



# SAFETY AT WORK BULLETIN

Proudly Sponsored by the Safety Institute of Australia (Victoria Division)  
National Office: PO Box 2078, GLADSTONE PARK Victoria 3043

Issue 13 August 2 2005 ISSN 1832-6714

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Supplied by SAFETY AT WORK magazine

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## Pilkington Fined \$310,000 over Workplace Death

By Charisse Ede and Kate Lahey

July 25 2005

Glass manufacturer Pilkington has been fined \$310,000 over the death of a Melbourne man crushed by eight tonnes of glass that toppled from a forklift.

Hung Nguyen Huu, 40, who had worked at the company for 17 years, was directing the forklift driver in a warehouse at the factory at Dandenong, in Melbourne's south-east, on November 10, 2001.

The forklift was carrying four packs of glass sheets which weighed almost two tonnes each. As the forklift was reversing the load toppled forward, crushing Mr Huu, a father of five, who was in front of the forklift.

The Australian Worker's Union has compared the penalty to a speeding fine. "In terms of Pilkington's global budget, it amounts to a corporate speeding fine," union secretary Bill Shorten said. "Compare it to the penalty Mr Hu has paid for the company's negligence," he said. We can never be satisfied with an outcome in a situation where a worker has died. However, we do hope this fine will serve as a warning to their employers that their first priority must be ensuring a safe working environment for their employees."

WorkSafe Victoria said the fine was one of the highest yet imposed in the state. WorkSafe's manufacturing, logistics and agriculture director, Trevor Martin, said companies should work to prevent accidents. "The improvement work, safe systems and proper planning and supervision should all have been in place. If they had, this man would not have died. It won't be intended, but equally, it won't be an 'accident' as these tragedies can be prevented. Forklifts are one of the most common machines in Victorian workplaces and have been involved in the deaths of 54 Victorians since 1985 and injured many more," he said.

Pilkington Operations Ltd pleaded guilty to two counts of failing to provide a safe working environment.

Last month, the Victorian County Court was told that the straps used to secure the glass sheets on the forklift were not adequate, the overhead crane normally used to move the glass sheets was not available and the forklift was used instead.

Judge Michael Bourke today fined Pilkington \$310,000.

Pilkington spokesman Russell Howard said today the company deeply regretted the accident and continued to support Mr Huu's family. Mr Howard said the safety of all its 1,350 Australian workers was the company's highest priority and it would continue to invest in measures to make it an injury-free workplace.

AAP

### Footballers not workers for compensation laws

22 July 2005

Victoria's footballers remain unable to access workers' compensation for injuries sustained whilst training or playing football despite a recent Court finding.

Mr Adrian Whitehead, a former footballer for the Carlton Football Club was seeking compensation in the Supreme Court for injuries he sustained during a game against Geelong in 1997.

The Court's decision handed down today was based on the law at the time which provided that employers, such as the Carlton Football Club, could be held responsible for compensating a player for injuries they sustained.

However, the laws were amended later in 1997 to remove this responsibility as it relates to sportspeople.

Under the current laws football clubs are not responsible for providing workers compensation for players injured while participating as a contestant in the sport.

Source: WorkSafe Victoria

### Teen dies in industrial accident

July 22 2005

The 17-year-old boy was killed about 9.20pm (AEST) yesterday at Hardchrome Limited in Mackay, police said.

The business specialises in the repair and manufacture of large scale hydraulic cylinders and suspension rods for the mining and transport industries.

Media reports suggested the boy was killed when a jackhammer exploded, but police refused to elaborate.

Workplace Health and Safety officers are investigating.

AAP

### Man critical after falling from tree

July 23 2005

A man is in a critical condition after falling from a tall pine tree in one of two workplace accidents in Tasmania today.

The 38-year-old man was trying to remove the upper part of the tree with a chainsaw when he fell about four metres and was knocked unconscious shortly after 12.30pm (AEST) in Runnymede, north east of Hobart.

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He was airlifted to Royal Hobart Hospital and remained unconscious and in a critical condition late this afternoon.

In a second accident, shortly before 2pm, a teenage girl fell from a tractor being driven by her father on a farm in Moriarty, near Devonport.

