

MONITOR

Keeping you up-to-date with current occupational health and safety news and practice

In this issue...

Harmonisation to be tested.....	2
New nanotechnology research centre	2
Hefty fine after mine death.....	2
Workers' Compensation rates for WA 2010-11.....	3
National Work Health and Safety Statistics	3
Falls from Height	4
Workers rate safety as the most important issue	5
No health and safety training for workers	5
Compliance with PPE.....	6
Eye injuries in the USA.....	6
Industry demands better hand protection	6
Protecting your back, neck and arms from laptop-itis	7
Early retirement for construction workers	7
Powered haulage accidents.....	7
Health Issues.....	8
Hearing Loss	9
Using mobile phones to prevent skin cancer	10
Leading causes of male deaths in Australia.....	10
Safe Work Australia Report Asbestos Exposure	11
Diabetes	11
Health hazard evaluation for BP oil spill cleanup workers.....	12
Oil spills in Nigeria	12
Goldfields Mining Expo	12
Sleep / Fatigue.....	13
Around the Globe.....	14
Work Health and Safety Act Workshop Invitation	16



The Monitor is the official publication of the Mining and Resource Contractors Safety Training Association

MARCSTA is a not-for-profit Association. All proceeds are reinvested into the industry for future development of safety and training.

HARMONISATION UPDATE

With the re-election of the Labor Government, the pressure to introduce harmonised OHS legislation is expected to be maintained to meet the original deadline for its introduction.

The release of a second draft Bill is imminent and the content is unlikely to be significantly changed before its ultimate proclamation in early 2012.

The passage of this upgraded harmonised OHS legislation will take Australia to the international forefront with a commitment to safer and healthier workers and their workplaces.

While Europe is moving to lessen the pressure on employers to provide safe and healthy working environments Australia continues to raise the bar and the harmonisation process underway will move this country to a position of world leadership.

Safe Work Australia is on track to release model WHS Regulations and Codes of Practice for public comment towards the end of 2010.

For those jurisdictions where health and safety in the mining industry are covered by industry specific laws, a separate harmonisation process is being undertaken through the Ministerial Council on Mineral and Petroleum Resources under the National Mine Safety Framework.

While the OSH Act operating in Western Australia will - for the most part - mirror the national model, the mining industry is expected to remain separately regulated and undergo a title change to bring it closer to the expected new Work Health and Safety Act.

Much of its content, however, may be moved to regulations to comply with other mining states and also to accommodate the proposed National Mine Safety Framework.

As mentioned in the June 'Monitor', MARCSTA will conduct a workshop for members and other interested parties in November to enable an understanding of how the changes underway will affect OHS in the mining sector in the future.

Readers are advised to register their interest in attending the briefing and discussion at an early date.

Member companies will be entitled to one free representative.

All other registrants will be required to pay an attendance fee of \$50 which will include lunch.

The registration form can be found at www.marcsta.com as well as at the back page of this edition of the *Monitor*.





HARMONISATION TO BE TESTED

In the Industrial Court of NSW in August the absolute duty of care imposed on employers to provide a safe workplace – they are assumed to be guilty if an accident occurs (the reversal of onus principle) – was again put to the test.

This followed the earlier High Court decision to overturn the conviction of a hobby farmer for the accidental death of his part-time farm manager in 2001.

The Model Work Health and Safety Bill scheduled to take effect nationally in 2012 does not include a reversal of onus provision and all states are expected to implement similar legislation as part of the harmonisation process.

Another aspect of harmonisation concerns unions' ability to launch prosecutions in NSW and collect part of any fine.

Whether the influential union movement in NSW will accept the removal of the power to launch prosecutions and receive up to half of the fines imposed in successful cases will be a test of the harmonisation concept.

For NSW employers the eventual decision is crucial.

Below: The Melbourne Centre for Nanofabrication

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY ANNOUNCES NEW \$63M NANOTECHNOLOGY RESEARCH CENTRE

A new Melbourne Centre for Nanofabrication has been established to position Australia at the forefront of this rapidly emerging field.

The centre will be open to researchers from Australia and overseas and to industry.

The Parliamentary Secretary for Innovation and Industry, Richard Marles, said that the facility will position Australia at the cutting edge of research and development and in a prime position to become a world leader in commercial nanotechnology.

