



# the monitor

keeping industry informed of developments in occupational health and safety

Issue 2 Vol 16 April 2012



## Progress of National Model WHS Laws

### Victorian supplementary assessment report threatens adoption of laws

Safe Work Australia has advised that the harmonising legislation has now been adopted by the Commonwealth and in the ACT, NSW, NT and Queensland and that Tasmania will do so from 1 January 2013. South Australia has committed to passing the national law in 2012. With regard to other jurisdictions, that is, Victoria and Western Australia, no information was provided about likely implementation dates.

However, a Victorian Government report *“Impact of the Proposed National Model Work Health and Safety Laws in Victoria”* may well result in that state deciding not to adopt the national model.

The report finds that taking into account the 20 major differences between the current Victorian laws and the proposed national model laws, the total cost to Victoria of adopting the laws will be approximately \$3.44 billion over five years (net present value).

These costs would be borne primarily by:

- transition costs of \$812 million as business modifies practices and workplaces to comply
- annualised ongoing costs to business of \$587 million per year over the first five years.

Sixty-eight per cent of the total costs are attributable to the following six of the 20 changes modelled:

- the extended definition of confined space
- changes associated with “officer” liability
- the removal of the two metre threshold for falls
- the broader definition of plant captured in the regulations
- the absolute duty for the development and testing of emergency plans
- the extended definition of “worker”

Only three of the 20 proposed changes are likely to have a positive economic effect:

- changes to duty to consult, co-operate and co-ordinate with other Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU’s)
- training required for HSR’s to issue PINS and cease work notices
- electrical safety in hostile operating environments - testing and tagging

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## Issue 2

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## MARCSTA training packages

As a Registered Training Organisation, MARCSTA delivers occupational safety and health units of competency for the following national training packages:

- Transport and Logistics
- Business Services
- Resources and Infrastructure Industry
- Construction, Plumbing and Services Integrated Framework

Applications for recognition of prior learning may be lodged for all training programs.

Archived editions of the Monitor are available online at [www.marcsta.com](http://www.marcsta.com)

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# OHS harmonisation continued



Continued from page 1

An important finding was that if Victorian businesses are already complying with a more general duty of the current laws the greater specificity in the Model WHS Laws is unlikely to translate to significant safety benefits.

The report has found that Victorian businesses will face significantly greater compliance costs if the Model Laws are introduced.

In order to break even, or be neutral, in overall terms, Victoria would need to avoid 8.7% of workplace illnesses, injuries or deaths. Claim numbers would need to be reduced by 0.91 claims per 1000 workers. (Over the last 10 years claims have decreased by only 0.39 per 1000 workers).

The Victorian Government has publicly expressed the view that while it is supportive of the principle of national harmonisation that there must be net benefits to Victoria for business from any national framework.

Whether the report's findings will result in the Victorian Government withdrawing from the original COAG agreement is certain to impact on the ultimate decision taken by the WA Government.

## South Australian report finds a contrary effect!

In South Australia, where a localised Regulatory Impact Statement on the costs and benefits of adopting the national model was carried out, Deloitte Access Economics Pty Ltd found that, although regulators and society in general will face initial adjustment costs, the ongoing lower costs associated with workplace injury and claims, are likely to offset these costs.

**Overall the expected aggregate benefits in terms of lower administrative burden, reducing regulatory duplication, improved efficiency and improved work and safety outcomes are greater than the considerable costs of implementing the model WHS Regulations.**

Deloitte Access Economics recommended adoption of the WHS reforms because:

- it achieves the objectives of WHS laws harmonisation as determined by COAG
- the safety benefits of harmonisation exceed the compliance costs; and
- the long term benefits to the national economy significantly exceeds the one-off cost of implementation of the new laws, even without taking into account the expected productivity benefits of the reforms.

## The state of play in Western Australia

Here in Western Australia a WorkSafe commissioned survey is to be conducted to assess the cost/benefit impact of the national model laws on small businesses which comprise a proportion of workplaces similar to that in Victoria.

Small enterprises comprise 90% of Victorian businesses which the PWC report claims will incur 78% of the transition costs and 74% of the ongoing costs of adopting the national model.

Should the results of the local study indicate a similar cost imposition on the small business sector it is likely to influence the government's decision to introduce legislation in the Spring session with an election pending early in 2013.

**For OHS professionals and workplaces the remaining months of 2012 will be a period of continuing uncertainty.**

In the meantime the production of Codes of Practice by Safe Work Australia is proceeding with 12 codes expected to be approved shortly by the Ministerial Council and a further five Codes of Practice released for a 12 week public comment period commencing early April 2012.

Source: *Safety in Australia*



# WORK RELATED TRAUMATIC INJURY FATALITIES AUSTRALIA 2009/10

Safe Work Australia reports that the 216 worker fatalities in 2009/10 equates to a fatality rate of 1.9 deaths per 100,000 workers.

Although the number of deaths is the lowest since the reporting series commenced in 2003/04, Safe Work anticipates 2010/11 will show an increase.

