for better guidance on working at height issues and that resources continue to be needed to help industry reduce exposure to risk whilst increasing the safety of their workforce.

The role for the WAHA continues to evolve, with an increasing influence in Industry Standards as well as being a reference point for many Regulator agencies. Our co-operative involvement in documentation and education is only set to continue through the coming few years.

We therefore leave FY2022 in great shape and with the support of members into 2023, will continue to be seen as a valuable industry resource. We commend the report to you and look forward to continuing to deliver quality services and outputs that make a true difference for the community at large.

Michael Biddle




# CEO Report

As I reflect on the past year's challenges and achievements, I'm struck by what can be accomplished through the combined efforts of the Association working together towards our shared vision.

We implemented an ambitious 3 year Strategic Plan in 2021 and have achieved some key milestones which is testimony to this combined effort; completing our rebranding, enhancing our profile and presence, amplified our message and ability to positively influence change and increased value for our members.

As an Association, we have reset the way we operate and reshaped our approach to engagement, reinforcing the underlaying philosophy of our mission statement.

As a voice for the industry and working at heights safety, we are increasingly being heard by major institutions and organisations (both Government and civilian) and key stakeholders across multiple industries.

As safety professionals, we are well placed to respond to complex challenges posed by changing economic and regulatory environments given the diversity of voices we can access through our membership and network.

Strengthening our collective voice has been a key focus in our strategic plan, and I'm particularly excited about our work to engage external stakeholders and bring them into the conversation around best practice to better empower and educate new cross-industry influencers.

The WAHA's ongoing commitment to providing the profession with a louder voice was strengthened even further with more audiences engaged across our various social media channels.

I would like to thank all those who were members of the WAHA in 2021 for your support, with a particular mention to those who volunteered their time to be actively involved in one or more of the significant number of roles that members take on each year.

Thank you also to leadership team for your significant contribution and support during 2021-22, despite the constant challenges. Your input helps ensure that the WAHA continues to be a respected leader in relation to the built environment, advocate impactfully on behalf of members and the profession, delivers value to members and remains a strong and viable organisation.

Scott Barber




# Secretary Report

For many of us, these last 12 months have seen a number of significant changes.

Be it through the combined influence that psychological factors and surrounding social environment have on our physical and mental wellbeing (and ability to function), or the lingering impacts of a pandemic, a fluctuating economy, significant changes to interest rates, along with supply and personnel shortages. There's no doubt that the 2021-22 year has been a weird one.



There is no doubt that it has been a challenging year, and for the WAHA our first year after significant changes occurred: including the re-structure of our Membership tiers, changes to Membership Fees, change in the Association brand and imaging. This year has been an exciting one, as for the first time in nearly two years we have been able to engage face-to-face with Members and industry stakeholders.

And through all of it, we have seen a significant increase in our Membership numbers from a more diverse base. We have seen our Membership increase by over 30% in the last 12 months.

This growth is a reflection of both businesses, individuals and larger organisations having a commitment to raising safety standards and positively shaping the places we live, work and meet.

Being able to engage with a broader range of stakeholders means our future campaigns and actions can be more informed by key issues being faced across multiple industries.

Along with our Members, we continue to work towards to improving our built environment and the safety of all stakeholders. The Association has had a strong year, promoting quality, responsible and safe design of fall protection systems.

We look forward to the upcoming year, where we will continue to advocate on behalf of the profession for the benefit of all those impacted by working at heights and confined spaces.

Deborah Chick

# SWOT Analysis

S

STRENGTHS

W

WEAKNESSES

O

OPPORTUNITIES

T

THREATS

The Strategic Plan has been significantly informed and structured around the latest SWOT Analysis as worked through by the Board of Directors as part of the 2021+ Business Plan.

This has been a key reference point when reviewing KPIs, and we have been successful in addressing some of the key weaknesses identified, incorporating these solutions into our overarching transformation strategy.





# WAHA Membership

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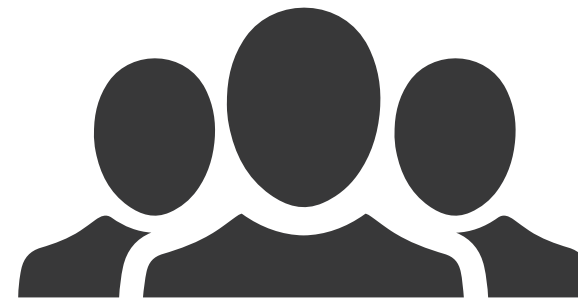
## Year-on-Year Growth

The events of the last few years led to a fluctuating membership base, as PCBU's refocused their energies on sustaining their businesses through the COVID-19 Pandemic.