Source: Office of the Minister, R Marles MP

HEFTY FINE AFTER MINE DEATH

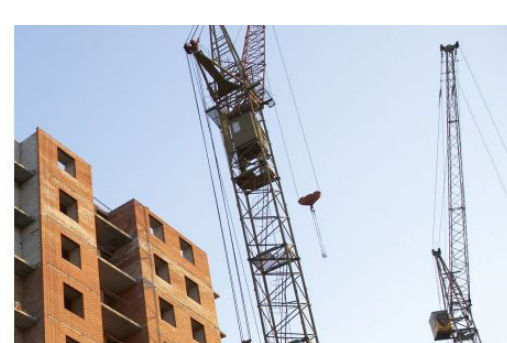
A Victorian mine maintenance contractor has been convicted and fined nearly half a million dollars for a 'significant failure' to protect its employees, following the death of a worker who was crushed by a steel beam.

The company was found guilty of two offences, failing to provide and maintain safe plant and systems of work and failing to provide information, instruction and training to employees.

WorkSafe Vic's Acting Managing Director said that the prosecution is a reminder that employers need to be vigilant about making sure plant and equipment is inspected, maintained and in a condition suitable for use – and that nothing slips through the cracks.

Source: WorkSafe Vic 13 August 2010





RECOMMENDED WORKERS' COMPENSATION PREMIUM RATES FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA FOR 2010-11

Recommended workers' compensation premium rates for 2010-11 show quite clearly that the mining industry enjoys the lowest rates of the major industry sectors and in fact other sectors generally considered to have a low risk of workplace injury.

It is important to be aware of this fact when the knee-jerk reaction by persons who should know better is to castigate the industry and its safety inspectorate and label the industry as unsafe whenever there is an accident or a minesite fatality.

The top nine premium-rated industry sectors are:

	Percentage of Payroll
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	3.97
Construction	2.96
Manufacturing	2.71
Wholesale Trade	1.92
Transport and Storage	1.89
Accommodation, Cafes, Restaurants	1.70
Mining	1.57
Communication Services	1.55
Cultural and Recreational Services	1.53

The failure of the media to direct its attention to those industry sectors attracting the higher premium ratings is a sad reflection on the journalistic profession.

NATIONAL WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY STATISTICS

Key work health and safety statistics recently released by SafeWork Australia provide interesting information across the major industry sectors and for the nation as a whole.

- The incidence of work-related injury from 2007-2008, although showing an 18% decrease, is still below the interim target of 20%. A greater reduction rate is required in the following four years if the National Strategy target for 2012 is to be achieved.
- The interim target for the reduction in the incidence of fatalities up to 2007-08 has been achieved and if continued, the 2012 strategic target is achievable.
- The preliminary incidence rates of serious workers' compensation claims by industry for 2007-08 demonstrate the continually improving performance of the mining sector. On a national basis mining easily outperforms all other industrial sectors.

Incidence Rate of Serious Claims by Industry 2007-2008

Transport and Storage	24.4
Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing	24.3
Manufacturing	24.1
Construction	21.6
Mining	17.8
Wholesale Trade	15.5

It should be noted that these are national figures derived from workers' compensation claims.

The AXTAT system in Western Australia which records all injuries occurring in the mining sector shows the serious injury incidence rate is approximately one-third of the above national claims rate for mining.

Source: Key Work Health and Safety Statistics, Australia, SafeWork Australia 2010



FALLS FROM HEIGHT- A WORLD-WIDE PROBLEM

Falls from height which were the major cause of recent fatalities in the WA mining industry continue to be a major cause of death and/or serious disabling injuries throughout the western world.

WorkSafe WA Commissioner, Nina Lyhne, commented in June that in the construction industry, 10 WA workers have died from this cause in less than three years with a further 1295 injured each year, many seriously and permanently.

WorkSafe Victoria reported, also in June, that six Victorian workers have died from falls from height since the start of 2009.

In the USA, NIOSH, commenting on falls in the manufacturing sector in 2008, claimed that the data substantiates the idea that strategic goals should focus on falls as one of the leading sources of occupational injuries and fatalities, with 58 deaths from falls in that year.

In Canada, WorkSafe British Columbia reports that despite disastrous results year after year, the use of proper fall protection continues to be widely overlooked by employers and workers alike.

In the construction sector falls comprise the largest portion of claims and almost 85% of the workers' compensation costs.

The latter comments would also seem to apply here in Australia.

Source: WorkSafe Vic June 2010, NIOSH, WorkSafe BC

Figures produced by Safe Work Australia on the number of work related fatalities for the period July 2009-May 2010 substantiate this situation, with falls from height leading the types of incident causing death.

