

# ATSA Newsletter

## Message from ATSA's Executive Officer, David Sinclair

We are very excited for the upcoming ATSA Independent Living Expo's this May. With the recent release of additional space in Melbourne, is set to be our biggest event yet and for the first time a test track for facilitating test driving of modified vehicles.

Thank you to all the members who took the time to complete the member survey earlier this year as it greatly assists us to understand your needs and views - we are having the report finalised at present and will be working on the information provided in the coming months.

We have a lot on offer in this issue - business and mental health sessions, updates on what ATSA members have been up to, latest in employment changes, details on ATSA's response to Assistive Technologies and Home Modifications Scheme and much more.

Our recruitment for ATSA's next Executive Officer is well underway - if you have interest in the role or know someone it may suit, please get in touch.



**David Sinclair**  
Executive Officer, ATSA

## ATSA Board Members

**Chair**  
Nikolas Witcombe (Total Ability)

**Vice Chair**  
Philippa Bell (Board Appointed)

**Financial Director**  
Andrew Webster (Country Care Group)

**Directors**  
Amin Akbarian (Mobility Engineering)  
Matthew Butterworth (Magic Mobility)  
Michael Linke (Vision Australia, Board Appointed)  
Jacinta Maurin (Sunrise Medical)  
Stewart McDonagh (Independent Living Specialists)  
Jeff Watters (Automobility)



## MASTER OF CEREMONIES FOR ATSA AWARDS DINNER - 31 MAY 2023

**ATSA is pleased to welcome Clare Gibellini as the master of ceremonies for this year's ATSA Awards Dinner.**



Clare is a dedicated community volunteer and human rights advocate. She also serves as the Board Secretary for both People with Disability Australia, and the South West Autism Network. In 2022 Clare was a member of the delegation to the United Nations Conference of State Parties (15), and she has a strong interest in disability inclusive disaster risk reduction, in particular the inclusion of people with disability in preparedness and recovery practices.

Join colleagues and peers for a night to remember at Fraser's, Kings Park, Perth.

Tickets are selling fast (table and single ticket options are available). To book please contact [allison.miller@atsa.org.au](mailto:allison.miller@atsa.org.au) or [download booking form here](#).



## ATSA INDEPENDENT LIVING EXPO

Seminar programs for both Melbourne and Perth are now released and registrations are open - check out [www.atsaindependentlivingexpo.com.au](http://www.atsaindependentlivingexpo.com.au) for all the sessions and to register.

Submissions to present at Canberra are now being accepted - <https://atsa.org.au/call-for-papers/>

# Time to get nominating!

## TIME TO SUBMIT YOUR ENTRY FOR THE 2023 ATSA AWARDS

It's time to get nominating – as well as the awards ATSA usually present at the end of day one at the networking drinks, this year we have again included additional categories.

Nominations for the following award categories are now open:

- **Best New Product of the Year**
- **Dealer of the Year**
- **Supplier/Manufacturer of the Year**
- **Australian Innovative Product of the Year**
- **AT Product Consultant of the Year**
- **Industry Person of the Year**
- **Commitment to Excellence**

If nominating for Best New Product, you may also nominate for Australian Innovative Product (if applicable).

Entries close at 5pm (AEST) Friday 21 April 2023. Finalists will be announced by Monday 1 May 2023.

Winners will be announced at the ATSA Awards Dinner on 31 May 2023, in Perth. If you wish to book a table or seats to the dinner, please contact Allison Miller – [allison.miller@atsa.org.au](mailto:allison.miller@atsa.org.au).

Any questions about the nomination process can be directed to [events@atsa.org.au](mailto:events@atsa.org.au)

Voting for Best New Product, Dealer of the Year, Supplier/Manufacturer of the Year and Industry Person of the Year will open Wednesday 3rd May 2023. Other Awards will be judged by a panel.

