

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** DLO Watt  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 18 December 2024 5:35 PM  
**To:** DEWR - Parliamentary  
**Cc:** DLO Watt; s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** [markup] FIO | WA support for Safe Work Australia Chair appointment | Simone McGurk [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Attachments:** 74-79685.pdf

**OFFICIAL**

<b>Responsible Minister</b>	<b>Senator the Hon Murray Watt</b>
<b>Reply Level/Subject</b>	<b>FIO   WA support for Safe Work Australia Chair appointment   Simone McGurk</b>
<b>Response to</b>	
<b>Outgoing Referral</b>	
<b>Responsible Division</b>	<b>Workplace Relations Legal</b>
<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>N/A (FIO/NFA)</b>
<b>Drafting Instructions</b>	Coversheet Required: <b>No</b> Meeting request: <b>N/A</b>
<b>Related PDRs</b>	<b>MS24-000947</b>

s 22(1)(a) Departmental Liaison Officer  
 Workplace Relations | Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
 p: s 22(1)(a)(ii) | E: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** McGurk, Minister <Minister.McGurk@dpc.wa.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 18 December 2024 2:56 PM  
**To:** Minister Watt <minister.watt@dewr.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Correspondence from the Hon Simone McGurk MLA

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**OFFICIAL**

Our ref: 74-79685

Dear Senator Watt

Please find attached correspondence from the Hon Simone McGurk MLA.

Kind regards



**Office of the Hon Simone McGurk MLA**

Minister for Training and Workforce Development; Water; Industrial Relations  
Member for Fremantle

(08) 6552 6600  
8th Floor, Dumas House  
2 Havelock Street WEST PERTH WA 6005

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**OFFICIAL**



**Hon Simone McGurk MLA**  
Minister for Training and Workforce Development;  
Water; Industrial Relations

Our Ref: 74-79685  
Your Ref: MS24-000947

Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations  
[minister.watt@dewr.gov.au](mailto:minister.watt@dewr.gov.au)

Dear Senator Watt

Thank you for your correspondence of 6 December 2024 regarding the proposed appointment of Mr Anthony Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia.

I support the appointment of Mr Maher to this important role.

Mr Maher will bring long experience of workplace safety issues to the position. His experience in the mining sector will be particularly relevant in the Western Australian context.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the effective performance of Ms Joanne Farrell as the outgoing Chair of Safe Work Australia. Safe Work Australia has delivered important reforms during Ms Farrell's term, including the prohibition of engineered stone and the further requirements for the use of crystalline silica substances.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed appointment of Mr Maher.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SMcGurk'.

**HON SIMONE McGURK MLA**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

18 December 2024

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** DLO Watt  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 21 January 2025 12:14 PM  
**To:** DEWR - Parliamentary  
**Cc:** DLO Watt; s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** [markup] FIO | Safe Work Australia Chair appointment| Jarrod Bleijie  
 [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Attachments:** MC24\_4654 Letter to Senator Murray Watt.pdf

<b>OFFICIAL</b>	
<b>Responsible Minister</b>	<b>Senator the Hon Murray Watt</b>
<b>Reply Level/Subject</b>	<b>FIO   Safe Work Australia Chair appointment  Jarrod Bleijie</b>
<b>Response to</b>	
<b>Content Warning</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Responsible Division</b>	<b>Workplace Relations Legal</b>
<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>N/A (FIO/NFA)</b>
<b>Drafting Instructions</b>	Coversheet Required: <b>No</b>  Meeting request: <b>N/A</b>
<b>Related PDRs</b>	MS24-000947

s 22(1)(a) | Departmental Liaison Officer  
 Workplace Relations | Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
 P: s 22(1)(a)(ii) | E: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** OIR DLO <DLO@oir.qld.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 21 January 2025 9:34 AM  
**To:** Watt, Murray (Senator) <Senator.Watt@aph.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Correspondence from the Hon Jarrod Bleijie MP, Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, Minister for Industrial Relations - our ref: MC24/4654 / MINC2024-1463931538-112931

Good morning

Please find attached correspondence from the Honourable Jarrod Bleijie MP, Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Industrial Relations.

Please do not respond to this email. If you wish to reply, please send your email to

[industrialrelations@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:industrialrelations@ministerial.qld.gov.au)

Kind regards

**Executive Services Unit**

Department of State Development and Infrastructure  
 1 William Street, Brisbane QLD 4000

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Honourable Jarrod Bleijie MP, Deputy Premier  
 Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning  
 Minister for Industrial Relations

Our ref: MC24/4654 / MINC2025-1463931538-113120

1 William Street  
 Brisbane Queensland 4000  
 GPO Box 611 Brisbane  
 Queensland Australia 4001  
 Telephone: +61 7 3719 7100  
 Email: deputy.premier@ministerial.qld.gov.au  
 Email: industrialrelations@ministerial.qld.gov.au

20 JAN 2025

ABN 65 959 415 158

Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
 Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations  
 senator.watt@aph.gov.au

Dear Minister 

Thank you for your letter of 6 December 2024 regarding your proposal to appoint Mr Anthony Maher as the Chair of Safe Work Australia (SWA) following the expiry of the term of appointment of the current Chair, Ms Joanne Farrell, on 31 January 2025.

