

Minutes of Health and Safety Group

Wednesday, 27 November 2024, 11:00am

Teams Meeting

**Present:**

| | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Kevin Hart – Chair | NZWEA |
| Ben Taylor (BT) | Gen-Net |
| Bobby Ball (BB) | VHNZ |
| Maria Fernando (MF) | Antarctica New Zealand |
| Ian Boslem (IB) | Siemens Gamesa |
| Josh Guetta (JG) | Meridian Energy |
| Pamela Bruce (PB) | SRG Global |
| Andre de Bruyn (AdB) | Contact Energy |
| Gerry McAndrew (GM) | SRG Global |

Apologies:

No apologies received.

1 Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed those in attendance.

2 Safety Moment

The Chair shared an article from 11th November about an Australian based employee working on the Golden Plains Wind Farm died after being crushed by a wind turbine blade in Australia. A WorkSafe investigation has been launched, but the findings have not been released yet. The event serves as a reminder that safety on wind farms is of paramount importance, and no country, market or company is immune to the risks that employees face every day they work on wind farm sites.

The Chair noted this highlights the importance of having robust Health and Safety procedures on worksites. When these unfortunate events happen, the liabilities for those involved are considerable. In Australia if a party is found liable, they could face manslaughter charges and up to 25 years in prison. The Unions are also involved. The cause of the accident is not yet known, however initial reports indicate that one of the turbine blades was sitting on a supporting platform, and the worker was crushed by the blade as the platform collapsed.

JG provided insight in that WorkSafe had visited the wind farm prior to the fatality and compliance notices had been issued, and there had been an incident 3 weeks before the death.

BB noted the importance of sharing learnings in the Working Group, past and present, for the good of the industry.

BT mentioned that in this case it was a frame failure that had been used on a previous wind farm site and served as a reminder that equipment should be inspected for being fit for purpose.

AdB informed the Working Group that StayLive is another forum that should be aligned to the NZWEA Working Group. The industry should do better in sharing H&S information, in particular the learnings, and it is good that the Working Group takes on sharing learnings, especially those specific to wind farms.

MF values the learning from others and is especially beneficial for smaller players in the market.

The Chair agreed with all comments and the cross-pollination of learning is what the Working Group is intended for.

3 Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

4 Governance of NZWEA HSE working group, nominate Chair

Interest had been expressed from members to become the Chair of the HSE Working Group. This was welcomed by the group as it would bring more focus, structure and formality to the Working Group.

It was agreed by all that a call for nominations would be sent to all NZWEA Working Group members, and if there was more than one nomination received, a vote would be held.

5 VHNZ New Industry Training Facility, Auckland

BB presented on the new VHNZ's Global Wind Organisation (GWO) training centre in Papakura, which offers a setting that incorporates many identical or comparable elements to a real wind turbine working environment.

VHNZ continues to deliver wind entry level GWO/NZQA Basic Safety Training (BST), as well as the GWO Advanced Rescue Training (ART). They are also planning to offer the GWO Bolt Tightening Module (BTT) in the new year.

VHNZ has developed a client specific wind turbine Co2 Fire Extinguisher course and have multiple proposed courses in the pipeline that could be valuable to the industry.

JG noted that there were really great things happening at VHNZ, and IB was also impressed with the courses. He noted that real training that saves lives. He also queried that as the GWO training becomes more generic, will the quick tips (that are valuable) still be taught? BB always reminds trainers that tricks of the trade are needed, and the human factor needs to be incorporated. It is important that once trainees have completed their course, feedback is provided. IB was pleased that the human factor element is brought into the courses, as turbines are not people friendly, so the human element is vital.

The Chair thanked BB. As there are new members who have joined NZWEA, there are plans in place to take members who have not seen the assets to view the facilities. The first one is scheduled for 19th February 2025 for a site visit of the VHNZ Papakura facility, and planning is in place for a tour of a modern wind farm mid-2025.

6 Regulatory Update

The Chair gave the members a brief update on the currently regulatory landscape, noting that there were 8 wind farms chosen to go through the Fast Track process, with an aggregate capacity of 1.7 GW. The Government has launched a consultation process to replace the current RMA, which they plan on implementing prior to the next general election in 2026.

The new NZWEA website has all the information on the current onshore wind project pipeline. Members were encouraged to view this, along with the Health and Safety page, and let the Chair know if there were any comments/changes that needed to be made.

AdB suggested that Health and Safety news/alerts could be added to the site. The Chair endorsed this and encouraged members to email through any information for inclusion on the site. IB subsequently emailed a link to a UK site known as 'Safety On | Safety Alert', which will be referenced on the NZWEA web page.

7 Roundtable Discussion

JG shared an issue regarding social risks. A new technician felt fatigued, but not so fatigued that he was unable to work, which was noted as a grey area. Being new, he didn't feel comfortable letting his team lead know that he needed a break, and subsequently hit his head. The company is looking at a social risk framework, which includes job pacing and relative timelines for work.

There is a global Human Factor Survey which feeds into the social risk area. BB is happy to provide members with the details to participate in the survey.

BT informed members that, as many know, NZ Windfarms took over Hau Nui wind farm, but Gensis will continue with the same work on the wind farm for NZ Windfarms. He agreed that a key safety issue is fatigue. Some workers who want to work over-time can work for 14 to 16-hour days, with time pressures. It was important that tabs were kept on people and keeping the communication open. It is important to manage people wanting to work, while also managing the fatigue factor.

JG agreed, that as a business contractor, he appreciated the open communications channel.

AdB advised that StayLive is working on a fatigue management plan which will be shared once completed.

KH commented that StayLive work on all renewable energy construction projects, however the same learnings also applied to wind farm projects.

8 Next Meeting Date

The Chair will send an invitation for the next meeting.

9 Closure

The meeting closed at 12:00pm

Summary of Action Items

| Subject | Action | Who/When |
|-----------------------|---|--------------------|
| Chair Nomination note | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Ask members for HSE Chair nominations | KH – by 3 December |
| Next meeting date | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Send meeting invitation | KH |