<https://atsa.org.au/atsa-awards/>

## Important dates

### 2023

**ATSA Independent Living Expo, Melbourne**  
24 - 25 May 2023

**ATSA Independent Living Expo, Perth**  
31 May – 1 June 2023

**ATSA Awards Dinner, Perth**  
31 May 2023

**Rehacare, Düsseldorf, Germany**  
13-16 September 2023

**ATSA Independent Living Expo, Canberra**  
7 - 8 November 2023

**ATSA AGM, Sydney**  
22 November 2023

### 2024

**ATSA Independent Living Expo, Adelaide**  
6-7 March 2024

**ATSA Independent Living Expo, Sydney**  
22 – 23 May 2024

**ATSA Independent Living Expo, Brisbane**  
29-30 May 2024

**ATSA Awards Dinner, Brisbane**  
29 May 2024

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## What ATSA members have been up to

### GTK SIGN ON AS MAJOR SPONSOR OF THE WARATAH WHEELCHAIR LEAGUE

Late in 2022, Basketball NSW announced the partnership with GTK as the BNSW Official Wheelchair & Education Partner and as the major sponsor of the 2023 Wheelchair Waratah League powered by Spalding.

The partnership provides a major boost to wheelchair basketball state-wide, providing some stability in funding of the league as well as support the construction of a framework for development and high performance for athletes in NSW.

Basketball NSW, CEO, Maria Nordstrom said she was delighted to welcome GTK to the basketball family and is excited to see the partnership take place.

“On behalf of the Basketball NSW team, I welcome GTK’s support on our wheelchair basketball leagues and pathways, and commend them on their track record in empowering people with a disability and their support of adaptive sports like Wheelchair Basketball,” said Nordstrom.

“GTK’s commitment to contribute to our sport will certainly generate greater stability of the wheelchair league, establish more robust athlete pathways and allow wheelchair basketball to be more visible and thus reach a larger audience in our state.”

“The impact that this sponsorship will have on wheelchair basketball is significant and we can’t wait to work together as a true partnership over the next three years.”



GTK, CEO, George Ajaka added “Sport is often a very important part of an individual’s identity. We are very proud to partner with Maria and her team at Basketball NSW to provide a strong competition, but most importantly new opportunities for players to expand their connections and sense of self.”

“GTK and BNSW share similar values and we are excited to connect with the basketball community and build resources and pathways to all involved in the game.”

### TOTAL ABILITY SUPPORTING TEAMS IN THE SHITBOX RALLY

It’s finally happening! Chris Astill is pursuing his original dream to participate in the Shitbox Rally... the journey has added a twist with the need to do it with the Satellite Accelerator hand controls.... A recent spinal injury is not going to stop Chris from achieving his goal! Rockhampton to Hobart...

Total Ability are extremely proud to sponsor Chris and see him achieve and conquer this incredible feat! The car is all ready to head north! Have fun Chris...you’ve got this!

If you can support Chris in his fundraising efforts for the Cancer Council please donate here:  
<https://summer2023.shitboxrally.com.au/wanna-go-for-a-drive>



## FREE Business Education for ATSA Members

**ATSA IS BRING YOU MORE BUSINESS EDUCATION TO FOCUS ON YOUR TEAM, MENTAL HEALTH, SALES AND MORE. SOME OF THE SESSIONS CONFIRMED FOR THE FIRST HALF OF 2023 ARE LISTED BELOW.**

Many are recorded so if you are unable to attend on the day you will still be able to access the content, tips and hints provided.

### **Managing Health and Wellness** **Remotely: Key ways leaders can foster a thriving team** **– with Lisa Mayocchi**

**Virtual Workshop**  
**Thursday 2nd March 2023**  
**10:00 am AEST | 11:00 AEDT**

[Click here to register](#)

As organisations navigate the future of work post COVID-19, this requires new ways of leading and supporting employee health and wellbeing. This includes how leaders can effectively manage decentralised and hybrid teams, optimise productivity, and most importantly look after the physical, mental and social wellness of their people throughout this period of uncertainty and beyond.



In this interactive session we explore:

- why leaders must practice self-care and 'put their own oxygen mask on first'
- how leaders can best engage with, and enable the wellbeing of their remote workers
- practical tips for teams to thrive in a remote working environment
- identifying and overcoming barriers to optimise team wellbeing and performance



### **Business Contingency Planning** **– Create your 25-point business contingency plan to help you get through times of crisis.**

**Provided by Your Business Momentum in conjunction with ATSA**  
**Virtual Workshop**  
**Thursday 16th March 2023**  
**9:00 am AEST | 10:00 AEDT**

[Click here to register](#)

No one likes to think about crisis situations, but they can happen to any business at any time. That's why it's so important to have a contingency plan in place. The purpose of a contingency plan is to prepare for the unforeseeable. In session 2, we will help you create a 25-point checklist to help you keep your business running, even in the most difficult of times.

