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Chemical safety
Mobile phones, social media and WHS
What’s on in WorkSafe Month 2018
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Making the commitment to safety

The Conference will feature the 2018 WorkSafe Awards cocktail presentation event, held at Hobart’s Hotel Grand Chancellor.

Held every two years, the WorkSafe Awards celebrate the outstanding achievements of Tasmanian workplaces and individuals who lead the way in raising the standards of work health and safety, health and wellbeing.

The Awards promote and encourage innovation and excellence in these areas and can help drive positive change in the Tasmanian community and better work, health, safety and wellbeing outcomes. The Awards also reinforce the message that safe business is good business, with less injury and illness helping improve overall performance and productivity.

It’s not too late to register for WorkSafe Month events, or to buy tickets for the Conference and Award cocktail presentation event (go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au). I look forward to meeting the people and organisations who make significant contributions towards building a safer Tasmania.

Regardless of whether we win awards or not, safety is everyone’s responsibility and with your help and commitment, I intend to continue building on the work already done and make Tasmanian workplaces the safest in the country.

As always, stay healthy and safe, and enjoy this edition of Workplace Issues.

Want to know what’s on?

Want to know dates for WorkSafe Tasmania and Better Work Tasmania events? The best way to keep your calendar current is by going online.

• WorkSafe’s website, especially its events page, will link you to events such as WorkSafe Month, as well as any calls for public submissions/comments on legislative changes. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au.

• Better Work’s website allows members to be notified of upcoming networking events, which are held regularly throughout the year. Joining Better Work and getting access to this and other online resources is free. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/betterwork.

• WorkSafe’s facebook page will keep you informed of important dates, too. Go to www.facebook.com/worksafetasmania.
Our working lives are rapidly transforming, through the increase of digital technologies and robotics, changing employment patterns, people staying at work longer, and rising levels of work-related stress and chronic disease.

These and other significant changes are likely to have disruptive impacts on the Australian working environment. Anticipating these impacts and preparing for a range of plausible futures is an important step in ensuring the long-term effectiveness of our safety and workers compensation systems.

WorkSafe Month 2018 adopts these future possibilities as the theme for its events, to help employers and workers prepare for the challenges and changes ahead.

**Two day safety conference**

The theme of this year’s conference, at the Hotel Grand Chancellor in Hobart on 23 and 24 October, is ‘Future Work, Future Challenges’. The conference will examine key ‘megatrends’ and innovations, and their impact on health, safety, wellbeing and workers compensation. It will help employers prepare for these changes and achieve better health, safety and wellbeing outcomes.

The conference will include a cocktail function to celebrate the winners of the 2018 WorkSafe Awards.

**Risk management workshops**

These workshops will present ways of transforming your thinking from safety-based to risk-based; and help you achieve productivity and quality work outcomes. See opposite page for details.

The workshops will be held in Hobart, Strahan, Smithton, Ulverstone, St Helens and Launceston.

**Flinders Island events**

We understand it’s difficult to attend a WorkSafe Month event if you’re in a regional area. So our Health, Safety and Wellbeing Advisors will be on Flinders Island to discuss (in confidence) the best way to implement new safety and wellbeing practices in your business. Whether you’re starting out or want to change your existing policies and procedures, our Advisors will give you the tools and information you need.

On 17 October, WorkSafe and beyondblue will host a forum on the Island with Lindsay Morgan, who will talk about his struggle with depression.

**Walk for Wellbeing**

We’re all experiencing more screen time and sitting, at work and home. So our Walk for Wellbeing on Sunday 7 October is the perfect opportunity for you to get up and moving! Bring your colleagues and family along to the Montrose Foreshore Community Park for what will also be the official launch of WorkSafe Month 2018.

**HSR breakfast forums**

Presented by Unions Tasmania in conjunction with WorkSafe Tasmania, these free breakfast forums are an opportunity for HSRs to network and learn in an informal setting. In line with the ‘Future Work, Future Challenges’ theme, guest speakers will discuss the contemporary challenges facing HSRs. The forums will be held in Launceston and Hobart.
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**Strahan Beach to Bay Fun Run**

WorkSafe Month will conclude on Saturday 3 November with this fun community event. Active Strahan and WorkSafe are hosting another chance to enjoy exercising with your family and friends in our great outdoors.

**Virtual seminar series**

Safe Work Australia will broadcast free online seminars showcasing the latest developments and best practice in WHS. Watch these at www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au.

**Register to attend now**

It’s not too late! For details of all 2018 WorkSafe Month events and to register to attend, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and follow the links for WorkSafe Month 2018.

**Manage risk, productivity and safety**

‘One of the biggest challenges for small to medium businesses is that they perceive safety compliance is very difficult. They also believe they don’t have the time and that it adds limited value to the operational realities of their business. Owners, operators and their employees are under pressure to do more with limited resources to survive. A real risk for these business is production/productivity pressure.’

They’re the words of guest speaker Tania Van der Stap, who’ll be presenting Effective Risk Management Workshops around the state during WorkSafe Month (she’ll also be keynote speaker at the two-day conference).

These hands-on workshops will help small to medium businesses balance the immediate objectives of optimum productivity with safety compliance and continuous improvement.

‘Our approach is that by managing risk, small business can pursue productivity, quality work and safety incident mitigation simultaneously,’ explained Tania. ‘This is about business improvement and preventing incidents, especially those that are life changing events such as fatalities, serious injuries and debilitating illnesses.’

Tania says the primary focus of these interactive workshops will be to serve the needs of attendees and to discuss the challenges facing their businesses, while providing practical solutions and support from WorkSafe.

The skills and lessons presented apply to any industry: from ‘running a mechanic’s workshop through to manufacturing, mining, tourism and farming’, said Tania. ‘What people need is risk management as an organisational skill and also as a personal life skill.

‘When we think about life-changing events for individual workers, large multi-nationals can absorb the negative consequences much more easily than small businesses. These owners understand the very personal consequences to themselves, their staff and their community.

Work Health and Safety Advisor Paul Kilby will be presenting with Tania at the workshops. ‘We’ll be working though some of the practical tools in our Safety Management Toolkit, showing how these can be tailored to attendees’ specific business needs,’ said Paul.

‘Paul and I make compliance as simple and practical as possible, and explain the business case for managing risk this way,’ said Tania. ‘We definitely want people to ask questions about their unique business concerns — it’s their opportunity to get some valuable help first hand.’