Important findings reported show that over the seven years of the series:

- one-third of those who lost their lives at work were killed in a vehicle-related incident on a public road
- another one third lost their lives in a vehicle-related incident at a workplace

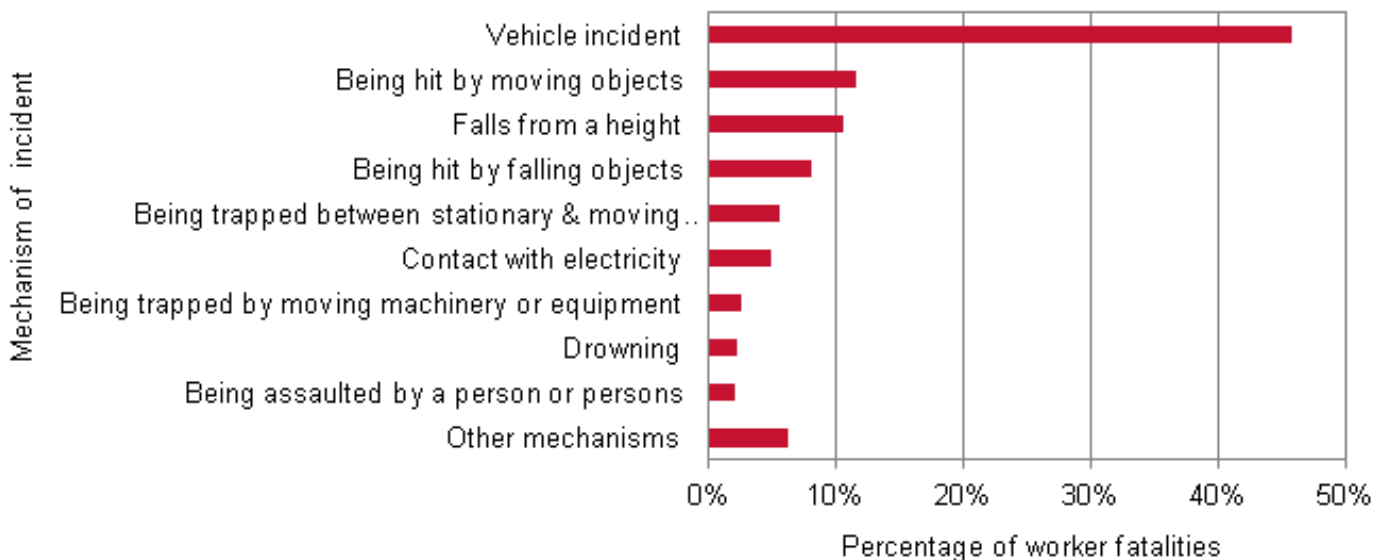
- the remaining one third lost their lives in incidents not involving a vehicle

Over the seven years of the reporting series, 567 workers have lost their lives in truck-related incidents.

These alarming statistics should attract the attention of governments, employer associations and OHS professionals.

The fatality figures are best illustrated in a combined analysis for the reporting series.

Worker Fatalities: Proportion by Mechanism of Incident, Australia 2003/04 – 2009/10 Combined



## Updated driver medical standards from March 2012

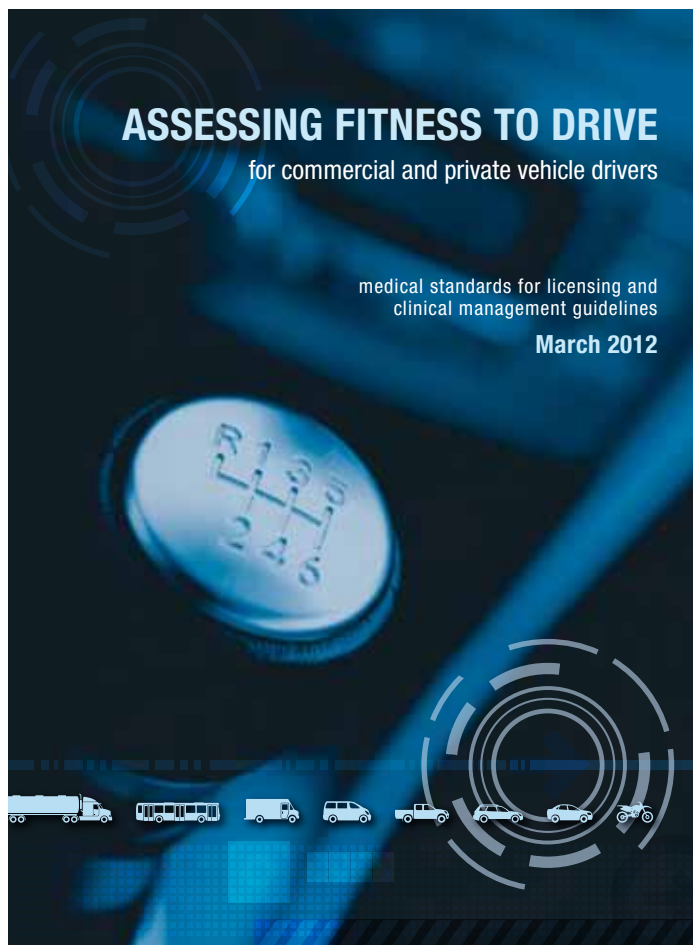
Austrroads has distributed copies of *Assessing Fitness to Drive*, a publication which contains medical standards to provide guidance to health professionals and driver licensing bodies on the health assessment of private and commercial drivers of heavy vehicles, light vehicles and motorbikes.

