



AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY PHNOM PENH

MEDIA RELEASE

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AUSTRALIA AND CAMBODIA: IMPROVING CONSTRUCTION SECTOR HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE KINGDOM

Today, Australian Ambassador Pablo Kang and His Excellency Chea Sophara, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction (MLMUPC) jointly launched Cambodia's Construction Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) Guidelines at the ministry.

According to MLMUPC data, during the last two decades over 57,000 construction permits have been issued for construction sites across Cambodia. These have involved estimated investments of over USD 66 billion and employment of an average 150,000 workers a day. This rapid pace of construction and urban growth requires the development and implementation of formal standards in construction quality, structural design and workplace safety.

In three volumes, the Guidelines cover a range of topics including WHS responsibilities, the use of personal protective equipment, first aid and the protection of children and young workers. The Guidelines provide additional protection for female construction workers, including procedures for recognising and addressing Gender Based Violence and Harassment (GBVH) on construction sites.

The approved Construction WHS Guidelines will become an integral component of Cambodia's Construction Law and are both timely and essential for Cambodia's growing construction industry.

"I am pleased that today we are launching this very crucial document, an important step to improving the health and safety of Cambodians engaged in the Kingdom's dynamic building construction sector. As well as focussing on safety on construction sites, the Guidelines also cover important issues like public safety and COVID-19 mitigation measures" said Ambassador Kang.

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister Chea Sophara mentioned that "Construction is one of the four main pillars for the country's economy apart from tourism, agriculture, and industry. It is crucially important to have the construction guidelines for workplace health and safety in place to help minimize risks and ensure improved safety at construction sites and surrounding areas. I highly encourage investors, employers and employees and relevant people and entities to pay close attention to the guidelines and educate their people and effectively implement the guidelines at their construction sites".

The Guidelines were developed with support from Australia's flagship AUD 51.7 million program, '*Investing in Infrastructure*' (3i). A series of dissemination workshops on the Guidelines will be held in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, Sihanoukville and Senmonorom in June 2022. Over 500 attendees, including staff from MLMUPC, construction companies and other stakeholders will benefit from reviewing and discussing WHS requirements on Cambodia's construction sites, based on the WHS Guidelines.

Media enquiries: Media.Cambodia@dfat.gov.au