To register to attend one of Tania and Paul’s Effective Risk Management Workshops go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and follow the links to WorkSafe Month.

Tania is founder and principal director of ALIGN Risk Management. ALIGN provides health, safety, environment, quality and quarantine (HSEQQ) consulting services. It specialises in helping organisations improve their systems and processes by managing risk to achieve productivity, quality output and incident prevention concurrently. Its approach is both strategic and hands-on, with a practical knowledge of the operational reality of businesses that exist to deliver products or services, and the challenges of balancing competing objectives. Tania will also be keynote www.alignstrategic.com.au

Can’t make the workshops? Book an Advisor to come to you and work through the Safety Management Toolkit. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/safety/request_a_visit.
Here’s a profile of some of the targeted programs that WorkSafe’s inspectors, advisors and officers are delivering to improve work health and safety performance in Tasmanian workplaces.

**Safe Farming Tasmania**

**What**

Safe Farming Tasmania is a joint initiative between WorkSafe Tasmania and the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment. ‘The program is supported by an industry-led stakeholder reference group, and has gained national attention for the work it has been doing (since it began in May 2015),’ said Senior Consultant Phill John. In 2017, the State Government extended the program until May 2021.

**Goals**

Safe Farming aims to raise awareness of farm safety issues, and provide practical WHS guidance and resources for farmers and rural businesses. It aims to reduce workplace injury in this important sector.

**How**

Phill meets with rural employers, managers and workers directly, through farm visits and events like Agfest. He also works closely with other industry groups and the broader rural community to focus on improving WHS.

**Success**

Feedback from farmers is that Safe Farming is having a significant and positive impact. With the practical, simple-to-use tools available for owners and managers to use immediately, the program is changing behaviours and improving safety.

‘Safe Farming is positively influencing the safety culture of the farming community, by encouraging discussions and helping farm owners, managers and workers to understand the importance of getting safety right on the farm so that we can keep our farm workers safe,’ said Phill.

**More information**

Better Work Tasmania

Pam Atkinson, Senior WHS Consultant with Better Work Tasmania (fourth from left) at a recent networking session. Pam is with (left to right) Ian Miles, Tassal Group Ltd’s Head of Safety; Julian Harrington, CEO of the Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council; Prof David Smart of the Dept of Health and Human Services’ Hyperbaric unit; Brett Hislop, Senior Inspector with Worksafe Tasmania; and Stuart Lovell, WHS Manager of Huon Aquaculture Group Ltd.

What

Better Work Tasmania is designed to influence leadership and culture, supply chains and networks, health and safety capabilities across Tasmania through networking, awareness sessions, worksite visits and online resources.

Goals

Better Work aligns with WorkSafe’s strategic priority to engage, educate and raise awareness within the community to change attitudes and behaviours that may contribute to unsafe and unhealthy work practices.

How

Since July 2016, Better Work has hosted networking sessions around the state, including the mining, fisheries and rural industries; covering issues such as engagement, consultation and collaboration; and promoting mentally healthy workplaces.

These events are also live streamed and captured on WorkSafe’s youtube site, to ensure everyone around Tasmania can participate and learn.

Better Work has also developed important relationships with Employer of Choice, the Safety Institute of Australia (Tasmania) and the Tasmanian Association of Vocational Rehabilitation Providers. Over the coming months, Better Work is holding events with Employer of Choice and the Safety Institute, to highlight the benefits of workplace safety and wellbeing on productivity and profit.

Previous seminars have been hugely popular, said Pam Atkinson, Senior WHS Consultant and prime driver of Better Work. ‘They’ve helped business professionals understand more deeply the economic value of caring for their staff and building safer and healthier workplaces.’

To find out more about these and future events, sign up to Better Work — it’s free.

Success

Since it launched in 2015, Better Work has grown to over 1,300 members: a huge pool of knowledge and resources that’s readily shared in its regular events.

‘Having lived the journey from nothing more than a ‘good idea’ to now a fully-fledged WorkSafe program, it’s pleasing to see Better Work going from strength to strength, with more and more people understanding the benefits of membership,’ said Pam.

‘After each networking event I receive feedback about the usefulness of our events in helping people with WHS issues,’ she said.

‘Livestreaming and recording our events has also really gained a lot of traction and empowered people to connect with the program.’ Participants have told Pam that the events ‘(connect) people with a responsibility for safety, for the sharing of information and views’.

More information

Case study: Chemical spill while decanting acid

What happened?
Two workers were decanting nitric acid from a 200 litre drum to smaller 20 litre container for a customer when the bung began leaking. When the men lifted the drum upright, the tap broke and splashed one of them with the acid.
First aid was administered at the workplace, including showering and rinsing, then the worker was taken to the local hospital for emergency treatment.
The other worker contained the spill, cleaned up the residue, and was then sent to his own doctor for a check up.

What injuries occurred?
The worker who went to hospital may need a skin graft for his injuries.

Any contributing factors?
The general manager explained they normally purchase 20 litre drums of nitric acid, but their supplier only had the larger size in stock.
The two workers weren’t wearing the protective overalls they had been supplied with and instructed to wear.
Their respirators were not fitted with a replaceable acid mist filter.

What measures were in place?
The company had:
- safety data sheets for the nitric acid
- safe work procedures for transferring chemicals
- an emergency plan for chemical spills
- induction information that included the location of spill kits and the procedures for managing spills.

What else could be done?
While the spill happened outside and therefore in a well ventilated, the area could be cordoned off when decanting takes place to ensure other people (especially those not wearing PPE) are not exposed.
Staff should be reminded of their obligations under the WHS laws, the requirements to wear PPE, and the need to follow the guidance in safety data sheets. Complimenting this, appropriate supervision and instruction must be provided to workers.

How was this problem fixed?
The workplace will no longer decant nitric acid.
Other chemicals will be transferred to smaller containers using a pump (not a tap), which will eliminate the manual handling of the larger drums.

What can you do?
These codes of practice have practical guidance to help you prevent this happening in your workplace:
- Managing the Risks of Hazardous Chemicals in the Workplace (CP120): practical advice on preparing for an emergency, assessing the risks around chemicals, safety data sheets, and case studies and practical examples of control measures
- First Aid in the Workplace (CP108): explains how to work out the first aid requirements for your workplace, and what equipment and facilities you need
- How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks (CP112): practical advice for identifying hazards in your workplace, doing risk assessments, and developing control measures. Includes a risk register template and case studies.
Find these at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au by searching for the code numbers given above.
If you need further help understanding chemical safety, first aid or managing safety in your workplace, talk to our Helpline or request a free visit from one of our Safety Advisors. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for ‘request a visit’.
The following excerpt is from the Managing Risks of Hazardous Chemicals in the Workplace code of practice. To read the full code go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for ‘CP120’.