### **From Struggling to Supported** **– with Matt Caruana**

**Virtual Workshop**  
**Thursday 30th March 2023**  
**11:00 am AEST**

[Click here to register](#)

From wanting to end his life, becoming paraplegic, to now wanting to live to his utmost potential, Matt Caruana explores the lessons that his lived experience brought him so we can find a supportive network, be able to support ourselves and also, be equipped to "see the signs" and support those we work alongside.



The Australian Journal of General Practice conducted a study that found more than 70% of healthcare workers reported psychological distress due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With heightened fear and increased stress levels, more than ever, healthcare workers have experienced exhaustive pressures commonly leading to "burnout".

By having awareness and effective strategies around supporting mental wellbeing, we battle the stigma, build individual resilience and boost everyone's output. As a result, we effectively increase connection and invite collaboration as we become stronger together.

## Doing more with less - Growing busy doesn't always mean adding more people. How can we achieve more with less in our business?

**Provided by Your Business Momentum  
in conjunction with ATSA  
Thursday 20 April 2023  
10:00 am AEST**

[Click here to register](#)

We all know the feeling of being too busy. Our to-do lists are never-ending, and it seems like we're constantly playing catch-up. But what if we told you that you can actually achieve more by doing less? In the third of our webinar series, we'll share strategies to help you find ways to be leaner and more efficient in your business.

## The Fatigue Antidote - Practical strategies for self when there is no fuel in the tank Presented by Bri Hayllar

**Virtual Workshop  
Thursday 16th March 2023  
11:00 am AEST**

[Click here to register](#)

A recent study showed that 75% of working professionals are experiencing burnout and exhaustion.

You don't need to be an organisational psychologist to understand why. Increased workloads, staff shortages, back-to-back meetings without breaks, and little separation between life and work have all contributed to a rise in burnout. And that's not even mentioning the P-word, the rising cost of living, or global conflict and instability.

In this one-hour interactive webinar, we will explore the dramatic increase in exhaustion in the global

workforce in recent years. As we seek a delineated 'fresh start moment' to give us a renewed sense of motivation and re-energise us to pursue our goals, we soon realise that this moment may not be coming. Instead, we must create our own 'fresh start moments' as we move into the ongoing global uncertainty and continue to protect and promote our mental health and wellbeing.

This workshop will focus on recognising the signs and symptoms of workforce exhaustion and understanding its causes. It will provide practical strategies and take-away resources that you can use to combat fatigue and help your team create their own 'fresh start' moments. Participants will have an opportunity to:

- Understand workforce exhaustion and its prevalence
- Ability to recognise the signs of exhaustion (in self and others)
- Unpack the common causes of workforce exhaustion and how the pandemic and other factors have exacerbated these issues
- Learn strategies to combat fatigue, including; co-creating the future, creating clear boundaries, self-care and rest, weaving wellbeing into work, and focusing on social connections.
- Build a range of practical strategies to re-energise and create lasting and meaningful change rather than temporary relief from exhaustion.
- Awareness of support available in addressing exhaustion and proactively supporting wellbeing.

## Questions?

Please email [events@atsa.org.au](mailto:events@atsa.org.au)

If there is a business topic or education session you would like to see in the 2023 calendar please let us know.





### A NEW APPROACH TO REGULATING AGED CARE



The Department of Health and Aged Care is developing a new approach to regulating aged care that will be people-centred and based on best practice principles, to ensure safe and quality aged care is delivered to older Australians.

They are consulting with older Australians, their families and carers, and the sector to participate and share ideas to develop a new approach to regulating aged care that will deliver the reforms identified by the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

Thank you to all the contributing ATSA members for the paper submitted to The Department of Health and Aged Care in February. [Click here to read the submission.](#)

To see all of ATSA's recent submissions please visit the Advocacy tab on this page <https://atsa.org.au/resources-newsletters/>

## ATSA is coming to Adelaide!

6-7 MARCH 2024

ADELAIDE SHOWGROUND  
Goodwood Road, Wayville SA

**atsa**  
independent living  
**expo**



## Leading with Vision



### DEVELOP YOUR TEAM AND NETWORK WITH YOUR PEERS ON THE GOLD COAST THIS OCTOBER

The Australian Dental Industry Association (ADIA) in collaboration with Assistive Technology Suppliers Australia (ATSA) is pleased to launch the Leading with Vision conference.

