

SAFETY IN DESIGN

Workplace health and safety (WHS) is something that's important to all of us. Identifying design solutions to eliminate hazards not only improves WHS outcomes, but also has potential to reduce costs associated with fixing design problems down the track. Safety in Design is important to Gandy and Roberts, and is a core component of our services.

Under the new harmonised model Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislation, there are a range of new legislative and regulatory requirements, supported by a suite of codes of practice clarifying how these obligations can be met. In particular, there are specific requirements and expectations of entities and persons defined as a "designer" and responsibilities for those that engage design and construction services.

The definition of "designer" in the new WHS legislation not only affects the actual designer, but also places duties on all those who are connected with the design, including during construction, end use, maintenance and demolition or de-commission. The designer must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the plant, substance or structure is designed to minimise risks to the health and safety of all parties who will work on a site connected with its design. For our part in the design process, Gandy and Roberts will provide a Design Safety Report to communicate hazards we have identified and controls to provide acceptable solutions. This report will be provided to our client who under the WHS Act shall provide it to the builder.

Gandy and Roberts is committed to our legislative obligations and delivering leading safety in design practices, but we cannot achieve these outcomes on our own. We'd like to illustrate the important role you play in achieving a successful safety in design outcome for our projects. Below are some ways you as a client can assist in making your project safer and compliant with safety in design requirements:

- (i) Shared understanding of managing risk – with joint policies and procedures to deal with issues as they arise.
- (ii) Provision of information – providing the designer with any information about any hazards and risks that have potential to affect the design, and when treated will make the end product safer.
- (iii) Allocation of sufficient budget – commensurate with project risk to enable legislative compliance and achievement of quality outcome.
- (iv) Engagement of a good team – commensurate with the scale of the project, there should be

safety expertise in the project team to facilitate consultation and integrate safety within the design process.

- (v) Access to appropriate contractors or maintenance staff – for consultation about how the construction work in connection with the design can be undertaken in a way that prevents or minimises risks to health and safety; and, information about the safe operation and maintenance of the facility.
- (vi) Access to end users – for consultation to ensure that the end product can be used, maintained and decommissioned safely.

For further detailed information, we recommend you refer to the model *Codes of Practice for the Safe Design of Structures* and the *Safe Design, Import, Manufacture and Supply of Plant*, if you have not already done so. We can assist you in better understanding our respective obligations if you need assistance.

We look forward to working together on safety in design to improve workplace health and safety and ensure best practice on this important matter. If you would like to further discuss WHS, safety in design or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We acknowledge that the above is based largely upon work undertaken by Consult Australia as part of its Safety in Design Toolkit for Consultants