Falls from height	18
Crushing	13
Hit by falling object	13
Electrocution	12
Vehicle - accident - public road crash	12
Pedestrian hit by a vehicle	10
Vehicle accident not on a public road	10
Hit by a moving object	8
All other causes	22
TOTAL	118

Industry of Employer

Agricultural, Forestry & Fishing	25
Construction	25
Transport & Storage	14
Manufacturing	13
Mining	6
Retail Trade	5
All other employers	14
TOTAL*	102

*(Bystanders not included)

Source: Safe Work Australia, Notified Fatalities Monthly Report, May 2010



WORKERS RATE SAFETY AS THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE

A new study from the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, reports that more than eight out of 10 workers ranked workplace safety first in importance among labour standards, even ahead of family and maternity leave, minimum wage, paid sick days, overtime pay and the right to join a union.

Despite widespread public concern about workplace safety, the study found that the media and the public tend to pay closest attention to safety issues when disastrous workplace accidents occur. Even during those tragedies, the fate of workers often is overlooked, such as during the recent oil well disaster in the Gulf of Mexico.

The director of the study commented that coverage in the media and public opinion polls has virtually ignored the 11 workers killed by the blow-out and destruction of the drilling platform.

Source: EHS Today 30 August 2010



NO HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING FOR WORKERS

A recent UK survey has found that over a third of people questioned, who have suffered work accidents or injuries in the workplace, have not had health and safety inductions.

More than 15,000 people a year contact National Accident Helpline after workplace accidents. Many of these would be avoidable with appropriate safety equipment, training and supervision.

A recent study by Safe Work Australia found part-time workers being injured at twice the rate of full time workers. The ACTU blamed less induction, less training and supervision for the high injury rates for part time workers.

Source: Digicast June 2010



MARCSTA training providers

Jayson Aveling
Carl Berglin
Danny Bognar
John Christie (C) (O) (R)
Stacey Clark
Brian Cloney
Jim Dandie
Geoff Day
Vlad Doguilev (C) (O)

Peter Dowding
Linda Elezovich
Keith Finnie
Donelle Fraser (C) (O) (R)
Ross Graham
Brett Green
Paul Harring
Theo Hermans
Ralph Keegan (S)

Sheryl Kelly (C) (O) (R)
Joe Maglizza
Les McIntyre
Neil McMeekin
Katherine Montague
John Preston
Graeme Richards
Merryn Richards
Jason Roberts

Victor Roberts
Grant Shearwin (C) (O)
Julian Strudwick (C)
Peter Tynan
Micheal White
Paul Willoughby

The trainers listed provide the General Safety Induction program.
C denotes Work Safely in the Construction Industry program
O denotes OHS for Supervisors and Managers program.
R denotes Conduct Local Risk Control program.
S denotes Extended Working Hours program.
U denotes Underground program.

COMPLIANCE WITH PPE PROTOCOLS A MAJOR CONCERN

Ninety-eight percent (98%) of respondents attending the recent ASSE conference in Baltimore answered 'yes' when asked if they had observed workers not wearing safety equipment when they should have been.

Thirty percent (30%) said this had happened on numerous occasions.

It was therefore not surprising that worker compliance with PPE protocols was cited as the top workplace safety issue by all survey respondents.

The findings are in keeping with results from previous surveys conducted at the National Safety Conferences in 2006(85%), 2007(87%) and 2008(89%).

When it comes to compliance with PPE use protocols, eye protection was found to be the most challenging (42% respondents).

According to NIOSH, 2000 US workers every day have a job related eye injury that requires medical treatment.

The next highest category for non-compliance was hearing protection.

The reasons for non-compliance were varied but the most common complaints were that it was:

- uncomfortable
- too hot
- not available near the work task
- poorly fitting
- unattractive

Source: EHS Today 17 August 2010



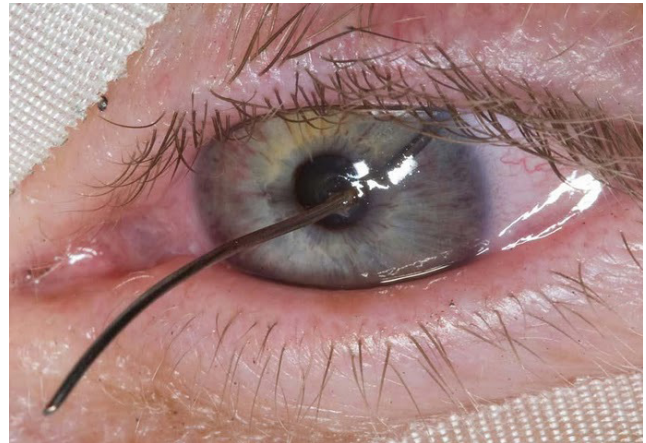
EYE INJURIES IN THE USA

Nearly 90% of eye injuries are preventable with proper PPE yet every day 1000 eye injuries occur in American workplaces.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics survey found that nearly 60% of workers were not wearing PPE at the time of the accident.