**Determining who could be exposed, and when this could occur**

Workers can come in contact with a hazardous chemical and any waste, intermediate or product generated from the use of the substance if they:

- work with it directly
- are in the vicinity of where it is used or likely to be generated
- enter an enclosed space where it might be present
- disturb deposits of the substance on surfaces (for example, during cleaning) and make them airborne, and/or
- come into contact with contaminated surfaces.

You should consider all people at the workplace, including those who may not be directly involved in using, handling, storing or generating a hazardous chemical, such as:

- ancillary or support/services workers (be aware that cleaners, maintenance and laboratory staff are often exposed to both the hazardous chemicals they use in the course of their work, such as cleaning products, and the hazardous chemicals used in the workplace by other workers)
- contractors
- visitors, and
- supervisors and managers.

You should consider:

- how specific tasks or processes are actually carried out in the workplace (for example, decanting, spraying, heating). By observing and consulting workers you can find out if they are not adhering strictly to standard procedures or if procedures are not adequately providing protection to workers
- the quantity of the chemicals being used. Use of larger quantities could result in greater potential for exposure
- the risk controls in place and their effectiveness. For example, a ventilation system may be in use but when poorly designed, installed or maintained it may not achieve the correct level of protection (such as if filters are not regularly cleaned)
- whether each worker’s work technique has a significant bearing on their level of exposure—poor techniques can lead to greater exposure, and
- workers who may be working alone with hazardous chemicals and if any additional precautions or checks may be necessary in case they become incapacitated.

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**Video resource: Managing chemical hazards**

After a video for your training sessions that covers applying the hierarchy of controls to managing chemical safety? Safe Work Australia has a five minute video that explains what workplaces need to consider: from eliminating the need to use chemicals at all — as demonstrated by a Victorian council — through to substituting with a less hazardous one, to the least effective and last possible option of using personal protective equipment (PPE).

‘Chemicals are essential in many of our everyday work and manufacturing processes. If they are not managed effectively, chemicals can impact on the health and safety of workers, the general public and the environment,’ the video explains.

‘Businesses are required to minimise risks to health and safety by applying the hierarchy of controls. This is a ranking of control measures used to protect workers from risks to health and safety. We need to choose controls based on this ranking, and whether they are practical for the job or task.’

The video explains that using a combination of controls often brings the best results: ‘We should use higher level controls where possible and consider using a combination of controls for the greatest protection. By remembering the different levels of hierarchy of controls, applying them and monitoring their effectiveness, we can minimise chemical health and safety risks in the workplace.’

**Find the video**

Go to www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au and search for ‘managing chemical hazards’.

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Review your chemical risk controls

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Safety rights and responsibilities

Under the WHS laws, we all have safety rights … and we all have safety responsibilities. These are usually called ‘duties’. If you’re vague about who does what, let us clear it up for you.

Who does the Act cover?
The Work Health and Safety Act 2012 covers:
• PCBUs
• people who carry out work in any capacity for a PCBU including workers, contractors, subcontractors, self-employed persons, outworkers, apprentices and trainees, work experience students and volunteers who carry out work
• suppliers and manufacturers of plant and equipment and substances to be used in a workplace
• other people at a workplace like visitors and customers.

What about volunteers?

Multiple and shared duties
A person may have more than one duty. For example, the working director of a company has duties as an officer of the company and also as a worker.

A duty cannot be transferred to another person. More than one person may have the same duty, and in this situation, each person retains responsibility and must discharge their duty to the extent to which they have the capacity to influence and control the matter, disregarding any attempts to ‘contract out’ of their responsibility.

One example of is a labour hire company who hires out its workers to host employers to carry out work for them. Both the labour hire company and the host employer have a duty of care towards the workers.


Construction sites where multiple companies are present provides another example. Both the principal contractor and the subcontractor must ensure adequate facilities (like toilets) are provided for workers. This doesn’t mean that both have to bring in the portaloos: after consultation about the matter, one may provide them, and the other may satisfy themselves that their duty is met because the loos provided by the other fulfil their obligations.

PCBUs
In this article, let’s look at the PCBU.
All PCBUs must ensure (so far as is reasonably practicable) the health and safety of:
• workers engaged, or caused to be engaged by them
• workers whose activities in carrying out the work are influenced or directed by the PCBU.

They must do this by removing risks to WHS or, if this isn’t possible, reducing the risks as much as possible.

PCBUs are also responsible for ensuring the safety of others, such as visitors to their workplace. Our September 2017 edition covered WHS obligations towards visitors. Find it at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/resources/wpi-magazine.

Finally, a self-employed person must ensure their own health and safety while at work.
What it means in detail
What this means in detail is the PCBU must ensure:

- the provision and maintenance of a working environment that is safe and without risks to health. This includes safe access to and from the workplace
- the provision and maintenance of plant, structure and systems of work that are safe and don’t pose health risks. For example, providing effective guards on machines and regulating the pace and frequency of work
- the safe use, handling, storage and transport of plant, structure and substances. This includes toxic chemicals, dusts and fibres
- the provision of adequate facilities for the welfare of workers at work. For example, access to washrooms, lockers and dining areas
- the provision of information, instruction, training or supervision to workers needed for them to work without risks to their health and safety and that of others around them
- that the health of workers and the conditions of the workplace are monitored to prevent injury or illness arising out of the work being done
- the maintenance of any accommodation owned or under their management and control to ensure the health and safety of workers occupying the premises.
- consulting, co-operating and co-ordinating with other duty holders. This includes sharing information to make decisions about safety. Recent columns in our ’build a safety system’ series in this magazine have focussed on consultation and communication. Find them at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/resources/wpi-magazine.

Duties of workers
Workers have the right to be safe at work, but they also have obligations as well, and the potential for prosecution of workers proves that the laws take these obligations seriously.

While at work, workers must:

- take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions (that is, what they do and don’t do)
- comply with any reasonable instruction given by their PCBU to comply with WHS laws
- co-operate with any reasonable WHS policy or procedure that has been notified to workers.

