

WHAT SHOULD THE OPTIMAL STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF A MODEL OHS ACT BE?

GENERAL COMMENTS

I have worked in national occupational health, safety and/or environmental management roles within industry for many years, and am familiar with legislation around OHS and dangerous goods, from each state and territory.

I note that there is a fair degree of variation around OHS regulatory requirements between various state and territories.

Australia is a large country, with 8 state and territories – each of these communities have their own cultural, economic and other issues. State and territory governments have a particular approach to OHS management that would appear to meet the cultural, economic and other needs of the communities that they serve. The proposed “one size fits all approach” around OHS management would therefore be problematic.

Further, many communities fear that the “one size fits all approach” around OHS management could result in the lowering of standards – due to compromise (if the Commonwealth was to legislatively mandate a “one size fits all approach”).