

# Safety Symposium

## QUEENSLAND

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*Taking Action:  
People, Culture & Risk*

The bottom half of the cover features a large, abstract graphic composed of numerous thin, parallel lines in shades of purple and white. These lines are arranged in a wavy, undulating pattern that flows from the bottom left towards the bottom right, creating a sense of movement and depth against the dark background.

# Welcome

*This year's symposium brings together industry leaders, safety professionals and practitioners to explore how safety is evolving in practice. From public and workplace safety to psychosocial wellbeing and high-reliability systems, the program highlights the importance of people and culture in driving safer outcomes.*

*Join us to hear fresh perspectives, practical case studies and forward-looking ideas on how we can work together to strengthen safety across industries.*



# Key details



**Friday**  
10 October 2025



**8.45am–5pm**  
Networking 5–6pm



**Cairns**  
Colonial Club Resort

## GETTING THERE

The Cairns Colonial Club Resort is located just 5 minutes from the Cairns CBD and 10 minutes from Cairns Airport. The resort has plenty of free on-site parking available for guests and visitors, making it easy if you're driving. Taxis, rideshare, and airport transfer services are also readily available.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Sunbus services operate throughout Cairns, with stops close to the resort along McGregor Road and nearby Sheridan Street. Services connect regularly to Cairns Central Shopping Centre and the main bus terminal in the CBD, giving easy access from most parts of the city. For timetables and route details, visit [translink.com.au](https://translink.com.au)

# Program

TIME	SESSION
8:00am	<b>REGISTRATIONS OPEN</b>
8:45	<b>WELCOME &amp; OPENING</b> Stuart Rawlins – <i>AIHS QLD Branch Chair / MC</i>
8:50	<b>CULTURAL SAFETY / WELCOME TO COUNTRY</b> Louise Hunter – <i>Director First Nations Futures, Department of Primary Industries, Queensland</i>
9:10	<b>WORKPLACE HEALTH &amp; SAFETY QUEENSLAND</b> Lewis Weston – <i>Principal Inspector, WHSQ Compliance &amp; Field Services, Office of Industrial Relations</i>
9:45	<b>PREVENTING OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE: PROTECTING STAFF, STRENGTHENING WORKPLACES</b> Nathan McDonald – <i>CEO / Director, Resolution Education</i>
11:00	<b>MORNING TEA</b>
11:15	<b>PUBLIC SAFETY – POWERLINES CAN KILL</b> Glen Cook – <i>Public Safety Specialist, Ergon/Energex</i>
12:05	<b>PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST: THE CASE FOR PSYCHOSOCIAL SAFETY</b> Tia Armit – <i>Principal Consultant &amp; Organisational Psychologist, Sentis</i>
1:00	<b>LUNCH</b>
1:50	<b>WHAT CHANGED WHEN WE STARTED LISTENING: FROM RULES TO RELATIONSHIPS</b> Tim Fitch – <i>Health, Safety, Security, Environment, Quality &amp; Training (HSSE/EQT) Manager, Tropical Reef Shipyard</i>
2:35	<b>CAIRNS REGIONAL COUNCIL &amp; THE HIGH RELIABILITY FRAMEWORK</b> Wayne Connors – <i>Executive Manager Wellbeing Health &amp; Safety, Cairns Regional Council</i>

Note: Program subject to change. Issued 24/09/25.

TIME	SESSION
3:20	<b>AFTERNOON TEA / NETWORKING</b>
3:35	<b>DIY HIGH-RELIABILITY: HOW WE USED PEOPLE-CENTRED PERFORMANCE AND OPERATIONAL LEARNING TO DRIVE CRITICAL RISK CONTROL AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT</b> Josh Bryant – <i>General Manager, People, Risk &amp; Sustainability, Mitchell Services</i>
4:20	<b>HOW TO DELIVER IMPACTFUL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROJECTS IN-HOUSE</b> Tim Gilchrest – <i>Head of Zero Harm Operations, Downer Group</i>
4:50	<b>WRAP UP &amp; CLOSING REMARKS</b>
5:00	<b>NETWORKING DRINKS</b>

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## Louise Hunter

**DIRECTOR, FIRST NATIONS FUTURES,  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND  
FISHERIES (QUEENSLAND)**

Louise Hunter is the Director of *First Nations Futures* at the Queensland Department of Primary Industries. She brings deep lived experience as a proud Aboriginal and South Sea Islander woman — grounded in her family history of the Stolen Generations, blackbirding, and migration — and a professional commitment to reframing the department's relationship with First Nations peoples.

Louise leads a team tasked with building cultural capability across the organisation, improving First Nations engagement, and driving Indigenous recruitment and retention. She believes in more than just representation: that true inclusion means communities “see themselves” in the workforce, and that government can deliver better outcomes when people who look and are from the land are shaping policy and practice.



## Lewis Weston

**PRINCIPAL INSPECTOR, WHSQ  
COMPLIANCE AND FIELD SERVICES,  
OFFICE OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

Lewis' workplace health and safety career commenced in Cairns in Tier 1 construction and has since spanned across mining, manufacturing, coastal shipping, transport, service and supply sectors in Australia. In early 2022, Lewis made the move to Workplace Health and Safety Queensland – Compliance and field services as an Inspector, following 14 years in Health and Safety Leadership roles predominantly in the mining industry.

In his current role, Lewis undertakes a variety of functions ranging from compliance monitoring and enforcement to advisory and educational engagement with stakeholders. Lewis also contributes to the training and development of new Inspectors throughout the North and Central Queensland Region.



## Nathan McDonald

**CEO / DIRECTOR,  
RESOLUTION EDUCATION**

Nathan, with over 28 years of experience in Occupational Violence and Aggression (OVA) Training, demonstrates a steadfast commitment to workplace safety. He aids organisations in crafting tailored solutions to reducing occupational violence.