We were already aware leading into 2020 that WAHA needed to be reinvigorated, and we took that opportunity to redefine our mission and re-brand as an organisation advocating for safer workplaces with a membership reflecting that philosophy.

We set out some fairly ambitious plans (which you can review in the previous years Annual Report) built on the work our late CEO, Richard 'Rick' Millar. Over the course of the last 12 months, we believe the Association has never been in a better position to increase our influence and amplify our message around safer working at height and confined spaces.

Significant changes occurred in the last 12 months, including the re-structure of our Membership tiers, and combined with representatives of the Association actually being able to engage face-



to-face with stakeholders, we have seen a significant increase in our Membership numbers from a more diverse base.

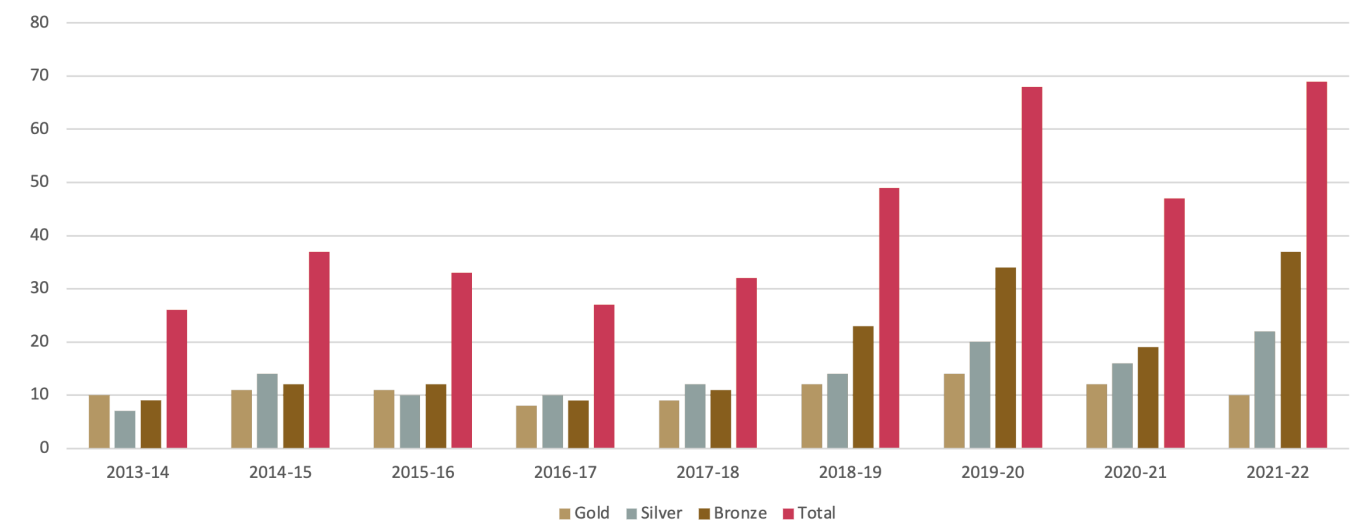
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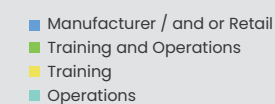
Along with our Members, we are dedicated to improving our built environment and the safety of all stakeholders but promoting quality, responsible and safe design and advocating on behalf of the profession for the benefit of all those impacted by working at heights.

The strength of WAHA is its commitment to enhanced safety at height, and with external stakeholder engagement at a Member level, we hope to leverage an expanded network to amplify our activities.

WAHA Membership Trends: 2013-2022



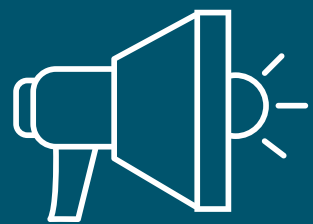
Primary Categories 2021-22



Member Geography 2021-22



# Benefits



## Contribution & Engagement

Subject Matter Experts across membership represents all facets of the industry providing expert guidance on policy and advocacy.

Development of State and application focused communities within the membership base to design solutions to existing and future working at height and confined space issues.

Encouraging contribution of articles for WAHA and industry journal publications.



## Professional Development & Learning

Member forums, conferences, peer review and training development.

Mentoring and support for Members to increase knowledge and competency.

CPD delivery to allied industry and professional associations.

Addition of Student and Individual Memberships to encourage engagement from outside industry and increase education footprint.

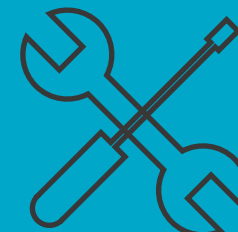


## Trusted Knowledge & Information

Continual development of the WAHA Body of Knowledge.