I thank you for consulting with me on your proposed nomination.

I note that Mr Maher's experience and that Mr Maher has been employed as the General President of the Mining and Energy Union since 1998.

I understand that the role of SWA Chair is to be independent and not a representative member, also noting the role of Chair is to ensure fulsome discussions at SWA meetings that seek to hear all views and balance the perspectives of regulators, employer representatives and unions. I trust you will consider whether nominees sufficiently meet the requirement for independence including considering the representative nature of existing roles.

I further trust that all other relevant background and due diligence checks will be undertaken as part of the nomination process for the role of SWA Chair, and that the appointed Chair will undertake this role with the required independence.

If you require any further information regarding this matter, please contact my Chief of Staff, Mr Nathan Ruhle, by email at industrialrelations@ministerial.qld.gov.au or by telephone on (07) 3719 7100.

Yours sincerely

  
**JARROD BLEIJIE MP**  
**DEPUTY PREMIER**  
**Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning**  
**Minister for Industrial Relations**

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** DLO Watt  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 28 January 2025 10:28 AM  
**To:** DEWR - Parliamentary  
**Cc:** DLO Watt; s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** [markup] FAA | Safe Work Australia Chair appointment concerns | Felix Ellis  
 [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Attachments:** SIGNED REPLY - Murray Watt - Appointment of Anthony Maher.PDF

<b>OFFICIAL</b>	
<b>Responsible Minister</b>	<b>Senator the Hon Murray Watt</b>
<b>Reply Level/Subject</b>	<b>FAA   Safe Work Australia Chair appointment concerns   Felix Ellis</b>
<b>Response to</b>	Felix Ellis
<b>Content Warning</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Responsible Division</b>	<b>Workplace Relations Legal</b>
<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>5 days</b>
<b>Drafting Instructions</b>	Coversheet Required: <b>No</b>  Meeting request: <b>N/A</b>
<b>Related PDRs</b>	MS24-000947

s 22(1)(a) | Departmental Liaison Officer  
 Workplace Relations | Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
 P: s 22(1)(a)(ii) | E: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** Minister Ellis <Minister.Ellis@dpac.tas.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 28 January 2025 9:52 AM  
**To:** Minister Watt <minister.watt@dewr.gov.au>  
**Subject:** SIGNED REPLY - Murray Watt - Appointment of Anthony Maher

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Good Morning

On behalf of the Minister for Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs, the Hon Felix Ellis MP, please find attached a response to your correspondence.

Kind regards

Eloise  
 Departmental Liaison Officer  
 Office of the Hon Felix Ellis MP

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management  
Minister for Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs  
Minister for Skills and Training  
Level 5, Salamanca Building, Parliament Square  
4 Salamanca Place HOBART TAS 7000

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Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management  
Minister for Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs  
Minister for Skills and Training

Level 5, 4 Salamanca Place HOBART TAS 7000  
GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001  
Phone: 03 6165 7770  
Email: [minister.ellis@dpac.tas.gov.au](mailto:minister.ellis@dpac.tas.gov.au)

Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Murray

I write regarding your proposed appointment of Mr Anthony Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia following the conclusion of Ms Joanne Farrell's term.

I must express my significant concerns regarding Mr Maher's suitability for this role. His long history as the General President of the Mining and Energy Union raises legitimate apprehensions about his capacity to act impartially and prioritise the broad interests of Safe Work Australia over the narrower agenda of a union-aligned perspective.

The Chair of Safe Work Australia should and must exhibit impartiality, independence, and the ability to balance diverse stakeholder interests, including employers, employees, and regulators. Mr Maher's longstanding union leadership raises concerns about the potential for politicisation of this position. The chairmanship demands a leader who can approach issues objectively and ensure that Safe Work Australia operates without undue influence from any single interest group. Appointing an individual so closely identified with union advocacy risks undermining confidence in the impartiality of Safe Work Australia's leadership and its ability to make balanced decisions in the national interest.

Ms Farrell's tenure exemplified the qualities required in this position: independence, strategic vision, and a commitment to fostering consensus across the diverse stakeholders of Australia's work health and safety framework. I urge you to ensure her successor embodies similar qualities and is free from affiliations that could cast doubt on their impartiality.

While I recognise Mr Maher's contributions to mine safety, I strongly recommend that you and the Australian Government consider a candidate with demonstrated independence and a broader perspective on workplace safety across various industries. Such an appointment would better reflect the principles of fairness, impartiality, and inclusivity that are essential to maintaining Safe Work Australia's credibility and effectiveness.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Felix Ellis".

Hon Felix Ellis MP  
**Minister for Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs**

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 28 January 2025 10:56 AM  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** FW: [markup] FAA | Safe Work Australia Chair appointment concerns | Felix Ellis [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Attachments:** SIGNED REPLY - Murray Watt - Appointment of Anthony Maher.PDF

FYI.

The letter sent to State Ministers (dated 6/12/24) requested any feedback by 9 Jan 25. I also rang each MO at the time to advise them that the letter was coming given that the consultation period as over the Christmas break.