The girl, 14, suffered leg injuries and was taken to Mersey Community Hospital. Police said Work Place Standards had been advised of both accidents. AAP

## Software to make workplaces safer across the globe

25 July 2005

A software program developed by a Queensland IT company is about to make workplaces around the world a lot safer, thanks to a grant from the State Government.

State Development and Innovation Minister Tony McGrady said Brisbane-based Qudos Management Pty Ltd had been provided \$45,000 under the Government's Queensland Industry Development Scheme.

The grant will help the company upgrade technology to help deliver leading-edge software and solutions to occupational health and safety clients overseas via the Internet.

"Qudos manufactures world-class compliance and risk management software solutions for Australian companies," Mr McGrady said.

"With this grant it is aiming to penetrate the markets of the United Kingdom, Europe and the Middle East with its new web-based application.

"It will help Qudos boost sales overseas and at the same time create four more jobs at the fast-growing company."

Member for Murrumba Dean Wells congratulated the company on its successes to date and plans for expansion.

"Qudos is a top example of a Smart State company always looking at ways to innovate and further their success," he said.

"This grant is also proof the Queensland Government is committed to generating local employment by helping small and medium enterprises to expand their business."

Qudos CEO Alan Jones said the funding would be a significant boost to the company, which provides software and solutions to a wide range of clients, including large corporations and government departments.

"As businesses, both local and international, face ever-increasing demands to manage compliance and risk, our mission is to help them put more effective and integrated management systems in place," Mr Jones said.

"Advances in IT have given us the hardware, software and telecoms to help make a quality management system more effective, very efficient, and within reach of even

the smallest organisation."

Mr Jones said a major European company had already shown a keen interest to widely distribute Qudos management solution products in EU countries.

"Our management solutions for industry have garnered much interest overseas and nowhere more so than in the primary export market - the UK."

Mr McGrady said \$2,350,204 in industry grants had been awarded to firms on Brisbane's Northside region since 1998.

Source: Queensland Department of State Development & Innovation

## Intelligence officer claims government bullied officers

July 25 2005

The Australian government has bullied and destroyed the careers of intelligence officers who do not back its political agenda, a television program will report tonight.

On tonight's ABC's Australian Story still serving intelligence officer, Lieutenant Colonel Lance Collins, speaks out about cover-ups in the system and recriminations faced by officers who oppose the federal government's view.

"The problem with our intelligence system is it's the politicians that choose or approve the choosing of bureaucrats that run it," he said.

"The system is very heavily weighted to produce a certain answer that is acceptable to a certain political party and its agenda rather than the nation and its wellbeing."

Lt Col Collins told the program that he criticised reports by the Defence Intelligence Organisation on East Timor because of factual errors.

"The DIO would routinely put out its current intelligence bulletins on the email system and invite comment," he said.

"I thought the intelligence reporting was too equivocal and quite vague. And so I and others attempted to draw their attention to errors of fact which, ah, wasn't appreciated."

He then received a letter from the government telling him to keep quiet, the program said.

Lt Col Collins also accused the government of turning off an intelligence link to Australian troops in East Timor for 24 hours in late 1999.

"We didn't find out until the next morning it had been turned off," he said.

In 2000, his own home was one of many of those of intelligence officers which Federal Police raided as a result of an intelligence leak.

According to the program, as a result of the raids, Lt Col Collins name was mentioned in the media which ended his intelligence career.

Captain Martin Toohey was then asked to conduct an independent inquiry into Lt Col Collins' claims.

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## Operational Matters

Firstly, thank you to the SIA members who have provide positive comments about the SIA Safety At Work Bulletin.

It is clear from some comments, though, that some Members are not as familiar with Acrobat Reader software as they could be and this is affecting their satisfaction with the Bulletin.

Firstly, although the Bulletin is configured for an old version of Acrobat Reader software, it is strongly recommended that you upgrade to the current version which is a free download from <http://www.adobe.com/support/downloads/product.jsp?product=10&platform=Windows> but as the file is large, I recommend getting a recent PC magazine as the magazine CDs usually have a copy of the latest version (7.02). This is much quicker than downloading.

Secondly, if you read the Bulletin on the computer screen, Acrobat Reader has a Full Screen view which you can access by going to VIEW (in the top toolbar) and clicking FULL SCREEN on the dropdown menu, or simply click CTRL-L when the Bulletin is open.