The cost was over US \$300 million in lost production time, medical expenses and workers' compensation.

Source: Safety Online



INDUSTRY DEMANDING BETTER HAND PROTECTION TECHNOLOGY

The recent economic downturn has caused manufacturers to place greater emphasis on hand protection differentiation in order to provide products that meet employer needs as customers become more sophisticated in their expectations.

Hand protection products should meet customer requirements at every level and provide the protection, comfort and dexterity that help promote worker safety and productivity.

Customers want hand protection products that look good, feel good and provide high levels of performance. They want to provide workers with gloves, for example, that are thinner, more comfortable and yet provide the same protective qualities – such as cut and chemical protection – that workers have come to enjoy.

Glove products today must also be able to perform in more diverse and demanding environments. They may prevent odour, incorporate antimicrobial properties, repel insects, or offer fire, ultraviolet, impact or puncture resistance.

Source: OHS Online June 2010



PROTECTING YOUR BACK, NECK AND ARMS FROM DEVELOPING LAPTOP-ITIS

Because of the way computers are designed, using a lap top almost inevitably leads to poor posture according to research carried out at the University of North Carolina.

Incorrect posture and computer over-use can cause debilitating physical problems such as sore muscles or repetitive stress injuries; typing can also cause carpal tunnel syndrome.

Most laptop users end up with incorrect neck or shoulder posture which can lead to muscle pain in those areas.

According to the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of North Carolina at the Chapel Hill School of Medicine, when you work at a computer your body should form 90-degree angles at your elbows, knees and hips. Meanwhile, your eyes should look straight ahead at the top third of the screen. But because the keyboard and monitor in a laptop are combined, they can't be positioned independently for typing and viewing.

Source: EHS Today 20 August 2010

EARLY RETIREMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

According to research published in the American Journal of Industrial Hygiene, 60% of roof workers who exited the trade within one year, left their jobs due to chronic pain, work-related musculoskeletal disorders and poor health.

The principal investigator and lead author of the paper, Laura Welch M.D., claimed that the research may understate the social and economic impact of injuries and diseases among ageing workers in the industry.

With the number of workers over age 55 increasing at an annual rate of 2.5% and a projected shortage of skilled construction workers, the study casts an unwelcome light on the future of the industry workforce.

Source: EHS Today, 25 June 2010

POWERED HAULAGE ACCIDENTS IN THE US COAL SECTOR

The Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) reports that of the 11 fatal accidents at surface coal mines in 2009, seven (64%) involved rock or coal trucks. All but one of the fatalities occurred on the day shift and all but one occurred before 10:00 am.

Source: MSHA Safety Alert July 2010





DIESEL PARTICULATE RESEARCH INITIATIVE

An important diesel particulate research study is currently underway to investigate exposure of current employees at a Western Australian underground mine and whether exposure is potentially associated with irritant effects.

The study which is being supported by Barmenco is being carried out by a Master's research student, Sara Fernandez, from the School of Public Health, Curtin University of Technology.

Data will be collected through personal air monitoring and fixed spot air monitoring from different sectors of the minesite, and emissions sampling from different vehicle and equipment engines. Contam data collected since 2003 will also be used.

The study will provide recommendations for further management and establish the foundation for future research studies.

The preparedness of Barmenco to commit to the study comes at a time when, in the USA, a long-delayed governmental epidemiological study of possible ties between diesel exhaust and lung cancer due to be published shortly, has already attracted the attention of industry lawyers who can be expected to oppose its findings.

The goal of the US governmental study of more than 12,000 current and former workers from eight mines that produce commodities other than coal is to determine whether ultra fine diesel particulate matter - a component of exhaust from diesel powered machinery - poses a serious hazard to miners in confined spaces.

MARCSTA will report on the progress of the local study.

ALCOHOL USE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

The Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation has put the costs of alcohol abuse in Australia at \$36bn a year, more than double previous estimates.

The increase is due in part to the survey conducted taking account of the effects on people beyond the actual drinker.

More than a third of child abuse cases have been linked to alcohol.

Importantly, the reporting authors say that the findings should prompt governments to re-think alcohol policy.