**From:** DLO Watt s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 28 January 2025 9:28 AM  
**To:** DEWR - Parliamentary s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Cc:** DLO Watt S 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** [markup] FAA | Safe Work Australia Chair appointment concerns | Felix Ellis [SEC=OFFICIAL]

<b>OFFICIAL</b>	
<b>Responsible Minister</b>	<b>Senator the Hon Murray Watt</b>
<b>Reply Level/Subject</b>	<b>FAA   Safe Work Australia Chair appointment concerns   Felix Ellis</b>
<b>Response to</b>	Felix Ellis
<b>Content Warning</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Responsible Division</b>	<b>Workplace Relations Legal</b>
<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>5 days</b>
<b>Drafting Instructions</b>	Coversheet Required: <b>No</b>  Meeting request: <b>N/A</b>
<b>Related PDRs</b>	MS24-000947

s 22(1)(a)(ii) | Departmental Liaison Officer  
 Workplace Relations | Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
 P: s 22(1)(a)(ii) E: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** Minister Ellis <[Minister.Ellis@dpac.tas.gov.au](mailto:Minister.Ellis@dpac.tas.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 28 January 2025 9:52 AM  
**To:** Minister Watt <[minister.watt@dewr.gov.au](mailto:minister.watt@dewr.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** SIGNED REPLY - Murray Watt - Appointment of Anthony Maher

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Good Morning

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Kind regards

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Departmental Liaison Officer  
Office of the Hon Felix Ellis MP

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management  
Minister for Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs  
Minister for Skills and Training  
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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Sent:** January 2025 9:26 AM  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)  
**Subject:** /iii\ Fw: [markup] FAA | Safe Work Australia Chair appointment concerns | Felix Ellis [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Attachments:** SIGNED REPLY - Murray Watt - Appointment of Anthony Maher.PDF

**From:** DLO Watt<sup>s 22(1)(a)(ii)</sup>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 28, 2025 9:28 am  
**To:** DEWR - Parliamentary<sup>s 22(1)(a)(ii)</sup>  
**Cc:** DLO Watt<sup>s 22(1)(a)(ii)</sup>  
**Subject:** [markup] FAA | Safe Work Australia Chair appointment concerns | Felix Ellis [SEC=OFFICIAL]

<b>OFFICIAL</b>	
<b>Responsible Minister</b>	<b>Senator the Hon Murray Watt</b>
<b>Reply Level/Subject</b>	<b>FAA   Safe Work Australia Chair appointment concerns   Felix Ellis</b>
<b>Response to</b>	Felix Ellis
<b>Content Warning</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Responsible Division</b>	<b>Workplace Relations Legal</b>
<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>5 days</b>
<b>Drafting Instructions</b>	Coversheet Required: <b>No</b>  Meeting request: <b>N/A</b>
<b>Related PDRs</b>	MS24-000947

s 22(1)(a)(ii) | Departmental Liaison Officer  
 Workplace Relations | Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
 P: s 22(1)(a)(ii) E: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** Minister Ellis <Minister.Ellis@dpac.tas.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 28 January 2025 9:52 AM  
**To:** Minister Watt <minister.watt@dewr.gov.au>  
**Subject:** SIGNED REPLY - Murray Watt - Appointment of Anthony Maher

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Good Morning

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Kind regards

Eloise  
Departmental Liaison Officer  
Office of the Hon Felix Ellis MP

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management  
Minister for Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs  
Minister for Skills and Training  
Level 5, Salamanca Building, Parliament Square  
4 Salamanca Place HOBART TAS 7000

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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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**From:** DLO Watt  
**Sent:** Friday, 31 January 2025 3:21 PM  
**To:** s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Cc:** DLO Watt; s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** Briefs regarding the appointment of SWA Chair [SEC=PROTECTED, CAVEAT=SH:CABINET]  
**Attachments:** s 22(1)(a)(ii) ; MS24-000947 - Appointments - Safe Work Australia – Chair.zip; Jurisdictional Consultation Responses.pdf; MS24-000947.pdf; s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Hi s 22(1)

As discussed, please see **attached** the following briefs and correspondence related to the appointment of Anthony Maher as SWA Chair.

- **MS24-000947 - Appointments - Safe Work Australia – Chair**
  - Jurisdictional consultation responses (**attached**):
    - WA
    - QLD
    - TAS

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Please let me know if you need further information.

Thanks  
s 22(1)

s 22(1)(a) | Departmental Liaison Officer  
Workplace Relations | Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
P:s 22(1)(a)(ii) E:s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Employment and Workplace Relations**

**MS24-000947**

**Standard Brief**

**To** **Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations**

**Action Required** **For Decision**

**Appointments - Safe Work Australia - Chair**

**Timing** Please action by **20 December 2024**. The reason is to avoid any vacancies in the position.

**Recommendation/s:**

1. That you **sign** the letters to the state and territory Work Health and Safety Ministers (the WHS Ministers) concerning the proposed appointment of Mr Anthony Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia at **Attachment A**.