Targeted Social Media campaigns referencing key collateral from the WAHA Body of Knowledge Library.

To facilitate and encourage the exchange of technical knowledge and to encourage further research into industry issues based on cooperation and collaboration with related industries and professions.



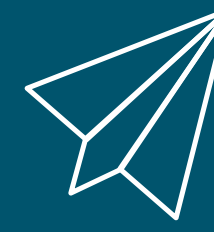
## Advocacy & Policy

Advocacy for change on current and emerging issues.

Prepare submissions and provide informed and evidence-based review and advice to Govt. Depts and Agencies, Regulatory Authorities and Industry.

Engagement with Industries to inform future development of Codes of Practice, Guidance Notes and campaign content.

WAHA as the peak industry body and primary expert resource.



## Professional Development & Learning

Member forums, conferences and training development.

Mentoring and support for Members to increase knowledge and competency.

CPD delivery to allied industry and professional associations.

Student and Individual Memberships to encourage engagement from outside industry and increase education footprint.



## Affordable Membership Tiers and Resources

Restructured Membership Categories provide multiple pathways for professional development and organisation engagement.

Digital resources available for free; physical copies for a nominal fee.

Member discounts available for external events and exhibitions.



# Phased Approach

## 03



## Opportunities

The 2021+2 Strategic Plan incorporated a phased approach to building our network and sphere of influence. As a guidance document, it allowed us to focus in on areas we saw as open to discussion.

As with all plans, we have approached this with a dynamic lens and have adapted our plan to fit better with the engagement we have received from the targeted industries.

As a result, we have made great progress in building connections and involvement with and from some of these targets, but have adjusted the 2022/23 plan to better fit our current activities and demands from industry.

As the year progressed the approach evolved. The Association has been able to adjust its course as new, and sometimes unexpected opportunities have presented themselves to us.

Being in the position to respond positively to ongoing developments in-industry gives our stakeholders, both internal and external, the confidence that the Association continues to maintain our relevance and acts as a bridge to building influence and facilitate positive change in working at heights safety.

We will work on key touch-points for immediate impact with all stakeholders, and then use a “phased” industry target model to focus in on relevant content for those stakeholders to influence impact and open new communication channels.

The campaigns and the engagement plans will run in parallel, one reinforcing the other, enhancing our messaging and influence platform.

### PHASE 1

2022-23 Year



Construction – Commercial  
Construction – Residential  
Safe Work / Work Safe  
Office of the Federal Safety Commissioner

### PHASE 2

2023 Year



Mining  
Australian Institute of Health & Safety  
Industry Associations (MBS, FIA, FMA & CIC)  
Water Utilities

### PHASE 3

2023-24 Year



Architecture / Designers / Specifiers  
Oil, Gas & Petroleum  
Refineries & Heavy Industry  
Manufacturing

### PHASE 4

2024 Year



Telecommunication  
Power Transmission  
Solar Installation  
Wind Energy

# New Targets

WAHA's early connections with Safe Work NSW led to a revised focus on construction via their active campaigns targeting the industry.

Other State Regulators were executing similar campaigns, but there was a lack of cohesion and consistency in the messaging as they were all acting independently, even though the impetus for their activities were based on the same data-sets/statistics.

Positioning WAHA as an active and vocal proponent of change, we were able to increase our sphere of influence into the Regulators and across other industry bodies, all of which were aligned with construction.

With a focus on this industry, we adjusted our content development and audience targets to address the knowledge gaps existing across construction in general. It was very apparent from our involvement with the Regulators that they were going to focus on work at height risk as a key part of their strategic plan, but their campaigns would stop short of providing guidance in achieving compliance, and focus more on highlighting the issues and how the Regulators would be targeting operations around the application of safe work at height methods.

The WAHA saw this as an immediate opportunity to amplify our messaging and become a key influencer and provider of education and information in an open and non-bias position of authority.

The expansion of our relationships to include Safe Work SA, Work Safe Victoria, Safe Work Australia and the Office of the Federal Safety Commissioner which is an indicator of the success of this approach and clear justification for the time and energy invested in this space.

With construction covering both new builds and remediation/renovation, the work done in this space has opened up relationships with other organisations affected by working at height and confined space risk including the Facility Management Association (FMA) and Formwork Industry Association (FIA) and further enhanced our reputation and relationship with the Australian Institute of Health and Safety (AIHS) and Inside Construction Magazine. Both of which are becoming strategic partners in 2023, with formalised agreements and memorandum of understanding (MOUs) being drafted.

This amplification of the WAHA brand creates further opportunity to expand our network and build connections with other Regulators and major stakeholders from across different industries.