Lastly the file has been formatted to be able to printed as well as read on-screen.

Please note that these Bulletins are "news" bulletins and are, as such, not archived on the SIA website. So please save them to your hard drive so that you can establish a news reference library.



# SAFETY AT WORK BULLETIN

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Visions 2005 Conference,  
Cairns International, Queensland  
28-30 September 2005**

**More information at**  
<http://www.sia.org.au/publications/Conferences/Safety%20in%20Action%202005/Visions%202005%20Conference.pdf>

**The Safety Conference,  
Sydney NSW  
26-28 October 2005**

**More Information at:**  
<http://www.thesafetyshow.com/?view=conference>

**This SIA Safety At Work Bulletin is circulated to all SIA members around Australia every week so if you have a special local SIA event, send the details through to the Editor at [natadmin@sia.org.au](mailto:natadmin@sia.org.au) for possible inclusion in this bulletin. This is a bulletin produced on behalf of the SIA and the more SIA content it contains the better it serves the members needs.**

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But when his report, which was submitted in late 2003, backed Lt Col Collins' claims, the federal government rejected it publicly and ordered a security inquiry to be carried out on him.

He was also denied further work with defence legal services, the program said.

"He was subjected to a defence security investigation," Lt Col Collins said.

"He's been put through the wringer and has incurred substantial legal fees in the process in order to defend himself and doesn't feel he can speak to the media now." AAP

### Emergency slide fails in plane evacuation: ATSB

July 26 2005

A preliminary report into an incident that left three Jetstar passengers with minor injuries has found an emergency slide failed to operate during evacuation.

The Boeing 717 was preparing for take-off from Hobart to Sydney in May when a ground engineer noticed sparks and smoke coming from the right engine.

The pilot-in-command shut down the engines and instructed 26 passengers and six crew members to evacuate the plane.

However, the right front emergency slide did not deploy, the Australian Transport and Safety Bureau (ATSB) said today.

Examinations of the right engine indicated that the air turbine starter had failed during the start sequence and there were signs of fire damage, the ATSB said.

The left-front and rear exit emergency slides deployed satisfactorily, but three passengers received minor injuries in using them.

The faulty starter has been sent to the component manufacturer in the United States for examination. Investigations into the incident are continuing. AAP

### Minister Announces Winners of Safety Awards

July 28, 2005

The Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, Kevin Andrews, today presented the annual safety, rehabilitation and compensation commission safety awards in Canberra.

The award categories recognise the importance of injury prevention and injury management. The three categories of awards were:

- leadership award for injury prevention and management
- workplace safety innovative solutions award

- rehabilitation and return to work award.

Nominations were invited from all agencies in the Commonwealth occupational health and safety and/or workers' compensation jurisdiction including ACT Government agencies.

In the Leadership in Injury Prevention and Management Category the winner was the Department of Health and Ageing, for its better practice for better premiums.

The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service was the winner of the Workplace Safety Innovative Solutions Category for its on vessel inspection minimisation strategies.

In the Rehabilitation and Return to Work Category the winner was the Australian Securities and Investments Commission for its improving outcomes for employees program.

In presenting the awards Minister Andrews emphasised that there is no room for complacency when it comes to workplace safety.

Source Minister For Employment And Workplace Relations

### Women Fear For Their Safety After Work

July 28 2005

26% of females fear for their safety when leaving their workplace at night according to research conducted by Talent2, Australia's leading recruitment company.

Additionally, 12% of females say they are too afraid to work back late because they are seriously concerned for their own wellbeing.

Ms Liliana Caputo of Talent2 says 25% of both males and females questioned said they received taxi dockets from their employers if they work late at night, but even this fails to reassure our female employees.

"It was interesting to note though that the banking/finance sector were the most generous with providing taxi dockets with nearly half of companies in that sector, ie, 48% giving their staff a docket to get home after normal working hours.

"Manufacturing, engineering, human resource and computer/information technology firms tend to look after the employees too ensuring they get home safely if working back is required.

"However, 24% of those who contributed to the research said they felt their workplace was not a safe and secure place at the best of times."