Duties of other people
Finally, customers and visitors to your workplace also have safety rights and responsibilities. They must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions. They must also comply with any reasonable instruction that is given by the PCBU. This could mean, for example, staying within designated pedestrian areas if you have a workplace where vehicles operate, or complying with any safety signage.
Avoiding slips, trips and falls

The problem
Slips, trips and falls (STF) may cause a bit of embarrassment and maybe a bruised ego — but they can also cause serious physical injuries such as cuts, fractured bones, dislocations, damage to the internal organs, or worse.

Safe Work Australia reports that between 2003–15, STF caused the death of 386 workers.

In Tasmania, STF are the second most common serious injury for workers, after body stressing. However a serious STF injury can cost 13% more than a body stressing injury.

In the last five years, the occupations most at risk included cleaners, laundry workers and farm workers; and serious STF injuries occurred mainly to workers’ knees, ankles and lower back.

Definitions and causes
Slips occur when your foot loses traction with the ground surface. This might be due to inappropriate footwear, or walking on slippery floor surfaces that are highly polished, wet, dirty or greasy. Inclined ramps can also be slip hazards.

Trips occur when you catch your foot on an object or surface. In most cases people trip on low obstacles that are hard to spot, such as uneven edges in flooring, loose mats, open drawers, untidy tools or electrical cables.

Falls can result from a slip or trip, but many occur during falls from low heights such as steps, stairs and curbs, falling into a hole or a ditch or into water.

As well as problem surfaces or obstacles, poor lighting can also contribute to STF.

Managing the risk
As with any hazard, workplaces must remove the risk and if that’s not reasonably practicable, reduce it as much as possible.

Doing a risk assessment is your first step. We have tools to help you with this:

- read the code of practice How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks for a practical guide to risk assessment. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and look under the ‘Laws’ tab for the code of practice

The checklist will have you and the workers you consult with look at housekeeping, lighting, footwear and of course flooring and surfaces.

Control options: Design
The best way to eliminate STF is to build and design facilities with safety in mind. For example:

- minimise any changes in the floor level. If levels must change, use ramps rather than steps when connecting pedestrian pathways
- install slip-resistant floor surfaces suitable for your work. Floor treatments that improve slip resistance are those which increase the surface roughness of the flooring. The main floor treatments are sand blasting or grinding, chemical etching, coating with resins, and using adhesive anti-slip strips
- avoid sudden changes in floor surface texture. If these are required, ensure good lighting and visual cues highlight the change
- ensure stairs have uniform risers and treads
- consider installing handrails for stairs
- ensure internal and external stairways are well lit
- provide ample storage space to avoid materials being placed in aisles
- provide drains as close as possible to any source of water or liquid that is frequently generated.
- ensure grates in walkways or aisles are slip resistant.

Control options: Housekeeping
Examples include:

- implementing procedures for storage and cleaning, including reporting any problems (such as spills) and having signage for these occurrences
- providing sufficient rubbish or recycling bins
- providing a bin near the entrance for people to put wet umbrellas in
- encouraging workers to clean their workplaces daily before they leave.

Control measures: Training
You should train your workers in:

- how to recognise STF hazards
- how to identify and/or follow effective control measures
- their responsibilities to maintain good housekeeping and cleanliness.

Control measures: PPE
Personal protection equipment (PPE) such as slip resistant footwear should only be used:

- when there are no other practical control measures available (so as a last resort)
- as an interim measure until a more effective way of controlling the risk can be implemented
- to supplement higher level control measures (as a backup).

When choosing footwear, consider whether it has good slip resistance properties in addition to any other required safety features. For example:
Councils and safety: What’s the risk, what to do

A recent survey of Australian local governments has found that WHS is growing in concern but a lot still needs to be done.

The survey released by risk and insurance specialist Aon reveals that WHS is the third leading risk facing local councils, behind infrastructure and financial sustainability/stability.

These factors are closely linked: ‘safer workplaces mean fewer accidents and reduced claims, leading to lower premiums and money saved enhancing financial sustainability.’

The survey acknowledges that WHS ‘can have huge human and reputational impact. Council workers often live in the community they serve — any (neglect or failure) of WHS or wellbeing responsibilities will echo loudly locally, injecting reputational risk and reducing the council’s ability to attract new talent’.

Keeping up to date

Around 18% or survey respondents had not audited their WHS and safety risk management policies, procedures and practices in the last two to three years. The survey says councils need to regularly review their safety systems, policies and procedures. It also says every council employer needs to ‘view their working day through a WHS lens’.

Other factors to follow up include:

- stakeholder engagement and taking a holistic approach to safety and wellbeing
- communication and consultation for safety, extending to mental health in the workplace
- ongoing training and assessment, both internal and independent.

Challenges

All councils (and indeed all workplaces) must comply with the same WHS laws. However the survey acknowledges that ‘smaller regional and rural councils are challenged to keep pace, to audit and update due to a lack of financial and human resources’.

An ageing workforce also presents challenges, especially in those services with physically intensive work (such as parks and grounds maintenance).

Additionally, field workers may not engage with common communications channels such as emails and so may not be as equally informed as others.

Not a council?

Chances are the messages from this survey could apply to your workplace too. What could you do better as you manage safety at your workplace?

Perhaps you employ workers who are ‘out in the field’ and methods like email aren’t the best option for communicating safety to them. Or perhaps you have an ageing workforce. Wellbeing and mental health issues may be matters you could consider building into your approach to safety. And maybe a review of your safety system, policy and procedures is long overdue.

Find the report


Tas snapshot

- Councils have a relatively high proportion of middle aged workers compared with other sectors. At least half of our council workers are over 45.

- Body stressing is the most common (45%) serious injury mechanism for council workers, followed by slips, trips and falls (23%) and mental Stress injuries (11%).

- Average time off work for these injured workers? For those suffering a serious body stressing injury, it’s 33 days lost; slips, trips and falls is 43 days; and a serious mental health injury is even longer at 45 days.

- The serious injury frequency rate for council workers is 53% higher than for state government workers.

• in wet conditions, the shoe sole tread pattern should be deep enough to help penetrate the surface water and make direct contact with the floor

• in dry conditions, the shoe sole tread pattern should be a flat bottom construction which grips the floor with maximum contact area

• urethane and rubber soles are more effective than vinyl and leather soles for slip resistance.

Control methods: For trips

Examples include:

- providing sufficient storage to keep materials out of aisles, corridors and even work areas

- providing enough power sockets and computer service jacks to reduce or remove the need to have cords lying on the floor or even hanging power cords over work areas

- cleaning up workplaces and removing rubbish or obstructions

- displaying warning strips and signs to alert workers to changed or uneven surfaces.