For WAHA to be effective in achieving our goals, we need to flow our activities into areas where we have a receptive audience and can achieve the best ROI, hence the Phased Approach allows for flexibility in its execution.

# Emerging Success

## Engagement

- Encourage engagement and membership as a means to influence and inform.
- We have been able to develop and manage industry and government relationships, guided by a clearer framework to maintain beneficial relationships
- We continue to work towards improving working at heights knowledge, education and training within the wider community.
- We continue to develop and provide access to working at height and confined space information and guidance for all organisations and workers at all levels.
- Our website continues to be improved, with the production of regular articles and new informative content, functions and features.

## Collaboration

- Established collaborative relationships to further identify any emerging issues and assess appropriate responses through collective problem solving.
- Increase the profile and relevance of WAHA values and principles to all segments, creating benefits for WAHA Members as benchmarks for quality.
- Actively pursue new relationships, and work with regulatory bodies and peer industry associations.
- Build on existing relationships with key publications, expanding our opportunities to reach wider audiences and enhance and amplify the WAHA profile and messaging.



# Publications and Marketing

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## Promotion Points

We've been looking at a variety of metrics to measure the success of the strategy implemented at the start of last financial year, and with Social Media being a big part of the amplification of our message, it's a good example of how effective the execution of the strategic plan has been sphere of influence increasing.

The WAHA social pages have had a **1,944.6%** increase in traffic and a **4,500%** increase on engagement or 'click-through'. This is a significant increase and demonstrates that the Association is having positive engagement, which was a foundational piece for our Membership Drive under new structure implemented last year.

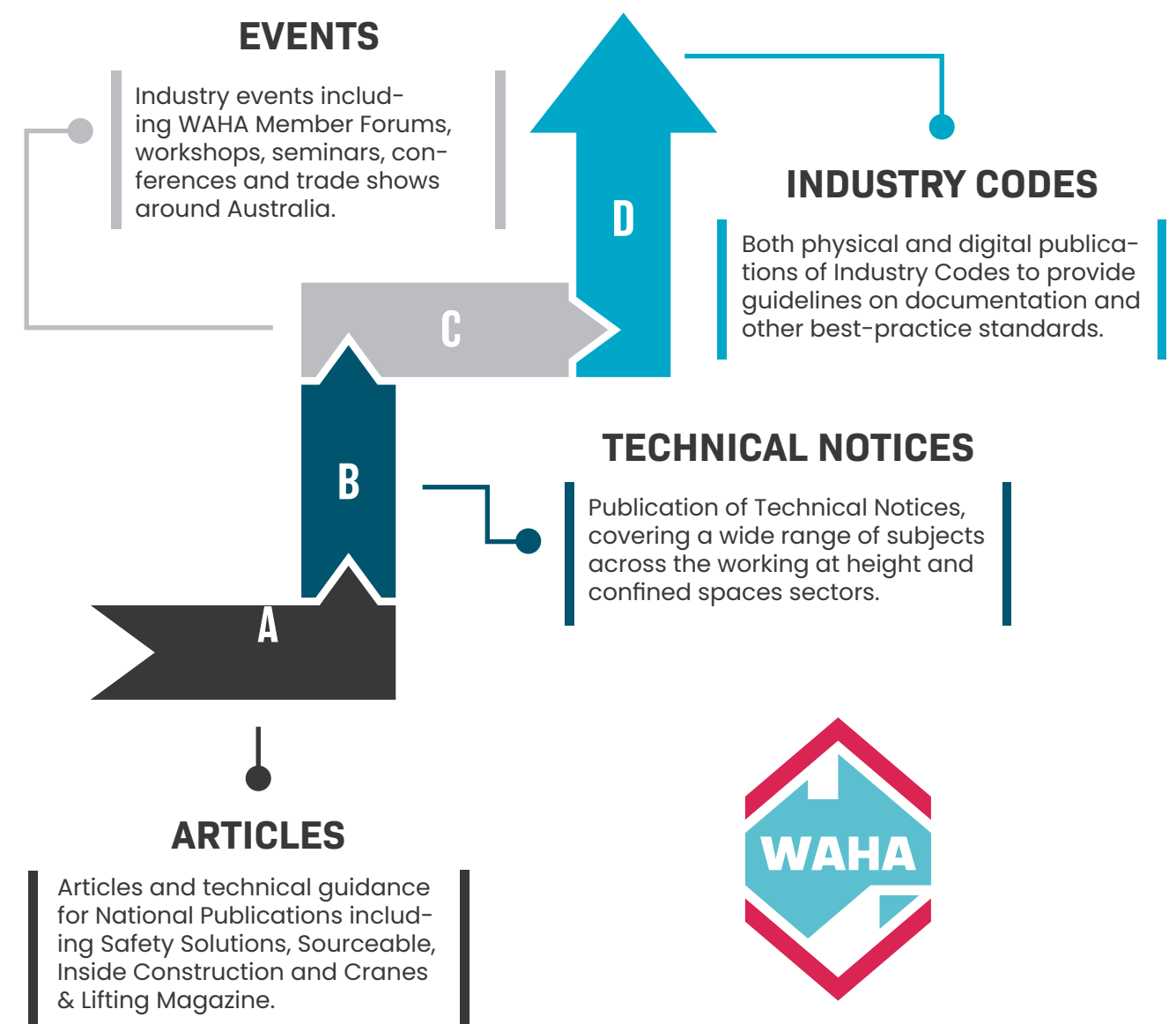
The vast majority of engagement came from working professionals in the 'operations' category of working at height and confined spaces, followed by 'sales' and 'business development'. This dramatic increase in engagement goes a long way in recognising WAHA Membership as being of value.