Updated medical standards for assessing whether private and commercial vehicle drivers are fit to drive safely came into effect from 1 March 2012.

National Transport Commission (NTC) Chief Executive, Nick Dimopoulos, said ensuring that drivers are fit to drive safely is a crucial element to improving road safety.

An electronic version of *Assessing Fitness to Drive* can be downloaded from Austrroads website at [www.austrroads.com.au](http://www.austrroads.com.au).

Source: National Transport Commission Media Release Feb 2012



## Safety is a management problem - Dan Petersen's prediction valued today

The well known author and educator, the late Dan Petersen, wrote about ways to improve safety performance, suggesting that employers put away accident statistics and start listening to the real experts on safety - their employees.

It sounds a little like the Robens finding of 40 years ago that the **primary responsibility for improving safety and health in the workplace lies with those who create the risks and those who work with them.**

Petersen argued that five widely held beliefs about safety management are simply wrong:

- accidents are caused by unsafe acts and conditions
- there are certain essential elements to a safety program
- accident statistics tell us something
- audits predict results in safety
- regulatory compliance ensures safety results

Petersen said that the answer lies with industry "working toward the concept that achieving results in safety is a management function" - organisations must "unleash" their management skills on safety problems.

### The role of employees

Petersen said that it is employee attitudes that provide a true barometer of an organisation's values. Employees need to be asked about how management actions and decisions define the work environment.

When managers have demonstrated to employees that they are serious about safety, they can then go to the employees and ask for their help.

Dan Petersen's books include *Safety by Objectives*, *Analysing System Safety Effectiveness* and *Human Error Reduction and Safety Management*.

Source: EHS Safety online





Attendees at the 2011 launch of the MATES in Construction WA program at Brookfield Multiplex's Fiona Stanley Hospital building site

## MATES IN CONSTRUCTION

### Addressing suicide rates in the construction sector

A study conducted by the Queensland commercial building and construction industry found that mortality rates from suicide were significantly higher than the already very high mortality rate from suicide in Australia generally. In fact, a construction worker was more than twice as likely to die from suicide than an average Australian man. If the construction worker is between 15 and 24 years of age, the chance of dying from suicide was found to be more than two times higher than for other Australian men of similar age.

The Queensland construction industry has developed a program, "Mates in Construction" to address the problem which has spread throughout the industry.

The Western Australian Construction Industry Redundancy Fund (WACIRF) launched the MATES in Construction program in Western Australia in late 2011.

The program, launched at the Fiona Stanley Hospital building site, provides a unique opportunity to test the program with over 1,500 construction workers and staff employed on the site.

The MIC program has been voted the best suicide prevention program in Australia three years running.

"In Queensland we have been busy delivering and promoting the program so we hadn't looked at what awareness there was in the industry of suicide without a MATES in Construction program," Jorgen Gullestrup, MATES in Construction's Queensland CEO said.

"We can now do this research at the Fiona Stanley site and measure the real effect of the program with a 'pre' and 'post' study of MIC," he said.

MATES in Construction WA has appointed Sergio Del Borrello to manage the program rollout across Perth and the rest of WA.

"By raising awareness and connecting workers to help we will build industry strength, its capacity and resilience to deal with issues that can lead to suicide," he said.

If you or a mate are doing it tough in WA and need help now, call MIC 24/7 on 1300 642 111.

**If you would like to know more about MIC WA, contact Sergio Del Borrello directly on 9463 6664.**

Source: *Mates in Construction*  
[www.matesinconstruction.com.au](http://www.matesinconstruction.com.au)

MATES in Construction is a charity providing services free to construction companies who agree to run the program well.

Young male (15-24) construction workers have suicide rates (58.6 deaths per 100,000), 2.39 times greater than young Australian males.

Male construction workers have suicide rates of 38.3 per 100,000 compared to Australian males generally (14 per 100,000).

Workers are 6 times more likely to die from suicide than from an industrial accident.

Alarming, among those who suicided, less than 7% had sought professional help and more than half had told someone of their intention to suicide in the previous 12 months.

To date, MATES in Construction WA has provided 1135 workers with General Awareness training, 60 with Connector training and three with ASIST training at the Fiona Stanley hospital site.

Over 50 workers have asked for help on this site since MIC was involved.

More than 20% of those had suicidal thoughts and had contemplated taking their life. 30 had complex needs that required case management.