Source: Talent2

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## Court Case Leads To Reminder On Safe Use Of Forklifts

July 29, 2005

A stonemason company has been fined \$5000 for failing to provide and maintain a safe working environment for its employees after two workers sustained foot injuries when a granite slab fell from a forklift.

Marble and Granite Pty Ltd was convicted in the Magistrate's Court of WA Perth last week of failing to provide and maintain a working environment in which its employees were not exposed to hazards.

In May 2003, a company employee lifted a 200kg slab of granite with a forklift in order to move it to a grinding machine in another position.

The forklift had a lifting attachment which comprised a clamp that grabs the slab between two pads to lift it, so the slab was attached only by a small point at the top centre and was free to swing during lifting and transportation.

The floor surface was uneven, so two other employees – one an apprentice - were holding onto the slab to stabilise it while it was being transported.

The slab slipped from the attachment and fell to the ground, landing on one foot of each of the men stabilising it, causing injury to both men's feet despite the fact that they were wearing safety boots.

WorkSafe WA Commissioner Nina Lyhne said today that the case was a reminder of the importance of enforcing safe work practices with and around forklifts.

"Work practices associated with forklifts have consistently shown higher than average rates of workplace injuries and deaths," Ms Lyhne said.

"Forklifts are one of the areas that have been particularly targeted by WorkSafe for education and enforcement action.

"In this particular case, it was very fortunate that the injuries sustained by the employees were not more serious – the slab could easily have fallen on more than just their feet.

Source: Department of Consumer and Employment Protection

## Pt Hedland and Broome Roadblocks Catch Lawbreakers

July 29, 2005

A joint roadblock exercise in the North-West led by WorkSafe and involving ten government agencies has found that some transport companies are still not complying with the State's fatigue safety laws.

WorkSafe WA Commissioner Nina Lyhne said today that the roadblock exercise last week had proved to be an excellent example of a number of government agencies working together to achieve their goals.

"No less than ten agencies participated in the roadblock campaign to check on compliance

with many different sets of legislation," Ms Lyhne said.

"WorkSafe, WA Police and Main Roads took the lead in roadblocks at Broome and Port Hedland, with WorkSafe checking the drivers of heavy vehicles for compliance with fatigue safety laws, the Police conducting breath testing and licence checks and Main Roads checking mass and length permits.

"In Broome, these three agencies were joined by officers from the Federal Police, Customs, Immigration, Fisheries, Roadwise, CALM and Centrelink who each addressed the concerns of their respective agencies.

"WorkSafe's inspectors reported that there had been an improvement in compliance with the fatigue regulations since their last campaign in February.

"However, they were still required to issue five Prohibition Notices and will follow up on other issues with 42 different transport operators, so there is still work to be done in this area."

Prohibition Notices are issued when an inspector sees a serious and imminent danger to employees, and the activity must then cease until the hazard no longer exists.

A comprehensive Code of Practice for the management of fatigue has been in operation in WA since 1998.

Regulations governing fatigue management for commercial vehicle drivers have been in place since July 2003, when an updated Code of Practice was also released.

"The regulations are there to ensure that commercial vehicle drivers get enough rest so they can drive safely and avoid endangering their lives and the lives of others on the roads," Ms Lyhne said.

"Last week's campaign showed some people are still breaching the laws, but we see these roadblocks as a successful way to enforce the fatigue regulations and intend to continue conducting them.

"It is essential that we get the message through that the human body has limitations and adequate rest and sleep is needed to safely undertake long-distance driving."

Source: Department of Consumer and Employment Protection

## Man Dies In Tree-logging Accident

July 29 2005

A man died when a three-metre section of tree trunk crushed him during a tree-felling accident in a NSW Blue Mountains backyard accident.

The man had been one of five contractors working in the backyard of a private property in Tygh Avenue, Lapstone.

Ambulance officers treated the other four contractors for shock.

WorkCover was investigating the incident and a report would be prepared for the coroner.

AAP

SIA Safety At Work Bulletin  
Issue 13, August 2, 2005  
ISSN 1832-6714

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Designer/Publisher:  
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This weekly news bulletin is produced on behalf of the Safety Institute of Australia (Victoria Division) by Workplace Safety Services P/L.

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