**Signed / Not signed / Please discuss**

2. That you **sign** the letter to the Prime Minister, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP, seeking his approval or, at his discretion, Cabinet's approval for the proposed appointment (subject to any serious concerns about the proposed appointment being raised by the WHS Ministers) at **Attachment B**.

**Signed / Not signed / Please discuss**

3. s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**Signed / Not signed / Please discuss**

**Minister Watt**

**Date:** 6 / 12 / 2024

**Comments:**

Clearing Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)	Deputy Secretary,   WR   Workplace Relations Group	Ph: s 22(1)(a)(ii) Mob: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Contact Officer:	s 22(1)(a)(ii)	Assistant Secretary, FACS Branch,   WR   Workplace Relations Legal	Ph: s 22(1)(a)(ii) Mob: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**Executive summary:**

1. This brief provides advice on your proposed appointment of Mr Anthony Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia.
2. The letters at **Attachment A** advise the WHS Ministers of your proposal to appoint Mr Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia.  
The letter at **Attachment B** seeks the approval of the Prime Minister or, at his discretion,

PROTECTED//CABINET

MS24-000947

Cabinet's approval for the appointment of Mr Maher and advises that you are consulting with the WHS Ministers about the proposed appointment in accordance with legislative requirements. s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**Key Points:**

3. On 25 October 2024, your office advised that you wish to appoint Mr Maher as the new Chair of Safe Work Australia following the expiry of Ms Farrell's term on 31 January 2025.
4. Mr Maher is the General President of the Mining and Energy Union. Mr Maher has held this position since 1998. From 2001 to 2005, Mr Maher was the Director of Coal Services Pty Ltd, which is a specialised health and safety scheme that provides an integrated suite of services to help identify, assess, monitor and control risks in the coal industry. Mr Maher was also a member of the Mine Safety Advisory Council from 2002 to 2005, which is a tripartite advisory body to the NSW Government on mine safety.
5. There are no legislative requirements that you must be satisfied of before appointing Mr Maher, except that you must consult with the WHS Ministers on your proposed appointment before you can make the appointment.
6. The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations has conducted due diligence checks on Mr Maher (**Attachment D**). The results do not suggest that Mr Maher is unsuitable for appointment.

**Public Sensitivities:**

7. Stakeholders may question Mr Maher's impartiality in the Chair position given his current role as General President of the Mining and Energy Union and long history of union involvement. His appointment may be seen to affect the current balance of 2 members representing the interests of workers and 2 members representing the interests of employers on Safe Work Australia. s 34(1)(c)
- 8.

**Consultation: Yes**

9. Subsection 11(2) provides that you must consult with the WHS Ministers about your proposed appointee before you can make the appointment.
10. The letters at **Attachment A** to the WHS Ministers ask that they write to you by 9 January 2025 if they have any serious concerns regarding Mr Maher's appointment.
11. The draft letter to the Prime Minister at **Attachment B** advises that you are consulting with the WHS Ministers and that you will advise him by mid-January 2025 if the WHS Ministers raise any concerns that suggest Mr Maher should not be appointed.

**Legal advice / Legislative impacts:**

12. Nil.

**Financial impacts:**

13. Safe Work Australia is jointly funded by the Commonwealth, state and territory governments through the Intergovernmental Agreement for Regulatory and Operational Reform in Occupational Health and Safety. The Commonwealth funds 50% of the budget with states and territories contributing the remaining 50% proportional to the population of each.

**Gender diversity targets:**

14. The Australian Government is committed to a gender diversity target of women holding 50% of Australian Government Board positions overall, with at least 40% representation of women and 40% representation of men on individual boards.
15. The gender balance of reportable positions for Safe Work Australia is 62% women (8 of 13) and 38% men (5 of 13) and does not meet the gender diversity target. The gender balance of all positions (reportable and non-reportable) is 67% women (10 of 15) and 33% men (5 of 15).
16. If the proposed appointment is made it will result in a reportable gender balance for Safe Work Australia of 54% women (7 of 13) and 46% men (6 of 13) and will meet the gender diversity target. The gender balance of all positions (reportable and non-reportable) will be 60% women (9 of 15) and 40% men (6 of 15).

**Remuneration:**

17. The Chair of Safe Work Australia is remunerated in accordance with the *Remuneration Tribunal (Remuneration and Allowances for Holders of Part-time Public Office) Determination 2024* and is entitled to \$67,460 per annum. The Chair is also entitled to Tier 2 travel expenses in accordance with the *Remuneration Tribunal (Official Travel) Determination 2024*.

**Background:**

18. The *Cabinet Handbook (15th Edition)* provides that short-term acting appointments of up to 3 months may be made without seeking the approval of the Prime Minister or, at his discretion, Cabinet. However, appointments cannot be further extended without the approval of the Prime Minister.
19. If the Prime Minister or Cabinet is unable to consider Mr Maher's appointment prior to Ms Farrell's term expiring, and subject to the WHS Ministers raising any serious concerns in relation to the proposed appointment within the period specified, the department will brief you with an instrument to appoint Mr Maher for a term of 3 months.
20. Safe Work Australia is the national policy setting body for matters relating to work health and safety and workers compensation. It consists of 14 voting members (the Chair, one member representing the Commonwealth, 8 members each representing a different state or territory, 2 members representing the interests of workers in Australia and 2 members representing the interests of employers in Australia). The Chief Executive Officer of Safe Work Australia is a non-voting member.
21. Voting members hold office on a part-time basis for up to 3 years and may be reappointed. There is no statutory limit on the number of terms a member can serve.