## Fatalities under Comcare attract significant penalties

Transpacific Industries Pty Ltd (TPI) has been fined \$170,500 following court action by Comcare after the death of a worker at the Alcoa Wagerup Refinery in September 2009.

The company was found to have failed to identify the 'fall hazard' risk, assess the fall hazard, or implement reasonably practicable controls to protect its employees from the fall hazard.

Source: Comcare Media Release Feb 2012

In another Comcare prosecution, John Holland Pty Ltd were fined \$242,000 following the death of a worker who stepped onto an unsecured sheet of grid mesh and fell to the floor below at the Mt Whaleback facility in the Pilbara.

In addition to the prosecution, Comcare insisted on an enforceable undertaking requiring the company to implement better safety practices in their operations across the country. They are also required to share those improvements with the construction industry.

Comcare said that the court decision sends a message to employers about the serious consequences of not meeting their legal obligations to workers and reminded employers that under the model WHS Regulations penalties will be much higher.

Source: Australian Government Comcare

## The cost of work-related injury and illness in Australia

The total economic cost of work-related injury and disease (illness) for 2008-09 has been estimated at \$60.6bn representing 4.8% of Gross Domestic Product for the same period.

A report by Safe Work Australia suggests that the greater proportion of the economic burden is born by workers (74%) and the community (21%).

Source: Safe Work Australia March 2012

## Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2012-2022

Safe Work Australia has released the draft Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2012-2022 for an eight week public comment period with input invited up to 21 May 2012.

The document is in easy read format and should attract comment from all concerned parties.

The Strategy includes the following targets to meet the 2022 outcomes:

- work related fatalities – a 20% reduction
- work related injuries – a 30% reduction in incidence rates of all claims resulting in one or more weeks off work
- body stressing injuries – a 30% reduction in the incidence rates of claims due to body stressing

Source: SafeWork Australia release March 2012

## Perception and work-life balance the key factors in workplace safety

According to a recent University of Georgia study a worker's perception of safety in the workplace and the work-life balance established by businesses has a significant effect on on-the-job injury.

Dave Dejoy, the Professor of Health Promotion and Behaviour said that while it is well known that certain occupations are more dangerous than others, due to a variety of physical and other hazards, there has been growing evidence in the last 20 years that management and organisational factors also play a critical role. That is, actions taken or not taken at the organisational level can either set the stage for injuries or help prevent them.

According to survey results companies that run in a smooth and effective manner and have minimal constraints on worker performance can decrease injuries by 38% as worker opinions improve. A worker's perception of a positive safety climate can decrease injuries by 32%.

In situations where work interferes with family life or family demands affect job performance, they found that the risk for injury increased 37%.

The nine factors examined in the survey were participation, work-family interference, management-employee relations, organisational effectiveness, safety climate, job content, advancement potential, resource adequacy and supervisor support.

Source: OHS online Feb 2012



# CONTROLLING OCCUPATIONAL CANCERS IN AUSTRALIA

In a most enlightening paper appearing in the *Medical Journal of Australia* in February the authors reveal that Australia has no regulatory approach in place for measuring rates, mitigating risk or addressing the needs of workers who are exposed to occupational carcinogens in the workplace.

The authors comment on the difficulties with estimating the number of cancers and quite correctly point out that there is no unique independent system for collection of data on work-related cancers.

However, by applying the European style approach to Australian employment data it has been estimated that about 5,000 cancers a year are caused by occupational exposures.

A plan of action for Australia is suggested under three major headings:

- Raising the profile of the prevention of occupational cancer as a priority issue.
- Further development of legislative, regulatory and policy processes.
- Monitoring and meeting the needs of individuals exposed to occupational carcinogens.

The authors conclude that “the currently limited and fragmented approach to the process of minimising workplace cancer risk is a significant obstacle to collecting and reporting data on exposure to carcinogens, and an even greater challenge to reducing such exposures.”

They propose that a strategic approach to the task would need the co-operation of government, industry and unions, non-government organisations, cancer clinicians, occupational physicians and the environmental movement.

**The authors should be complimented for exposing a major deficiency in Australia’s workplace health monitoring system and which will hopefully result in the development of a strategic approach to what is emerging as a significant workplace health issue.**

Source: Safety Net 231

## Wittenoom mesothelioma rates exceed expectations

Death rates in former Wittenoom miners are higher than predicted according to a new 50 year follow-up study.

By the end of 2008, the number of mesothelioma deaths had reached 4.7% for all the male workers and 3.1% for the females, with the authors noting a higher than expected rate over the past eight years.

A further 60-70 deaths are predicted in men by 2020.

Source: SafetyNet 231





## Occupational skin disease now the second most common work-related disease presented to general practitioners in Australia

Safe Work Australia has released two research reports on occupational skin disease which show quite clearly that occupational skin disease is a serious workplace health issue that is having a significant impact on the national economy.

Workers most at risk are those exposed to chemicals or wet work in their day-to-day jobs. These include tradespersons, labourers, health care workers, hair and beauty workers and food handlers.