Source: ABC News August 2010

NATIONAL HAZARD EXPOSURE WORKER SURVEILLANCE

Safe Work Australia have released a further report on exposure to dust, gases, vapours smoke and fumes and the provision of controls for these airborne hazards in Australian workplaces.

The report focuses on the exposure of Australian workers to these airborne contaminants and the control measures to be provided in workplaces that eliminate, reduce or control worker exposure to them.

The report includes policy recommendations for future research in the field.

Source: Safe Work Australia,



MARCSTA members

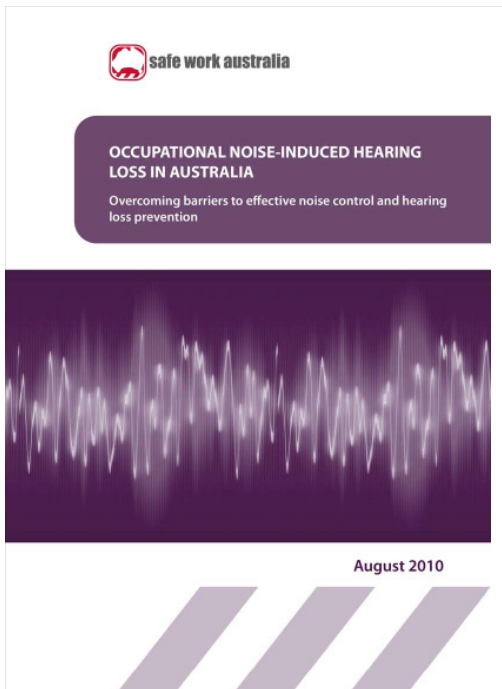
ORDINARY MEMBERS

Alpha Safety Management
Ausdrill Ltd
Barmenco Limited
BGC Contracting Pty Ltd
Bucyrus
Cape Skills
Downer EDI Engineering

GFR Group
GR Engineering Services
GRD Minproc
Holcim (Australia) Pty Ltd
Komatsu Australia Pty Ltd
Roche Mining Process Engineering
Skilled Group Ltd
Westrac Equipment Pty Ltd

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

AVELING
Jako Industries Pty Ltd
Mandurah Safety and Training Services Pty Ltd
Mine SafeGear
Strudwick HR



REPORT - OCCUPATIONAL NOISE INDUCED HEARING LOSS IN AUSTRALIA

The report describes the outcomes of an investigation of the key factors ('barriers' and 'enablers') that influence the effective control of occupational noise and prevention of occupational noise-induced hearing loss (ONIHL).

Importantly, the report emphasises that ONIHL is a significant health and economic problem and that exposure to excessive occupational noise is associated with many adverse effects besides loss of hearing. For example, it has been linked to annoyance and fatigue and to serious health conditions such as hypertension.

INCREASING HEARING LOSS IN ADOLESCENTS

According to a study in the US the prevalence of hearing loss among US adolescents increased by about 30 percent over the 20 years to 2005-06.

An analysis of the data indicated that the prevalence of hearing loss in that period among 12-19 year olds had increased by 31 percent.

The authors concluded that further studies are needed to determine reasons for the increase and to identify potential modifiable risk factors to prevent the development of hearing loss.

They considered that some risk factors, such as loud sound exposure from listening to music, may be of particular importance.

Source: OHS Online August 2010

ONE IN THREE AUSTRALIAN WORKERS AFFECTED BY NOISE

A Safe Work Australia report released in February based on the National Hazard Exposure Worker Surveillance survey shows many Australian workers risk injury from loud workplace noise. Key findings include:

- Between 28 and 32 per cent of the Australian workforce are likely to work in an environment where they are exposed to non-trivial loud noise.
- Male workers were more likely to report exposure to loud noise than female workers.
- Young workers were more likely to report exposure to loud noise than older workers.
- Workers who worked at night were more likely to report exposure to loud noise than workers who worked during the day.
- The main industries in which workers reported exposure to loud noise were manufacturing and construction.

Only 41 per cent of exposed workers reported they had received training in noise injury prevention.

Download the report at www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au

Source: SafeWork Australia



USING MOBILE PHONES TO PREVENT SKIN CANCER

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recognising Ultraviolet Safety Month (July) has launched an application for smartphones that gives users mobile access to the daily UV index forecast in their area.

This will provide Americans with a new way to check the sun's intensity and plan outdoor activities accordingly.

The agency has also released a fact sheet "Health Effects of Ultra Violet Radiation" which describes how UV radiation plays a role in the development of age-related macular degeneration and skin cancer.