Leading with Vision will bring together leaders and senior staff from all over Australia this October.

Held on Queensland's beautiful Gold Coast, Leading with Vision is the go-to event for you and your team. The conference will feature industry leaders, business insights, networking opportunities and practical take-aways.

With a mix of keynote presentations, masterclasses and breakout sessions covering a range of learning styles, there is something for everyone on the three-day program.

- Be challenged by disruptor Mark Bouris, founder of Yellow Brick Road and Wizard Home Loans
- Elevate your sales skills with The Sales Dr, Ingrid Maynard
- Learn negotiation techniques with Australasia's foremost sponsorships expert, Julian Moore
- Create meaningful social media strategies with Eric Burrus, founder of Upsurge Digital
- Perform at your best with former Olympic gymnast Brennon Dorrick
- Get the most from your team with "People Whisperer", Anneli Blundell

ADIA CEO, Kym De Britt believes Leading with Vision will provide delegates with valuable face-

to-face networking opportunities that have been scarce the last few years.

"This will be our first conference since 2018. All the feedback we receive cites business and regulatory education as a major membership benefit and includes requests for more networking opportunities. The Leading with Vision program really delivers on both fronts. There's nothing quite like the atmosphere at a quality conference. We are really looking forward to welcoming everyone in the same room," Mr De Britt said.

"ATSA is excited to be working with ADIA to bring a business-focused conference for our members to the Gold Coast. With plenty of opportunities to learn from, great presenters bring insights that will improve business skills, combined with social functions. It's a great way to bring together two different industries with similar challenges," said David Sinclair, Executive Officer, ATSA recently.

#### LEADING WITH VISION CONFERENCE

**When:** Sunday 8 – Tuesday 10 October 2023

**Where:** RACV Royal Pines Resort, Gold Coast Queensland

#### Registrations open now!

Book early to take advantage of the early bird and multi-ticket discounts.

<https://www.ivvy.com.au/event/DY581N/home.html>

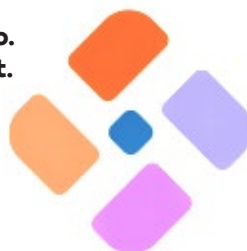


## Thank You for the Support

### RECENT JOINT STATEMENT IS WELL SUPPORTED

**The joint statement regarding business integrity and legal requirements in the Assistive Technology sector was highlighted in NDIS newsletter and there have been numerous shares on LinkedIn too. Thanks to all who have supported this statement.**

[Click here to read complete statement](#)



# NDIS Review

### EMPOWERING CHOICE IN ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

People who use assistive technology have the right to make informed choices about the tools they need to support their goals.

They should receive information in a form they understand, and well-informed and ethical professional advice, without undue influence by suppliers, providers or health care advisors.

Allied Health Professions Australia, ARATA, and Assistive Technology Suppliers Australia (ATSA) have signed a joint statement on their websites about provision of assistive technology. This statement reminds stakeholders of their obligations to ensure high standards of honesty and integrity

are met while providing assistive technology solutions.

All NDIS providers and workers are expected to comply with the NDIS Code of Conduct including acting with integrity, honesty and transparency.

Providers have an obligation to ensure each participant can make informed choices, which includes disclosing provider interests in other support and service options available to them.

If someone is concerned an NDIS provider may be coercing or unfairly influencing participant choice, these concerns should be raised with the NDIS Commission by lodging a complaint.