The main industries impacted by occupational skin diseases are health and community services, accommodation, cafes and restaurants, construction, agriculture, forestry and fishing.

Source: Safe Work Australia

## Chronic disease risks – a result of lifestyle

A new report released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) says that most Australians have at least one preventable risk factor for chronic disease, such as heart disease or type 2 diabetes, as a result of their lifestyle.

The report identifies diet, particularly low fruit and vegetable intake and lack of physical activity, as major contributing factors.

The report provides a comprehensive picture to date of Australian lifestyle behaviours that contribute to chronic disease.

Source: Risk factors contributing to chronic disease

## Diabetes a major health concern for all Australians

Another new report released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare shows that diabetes has increased sufficiently over the past 20 years with prevalence in the Australian population increasing from 1.5% to 4.1%.

The head of Diabetes Australia has called for a national action plan to be developed. He said if nothing is done the number of sufferers will go from the current 1.5 million to 3.5 million by 2033.

Complications from the disease include blindness, limb amputations, kidney disease, heart disease, stroke and death.

Source: ABC News

## Smoking and obesity stretching the US health care system

Smoking and obesity are placing a growing strain on an already stretched health care system in the USA.

Employers are evaluating wellness programs – such as quit smoking and fitness programs – in an attempt to lower costs by reducing health risk factors.

A study by the Mayo Clinic provides new insights into the long term costs of obesity and smoking, showing that both risk factors lead to persistently higher health costs throughout a seven-year follow-up period.

Source: OHS Online March 2012





## Aussie men show more prostate cancer signs

Australian-born men show more possible warning signs of prostate cancer than those born in other countries, and diet could hold the clue, a study has found.

The report published online in the Medical Journal of Australia found Australian-born men over 70 years old have higher prostate specific antigen (PSA) levels than those born overseas.

Elevated PSA levels are one of the possible early warning indicators of prostate abnormalities, including prostate cancer.

The study, the largest general population study to be conducted in men aged over 70, examined the PSA levels of more than 1430 men living in the ethnically diverse area around Sydney's Concord Hospital.

Most of the men in the study (48%) were born in Australia and the researchers found that those born in Italy, Greece, Britain, or Ireland had lower PSA levels than the Australian born men.

"It's most likely to be the diet," states Professor Cumming, one of the co-authors on the report.

"The men born in Italy and Greece have a diet that lowers their risk of prostate cancer."

Previous research has linked tomatoes, which feature heavily in the Mediterranean diet, to lowered prostate cancer risk.

Professor Cumming said while diet wasn't a specific aspect of the new study report, tomatoes were linked to lower PSA levels.

## Exposure to diesel exhaust increases the risk of developing and dying from lung cancer

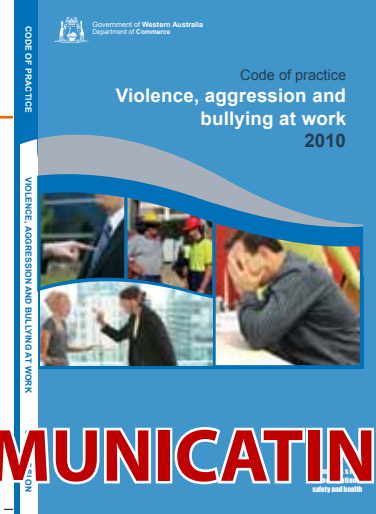
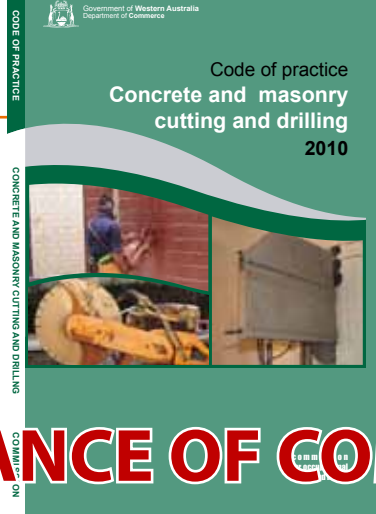
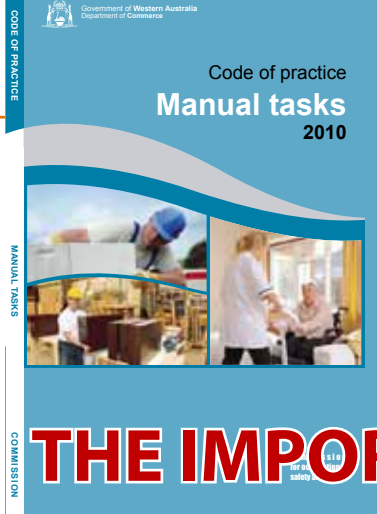
Studies published in March in the Journal of the US National Cancer Institute confirm previous studies demonstrating a possible causal relationship between diesel exhaust exposure and lung cancer and suggest that this association represents an important public health burden in urban areas worldwide.