## Marketing Strategy

We continue to build our relationships with key publications, expanding our opportunities to reach wider audiences and enhance and amplify the WAHA profile and messaging. This content has also been used as inspiration for a range presentations delivered to different industry groups, reinforcing our position as the peak body.

Technical bulletins continue to be reviewed to provide specific advice about selected topics that have become important for members and the public. Bulletins are issued on a needs basis, and WAHA Members can contribute to the technical contents therein.

Industry Codes are documents published by the WAHA that assist to establish minimum standards of installation as well as provide guidelines on documentation and other best-practice standards for installers of height safety and fall protection equipment in the Australian market. Whilst we had hoped to publish a revision of the Permanent Anchor Systems, Lifeline & Rail Installations Code of Practice, the Association made the decision to halt production until the final revisions have been made to the Australian Standard 1891 Part 4 and 5532.



# Key Industry Events

05



## Safety Symposium

The NSW Government's inaugural Safe Work NSW Building and Construction Symposium was originally scheduled to be a two day event, in Sydney. The WAHA were initially engaged for the Symposium to present on the topic of fall prevention as well as be on the primary panel for a falls from heights workshop. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic the event was rescheduled twice before being downsized to a primary event in Sydney, with Regional Roadshow events held at Coffs Harbour, Tamworth, Newcastle, Wollongong, Batemans Bay, Wagga Wagga, Orange, and Port Macquarie.

The Symposium finally came together in 2022, and was held at CommBank Stadium Parramatta on the 10th May 2022. The Symposium brought together the Regulator and the building and construction industry to launch the Scaffolding Industry Safety Standard (SISS) as well as conduct workshops to address the ongoing issues around working at heights in NSW.

Scott Barber, Deborah Chick and Ashley Campbell attended the event as SMEs to participate in the break out sessions across three sub-industry areas; residential/house construction (stream 1), multi-storey mixed use (stream 2), and infrastructure (stream 3) provided a forum to address their specific issues, improve safety standards and work with Safe Work NSW.



Stream 1

### Residential / House Construction

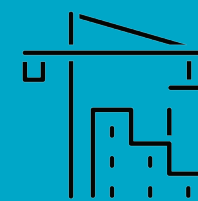
The common sentiment that there is a lack of standards in this area, and it was felt that there needed to be a Code of Practice or guidance material outlining the accountabilities and responsibilities of the person conducting the business or undertaking (PCBU), supervisors, workers and third-party suppliers. For site security, it was suggested that more education/emphasis was needed in site inductions, toolbox talks and site supervisor training.



Stream 2

### Multi-storey Mixed Use

For hazardous manual task outcomes in formwork it was commented that there needed to be more focus on safety in design, standardised safe work method statements (SWMS) and re-consideration of licensing or regular verification of competency (VOC) requirements. For waterproofing, more training was needed on personal protective equipment (PPE), ventilation, safety data sheets (SDS), confined spaces (atmospheric and flammability issues), as well as more supervision.



Stream 3

### Infrastructure

For plant and person interaction, minimum standards for separation was suggested along with auto immobilisation recognition, competency requirements for spotters, and a change of culture and behaviour at all levels. For silica exposure, in-built suppression systems, removing persons during plant movements, air-monitoring and ventilation flow alarms, fit-testing, and ensuring that it is a topic within all training packages were considered best practice and should be implemented industry wide.

The stream session outcomes have been considered in developing the following options for consideration by Safe Work NSW. One of the leading themes across all sessions was that any deliverables or outcomes from the symposium should be led and championed by industry, particularly regarding mandating / standardising SWMS, sharing and promotion of proprietary systems and technologies.