MS24-000947

**Communications and media strategy:**

22. On 8 January 2024, the Prime Minister's office advised of a new process relating to public announcements of statutory appointments. Before any public announcement, your office must provide a draft copy of any media release to the Prime Minister's Press Office, along with a completed 'Appointments announcement checklist'.
23. A media release and talking points in relation to the inaugural appointments will be provided to your office by the department's Media team, should your office indicate that these are needed. The department will also provide a completed 'Appointments Announcement Checklist' at that time.

**Stakeholder Implications:**

24. Safe Work Australia's Secretariat has advised that the first meeting of 2025 will also be a strategic planning meeting and is currently scheduled for 6 March 2025. It is important that the Chair of Safe Work Australia is appointed prior to the first meeting of 2025 so that they are able to prepare for and participate in the meeting.

**Attachments:**

- A:** Letters to state and territory work health and safety ministers
  - B:** Letter to the Prime Minister
- s 22(1)(a)(ii)



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT  
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

MS24-000947

Mr Michael Pettersson MLA  
Minister for Skills, Training and Industrial Relations  
GPO Box 1020  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

[Pettersson@act.gov.au](mailto:Pettersson@act.gov.au)

Dear Minister

I am writing to consult you about my proposal to appoint Mr Anthony Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia following the expiry of the term of appointment of the current Chair, Ms Joanne Farrell, on 31 January 2025. I have also written to other state and territory ministers with responsibility for work health and safety to consult on this proposed appointment as required under the *Safe Work Australia Act 2008*.

I identified Mr Maher as my preferred candidate for appointment to this position on the basis of his work health and safety and leadership experience, which I am satisfied will equip him with the qualities needed to ensure that Safe Work Australia operates effectively, including the ability to preside at Safe Work Australia meetings and direct discussions efficiently.

Since 1998, Mr Maher has been the General President of the Mining and Energy Union, which strongly advocates for mine worker safety and routinely engages with the Commonwealth and state governments on mine safety legislation, standards and codes of practice. From 2001 to 2005, Mr Maher was the Director of Coal Services Pty Ltd, a specialised health and safety scheme that provides an integrated suite of services to help identify, assess, monitor and control risks in the coal industry. From 2002 to 2005, Mr Maher was also a member of the Mine Safety Advisory Council, a tripartite advisory body to the NSW Government on mine safety.

If you have any concerns regarding this proposed appointment, please write to me by 9 January 2025. As this proposed appointment is subject to formal Australian Government approval processes, I ask that you keep the proposed appointment in strict confidence at this time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Murray Watt'.

MURRAY WATT

6 / 12 / 2024

OFFICIAL: Sensitive



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT  
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

MS24-000947

The Hon Sophie Cotsis MP  
Minister for Work Health and Safety  
GPO Box 5341  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

[Sophie.Cotsis@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Sophie.Cotsis@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Minister

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MURRAY WATT

6/12/2024

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

OFFICIAL: Sensitive



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT  
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

MS24-000947

The Hon Jarrod Bleijie MP  
Minister for Industrial Relations  
PO Box 15009  
CITY EAST QLD 4002

[deputy.premier@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:deputy.premier@ministerial.qld.gov.au)

Dear Deputy Premier

Jarrood

I am writing to consult you about my proposal to appoint Mr Anthony Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia following the expiry of the term of appointment of the current Chair, Ms Joanne Farrell, on 31 January 2025. I have also written to other state and territory ministers with responsibility for work health and safety to consult on this proposed appointment as required under the *Safe Work Australia Act 2008*.

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Yours sincerely

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MURRAY WATT

6/12/2024

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

OFFICIAL: Sensitive



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT  
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

MS24-000947

The Hon Marie-Clare Boothby MLA  
Attorney-General  
GPO Box 3146  
DARWIN NT 0801

[Minister.Boothby@nt.gov.au](mailto:Minister.Boothby@nt.gov.au)

Dear Attorney-General

I am writing to consult you about my proposal to appoint Mr Anthony Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia following the expiry of the term of appointment of the current Chair, Ms Joanne Farrell, on 31 January 2025. I have also written to other state and territory ministers with responsibility for work health and safety to consult on this proposed appointment as required under the *Safe Work Australia Act 2008*.

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Yours sincerely

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MURRAY WATT

6 / 12 / 2024

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

OFFICIAL: Sensitive



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT  
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

MS24-000947

The Hon Simone McGurk MLA  
Minister for Industrial Relations  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Dumas House  
2 Havelock Street  
WEST PERTH WA 6005

[Minister.McGurk@dpc.wa.gov.au](mailto:Minister.McGurk@dpc.wa.gov.au)

Dear Minister

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Simone'.