As the founder of Resolution Education and creator of the ADP Framework, Nathan is devoted to enhancing employee well-being by imparting practical awareness, de-escalation and protection skills. His passion for safety is evident in his advocacy for clear organisational boundaries and consistency which are key components of a confident and secure workplace.



## Glen Cook

**PUBLIC SAFETY SPECIALIST,  
ERGON/ENERGEX**

Glen Cook (Cookie), is an experienced and enthusiastic Public Safety Specialist and acclaimed keynote conference speaker on powerline safety. Cookie is extremely passionate about raising powerline safety awareness and has been nationally and internationally recognised for his efforts. He received the Australian Health and Safety Professional of the year award at the 2020 at the Australian Work Health and Safety Awards, and was recently named the damage prevention hero of the year at the 2023 Global Excavation Conference in the United States.

Working as an electrician for over 30 years, including a senior electrical inspector within the construction and utilities industries, he has been first responder to serious injury/burns and fatalities due to third party accidental contact with powerlines. He now educates to the broader community to the dangers of accidental contact with overhead and underground powerlines, and was the driving force behind the app and award winning [lookupandlive.com](http://lookupandlive.com) powerline mapping application that is assisting workers plan work near powerlines.



## Tia Armit

### PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT & ORGANISATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST, SENTIS

Tia is an Endorsed Organisational Psychologist and Principal Consultant with over 7 years' experience in organisational psychology and applied research. Tia studied psychology at The University of Queensland and obtained a Master of Organisational Psychology & Bachelor of Psychological Science (Honours, Class I).

Tia has a passion to make meaningful contributions to employees and organisations using evidence-based methods. She partners with clients on a strategy and solution to achieve their outcomes, with specialist knowledge in safety culture assessments and psychosocial safety.

As an Organisational Psychologist, Tia brings knowledge in psychological assessments, intervention strategies, and applied research methodology. She has worked with organisations from a range of industries (mining, utilities, ports, construction, agriculture), with the aim of improving their safety culture maturity.



## Tim Fitch

### HEALTH, SAFETY, SECURITY, ENVIRONMENT, QUALITY & TRAINING (HSSE/EQT) MANAGER, TROPICAL REEF SHIPYARD

Tim Fitch is a safety leader with over 30 years' experience spanning defence, mining, drilling, and shipbuilding. A former Royal Australian Navy member with 20 years of service, Tim brings operational discipline and systems thinking to some of industry's most complex environments.

A passionate advocate for Human and Organisational Performance (HOP), Tim has delivered global coaching and Learning Teams facilitation through Southpac International's HOPLAB. While at Mitchell Services, he was proud to be part of the team recognised with the AIHS Workplace Health and Safety Team of the Year Award in 2023, for its work embedding HOP in practical, real-world operations.

Now leading HSSE/TA at Tropical Reef Shipyard, Tim continues to challenge traditional safety thinking—focusing on engagement, reflection, and leadership presence.

His presentation, "What Changed When We Started Listening: From Rules to Relationships," explores the shipyard's journey in operational learning—highlighting how trust, conversation, and collaboration are reshaping safety from the ground up.



## Wayne Connors

### EXECUTIVE MANAGER, WELLBEING HEALTH & SAFETY, CAIRNS REGIONAL COUNCIL

Wayne started his safety journey in public safety arena as a Police Officer and Detective for 15 years before moving to Workplace Health and Safety Qld and the Electrical Safety Office for 8 years as an Investigations Manager and was responsible for fatal and serious injury investigations and recommending matters for prosecution.

Wayne is now the Executive Manager of Wellbeing Health and Safety at Cairns Regional Council where he is using his investigation and compliance experience to lead Cairns Regional Council in managing WHS risks effectively, practically and with a focus on continuous improvement to achieve the goal of all workers 'home safe and well today, and everyday'.



## Josh Bryant

### GENERAL MANAGER – PEOPLE, RISK & SUSTAINABILITY, MITCHELL SERVICES

Josh Bryant is the General Manager – People, Risk, and Sustainability at Mitchell Services, a leading drilling and mine services provider to the mining and exploration sector, headquartered in Brisbane. He brings extensive experience from operational and strategic roles working with some of the world's largest mining companies.

Josh and his team are recognised for successfully integrating contemporary safety principles into frontline operations and leadership approaches to risk and learning. This work has not only strengthened Mitchell's critical risk management, but more importantly, enhanced its capacity to learn and improve the safety of work.

These sustainable changes have been shared globally across industries and have contributed to reduced injuries, improved psychological safety, and greater business resilience. In 2023, the team was awarded Australian WHS Team of the Year by the Australian Institute of Health and Safety (AIHS).



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## Tim Gilchrest

**HEAD OF ZERO HARM OPERATIONS,  
DOWNER GROUP**

Tim is a team-oriented leader with acumen and experience in health, safety, business, marketing and communications. Drawing on a pluralist skillset, he brings a unique and balanced perspective to safety leadership.

As Head of Zero Harm Operations for Downer Group, Tim leads service delivery in safety across Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. He is passionate about building high-performing health and safety teams that provide a professional service blending the best of in-house and consultancy delivery experience.

Throughout his career, Tim has learnt from and been supported by outstanding colleagues, and he pays that forward to the next generation through volunteering, lecturing and mentoring. Within the AIHS, Tim holds a Fellowship and has volunteered for more than seven years in a variety of capacities.

Tim is currently a judge for the Australian Workplace Health and Safety Awards and was a member of the team recognised at the 2024 NSCA National Safety Awards for the Critical Risk Lookahead Tool.



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10 October 2025

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