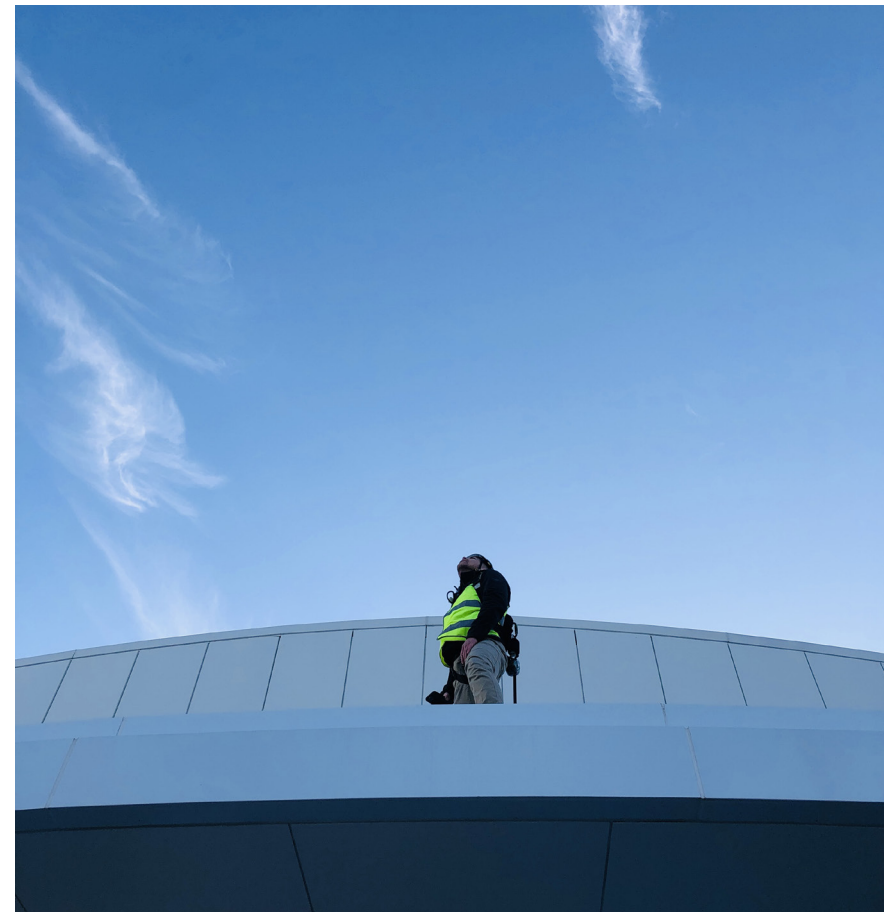


Regarding the falls from heights workshops, each stream brainstormed ideas for potential regulatory options to solve this “wicked problem” – the most common cause of traumatic fatalities on NSW construction sites, with this statistic echoed throughout the whole of Australia where an average 12.2% of all workplace fatalities for the last five years running occur from a fall from height. A significant number of suggestions were recorded across all workshops in the afternoon, including:

- Regulatory change: increased penalties, demerit point system, specific Safe Work NSW led Working at Heights Forum, permit and licencing systems introduced;
- Communication: building greater awareness and risks including guidance material, changing messaging regarding accountability and duties of leaders;
- Training: specific training for Working at Heights specific to sub-sector and skills, White Card changes/inclusion of work at height, greater oversight of Registered Training Organisation (RTO) providers; and,
- Licensing: High Risk Work Licence (HRWL) e.g., <4m and >4m, sub-competencies as per trade (formwork, scaffold), validity period.

A separate regulatory options paper will be prepared by Safe Work NSW for further consultation.

Overall, the Symposium was a successful way to engage with the building and construction industry, with it recommended to be delivered every two years with smaller stream specific forums in between, to engage with industry and discuss solutions for priority issues, addressing specific harms in the targeted locations and sub-sectors across the state.



### Falling from heights is the leading cause of serious injury and fatal incidents in the construction industry.

A paper will be produced by Safe Work NSW, it will be a major contributor to how Safe Work NSW will address falls from heights with future compliance interventions and campaigns to drive down incident rates. The paper will explore the major findings of Safe Work NSW's initiatives and proposes options for Safe Work NSW and its interstate counterparts to solve the wicked problem of serious falls from heights in construction with a national approach.

## WHS Show Returns



The WAHA were delighted to be back as a Supporting Association Partner at the Workplace Health & Safety Shows in Melbourne and Sydney in 2022. The partnership with the Workplace Health and Safety Show has proven to be a successful means of engaging with external stakeholders and increasing the breadth of our profile.