As in Australia, skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States.

A similar approach here in WA would seem to be a worthwhile initiative.

Source: US EPA Media Release July 2010

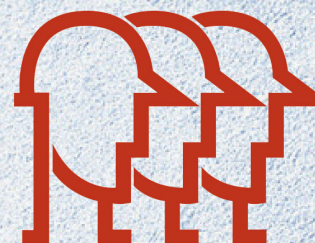


LEADING CAUSES OF MALE DEATHS IN AUSTRALIA

The following causes are responsible for more than half of all male deaths in Australia:

Coronary heart disease, stroke, long-term lung disease	27.8
Cancer of the lung, prostate, colon/rectal, unknown primary source	16.6
Diabetes	2.7
Dementia/Alzheimer's	3.4
Suicide	2.1
Total	52.6

Source: Australian, Health+Medicine, 14 July 2010



MARCSTA

**Mining and Resource
Contractors Safety
Training Association**



Joe Maglizza



Ross Graham

MARCSTA who's who?

Chairman

Joe Maglizza, Holcim
(Australia)
Pty Ltd

Deputy Chairman

Ross Graham, Bucyrus
Australia Pty Ltd

Director Safety and Health

Patrick Gilroy AM

Training Manager

Sheryl Kelly

Committee of Management

John Christie
Allaine Coleman
Terry Condipodero
Peter Nicholls
Kim Stewart

Monitor Editor

Geoff Taylor

HEALTH HAZARD EVALUATION (HHE) FOR BP OIL SPILL CLEANUP WORKERS

The US National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is conducting surveillance to monitor for health symptoms of acute injury, illness or job stress by workers involved in offshore cleanup operations as requested by BP in May.

NIOSH staff members, including industrial hygienists and medical officers with expertise in assessing safety and health risks in the workplace have been deployed on the Gulf Coast.

The findings and recommendations will be reported to employer and employee representatives and released publicly.

The likelihood is that compensation claims will continue for decades.

Source: Environmental Health News July 2010

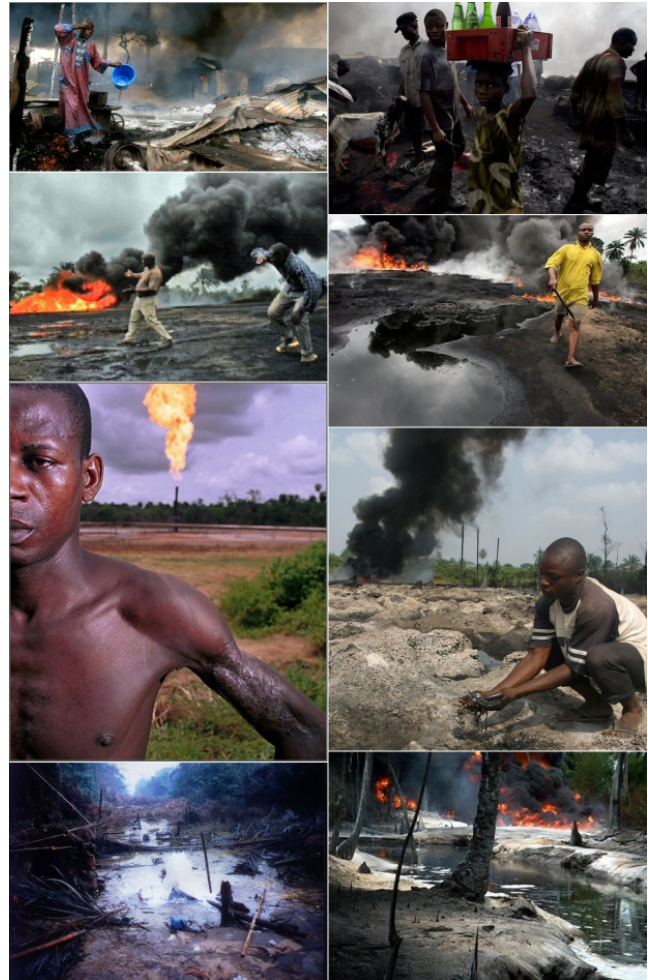
OIL SPILLS HAVE DEADLY CONSEQUENCES IN NIGERIA

The head of economics and human rights of the Swiss section of Amnesty International, Daniele Gosteli Hauser, commenting on the regularity of oil spills in the Niger Delta has warned of the deadly consequences for both the inhabitants and the local environment.

Life expectancy of local people has dropped to just 40 years. The water they use for washing or cooking is polluted; fish are scarce and contaminated, with agricultural land unfit for cultivation.