The researchers observed increased risk of lung cancer death with increasing levels of exposure to diesel exhaust. Risks among heavily exposed workers were about three times greater than risk among workers with low exposure to diesel exhaust.

They also reported that non-smokers with the high levels of diesel exposure were seven times more likely to die from lung cancer than non-smokers in the lowest exposure category.

Source: Oncology Report Digital Network

Source: MedConnect April 2012



# THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY

With communication, co-operation and the direct involvement of employees recognised as essential to establish and maintain safe and healthy workplaces, the importance of being able to read and understand documentation e.g. Regulations, Codes of Practice, Guidelines etc needs to be recognised and promoted.

## Readability of WHS documents

With the assistance of some MARCSTA members and other companies, for which he is grateful, Geoff Taylor has examined the readability of a range of company WHS documents. This paper is in press in the *Journal of Health and Safety Research and Practice*. It also examines the readability of some new national model WHS codes.

A further step has been to look at ways to improve the readability of such documents, and this has been done after analysing one member company's documents. This paper is also now under review.

Geoff's first piece of readability research was into codes and guidelines produced by Australian WHS bodies, and this was published in 2010 in the *Journal of Health Safety and Environment*. The paper reported that reading grades varying from 11 (some US high school education) to 18 (postgraduate) could be needed to fully comprehend the 20 Australian safety documents selected. The paper linked the readability scores with the literacy levels of Australian mid-high school students and adults as measured by international comparative surveys, eg. PISA (Program for International Student Assessment).

In Geoff's second paper published this year in *Safety Science*, readability of mainly government WHS documents from China – Hong Kong, the European Agency on Safety and Health (EASH), Japan, Malaysia, Spain, Turkey and the US (in English and Spanish) was examined. This also related the results to PISA literacy levels for some countries concerned.

One other similar paper has recently appeared in *Safety Science*. The Netherlands' Jeanette A. Paul (*Improving communication with foreign speakers on the shop floor*) looked at difficulties in OHS communication in workplaces with up to twelve languages, which words were key ones and what pictograms could be used to assist. There is a tips brochure and an online dictionary.

Also of interest in *Safety Science* this year is a paper (*Safety is an inherently inconsistent concept*) by S.O. Hansson which discusses what we mean by **safe** and **safety**. It shows how **safe** is an inherently inconsistent concept, and proposes improved terminology which avoids the inconsistency.



Geoff Taylor



# ABSENCE OF HAND HYGIENE MAKES MOBILE PHONES A HEALTH HAZARD

Increasing functionality and affordable prices for mobile and smart phones have resulted in a global reliance on staying connected. When we consider a mobile phone's daily contact with the face, mouth, ears and hands, the dire health risks of using germ-infested mobile devices are obvious.

Studies conducted around the world have identified mobile phones as a major cause of hospital-acquired infections. Mobile phones are used often in hospitals by patients, visitors and health care workers.

In the US, 1.7 million hospital-acquired infections per year are associated with 100,000 deaths.

Health professionals, from microbiologists, doctors and dentists to behavioural scientists and occupational health and safety consultants, need to take note of how and where we are using mobile phones and mobile devices, draft new guidelines and prevention tips, and help awareness about the health risks of using an unclean mobile phone.

Source: OHS online March 2012

## Safe handling of carbon nanotubes in the workplace

Safe Work Australia has released a new publication on the safe handling and use of carbon nanotubes.

The Chair, Tom Phillips AM, says that while carbon nanotubes have many useful properties, health concerns have been raised as some forms can have structural similarities with asbestos.

The publication addresses these health concerns and provides information on working safely with nanotubes. It suggests two risk management approaches that can be used separately or combined to inform a safe approach when using the material.

A useful Information Sheet has also been produced which provides a simple explanation of the complete document.

Source: Safe Work Australia

SAFE HANDLING AND USE  
OF CARBON NANOTUBES

MARCH 2012

## Sleep disorders cost \$5.1 billion annually

Research commissioned by the Sleep Health Foundation and carried out by Deloitte Access Economics says that sleep disorders, such as sleep apnea and basic lack of sleep, cost the Australian economy \$5.1 billion a year.

The research found \$270 million a year is spent on directly caring for those with sleep problems and a further \$540 million on treating knock-on effects such as blood pressure.

**The major cost, \$4.3 billion, comes from lost productivity caused by absenteeism and poor work performance.** A further \$650 million is lost through indirect costs such as workplace and car accidents. Professor David Hillman, Chairman of the Sleep Health Foundation in Western Australia has urged politicians and business leaders to pay more attention to the problem.

He says that although currently there is a focus on healthy diet, regular exercise, alcohol moderation and smoking, more attention needs to be paid to sleep disorders.

Source: MedConnect Feb 2012

## Working long hours doubles depression risk

Researchers at the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health and at University College in London have found a link between working overtime and major depressive episodes.

Workers who put in an average of at least 11 hours per day at the office had approximately two and a half times higher odds of developing depression than their colleagues who worked seven or eight hours.