There were two shows in 2022, with the May event in Melbourne being aligned with the AIHS SafetyScape conference, and Sydney being held in September. Scott gave a presentation on holistic approaches to working at height risk management on the Spotlight Stage at both the Melbourne and Sydney events, drawing over 100 attendees to each one.

With Work Safe Victoria and Safe Work Australia attending, we were able to continue our relationship building with them face to face, further cementing future opportunities.

A key element in growing WAHA is the interface with key stakeholders, and the Workplace Health and Safety Show, and our Partnership with them, is proving to be a great engagement tool taking the brand and our mission to the broader safety community. The WAHA were also able to engage with our Members face-to-face at both events for the first time since the Training Seminar at 3M in early 2020.

The WAHA look forward to continuing our partnership with the Workplace Health and Safety Show in 2023, with an event being held in Brisbane in May, and again in Sydney in September, where the WAHA will not only be able to pursue our objectives in industry, but also allow our Members to receive exclusive discounts on stalls and floor space.

**BRISBANE** – Wednesday 31st May to Thursday 1st June 2023

**SYDNEY** – Wednesday 20th to Thursday the 21st September 2023

[www.whsshow.com.au](http://www.whsshow.com.au)



## AIHS Emerging Leaders

The relationship with the Australian Institute of Health and Safety (AIHS) has been one we have been working on for the last 18 months. The Emerging Leaders group is comprised of Safety Professionals who are in their early years of their careers in safety, but come from a wide cross-section of demographics. Some are entering the industry later in their careers, often coming from a trade or other background, and others are recent graduates or those carving a space and wanting to be pro-active in developing networks and new skills to progress their careers.

WAHA have been working with the committee to deliver events and workshops, including webinars, seminars and climbing nights (combined with a "working at height" presentation around risk management and how it aligns/relates with safe climbing practice).



## FMA Summit

The Facility Management industry is a key target for our messaging, and we have spent considerable time over the last 12 months building connections with their Industry Association, the FMA.

The WAHA was invited to be a guest presenter at the November Summit in Brisbane where Scott spoke about Working at Height and the Regulatory Environment, receiving an excellent response from the 100+ attendees.

WAHA and FMA are in talks around formalising the relationship between the two Associations and collaborating on education programs and campaigns.

## Standards Australia Centenary

This year, one of the most unsung but stalwart institutions of our nation, Standards Australia, celebrated 100 years in the Australian community.

Nearly everything we touch has a standard connected to it. From the beds we sleep in and the food we consume, to the cars we drive and the places we call home. There are up to 10,000 standards across a range of sectors from manufacturing and construction to energy and mining, public safety, communications, and information technology, transport, health, logistics and beyond. The WAHA have had a long relationship with Standards, as our late CEO Richard "Rick" Millar was an original drafting committee member of AS/NZS 1891 Series. The Association continues to contribute to Standards for workers at height and in confined spaces, through its involvement with the SF015 Committee.

On the 12th of October 2022, Standards Australia held a Gala Dinner to celebrate the Centenary at Dolton House in Sydney. WAHA was represented at the dinner by Deborah Chick, as the Association Secretary and Strategic Development & Programs Manager.

"Our story began with the first standard used to help build the Sydney Harbour Bridge in 1922," said Adrian O'Connell, Chief Executive Officer of Standards Australia.

"Over the last 100 years, thousands of standards have been created to help build and protect Australia's most beloved national icons, and given us the confidence to travel, shop and build, knowing we are safe from inconsistent or dangerous practices."

Australia's \$1.8 trillion economy cannot operate without Australian Standards™, which surround and protect our everyday lives from the moment we get up in the morning, to the time we go to bed. Standards have played a critical role in the creation and protection of some of Australia's most unique national icons including Melbourne trams, the Port Arthur heritage site in Hobart, and lighting towers at the Sydney Cricket Ground, and the city of Darwin, which had to be completely rebuilt after Cyclone Tracy in 1974.

"Some standards have inevitably come from largely unforeseen calamities of the past – including cyclones, floods and fires, and safety incidents like road and train accidents."

"Most standards, however, are created by looking to the future, and the overwhelming bulk have been designed by forward-planning teams of experts, thanks to advances in science and technology, and our continued focus on solving the challenges of tomorrow," Mr O'Connell said.

"We couldn't have met this momentous milestone without the support of our many stakeholders, contributors, members and staff – thank you."

*Celebrating*  
**100 YEARS**  
1922 – 2022





# Key Industry Statistics

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## Key WHS Statistics 2022

Each year, Safe Work Australia produces national work health and safety statistics, providing important evidence on the state of work health and safety in Australia.

Falls from height continue to be a major cause of serious accidents in the workplace. Notwithstanding the overall improvement of health and safety at work over recent years, falls from height still occur. Indeed, falls from height were one of the principal cause of fatalities in the 2020–21 period, comprising 11% of all fatalities according to Safe Work Australia figures.