**atsa**  
independent living  
**expo**



**REGISTER  
NOW**

**MELBOURNE** 24-25 MAY 2023  
Melbourne Showgrounds

**PERTH** 31 MAY-1 JUN 2023  
Claremont Showground

**CANBERRA** 7-8 NOV 2023  
Exhibition Park (Epic)

Australia's foremost assistive technology event  
**BY THE INDUSTRY FOR THE INDUSTRY**

[events@atsa.org.au](mailto:events@atsa.org.au)

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

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**IF YOU'RE ONE OF THE 1.15 MILLION AUSTRALIANS WITH MOBILITY DISABILITY THAT USE A WHEELCHAIR, OR A PERSON WHO SUPPORTS THE USER OF A WHEELCHAIR, YOU MAY BE CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WHEELCHAIR DAY.**

International Wheelchair Day is the 1st of March. First launched in 2008, this world event celebrates how wheelchair mobility promotes health, wellbeing, and social inclusion.

Globally, wheelchair mobility is recognised as a critical policy issue at the forefront of legal reforms on accessibility as it is not a choice but a necessity of life. Australia as signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognises:

***... the importance of accessibility to the physical, social, economic and cultural environment, to health and education and to information and communication, in enabling persons with disabilities to fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms.***

Indeed, since 2014, the Disability Inclusion Act (NSW) requires all government departments to develop Disability Inclusion Action Plans, including municipal authorities and those of Transport for NSW (2017). So, while disability policy often focusses on the provision of infrastructure to enable persons with mobility needs to conduct routine activities in the name of social justice, there is much to still learn from the those with lived experience of everyday wheelchair journeys.

**Project update**

The research team at the University of Wollongong want to share some insights from our collaborative project with ATSA. Our project engaged with people who use assistive mobility devices– mobility scooters, manual wheelchairs, power-assisted wheelchairs and motorised wheelchairs. We are happy to share with you two academic publications that highlight the problems associated with access to public space and public transport. We argue that providing more infrastructure like ramps, lifts or disability parking spaces is only the beginning of the solution to equitable access. There remain significant challenges for integrating people who rely on motorised mobility devices into social life, not least of which are social attitudes towards people who look or move differently due to different forms of disability.

Other issues we have identified arise from the care and support structures that are in place to support people with disabilities. For example, in our focus group discussions with health professionals and prescribers we learnt about the processes of applying for funding through the NDIS.



**International  
Wheelchair  
Day**  
1st March



## International Wheelchair Day continued

Health professionals realised that funding success relies very much on how applications are written. Applications require that a person's level of inability must be demonstrated in order to justify why they require particular equipment to aid with their everyday lives. Often health providers and applicants reiterated to us that documenting this negative perspective (i.e., what a person is unable to achieve by themselves) has a detrimental impact on well-being. Rather than a focus on ability and what is possible, often the negative framing of disability further added to feelings of dependence and reliance on others. Added to this were frustrations about what equipment was available to them to support their independent mobility. Often applicants were forced to choose between a device that would serve them at home, or one that would provide access to local neighbourhoods and outdoor spaces. This 'either or' approach meant that some people were limited in how they managed their everyday lives using devices that were not entirely suitable to their needs. Further, we heard of the long wait times for approval processes which often resulted in another level of anxiety and stress for participants. Sadly for some participants devices came too late - changing medical conditions meant that the originally prescribed device was no longer suitable and thus required further adjustments.

Our discussion groups with industry representatives and government planners also alerted us to how legislation is often outdated or contradictory across federal and state jurisdictions. There was disjuncture between for example, building standards and requirements in housing, corporate and government buildings. Often legislation designed to support the rights of people with disabilities did not go quite far enough. For example, in the educational context schools that have students with disabilities

enrolled are able to access funding to install lifts, ramps and bathrooms. Yet, it was a different story when the parents of the student had a disability - parents related to us their time consuming 'battles' to have supportive infrastructure upgrades in their children's schools so as to be able to attend concerts and ceremonies.

### The importance of International Wheelchair Day

Conventional codes of ability continue to shape everyday public spaces through privileging independent movement of standing and walking bodies. Our work continues to highlight the need for more inclusive spaces through design, consultation and collaboration with people who have lived experiences of moving by wheelchair. International Wheelchair Day provides an opportunity to reflect on the important achievements of persons with mobility needs and the ongoing importance of social activism and social responsibility in matters of everyday wheelchair journeys. Our project participants were often proud of their service as consultants in local accessibility committees and their efforts must be celebrated as part of International Wheelchair Day for their political advocacy. But the fact that such political advocacy is required for wheelchair users only further confirms the entrenched norms that marginalise those reliant upon wheelchairs for not living up to able bodied expectations. International Wheelchair Day plays an important role in showcasing disability advocacy to support everyday journeys and cultivating cultures of everyday mobility rooted in acceptance and inclusion.