Review regularly

Don’t forget:

- more than one control measure may be needed to provide the best protection

- to regularly review your control options. Keeping floor surfaces clean and dry or lighting levels adequate can change. Consider too seasonal changes such as shorter darker winter days, autumn leaves and debris, and winter frosts and the effects these have on surfaces.

This article based on Safe Work Australia material at www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au
Be covered with a SWMS

Recent WHS prosecutions around Australia serve as a reminder of a PCBU’s legal requirements around safe work method statements (SWMS). This includes preparing, keeping, complying with and reviewing them, consulting with workers and others, and providing them to the principal contractor.

Which activities?

A SWMS must be in place for the 18 high risk construction work activities defined in the Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012. These include work that:

• involves the use of explosives
• involves, or is likely to involve, disturbing asbestos
• is carried out on or near energised electrical installations or services
• involves structural alteration or repair that requires temporary support to prevent collapse.

You can find the full list at the Safe Work Australia website at www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/construction.

What is a SWMS?

A SWMS is a document that sets out the high risk construction work activities to be carried out at a workplace, the hazards arising from these activities, and the measures to be put in place to control the risks.

One SWMS can be used for work that involves multiple high risk construction work activities: for example, a work activity that requires using powered mobile plant, working at heights of more than 2 metres, and working adjacent to a road used by traffic other than pedestrians.

What about JSAs?

A SWMS is generally different from other documents that focus on specific tasks or processes, such as a job safety analysis or a safe operating procedure. A SWMS is not intended to be a procedure; rather, it is a tool to help supervisors and workers confirm and monitor the measures required to control these job-specific high risk construction hazards in the workplace.

How do you prepare a SWMS?

A SWMS must be prepared before the high risk construction work begins. A principal contractor must obtain the SWMS before the high risk construction work begins.

Who should prepare a SWMS?

The person responsible for carrying out the high risk construction work is best placed to prepare the SWMS, in consultation with workers who will be directly engaged in the work. Generally this means a SWMS is prepared by the builder for their workers, or by the subcontractor for their workers and themselves.

The principal contractor, builder and subcontractors should consult with each other to determine who is in the best position to prepare the SWMS.

Managers, contractors, leading hands and workers should all be involved in developing a SWMS.

Why consult?

Consulting workers is important so they understand the detail of the SWMS, and what they are required to do to implement and maintain risk controls. Sharing information and using the knowledge and experience of workers will help make sure the work is performed in accordance with the SWMS.

If you have a health and safety representative (HSR) at the workplace, consult with them when developing the SWMS, too.

What information must be included in a SWMS?

A SWMS must:

• specify hazards relating to the high risk construction work and the risks to health and safety
• describe the measures to be implemented to control the risks so the work is carried out safely
• describe how the control measures are to be implemented, monitored and reviewed.

A lengthy, overly detailed SWMS can be difficult to understand, apply at the workplace, monitor or review. A SWMS must be easily understood by workers, including those from non-English speaking backgrounds. For example, pictures or diagrams may be a more effective way of communicating information.

If the SWMS is based on a workplace-specific risk assessment, evidence of the risk assessment may be required by the regulator or for auditing purposes but does not need to be detailed in the SWMS.

What about other hazards?

While there are other legislative requirements to ensure WHS which are not related to the high risk construction activity, these hazards and risk controls do not need to be included in a SWMS.

Can a generic SWMS be used?

It is important for a SWMS to reflect the specific circumstances of the workplace in which it will operate: that is, the workplace where the high risk construction work is to be carried out, the work environment and the workers carrying out the work.

A generic SWMS used at different workplaces may not meet the requirements of the WHS laws unless it has first been reviewed to take into account the hazards and risks at the specific workplace and amended as necessary.

One SWMS can be prepared to cover a variety of tasks if it takes into account the changing nature of the work environment. Alternatively, a separate
SWMS can be prepared for each high risk construction work activity. In this case, consider situations where different activities impact each other; for example, using powered mobile plant during the construction of a tunnel.

**Implementing and reviewing the SWMS**

High risk construction work must be carried out in accordance with the SWMS. So the PCBU must put in place arrangements to ensure the SWMS is being complied with. This could be as simple as visiting the work site.

If work is not being carried out in accordance with the SWMS, then it must stop immediately or as soon as it is safe to do so.

In these cases, the SWMS should be reviewed and if necessary, revised to reflect the safest way to carry out the work that is reasonably practicable.

Work must not resume until the work can be carried out in accordance with the SWMS.

The PCBU must also ensure a SWMS is reviewed and as necessary revised if the measures put in place to control WHS risks are revised.

**Where do I keep a SWMS?**

Keep the SWMS at the workplace where the high risk construction work will be carried out.

If this isn’t possible, then keep it where it is readily accessible to any worker carrying out the high risk work.

A SWMS can also be kept electronically.

**Find a SWMS template**

We have a template and an example of a completed SWMS at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au – search for ‘SWMS’.

*This article based on Safe Work Australia material at www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au*

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**Update: Silica dust**

In our September 2017 and March 2018 editions, we highlighted the growing incidence of silicosis, a deadly lung disease caused by exposure to silica dust that is produced when cutting or grinding stone products (such as kitchen benchtops or sandstone blocks).

The 2017 article referred to the NSW parliamentary inquiry that looked into the reappearance of silicosis. Now a new safety taskforce has been established in NSW to protect workers in the manufactured stone industry from lung diseases.

The Manufactured Stone Industry Taskforce has been convened by SafeWork NSW and comprises industry, peak bodies, medical professionals, unions and other government agencies, including the Lung Foundation, Australian Industry Group and Unions NSW.

The Taskforce will review safety standards and consider safety improvements to better protect workers from exposure to crystalline silica dust that can lead to silicosis.

‘This is a disease that is 100 per cent preventable if the correct safety measures are in place,’ said SafeWork NSW’s Ron Keelty.

‘This involves having adequate ventilation systems, installing dust capture systems on portable tools, wetting down stone, providing personal protective equipment such as masks and respirators, and not using compressed air to remove or clean-up settled dust.

‘Businesses should also conduct regular air monitoring to confirm that crystalline silica dust is not exceeding the Australian Workplace Exposure Standard and provide health monitoring to workers.’