Where such incidents happen, employers and controllers of the premises are likely to face investigations by the state and territory regulatory bodies. The outcome can be prosecutions with resultant significant fines and/or prison sentences. Incidents are also more likely than not to lead to personal injury claims which in view of the circumstances and nature of the injuries sustained can often be substantial in value.

The 2022 **Work-Related injury fatalities / Key Work Health and Safety Statistics** publication shows that risks rising from work at height remains a major source of incidents and that those involved in such works still need to do more to minimise the dangers.

**In fact, on average, falls from height account for a total of 12.5% of all workplace fatalities for the last five consecutive years.**

The Construction Sector remains one of the leading industries work workplace fatalities and incidents / workers' compensation claims. The outcomes of falls in the workplace are more likely to be life-threatening when compared to many other incident types.

Other common mechanisms of injury, such as manual handling, overexertion, and vehicle or machine accidents are more likely to cause injury to a particular body part. The injuries sustained from a fall from height can easily have wider spread complications which can affect the whole body, cause significant damage to vital organs, and if not directly resulting in death, have life-altering long term consequences.

Work at height should be avoided where it is reasonable to do so. Where it is not possible to avoid working at height, conducting a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks should be of primary importance as this will identify the hazards and inform appropriate control measures.

It is of key importance that employees and personnel working on your premises are trained in respect of how to work safely at height, and that there is a culture of identifying and reporting any concerns regarding the working practices. Furthermore, companies must take reasonable steps to ensure that any equipment used as part of the assessment of adequate control measures is suitable for the task at hand, and is properly maintained and inspected.

If it is not reasonably practicable to avoid working at height, the WAHA recommend documented consideration of the following matters:

1. What is the height of the task?
2. How often is it done?
3. Is work equipment being used when at height?
4. Can the work be undertaken reasonably without precautions?
5. If not, what equipment can reasonably be used to prevent falls: ladders, working platforms, scaffolds, lifts, guard rails, toe boards etc.
6. What personal protective equipment can be used to prevent falls: fall arrest, harnesses, hard hats etc?
7. Are safety nets/soft landing systems reasonably required and if so, provided?
8. Can work equipment be extended safely from the ground?
9. If not, how can equipment be safely transported for working at height?
10. Ensure inspections of the work equipment are done periodically and documented.
11. Ensure maintenance of the work equipment is done periodically and documented.
12. Ensure work surfaces are inspected and documents retained.
13. Reasonable steps should be taken to train personnel working at height in respect of the risks of working at height and how to work safely.

Knowledge is power, so underestimating and devaluing the high risk nature of the work environment, and consequently the level of competency required to operate safely in these spaces, leads directly to a higher incident rate.

Ensuring those working at height are educated sufficiently to assess risk appropriately and manage it accordingly is the key to the reduction in these statistics.



# Closing Statement

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## Future Growth

There is no doubt that the Working at Height Association of Australia has experienced a rapid amount of change in the last 18 months, and have consolidated our approach to supporting our key stakeholders and Members.

The Association truly is in a position to continue the work undertaken this year, to ensure we achieve great outcomes to benefit its members, and fulfill our key organisational aims and objectives. We are fortunate that we have been able to maintain our position as the peak body for height safety, through a global pandemic and state and territory lockdowns.

We've been able to adapt and overcome challenges, and continue to represent the interests of all those involved in providing products, services, training or advice relating to safe Working-at-Height and Confined Spaces.

As we head into 2023 and beyond, we will continue to promote and maintain the highest standards in safety, work quality and working practices for the Working-at-Height and Confined Spaces industries.

We are excited to be able to facilitate increased knowledge and compliance with safety Standards for all those involved in Working-at-Height and Confined Spaces.

We look forward to developing new resources for our Members. We look forward to new events and new opportunities to promote the continuous improvement of education and training in the Working at Height and Confined Space sectors, to meet the changing needs of industry and increase the competencies and professionalism of operators.

We are proud of our diverse membership, and we look forward to the opportunity to continue to facilitate and encourage the exchange of technical knowledge and to encourage further research into industry issues based on cooperation and collaboration with related industries and professions.

Thank you for supporting us, and continuing to promote workplace health and safety in a challenging commercial climate.

We look forward to supporting your successes in the future.

Regards,

The Working at Height Association of Australia.



## Working at Height Association

Reaching new levels in safety

The WAHA would like to thank the following Members for providing photos for the Annual Report: ALTURA, Bunzl Brands, Hi Rise, RIGCOM & SafetyLink Australia.





# Working at Height Association

Reaching new levels in safety



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