

2026

Comcare
National Conference



14-16 September 2026
Canberra

A people-first approach to workplace health and safety



Call for Speakers

Submissions open 2 March 2026 - 30 April 2026

Invitation from Comcare

Comcare welcomes submissions to present at the 2026 Comcare National Conference in Canberra

About the conference

Comcare's biennial premier event unites over 900 leaders and professionals from across Australia to explore the latest innovation and research in workplace safety, compensation and rehabilitation.

Program highlights

Monday 14 September

- Exclusive Workshop afternoon
- Welcome Reception – connect with partners, exhibitors, and delegates in a relaxed setting

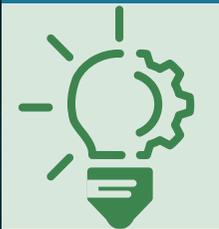
Tuesday 15 September

- Gala Dinner at the National Museum of Australia - an unforgettable evening at an iconic Canberra venue

Plus: Multiple presentation opportunities including silent sessions and interactive demonstrations.

Theme: A people-first approach to workplace health and safety

In a time of rapid change, the 2026 Comcare National Conference takes a people-first approach to workplace health and safety. Through engaging sessions and discussion, we'll explore how wellbeing, inclusion, and empowerment create the foundation for safe and thriving workplaces.





Who is the audience

This is your chance to present to people from the private sector and Australian Public Service, who are involved in leadership, work health and safety, rehabilitation and compensation, including providers, policy makers and workers.

Delegate profile and diversity

Based on previous conference registrations

Roles

- work health and safety (WHS)
- senior leadership & executive
- human resources & management
- health: rehabilitation, case management, psychology
- research and academia
- technical: policy, data & technology



Sectors

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| • Government | • Education | • Health |
| • Transport & Logistics | • Finance | • Insurance |
| • Unions | • Community & Not-For-Profit | • Legal |



Organisations

250+ organisations represented

Australian Public Service 70%

Private/Other 30%

Key dates and criteria

Key dates

Submissions open	2 March 2026 to 30 April 2026
Notification of outcome	May 2026
Early bird registrations open	May 2026
Comcare National Conference	14 – 16 September 2026



Criteria

Submissions should:

- present a clear purpose
- align with the conference theme and be relevant to work health and safety, compensation and rehabilitation
- be evidence based, supported by research, data or analysis
- offer innovative ideas with practical insights
- not be solely focused on selling a product or service.

Submissions on research papers should clearly outline the design, methodology, analysis and results.

Submissions must include at least **three key takeaways** for the audience, which are expected to be reflected in the final presentation.





Submission streams

Your submission must align with the conference theme, **A people-first approach to workplace health and safety** and address at least one of the below streams.

Tip: Case studies and lived experience are encouraged

- Prevention and Early Intervention
- The Future of Workplace Safety
- Rehabilitation and Return to Work
- Psychosocial Hazards and Wellbeing at Work
- Diversity and Inclusivity in the Workplace
- Leadership, Change and Governance

The suggested sub-topics can help guide your content for the conference audience, but you're not limited to them. Some sub-topics may fit across more than one stream.

Prevention and Early Intervention	Rehabilitation and Return to Work	Diversity and Inclusivity in the Workplace
Suggested sub-topics		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good work design • Work design and psychosocial risk: the link between workload, role clarity and psychological injury in real settings • Addressing early intervention barriers • Better practice in early intervention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What managers and teams can realistically achieve • Psychological safety • Fatigue management • Building organisational capability • Keeping diverse workers fit, healthy and meaningfully employed • Addressing return to work (RTW) barriers early through facilitated conversations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful return to work (RTW) for approaches for mental injury • Rebuilding trust when the workplace has played a role in injury • Suitable employment opportunities and alternate pathways • Where standard RTW approaches don't fit well and what helps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting recovery and work participation where cognitive demands are a factor - Invisible illness and variable capacity • Planning RTW where capacity fluctuates over time • Triaging and assessing risk • RTW workforce capability and support alignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural and linguistic diversity and inclusivity • Intersectionality • Generational health and wellbeing, e.g. menopause, invisible illness, multi-generational workplaces • Designing for neurodiverse and inclusive workplaces • Application of accessibility and workplace adjustments • Empathy and integrity in WHS/HR practice • LGBTIQ+ and authenticity at work



The Future of Workplace Safety	Psychosocial Hazards and Wellbeing at Work	Leadership, Change and Governance
Suggested sub-topics		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in workplace safety and ways of working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact on productivity - Using AI in different operating environments - Safeguarding workers from AI risk - AI as a preventative control • Innovation and best practice in workplace safety • Future trends, research and data • Climate change • Change in the nature and volume of injuries and illnesses • Shifts in patterns of ways of working • Sustainable workload management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing psychosocial risks • Workplace violence and aggression • Unpacking psychosocial hazards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Similarities and differences from physical hazards - Effective prevention and management • Mindfulness and wellbeing • Complex psychological claims • Reducing stigma • Practical skills for leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reasonable management action - Intersect with HR processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce change and consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultation duties - Leading through change without causing harm • Practical approaches and scenarios for engaging management • Linking injury prevention to financial impact • Increased fiscal pressures • Efficient and effective decision making • Productivity benefits of safe and healthy workplaces • Effective change management • Addressing stigma and cultural barriers associated with workplace injury

Presentation formats

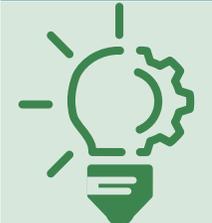
Accepted presentations will be scheduled as a concurrent session on **15 or 16 September 2026**.