For more updates go to www.safework.nsw.gov.au. To see our original articles, with their practical guidance, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/resources/wpi-magazine
SAFETY Mobile phones and WHS

What did we do before mobile phones? How did we bank, socialise and organise our lives? Mobile phones are an undeniable part of lives and important communication tools — but they can also be a distraction, introducing safety risks in workplaces. So how do phones fit with WHS?

Phones as hazards
Employers have a duty of care to provide a work environment that is safe and without risks to the health of their workers and others. Workers also have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions.

So think about phones and their use as you would any other piece of equipment in your workplace: you need to consider what risk they present to health and safety, and how you will manage them.

It’s reasonable for you to conduct a risk assessment and think of the specifics of your workplace and the work being done. Consult with your workers and ask how using a phone could pose a risk to WHS.

Driving and operating vehicles
It’s illegal to use phones while you’re driving on public roads. Using a phone and being distracted can affect your awareness of your surroundings, which could increase the risk of hitting a pedestrian or another vehicle, dropping loads, or having the vehicle move unintentionally.

Some companies apply this to workplace settings; others have even banned hands-free phoning while driving, because the distraction level can still be high. Another option is ‘engine on, phone off’.

These could apply to vehicles that never see a public road, such as forklifts or earthmoving equipment.

Other equipment
We’re all aware of the in-flight warnings about mobile phones, and the warning signs at service stations. This is because the radiofrequency or electromagnetic energy of a phone could interfere with electrical equipment and cause flammable materials to ignite.

Other places where phones can cause problems include hospitals, fuelling areas, blasting operations and certain manufacturing situations, flammable goods stores, laboratories, and bulk materials handling areas.

Why have a policy and procedure
Once you’ve done your risk assessment and consulted with your workers, draw up a policy for mobile phones.

Your policy and procedure should cover:
• what you mean by ‘usage’: calls, texts, emails, internet use; work, personal
• if you allow people to carry their phones, or you expect them to be surrendered or stored away (for example, in a locker)
• if phones are limited to designated areas or for emergency use only
• what restrictions you have when driving and operating machinery and performing other tasks.

Make sure you train everyone in your policy, and make sure everyone understands their responsibilities and what will happen if they don’t comply.

You should also look at your safe work procedures: for example, you may need to state that mobile phones must not be used or be in the vicinity when refuelling or while driving.

Alternatives
In your risk assessment and consultation with your workers, you may be able to identify alternatives to mobile phones. These might be:
• landline phones
• two-way radios.
Current reviews: PTSD and WHS Regulator

The WorkCover Tasmania Board is currently overseeing two reviews. The first review was referred to the Board for its co-ordination and advice on the findings and recommendations. This review is looking at whether the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 should be amended to include presumptive provisions for certain workers in relation to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Following a public expressions of interest process, the Board engaged Stephen Carey and Dr Jacqueline Triffitt to undertake the review. A written report on the outcomes of the review is to be tabled in each House of Parliament on or before 1 October 2018.

The second review relates to monitoring and reviewing the WHS Regulator in connection with the exercise of its powers and the performance of its functions under the Work Health and Safety Act 2012. Following a request for quotation process, Barry Sherriff of Sherriff Consulting was appointed to undertake the review.

For more details and progress updates, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and look under the News listing.

National look at priority industries

Safe Work Australia has released new snapshots into the WHS issues and performance of seven national priority industries. These include agriculture, construction and health care, which are also some of WorkSafe Tasmania’s priority industries.

The snapshots also explain why these industries are a national priority, and the main cause of fatalities and injuries in these industries.

To find the snapshots and see how your industry stacks up, go to www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au and search for ‘snapshots 2018’.

WorkSafe Tasmania is also producing a series of Tasmanian industry snapshots. They’ll be available in October to coincide with WorkSafe Month 2018. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au closer to the time to find them.
Safe Work Australia has released a new guide for employers and workers, ‘Work-related psychological health and safety: A systematic approach to meeting your duties’.

The guide describes how to build a psychologically healthy and safe workplace by identifying, assessing and controlling risks to workers’ mental health.

**The causes**

Work-related psychological injury can be caused by excessive time pressures, unreasonable deadlines and poorly managed organisational change. ‘Interpersonal conflict, harassment and bullying, and exposure to occupational violence are also critical causes of work-related injury,’ said Peta.

‘Most importantly, however, you can prevent workers becoming ill by taking preventative action and by intervening early.’

**Preventing it**

Identifying the hazards to good mental health, assessing how severe the risks are, and taking steps to eliminate and control the risks are essential steps to building a healthy and safe workplace.

‘You can prevent your workers becoming ill or sustaining a psychological injury by responding to early warning signs and incidents — an increase in unplanned absence, uncharacteristic behaviour and workplace conflict are all clues that things aren’t quite right,’ said Peta.

‘Most importantly, workers will offer the most valuable insights — they know what causes them harm, and will have ideas about how to most effectively address the dangers to their mental health.

‘My advice is to listen to the people doing the work.’

**Find the guide**

Go to www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au and search for ‘psychological health and safety’.

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**Taking action against workplace pranks**

From time to time we read reports from around Australia about workers and managers being prosecuted and fined for participating in workplace initiations and pranks.

These incidents involve dangerous misconduct, often against young or new workers or apprentices. They cause physical harm and emotional distress to their victims.

What’s more alarming is that in our research for this story, we found some overseas websites condone this behaviour as a way of welcoming new workers into the workplace culture — a kind of organisationally-accepted baptism of fire. One website called it ‘hazing’ and promoted this abusive behaviour as an effective way to build team loyalty and greater personal work satisfaction!

In Australia, this is not acceptable, as the recent prosecutions under the WHS laws show.
Do you have a social media policy? Even though employers can’t control what workers do outside of work, from a WHS perspective, you may want to include some guidelines to make it clear that some out-of-hours behaviour could cross the line into workplace bullying and harassment.

You might have a social media policy, or you may build guidance into your existing WHS policy or code of conduct. Whatever option, don’t forget to consult with your workers as you develop it, and train them afterwards so they understand it.

This guidance can explain how people in the workplace can be affected by what’s said or shown online and out of hours.

If you become aware of a problem, don’t ignore it; a simple conversation could help address the issue before it becomes workplace bullying.

For practical guidance see our guide How to prevent and respond to workplace bullying. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/bullying.

Employers must provide a safe working environment, and workers must work in a safe way, and not put themselves or others at risk. Supervisors and managers play an important role in setting and demonstrating clear standards of safe behaviour.

This means there is no room for workplace initiations and pranks.