The link between long work days and depression persisted even after the researchers took into account factors such as job strain, the level of support in the workplace, alcohol use, smoking and chronic physical disease.

Source: OHS online Jan 2012

## How much sleep should we be getting?

While there is increasing concern about the amount of sleep that children are currently getting, an expert in childhood sleep problems from the University of Chicago, Dr David Gozal, points out that there is a lack of scientific evidence to substantiate the commonly held views that pre-schoolers need 11-12 hours, older children and adolescents need at least 10 hours and adults 8 – 8 ½ hours.

Australian researchers estimate that children's actual sleep duration fell by 73 minutes over the last century.

Gozal blames our reduced sleep on the accelerated pace of modern society with its 24/7 demands on both adults and children.

He believes that reduced sleep leads to an increased risk of many diseases.

### How do you know when your child has had enough sleep?

Gozal suggests that you will know your child's sleeping enough if they wake up of their own accord rather than being awoken.

He says that if they don't get up in time, make them go to bed earlier.

Source: AAP Reuters Feb 2012



# ONLINE DELIVERY OF INDUCTION TRAINING FOUND TO LACK QUALITY AND EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT

Acting on the final research report from the School of Management at Edith Cowan University into the contribution that mandatory induction training in the WA construction industry has made towards workplace safety, the Construction Training Fund has withdrawn financial support for online delivery of the training program.

The research found that the online delivery of the program lacked in quality and did not effectively assess understanding of site safety.

Source: ECU University Media Release  
 Bahn and Barratt-Pugh in *Journal of Health and Safety Research and Practice* 3(1), 24-32 (2011)  
[http://bcitf.org/upload/documents/research\\_reports/FinalReportCITHousingandCivil.pdf](http://bcitf.org/upload/documents/research_reports/FinalReportCITHousingandCivil.pdf)

## Curtin health and safety student receives boost through scholarship

A Curtin University first-year Bachelor of Science (Health and Safety) student has been awarded the 2012 Jim Torlach Scholarship.

Samantha Pollock, 21, from South Perth, will have her course fees paid for the duration of the three-year degree.

The scholarship also provides the successful awardee with unique practical employment opportunities in the mining industry.

Ms Pollock's interest in health and safety was prompted while completing a business administration certificate.

"As part of the certificate program I completed a placement in the health and safety department of Woodside's Karratha gas plant," Ms Pollock said.

"The experience was amazing and I decided that I wanted to extend my skills in the field. Completing a university degree in the field seemed like the next logical step, and Curtin has a great reputation in health and safety education.

I am extremely grateful for the scholarship. It means I will be able to concentrate on my studies for the next three years, rather than working long hours to cover my university fees.

A great benefit of the scholarship is that I am able to gain on-the-job experience with some of the State's top employers in health and safety."

Head of Curtin's School of Public Health, Professor Bruce Maycock, said the scholarship provided recipients with a wonderful financial boost.

"Many of our scholarship winners are also offered employment by leading companies before they graduate," he said.

Samantha is the fifth student to be awarded the Jim Torlach Scholarship which honours the memory of James (Jim) Milne Torlach (1938-2006), who made an outstanding contribution to the improvement of safety and health in the mining industry in Western Australia.



2012 Jim Torlach Scholarship awardee  
 Samantha Pollock



# substance abuse in the workplace: a participative workshop 12 July 2012, Technology Park, Bentley WA

Continuing with its program of professional development workshops for OHS personnel and management, MARCSTA has secured the participation of Professor Steve Allsop, Director, National Drug Research Institute, to co-ordinate a comprehensive program to provide a full understanding and appreciation of the rapidly escalating epidemic of drug usage in the community and how this might translate to workplace risk.

The workshop will be fully interactive involving small group discussions and exercises.

**Registration will be strictly limited** and participants allocated to tables to maximise participation and sharing of knowledge and experience.

#### Issues for consideration:

- Patterns of drug use in the community and how this might translate to workplace risk
- Models of drug use and their relevance to the workplace
- Rationale for responding in the workplace
- Evidence about the range of strategies for response
- Designing a response for your workplace

- The role of Government, services available, treatment options
- The status of drug testing methodologies
- Small group exercise to develop future options for workplace management

## DATE /

Thursday, 12 July, 2012

## TIME /

8:30 am to 4:30 pm

## COST /

\$200 (inc GST) non-members

\$150 (inc GST) MARCSTA members and training providers

Cheques payable to MARCSTA.

#### Direct Debit Details:

Account Name: MARCSTA  
Bank: National Australia Bank  
BSB: 086-113  
Account Number: 46299 9082

## VENUE /

Function Centre, Technology Park  
2 Brodie Hall Drive, Bentley WA 6102

## PRESENTER / PROFESSOR STEVE ALLSOP

Steve Allsop has worked in the drug field for over 20 years and been involved in research and professional development for health, police, education, welfare staff and community organisations.