She added that the air is polluted by flaring or the burning of natural gas out of oil.

Source: Afrik News



MARCSTA TRAINING PROVIDER TO EXHIBIT AT GOLDFIELDS MINING EXPO

Strudwick HR will be exhibiting at the Goldfields Mining Expo being held at Kalgoorlie Racecourse 26 to 28 October 2010. The event is held every two years showcasing new machinery, products and companies working at the forefront of the mining sector.

Information about MARCSTA training programs will be available at the stand.



SLEEP/FATIGUE

US AIRLINES REQUIRED TO DEVELOP A FATIGUE RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

President Obama has signed into law a provision that requires all commercial airlines to develop an acceptable fatigue risk management plan by 1 November 2010.

Source: Circadian Newsletter

WHY FATIGUE TRAINING IS IMPORTANT TO THE SAFETY OF WORKERS

Shiftwork is associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, gastrointestinal disorders, obesity, diabetes, and obstructive sleep apnoea.

Sleep quality and quantity is often lower for those working at night or starting early in the morning.

Research shows that facilities that do not provide some type of training in the area of fatigue and lifestyle management experience higher absenteeism, accidents and staff turnover rates.

Source: Circadian 24/7 Workforce Solutions



LACK OF SLEEP INCREASES CHANCE OF MENTAL ILLNESS

A survey of almost 20,000 Australians by the George Institute for Global Health (which appeared in the journal 'Sleep') has found that those sleeping fewer than five hours a night are three times more likely to become mentally ill than those sleeping eight or nine hours.

The researchers also found over half of those who reported getting fewer than six hours per night had high levels of psychological distress compared to about one quarter of those sleeping eight to nine hours a night.

Source: ABC Net 1 September 2010

WORK RELATED EXHAUSTION TREBLES THE DEATH RISK OF YOUNGER WORKERS

A study of employees in the forest industry by researchers at the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health has found that work-related exhaustion for employees under the age of 45 years almost trebles their death risk.

The findings stress the urgency of prevention of work-related exhaustion among younger employees.

Among the mildly or seriously exhausted the most common causes of death were tumour (34%), accident (26%), suicide (26%) and coronary disease (22%).

Source: Finland Trade Union News



AROUND THE GLOBE

HOLLAND

RETAINING OLDER EMPLOYEES

A Dutch study has found that employers that want to dissuade older workers from retiring early should invest in their health, lighten their workload and make them feel more appreciated.

The longitudinal studies showed workers might be more inclined to retire early if they:

- suffered from poor health
- had a job with high physical work demands or
- had a high pressure, low-satisfaction role.

Focus group participants when asked what their employers could do to postpone early retirement, suggested more rewards, greater social support and more appreciative leadership, with supervisors present on the shop floor and showing interest in their work.

Source: OHS Alert July 2010

USA

EXCITING TIMES PREDICTED FOR OHS PROFESSIONALS

In a series of recent papers by industry leaders of US safety organisations it is predicted that "workforce safety and health initiatives will be as important to 21st century business performance as quality initiatives were to the 20th century."

They have suggested a new acronym for industry, CRGC, which represents Compliance Risk Management Governance and Culture, adding that there have never been as many factors as now that support occupational safety and health development as a profession and an understanding of why it is important.

Source: OHS Online June 2010

THE VALUE OF REMAINING MENTALLY STIMULATED IN LATER LIFE

A 12 year study of more than 1100 people in the US has found that people who remained mentally stimulated in later life were about 80% less likely to develop Alzheimer's' disease. However, in people who developed the disease a history of being cognitively active was actually associated with more rapid cognitive decline.

The study's lead author, Dr Robert Wilson of the Rush University Medical Center in Chicago commented that the upshot is that people who remain mentally active ultimately spend less of their total life span in a demented or cognitively disabled state.

Source: The World Today, September

LESSONS LEARNED FROM CONSTRUCTION FATALITIES

A new USA research-based case study shares lessons learned from eight tragic deaths that occurred within 18 months in 2008 at the largest commercial construction project in US history in Las Vegas.

Upon completion of safety needs assessment surveys conducted at the worksite four recommendations from management were compiled:

- General contractors need to demonstrate an organisational commitment to safety and "walk the talk."
- Training on proactive management skills should be conducted for senior and mid-level managers, engaging them more in safety.
- Supervisors should be encouraged to display constructive attitudes, actions, expectations and communications about safety.
- Employees need to be empowered to become actively involved in safety.