I am writing to consult you about my proposal to appoint Mr Anthony Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia following the expiry of the term of appointment of the current Chair, Ms Joanne Farrell, on 31 January 2025. I have also written to other state and territory ministers with responsibility for work health and safety to consult on this proposed appointment as required under the *Safe Work Australia Act 2008*.

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Yours sincerely

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MURRAY WATT

6 / 12 / 2024

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

OFFICIAL: Sensitive



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT  
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

MS24-000947

The Hon Kyam Maher MLC  
Attorney-General  
Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector  
GPO Box 464  
ADELAIDE SA 5001

[AttorneyGeneral@sa.gov.au](mailto:AttorneyGeneral@sa.gov.au)

Dear Attorney-General

*Kyam*

I am writing to consult you about my proposal to appoint Mr Anthony Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia following the expiry of the term of appointment of the current Chair, Ms Joanne Farrell, on 31 January 2025. I have also written to other state and territory ministers with responsibility for work health and safety to consult on this proposed appointment as required under the *Safe Work Australia Act 2008*.

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Yours sincerely

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MURRAY WATT

*6/12/2024*

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

OFFICIAL: Sensitive



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT  
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

MS24-000947

The Hon Danny Pearson MP  
Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC  
PO Box 605  
MOONEE PONDS VIC 3039

[Danny.Pearson@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:Danny.Pearson@parliament.vic.gov.au)

Dear Minister 

I am writing to consult you about my proposal to appoint Mr Anthony Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia following the expiry of the term of appointment of the current Chair, Ms Joanne Farrell, on 31 January 2025. I have also written to other state and territory ministers with responsibility for work health and safety to consult on this proposed appointment as required under the *Safe Work Australia Act 2008*.

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Yours sincerely

MURRAY WATT

6 / 12 / 2024

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

OFFICIAL: Sensitive



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT  
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

MS24-000947

The Hon Felix Ellis MP  
Minister for Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs  
Level 5, Salamanca Building  
4 Salamanca Place  
HOBART TASMANIA 7000

[Felix.Ellis@dpac.tas.gov.au](mailto:Felix.Ellis@dpac.tas.gov.au)

Dear Minister

*Felix*

I am writing to consult you about my proposal to appoint Mr Anthony Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia following the expiry of the term of appointment of the current Chair, Ms Joanne Farrell, on 31 January 2025. I have also written to other state and territory ministers with responsibility for work health and safety to consult on this proposed appointment as required under the *Safe Work Australia Act 2008*.

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Yours sincerely

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MURRAY WATT

*6/12/2024*

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

PROTECTED//CABINET

s 34(1)(c)

PROTECTED//CABINET

s 34(1)(c)

PROTECTED//CABINET

**From:** "Minister Watt"  
**Sent:** 10/12/2024 6:23:16 PM  
**To:** "Pettersson@act.gov.au" <Pettersson@act.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Correspondence from Minister Watt [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Attachments:** MS24-000947 signed letter - Petterson.pdf

Good evening,

Please find **attached** correspondence from the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Senator the Hon Murray Watt.

Kind regards,

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Departmental Liaison Officer - Workplace Relations  
Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
Ps 22(1)(a)(ii)

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The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and Elders past and present.



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT  
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

MS24-000947

Mr Michael Pettersson MLA  
Minister for Skills, Training and Industrial Relations  
GPO Box 1020  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

[Pettersson@act.gov.au](mailto:Pettersson@act.gov.au)

Dear Minister

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Yours sincerely

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MURRAY WATT

6 / 12 / 2024

**From:** "Minister Watt"  
**Sent:** 10/12/2024 6:23:47 PM  
**To:** "Sophie.Cotsis@parliament.nsw.gov.au"  
<Sophie.Cotsis@parliament.nsw.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Correspondence from Minister Watt [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Attachments:** MS24-000947 signed letter - Cotsis.pdf

Good evening,

Please find **attached** correspondence from the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Senator the Hon Murray Watt.

Kind regards,

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Departmental Liaison Officer - Workplace Relations  
Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
P: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

---

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OFFICIAL: Sensitive



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT  
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

MS24-000947

The Hon Sophie Cotsis MP  
Minister for Work Health and Safety  
GPO Box 5341  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

[Sophie.Cotsis@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Sophie.Cotsis@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Minister *Sophie*

I am writing to consult you about my proposal to appoint Mr Anthony Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia following the expiry of the term of appointment of the current Chair, Ms Joanne Farrell, on 31 January 2025. I have also written to other state and territory ministers with responsibility for work health and safety to consult on this proposed appointment as required under the *Safe Work Australia Act 2008*.

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Yours sincerely

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MURRAY WATT

*6/12* /2024

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

**From:** "Minister Watt"  
**Sent:** 10/12/2024 6:24:28 PM  
**To:** "deputy.premier@ministerial.qld.gov.au"  
<deputy.premier@ministerial.qld.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Correspondence from Minister Watt [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Attachments:** MS24-000947 signed letter -Belijie.pdf

Good evening,

Please find **attached** correspondence from the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Senator the Hon Murray Watt.