There is an opportunity for your presentation to be either:

- 25-minute including questions, or
- 45-minute including questions.

The conference is an in-person event and virtual presentations will not be accommodated. Audio visual facilities, including screen and microphone will be available for both presentation formats.

If you're interested in presenting a demonstration, an interactive session or activity, contact us for options.



25-minute presentation

- The 25-minute short presentation offers a fast, engaging format to share clear and insightful content.
- Designed to capture delegate attention, these sessions will be delivered in the exhibition hall as silent sessions using provided headphones.
- Presentations will be strictly timed by the Session Chair, and time for questions must be included within the 25-minutes.
- Up to two presenters may deliver a 25-minute short session.

45-minute presentation

- The 45-minute presentation offers delegates a deeper exploration of a specific topic.
- Presentations will be strictly timed by the Session Chair.
- Presenters should include time for audience questions within the 45-minutes.
- We recommend allowing 10 to 15 minutes for questions.
- Up to three presenters may deliver a 45-minute session.



Submitting your abstract

Submission requirements

Submission requirements for all presentation formats are outlined below.

Submissions must include:

- Abstract title (no more than 10 words)
- Abstract description (up to 100 words) which will be displayed on the conference website and conference app
- Relevant stream (from list on page 5)
- Abstract (max 350 words)
- You will have the option to select keywords/tags relevant to your abstract
- Preferred length of presentation (25 or 45-minutes)
- Author's name, title and organisation
- Brief biography and JPEG headshot of **all** presenters (max 100 words per presenter).

Submissions that do not address the format above will not be considered.

See our [Tips on preparing a conference abstract submission](#).

How to submit

1. All submissions must be submitted electronically via the online portal on the conference website www.comcare.gov.au/conference
2. If submitting more than one abstract, each abstract must be submitted under the name of the presenting author.
3. Ensure that all authors have agreed to the submission of the abstract[s].
4. Please note that the presenting author must check the 'acknowledgement of terms and conditions' box when registering and submitting each abstract.
5. Please ensure that your abstract is finalised and has been prepared in accordance with the abstract submission requirements listed.
6. You can save your submission in draft and revisit later.
7. You will receive a confirmation email upon successful submission of your abstract.
8. All abstracts must be submitted by **5:00pm Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST) on Thursday 30 April 2026**.
9. **No late submissions will be accepted.**



Terms and conditions

1. The conference is an in-person event and virtual presentations will not be accommodated.
2. Your abstract submission does not guarantee an opportunity to present at the conference.
3. Abstracts should describe work which has not been presented at a previous Comcare National Conference, unless there is a significant update and if so, please explain in your submission.
4. The Conference Program Committee reserves the right to determine the most appropriate content, presentation format and presentation length. This may mean that an accepted abstract may be chosen for a different presentation type or length of time.
5. Please ensure you thoroughly check your abstract for spelling and grammar.
6. Abstract[s] must not contain tables, pictures or diagrams.
7. A maximum of **three presenters** will be allowed to present during a 45-minute presentation, and a maximum of **two presenters** will be allowed to present during a 25-minute short presentation.
8. The Conference Program Committee reserves the right to accept or reject abstract submissions as appropriate, and the decision of the committee is final.
9. Should your abstract be accepted into the conference program, you will be required to register to attend the Comcare National Conference for the day of your presentation.
10. Accepted presenters will be advised of their allotted time slot on the program, by the Comcare Conference Team. The Conference Program Committee reserves the right to change your date and time slot with short notice.
11. Accepted presenters will receive a complimentary registration for the day of their presentation only. Should you wish to attend the full conference, a discounted registration fee of **\$510.00** will be available. Please note, this price does not include the Conference Dinner, however tickets for this event may be purchased (subject to availability).
12. Comcare is unable to offer financial support for accommodation or travel costs to attend and present at the conference.
13. Comcare reserves the right to alter the date and, cancel or reduce the size of the 2026 Comcare National Conference due to unforeseen circumstances beyond its control. Comcare will advise of any changes in writing as soon as possible and Comcare will take reasonable steps to remedy the situation quickly. To the extent permitted by law, Comcare's liability in the event of unforeseen circumstances (including for any incidental, indirect or consequential loss or damage) is limited to resupplying the presentation benefits (at a later date).

Contacts

Our friendly conference team is here to answer your questions.

General conference enquiries
Comcare National Conference Team

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 comcare.gov.au/conference

Submission technical enquiries
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