It’s also all too easy for these kind of behaviours to slip into the realm of bullying and harassment. If you’re an employer or manager and want to make sure you prevent this kind of behaviour taking hold in your workplace, see our guide ‘How to prevent and respond to workplace bullying’ at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/bullying.

More and more Australians are becoming overweight or obese, so it makes sense that weight control is part of a workplace wellbeing program. Some experts claim that obesity can affect a worker’s ‘fitness for work’ and so should be considered; others believe it’s a personal matter.

While some workers may welcome help with improving their exercise and eating choices to tackle obesity, others don’t. So how can employers help workers improve their health in this area, reduce obesity-related health problems and address fitness-for-work?

A new UK resource, ‘Physical activity, healthy eating and healthier weight: A toolkit for employers’ aims to help employers in this sensitive area. While it’s a UK resource, it has valuable practical guidance that is relevant to Australian workplaces.

‘Personal responsibility is important, but employers are able to make positive changes that can help employees make healthier choices,’ says the toolkit. ‘It can take time to change habits that have been formed over a lifetime, so plan and prepare for the long haul. Small, incremental changes in physical activity and in diet can make a big, positive difference over time.’

The toolkit encourages a partnership between employers and workers to create healthy changes. It has a ‘checklists of actions’ to help create a workplace environment that supports physical activity, healthy diet and healthier weight.

There are practical ideas such as moving printers further from workspaces, to encourage a few extra steps in each day, and providing facilities such as change rooms and bike racks for lunchtime exercise (see our ‘Build a wellbeing program column in this edition for more on workplace facilities).

Go to wellbeing.bitc.org.uk and search for ‘healthy weight’ to find the ‘Physical activity, healthy eating and healthier weight: A toolkit for employers’.
Build a safety system: Reporting

In this series, we’ve helped you build an effective safety management system, specific to your workplace needs. You’ll find previous articles in past editions (starting from the September 2015 edition) at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au under the Resources tab.

This edition we cover reporting and recording.

What?
In this column, we’re focussed on reporting and recording workplace injuries, illnesses, incidents, near misses, hazards, and systems failures.

We also want you to capture WHS inspections, testing and monitoring, which are mechanisms for identifying and fixing problems.

For brevity, we’re going to refer to these reportable matters as ‘safety issues’.

Why?
Workers are often the first to become aware of a safety issue, either by directly seeing it or as a result of things going wrong.

You need to have an effective process for capturing safety issues so you can conduct a risk assessment and take corrective actions. This process can also prevent the issues from reoccurring; or prevent occurrences with potentially more serious consequences from happening.

But, why not?
You may think the less you hear about WHS, the better — but this couldn’t be further from the truth. A lack of reporting doesn’t necessarily mean your workplace is safe. Instead, it often indicates:

- there’s no system in place for workers to report these issues to you
- your workers may feel uncomfortable mentioning safety issues. Perhaps they believe you’ll think they’re a nuisance or a complainer, and speaking up may jeopardise their employment (especially if they’re casual). It’s easier to say nothing.

Reports of safety issues should be welcomed, because as we said above, they enable you to fix a problem before a worker is injured.

How?
You don’t need an elaborate reporting system in place: it could be an official form or a dedicated notebook or whiteboard in the lunch room.

Encourage your workers to use this, then make sure you check it. It’s important that your workers are comfortable and confident to report hazards as soon as they notice them. It’s just as important that you, your managers and supervisors are prepared to listen and act.

Once you have some tools and procedures in place, create a simple document that says:

- what workers must report and how they are to do so
- what will be done with the information you’ve gathered.

For example, you may go on to create a hazard register, and put reported incidents or workplace inspections on the agendas of your staff and senior management meetings.

What about reporting an incident to the authorities?
You must notify WorkSafe if:

- someone is killed, or
- someone suffers a serious injury or serious illness (that is, they require immediate hospitalisation or immediate treatment for a range of injuries), or
- a dangerous incident occurs (for example, a fire, explosion, infrastructure collapse, chemical spill or leak).

If you’re not sure, report it.
You must notify WorkSafe:

- immediately after becoming aware of the incident
- by calling 1300 366 322 (inside Tasmania) or (03) 6166 4600 (outside Tasmania) (this line operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week).

We have an incident notice form on our website that you can use to notify WorkSafe — it captures all the details we require. You could also use it for your internal reporting and record keeping too. Find it at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and follow the ‘report an incident’ button on the home page.

Finally, you must keep a record of each notifiable incident for at least five years from the date you notify WorkSafe.

Anything else?
You should compile and distribute to your workers regular reports on your safety performance: reporting against your safety objectives and targets, sharing the results of audits and reviews of your safety management system. These ‘big picture’ reports can:

- remind everyone of the importance of WHS (and the importance your company puts on it)
- provide positive reinforcement of people’s safe actions and behaviours
- communicate emerging trends, positive and negative.

Share these reports at staff meetings and safety committee meetings, and display them around your workplace on noticeboards.
Why keep records?

Every edition we tell you to document and keep records of your decisions and actions for that part of your safety system that we’re building.

Record keeping is not just ‘paperwork’ but has many benefits and purposes, including:

• demonstrating (to your workers, the regulator, investors, shareholders, customers and so on) that you’re effectively managing WHS and complying with the laws
• demonstrating how you made your decisions about safety issues
• providing a starting point for future decision making or risk assessments
• helping you target training for your workers, managers and supervisors for the key hazards in your workplace
• helping you review risks following any changes to legislation or your business activities.

Make sure that everyone is aware of your record keeping and where they’ll find these.

Your annual report

Finally, don’t forget your corporate annual report, which is often the public presentation of your company’s performance and achievements. Include a section on WHS, highlighting all the things we’ve covered here (and in other parts of this series: safety targets and performance, achievements, outcomes of audits/reviews/inspections, and how you’re resourcing and planning these).

By publishing information about WHS, you’re demonstrating publicly that you rank the safety of your workers alongside profitability, quality, customer satisfaction and other business outcomes.

Build a wellbeing program: Work out what you need

Your wellbeing program will only succeed if it meets the needs of your workers. Do they want to stop smoking, manage stress, exercise more or eat healthier? How do you know that they want?

Ask!

Yes, it’s that simple. Ask workers at a team meeting, by email to all staff, or set up a suggestion box if you think people may hesitate to talk in front of other people.

You could use a survey to gauge where workers are currently at — what their diet looks like, how much exercise they currently do — what activities they’d take part in and more importantly, what health issues they’d like addressed.