Kind regards,

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Departmental Liaison Officer - Workplace Relations  
Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
p: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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OFFICIAL: Sensitive



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT**  
**MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

MS24-000947

The Hon Jarrod Bleijie MP  
Minister for Industrial Relations  
PO Box 15009  
CITY EAST QLD 4002

[deputy.premier@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:deputy.premier@ministerial.qld.gov.au)

Dear Deputy Premier

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MURRAY WATT

6/12/2024

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

**From:** "Minister Watt"  
**Sent:** 10/12/2024 6:24:50 PM  
**To:** "Minister.Boothby@nt.gov.au" <Minister.Boothby@nt.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Correspondence from Minister Watt [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Attachments:** MS24-000947 signed letter - Boothby.pdf

Good evening,

Please find **attached** correspondence from the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Senator the Hon Murray Watt.

Kind regards,

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Departmental Liaison Officer - Workplace Relations  
Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
p s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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OFFICIAL: Sensitive



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT  
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

MS24-000947

The Hon Marie-Clare Boothby MLA  
Attorney-General  
GPO Box 3146  
DARWIN NT 0801

[Minister.Boothby@nt.gov.au](mailto:Minister.Boothby@nt.gov.au)

Dear Attorney-General

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MURRAY WATT

6 / 12 / 2024

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

**From:** "Minister Watt"  
**Sent:** 10/12/2024 6:25:36 PM  
**To:** "minister.mcgurk@dpc.wa.gov.au" <minister.mcgurk@dpc.wa.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Correspondence from Minister Watt [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Attachments:** MS24-000947 signed letter - McGurk.pdf

Good evening,

Please find **attached** correspondence from the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Senator the Hon Murray Watt.

Kind regards,

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Departmental Liaison Officer - Workplace Relations  
Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
P: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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OFFICIAL: Sensitive



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT  
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

MS24-000947

The Hon Simone McGurk MLA  
Minister for Industrial Relations  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Dumas House  
2 Havelock Street  
WEST PERTH WA 6005

[Minister.McGurk@dpc.wa.gov.au](mailto:Minister.McGurk@dpc.wa.gov.au)

Dear Minister

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Simone'.

I am writing to consult you about my proposal to appoint Mr Anthony Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia following the expiry of the term of appointment of the current Chair, Ms Joanne Farrell, on 31 January 2025. I have also written to other state and territory ministers with responsibility for work health and safety to consult on this proposed appointment as required under the *Safe Work Australia Act 2008*.

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MURRAY WATT

6 / 12 / 2024

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

**From:** "Minister Watt"  
**Sent:** 10/12/2024 6:26:19 PM  
**To:** "attorney.general@sa.gov.au" <attorney.general@sa.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Correspondence from Minister Watt [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Attachments:** MS24-000947 signed letter - Maher.pdf

Good evening,

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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Departmental Liaison Officer - Workplace Relations  
Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
p: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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OFFICIAL: Sensitive



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT  
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

MS24-000947

The Hon Kyam Maher MLC  
Attorney-General  
Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector  
GPO Box 464  
ADELAIDE SA 5001

[AttorneyGeneral@sa.gov.au](mailto:AttorneyGeneral@sa.gov.au)

Dear Attorney-General

*Kyam*

I am writing to consult you about my proposal to appoint Mr Anthony Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia following the expiry of the term of appointment of the current Chair, Ms Joanne Farrell, on 31 January 2025. I have also written to other state and territory ministers with responsibility for work health and safety to consult on this proposed appointment as required under the *Safe Work Australia Act 2008*.

I identified Mr Maher as my preferred candidate for appointment to this position on the basis of his work health and safety and leadership experience, which I am satisfied will equip him with the qualities needed to ensure that Safe Work Australia operates effectively, including the ability to preside at Safe Work Australia meetings and direct discussions efficiently.

Since 1998 Mr Maher has been the General President of the Mining and Energy Union, which strongly advocates for mine worker safety and routinely engages with the Commonwealth and state governments on mine safety legislation, standards and codes of practice. From 2001 to 2005, Mr Maher was the Director of Coal Services Pty Ltd, a specialised health and safety scheme that provides an integrated suite of services to help identify, assess, monitor and control risks in the coal industry. From 2002 to 2005, Mr Maher was also a member of the Mine Safety Advisory Council, a tripartite advisory body to the NSW Government on mine safety.

If you have any concerns regarding this proposed appointment, please write to me by 9 January 2025. As this proposed appointment is subject to formal Australian Government approval processes, I ask that you keep the proposed appointment in strict confidence at this time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Murray Watt'.

MURRAY WATT

*6/12/2024*

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**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT  
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

MS24-000947

The Hon Danny Pearson MP  
Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC  
PO Box 605  
MOONEE PONDS VIC 3039

[Danny.Pearson@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:Danny.Pearson@parliament.vic.gov.au)

Dear Minister *Danny*

I am writing to consult you about my proposal to appoint Mr Anthony Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia following the expiry of the term of appointment of the current Chair, Ms Joanne Farrell, on 31 January 2025. I have also written to other state and territory ministers with responsibility for work health and safety to consult on this proposed appointment as required under the *Safe Work Australia Act 2008*.