Check out [https://www.letsmoveitogether.com.au/for more information](https://www.letsmoveitogether.com.au/for-more-information)

## ACCC SOCIAL MEDIA SWEEP TARGETS INFLUENCERS

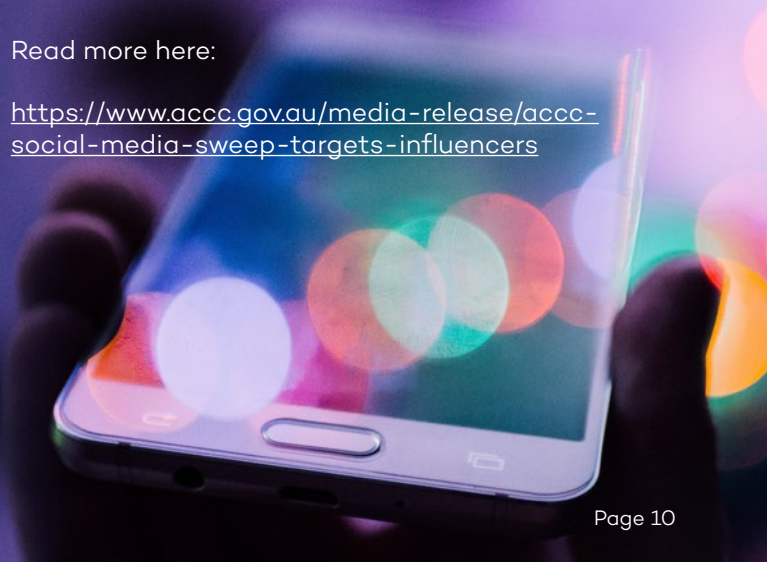
### ACCC social media sweep targets influencers

The ACCC has started a sweep to identify misleading testimonials and endorsements by social media influencers. It will also look at more than 100 influencers mentioned in over 150 tip-offs from consumers who responded to the ACCC's Facebook post asking for information.

Most of the tip-offs from members of the public were about influencers in beauty and lifestyle, as well as parenting and fashion, failing to disclose their affiliation with the product or company they are promoting.

Read more here:

<https://www.accc.gov.au/media-release/accc-social-media-sweep-targets-influencers>





# Revised Paid Family & Domestic Violence Leave



Recent legislation changes mean employees of businesses with 15 or more employees can now access 10 days of paid family and domestic violence leave, as of 1st February 2023. (Up from 5 days of unpaid leave).

This is for all employees over a 12-month period, including part time & casuals (although casuals are only entitled to rostered hours of work).

Whereas this legislation takes effect for employees of small businesses (less than 15 employees) from 1st August 2023. However, employees of small businesses can still access the 5 days of unpaid leave until then.

Note, also, that this leave does not accrue – it resets every 12 months.

Payment for family & domestic violence leave is calculated at the full pay rate including any penalty rates, allowances, loading & overtime.

An employee can use paid family and domestic violence leave during a period of personal/carers or annual leave. If so, the employee is now taking paid family and domestic violence leave instead of personal/carers or annual leave.

The employee is still required to give their employer the required notice and evidence to take this leave however this can be after the leave has started.

An employer may ask their employee for evidence to show that the employee needs to do something to deal with FDV and it is not practical to do so outside their hours of work.

Employers should take reasonable steps to treat any information about an employee's situation confidentially and with sensitivity when they receive it as part of a leave application.



According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, as estimated 3.6 million Australian adults reported experiencing physical and/or sexual family domestic violence since the age of 15.

The above is yet another example of the ongoing legislative workplace relations changes that many (particularly small) business owners struggle to keep up with whilst running their business.

If EmploySURE can support your business keep up with these changes or anything else regarding Employment Relations or Work Health & Safety, please call Brett on 0418 935 057.

At EmploySURE, they advise, support and protect over 30,000 businesses across Australia & NZ with their workplace relations and Work Health & Safety.

They can support your business too.

Kind Regards

*Brett Winduss*

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