In addition to being Director of NDRI Professor Allsop is an Adjunct Professor with the Centre for International Health, Division of Health Sciences, Curtin University. He has previously worked as the A/Executive Director, Drug and Alcohol Office, Western Australia and the Director of the National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction, Flinders University of South Australia.



## REGISTRATION / TAX INVOICE

MARCSTA ABN 26 058 876 174

### Substance Abuse in the Workplace: A Participative Workshop 12/7/12

Credit card facilities are not available. Payment by cheque/money order or EFT (Quote reference **SUBSTANCE** and your name)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

ABN of company (must be supplied for invoice/receipt purposes) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

\$200 Non-Member

\$150 MARCSTA Member/Training Provider

Paying by: (please circle)

Cheque

Money Order

EFT

Either fax this form to 9355 1499, email your details to pfs@marcsta.com or post to MARCSTA, Suite 5, Petroleum House, 12 Brodie Hall Drive, Bentley WA 6102. Telephone 9355 1400 www.marcsta.com

# Workers' compensation premium rates for 2012/13 on the rise again

WorkCover has announced that the average recommended premium rate for 2012/13 would be 1.691% of total wages, an increase of 7.7% over the rate for 2011/12.

The increase is the result of a number of factors, including a moderate increase in claim numbers, removal of age limits on workers' compensation and improved protection for workers employed by uninsured employers. Reductions in real rates of return on investment have also placed upward pressure on premium rates, offset to some extent by continued wage growth in Western Australia.

The increase has not been applied uniformly across all classifications.

For the metal ore mining sector there has been a varied effect on premium rates.

|                         | Premium Rate 2011/12 | Premium Rate 2012/13 | % increase |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Iron Ore                | 0.66                 | 0.70                 | 6.06       |
| Bauxite                 | 1.00                 | 1.15                 | 15.0       |
| Copper                  | 2.17                 | 2.30                 | 5.99       |
| Gold-Surface            | 1.03                 | 1.13                 | 9.70       |
| Gold-Underground        | 4.41                 | 4.65                 | 5.44       |
| Mineral Sands           | 0.91                 | 1.13                 | 24.17      |
| Nickel                  | 1.49                 | 1.69                 | 13.42      |
| Silver, Lead, Zinc      | 1.00                 | 1.28                 | 28.00      |
| Other Metal Ore         | 1.20                 | 1.36                 | 13.33      |
| ALL SECTOR AVERAGE RATE | 1.54                 | 1.71                 | 11.03      |

With the obvious exception of the underground sector, premium rates continue to be low by comparison with some higher rated occupations in other industry sectors.



| Occupation          | Premium Rate |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Shearing            | 6.46         |
| Sheep farming       | 6.16         |
| Deer farming        | 5.71         |
| Seafood processing  | 5.59         |
| Carpentry           | 6.96         |
| Roofing             | 5.87         |
| Glazing             | 5.59         |
| Road freight        | 4.89         |
| Police services     | 4.68         |
| Corrective services | 5.64         |



However, increases in rates by the bauxite, mineral sands, nickel and silver/lead/zinc sectors, well beyond the overall average increase of 7.79%, are cause for concern.



# AROUND THE GLOBE

## US

### House leaders introduce mine safety bill

A bill featuring numerous changes to mine safety law was introduced in January into the US House of Representatives.

The bill is intended to empower miners to voice their concerns and take whatever steps necessary to protect themselves and their co-workers. Much of the bill focuses on preventing future mining accidents, require a ventilation survey to be conducted prior to approval of mine ventilation plans and establish an education and training program that provides at least one hour of instruction on miners' rights related to unsafe conditions and machinery and the miners' right to report those conditions.

*Source: The State Journal*

### Does less OHS regulation benefit employers?

In the UK the 40,000 member Institution of Occupational Safety and Health has launched a new study to answer the question – does less regulation really benefit employers?

The study will assess the British government's response to a 2011 review of OHS legislation which called for regulations to be simplified, guidance for businesses to be made clearer, and the concept of risk reconsidered.

The study is part of IOSH's "Health and Safety in a changing world" research program.

The research program's director, Professor Robert Dingwall said that there is a serious concern that the flexibility created by a lighter touch from public agencies will actually be lost in an expansion of private rules from other interested parties like insurance companies.

IOSH claims to be the world's largest professional health and safety organisation.

*Source: OHS online Mar 2012*

### Side effects of energy drinks

Circadian 24/7 Workforce Solutions have issued a comprehensive bulletin "Energy Drinks: The Good, the Bad and the Jittery" which is most informative on the side effects and dangers of over consumption of energy drinks.

The document contains some useful recommendations for sensible usage.

*Source: Circadian*





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 BGC Contracting Pty Ltd  
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 Micheal White  
 Paul Willoughby

All training providers listed provide the General Safety Induction program.

C denotes the Work Safely in the Construction Industry program.  
 O denotes the OHS for Supervisors and Managers program.  
 S denotes the Extended Working Hours program.  
 R denotes Conduct Local Risk Control program  
 U denotes the Underground program.



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