We have two sample surveys you can use. One is simple, while the other requests more detail from workers. Both will help you work out what issues your wellbeing program should target.

You can also use these templates to re-survey workers after your program has been running for a while. Compare the initial information you gathered with later feedback to find out if your program is reaching its goals.

To find these templates, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for ‘needs survey’.

Respect your workers

Any survey should be voluntary, confidential and anonymous. Assure your workers that any information they share will be de-identified and not made public. The idea is not to victimise anyone for their sedentary lifestyle or make private medical information and health conditions public knowledge.

Rather, it’s about developing practical and valuable activities such as lunchtime walking groups or seminars on healthy eating.

Make sure you reach all your workers. Don’t forget those who work night shift, part-time, or who are ‘on the road’ or ‘out in the field’. You may need to use both printed and digital surveys.

Survey your workplace

Review your workplace facilities and environment to see if it supports your wellbeing goals. Do workers have space to change in and out of exercise clothes for a lunchtime walk, and to refresh afterwards? Do you need a bigger fridge that will encourage workers to bring healthy foods from home? Or do you have public cycle tracks and parks near your workplace that workers could use for outdoor exercise?

We have a checklist you can use to find out. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for ‘workplace environment checklist’.
Are you an injury management co-ordinator (IMC) or return to work co-ordinator (RTWC)? If so, have you joined IMCAtas, the industry association that represents these injury management service providers?

What is IMCAtas?
IMCAtas (which the WorkCover Tasmania Board maintains close links with) provides local, professional support to IMCs and now RTWCs. It helps members develop their skills to remain up to date with the latest developments in the industry.

IMCAtas acknowledges the importance of effective and proactive injury management, and the role that IMCs and RTWCs play to facilitate this, particularly for more complex and/or high risk cases.

‘Our mission is to provide member benefits through networking, access to local professional support, resources and training — to help shape the future direction of injury management in Tasmania,’ said Michelle from IMCAtas.

IMCAtas members meet quarterly.

Who is an IMC?
An IMC is someone appointed by the insurer or employer. Their role is to co-ordinate and oversee the entire injury management process, including medical treatment, return to work and all aspects of return to work plans and injury management plans.

An IMC facilitates effective communication between key parties by acting as a liaison or contact point. This role aims to streamline the injury management process, particularly for more complex and/or high risk cases.

‘Our focus is on ongoing professional training and development; and continuing commitment to providing input to stakeholders and government organisations on injury management issues,’ said Michelle.

Find out more about IMCs by going to www.workcover.tas.gov.au and searching for ‘GB194’.

Who is an RTWC?
A RTWC is someone who provides an injured worker with workplace-based support and assistance. They help injured workers achieve the best possible return to work outcome through their intimate knowledge and understanding of the various jobs, processes, people and management systems within the workplace.

Find out more about RTWCs by going to www.workcover.tas.gov.au and searching for ‘GB229’.

How do an IMC and RTWC work together?
Both the IMC and RTWC play a pivotal role in the injury management process. They work in close collaboration and are committed to achieving a common goal of returning the injured worker to early, safe and sustainable return to work.

How to join
If you’re an IMC or RTWC, join IMCAtas by going to www.imcatas.com.au or emailing info@imcatas.com.au.
Are there different weight limits that men and women are allowed to handle?

Since 1996, hazardous manual tasks have been risk assessed in accordance with a code of practice that looks at all aspects of the task, not just a person’s weight, strength or gender.


I was injured at work — do I have to go to the company doctor?

You have the right to choose your own doctor as your ‘Primary Treating Medical Practitioner’ (PTMP) to manage your injury and return to work.

Once you have lodged your claim, your doctor should work together with your employer and their insurer to make sure you can return to work as quickly and safely as possible.

If you decide to change your PTMP for any reason, you must notify your employer and make sure your previous PTMP passes your injury and treatment records to the new one.

Find the Authority and Consent for Release of Medical Records form to notify your employer at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au (search for ‘GF182’).

I’m employed by a labour hire business and have a host employer. Who do I notify if I have an injury at work?

You need to notify both.

The host employer’s safety officer or manager needs to ensure you get appropriate first aid or medical treatment. They will need to get details and ensure that no one else is at risk.

The employer who pays your wages needs to know, as they must inform their licensed insurer and provide you with advice about workers compensation. They must advise you about your right to make a claim.

For more information about the workers compensation process, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/compensation/workers

How long would I expect to wait for my high risk work licence or my construction induction (white) card, after I have submitted an application with Service Tasmania?

You will normally receive your licence/card from WorkSafe Tasmania within 3 to 4 weeks after lodging your application at Service Tasmania.

If you are experiencing delays greater than 4 weeks, please call our Helpline on 1300 366 322.

We also advise you to keep your receipt from Service Tasmania, to demonstrate to an employer that you have done the training, submitted your application and your licence/card is on the way.

How do I change my address with WorkSafe Tas?

Keeping your address current with us means you’ll receive your licence renewal notice and other important reminders.

The best way to change your address is on our website at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/licensing/update_address_online_form.

You can also send us an e-mail to wstinfo@justice.tas.gov.au, making sure you include your full name, date of birth, licence number, phone details, and of course old and new postal address.

You can also drop into your local Service Tasmania outlet.

Everybody’s Talking... Questions and answers from our Helpline

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INJURY HOTSPOTS

The most common body locations of workplace injuries in 2017

Mental health conditions made up 9% of all injuries. They were most commonly the result of work pressure or workplace bullying and/or harassment.

Lower back injuries made up 13% of all injuries, the highest of any body location. They were most commonly the result of body stressing incidents.

Labourers and Food Trades workers reported the highest number of hand injuries. These were largely wounds and lacerations from contact with powered and non-powered tools.

The most common cause of knee injuries was slips, trips and falls, followed by body stressing.

Shoulder injuries made up 9% of all injuries. They were most common in Health Care, with Personal Carers and Assistants reporting the most shoulder injuries across all occupations.

30% of all wrist injuries were disease/disorders (rather than traumatic injuries): conditions such as tendinitis, carpal tunnel syndrome and tenosynovitis.

The most common type of injury to fingers were wounds and lacerations. These usually resulted from cutting oneself with a knife or other tool, or sustaining a needlestick injury.

Ankle injuries were usually the result of a fall on the same level.

Selection is based on injuries occurring in 2017. Data at 1 August 2018.

Safety is good for business. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au for resources to help you.