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Yours sincerely

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MURRAY WATT

*6 / 12 / 2024*

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

**From:** "Minister Watt"  
**Sent:** 10/12/2024 6:27:21 PM  
**To:** "Felix.Ellis@dpac.tas.gov.au" <Felix.Ellis@dpac.tas.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Correspondence from Minister Watt [SEC=OFFICIAL]  
**Attachments:** MS24-000947 signed letter - Felix.pdf

Good evening,

Please find **attached** correspondence from the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Senator the Hon Murray Watt.

Kind regards,

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Liaison Officer - Workplace Relations  
Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
p:s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and Elders past and present.

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**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT  
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS**

MS24-000947

The Hon Felix Ellis MP  
Minister for Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs  
Level 5, Salamanca Building  
4 Salamanca Place  
HOBART TASMANIA 7000

[Felix.Ellis@dpac.tas.gov.au](mailto:Felix.Ellis@dpac.tas.gov.au)

Dear Minister

*Felix*

I am writing to consult you about my proposal to appoint Mr Anthony Maher as Chair of Safe Work Australia following the expiry of the term of appointment of the current Chair, Ms Joanne Farrell, on 31 January 2025. I have also written to other state and territory ministers with responsibility for work health and safety to consult on this proposed appointment as required under the *Safe Work Australia Act 2008*.

I identified Mr Maher as my preferred candidate for appointment to this position on the basis of his work health and safety and leadership experience, which I am satisfied will equip him with the qualities needed to ensure that Safe Work Australia operates effectively, including the ability to preside at Safe Work Australia meetings and direct discussions efficiently.

Since 1998 Mr Maher has been the General President of the Mining and Energy Union, which strongly advocates for mine worker safety and routinely engages with the Commonwealth and state governments on mine safety legislation, standards and codes of practice. From 2001 to 2005, Mr Maher was the Director of Coal Services Pty Ltd, a specialised health and safety scheme that provides an integrated suite of services to help identify, assess, monitor and control risks in the coal industry. From 2002 to 2005, Mr Maher was also a member of the Mine Safety Advisory Council, a tripartite advisory body to the NSW Government on mine safety.

If you have any concerns regarding this proposed appointment, please write to me by 9 January 2025. As this proposed appointment is subject to formal Australian Government approval processes, I ask that you keep the proposed appointment in strict confidence at this time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Murray Watt'.

MURRAY WATT

*6/12/2024*

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

**From:** [DLO Watt](#)  
**To:** [DEWR - Parliamentary](#)  
**Cc:** [DLO Watt](#); s 22(1)(a)(ii)  
**Subject:** [markup] FIO | NT support for Safe Work Australia Chair appointment | Marie-Clare Boothby  
**Date:** Monday, 3 February 2025 9:00:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [Senator Watt\\_ltr.pdf](#)

<b>OFFICIAL</b>	
<b>Responsible Minister</b>	<b>Senator the Hon Murray Watt</b>
<b>Reply Level/Subject</b>	<b>FIO   NT support for Safe Work Australia Chair appointment   Marie-Clare Boothby</b>
<b>Response to</b>	
<b>Content Warning</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Responsible Division</b>	<b>Workplace Relations Legal</b>
<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>N/A (FIO/NFA)</b>
<b>Drafting Instructions</b>	Coversheet Required: <b>No</b>  Meeting request: <b>N/A</b>
<b>Related PDRs</b>	MS24-000947

s 22(1)(a) | Departmental Liaison Officer  
 Workplace Relations | Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
 P: s 22(1)(a)(ii) | E: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

**From:** Kellie Hattam <Kellie.Hattam@nt.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Sunday, 2 February 2025 2:36 PM  
**To:** Minister Watt <minister.watt@dewr.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Letter from Minister Boothby

You don't often get email from [kellie.hattam@nt.gov.au](mailto:kellie.hattam@nt.gov.au). [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Minister

Please find attached a letter from the Hon Marie-Clare MLA, Attorney-General.

Hard copy to follow in the mail.

Regards

**Kellie Hattam | Director Central Registry**  
 Office of the **Chief Minister** of the Northern Territory  
 Northern Territory Government of Australia

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ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Parliament House  
State Square  
Darwin NT 0800  
minister.boothby@nt.gov.au

GPO Box 3146  
Darwin NT 0801  
Telephone: 08 8999 8603

Senator the Hon Murray Watt  
Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations

Via email: [minister.watt@dewr.gov.au](mailto:minister.watt@dewr.gov.au)

Dear Senator

Thank you for writing to consult me about your proposal to appoint Mr Anthony Maher as the Chair of Safe Work Australia following the expiry of Ms Joanne Farrell's appointment on 31 January 2025.

I note your proposal and have no immediate concerns with the appointment of Mr Anthony Maher as the Chair of Safe Work Australia.

Thank you for consulting me as required under the *Safe Work Australia Act 2008*.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Marie-Claire Boothby'.

MARIE-CLARE BOOTHBY

31 JAN 2025