Much of the content of these recommendations have been addressed in the Australian National Harmonised Work Health and Safety Act.

Source: EHS Today 2 July 2010

DENMARK

OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURES CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC IRREGULARITIES IN LUNG CANCER INCIDENCE AMONG MEN

A report in the International Journal of Cancer which analysed 703 incident lung cancer cases among men in Denmark, the UK, Germany, Italy, Spain and Greece examined to what extent occupational exposures may explain socio-economic irregularities in lung cancer incidence after adjusting for smoking and dietary factors. The authors concluded that the impact of occupational exposure on socio-economic irregularities in cancer incidence, rarely studied until now, exists while of modest magnitude.

Source: Chemwatch Bulletin Board 27 August 2010

EUROPE

MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS THE MOST COMMON OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE

Musculoskeletal disorders remain the most common occupational disease in the European union with workers in all sectors and occupations affected with an increasing impact on costs.

The direct visible costs include insurance, compensation, medical and administrative costs. The indirect hidden costs can be attributed to sick leave costs, including the hiring and training of new employees, the reduced productivity levels and the effects on production and quality of work.

Source: OSH in figures: Work-related musculoskeletal disorders in the EU - Facts and figures

SPENDING ON HEALTH AND SAFETY IS AN INVESTMENT NOT A LOSS

The Director of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, Jukka Takala, has warned against organisations "abandoning long term benefits for short term gains, by reducing their health and safety budgets in difficult times."

With 80% of European managers reporting workplace accidents as their main concern, employers cannot afford to make cuts in workplace health and safety, he said.

Source: EU OSHA

CHINA

FALLS THE LEADING CAUSE OF INJURY AMONG OLDER ADULTS IN CHINA

According to a new study by researchers from China and the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (USA), falls are the most common injury for both urban and rural elderly in China being responsible for more than two thirds of all non-fatal injuries in people 65 and older (who represent 9% of the population)

Source: EHS Today 6 August 2010

IRELAND

FALL IN CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT MEANS LESS WORKPLACE FATALITIES

The Health and Safety Authority of Ireland says that it hopes to continue with its policy of co-operation rather than coercion in a bid to further reduce work-related deaths following a 25% reduction in fatal accidents in 2009.

The reduction should be seen in the light of a reduction in employment in construction of almost 50%.

The CEO of the Health and Safety Authority identified the agriculture sector as a 'black spot' with 13 fatalities so far in 2010 accounting for more than one half of all fatalities this year.

An analysis of the accident circumstances indicated that nearly one half all fatalities recorded in 2009 (43) involved vehicle activity of some sort.

Source: Irish Times

ITALY

PLAN TO REMOVE OHS RESEARCH CENTRE

According to the European Trade Union Institute, the Italian Government, within the framework of its "economic manoeuvre" to restore public accounts, is planning the removal of the Higher Institute for Prevention and Occupational Safety (ISPESL), the only research centre in this area in the country. Its job will be performed by the National Institution for Insurance against Accidents at Work (INAIL). Observers say this is creating a conflict of interest since the INAIL thus becomes responsible for research on occupational diseases for which it will have to grant compensation.

The removal is seen as a '30 year jump backwards' which will isolate Italy from Europe. In no other European country has there been a removal of a research institute on health and safety at work.

Source: European Trade Union Institute





Work Health and Safety Act Workshop Thursday, 2nd December 2010

MARCSTA will conduct a half-day workshop for members and other interested parties to be briefed on:-

- the progress of the national harmonisation of OHS laws and supporting regulations
- the development of general OHS legislation in Western Australia to harmonise with the national legislation
- the development of mining legislation to complement the general OHS legislation and regulations in Western Australia; and
- the development of regulations to include the content of the National Safety Framework.

Member companies are entitled to one free representative. All other registrants are required to pay an attendance fee of \$50 which will include lunch.

This workshop has been organised in association with :



**Department of Mines and Petroleum
Department of Commerce - Worksafe**



Details of presenters

Ian Munns

Director, Policy and Education

Department of Commerce - Worksafe WA

Simon Ridge

Director Mining Safety

State Mining Engineer

Department of Mines and Petroleum

Venue

Theatre Room

Technology Park Function Centre

2 Brodie Hall Drive

Technology Park

Bentley 6102

Commence

8.30 am

Name: _____

Company: _____ Company position: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____ ABN: _____ Purchase Order #: _____

Cost: \$50 (GST inclusive) or MARCSTA Member

Cheque enclosed Please invoice me

ABN & Purchase Order # (if applicable) MUST BE SUPPLIED

