



SAFETY AT WORK BULLETIN

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

Issue 30 November 28 2005 ISSN 1832-6714

Website: www.sia.org.au

Email: natadmin@vic.sia.org.au

Supplied by SAFETY AT WORK magazine

QUICKSCAN

- Workers' health will suffer as they are forced to work longer hours** 1
- Tractor rollover kills man** 1
- Rock lobster inspection program successful** 1
- Nuclear waste store must have safe design** 1
- Security-Sensitive Dangerous Substances restricted in Tasmania** 2
- ACT handles depression well** 2
- New Work and Family publication launched** 2
- Unusual Reaction Causes Factory Fire** 3
- New safety laws in Queensland pubs and clubs** 3
- A man died when he fell four metres from a truck** 3
- National Work And Family Awards winners** 3
- Certified Safety Professionals In Australia** 4

Workers' Health to Suffer Under New IR Laws - Union

November 25 2005

Workers' health will suffer under the new industrial relations regime as they are forced to work longer hours in less secure employment, the Australian Workers Union (AWU) believes.

In research reported in the latest edition of the AWU's official magazine, The Australian Worker, experts cite a growing body of research showing job insecurity and stress can have a profound effect on the physical and mental health of workers

And that has a flow-on effect on their families, it says.

In the article, Professor of Public Health at Flinders University Fran Baum said there was strong scientific evidence showing employees who lacked a sense of control over their work and working conditions suffered worse physical and mental health.

"People will be under pressure to work longer hours and are more likely to be in casual and insecure employment," she said. "I think its going to have a big impact on peoples' health and on family life."

Australian National University researcher Dr Lyndall Strazdins said changes to the industrial relations landscape must not only be evaluated for their impact on productivity and employees but also on households and families. Dr Strazdins was lead author of a study analysing the wellbeing of children in more than 4,000 Canadian families according to whether one or both parents worked non-standard hours.

That study found the increasing push for around-the-clock workers was affecting family functioning and was stressful for parents. "You may find that what you think is going to be more productive to the economy may have unanticipated consequences such as impairing health," she said. AAP

Man Dies When Tractor Rolls - Lower Portland

20 November 2005

Hawkesbury Police are preparing a report for the information of the Coroner after a tractor rolled and crushed a man yesterday afternoon. The incident happened between 7pm and 8pm when the 55-year-old man was slashing paddocks on a property on River Road at Lower Portland. Police have examined part of an embankment near a boat ramp where the man was working and it appears the tractor has slipped and rolled onto its side trapping the driver. The man died at the scene. Source: NSW Police

Rock Lobster Inspection Program A Great Success

November 21, 2005

WorkSafe's inspection program prior to the opening of the rock lobster season has been declared a great success.

WorkSafe WA Commissioner Nina Lyhne said today that inspectors have reported a high level of awareness of occupational safety and health requirements and action being taken to meet these requirements.

"WorkSafe's regional inspection team spent a week in Geraldton earlier this month conducting pre-season inspections on fishing vessels in the area," Ms Lyhne said. "The inspectors have reported that they encountered a high level of awareness of safety issues, along with a very positive attitude among the fishing industry. We have been working closely with the WA Fishing Industry Council (WAFIC) and the rock lobster industry in this region for a number of years, and this is a very pleasing result.

"A few years back, the rock lobster industry's focus on occupational safety and health was relatively low. But that situation has changed considerably, and our inspectors have reported that on this trip they were actually being approached to inspect vessels to ensure everything was in compliance with the laws. Clearly a lot of work has been done by the industry and WAFIC, resulting in positive change."

Inspectors looked at a total of 67 vessels over the course of the week. They issued 112 improvement notices. "112 notices sounds like a high number, however compliance with safety and health requirements has improved significantly and there is a high level of cooperation in the industry," Ms Lyhne said. Source: DOCEP

N-waste facility would meet all safety standards - watchdog

November 22 2005

The head of Australia's nuclear watchdog agency has assured a Senate inquiry the engineering know-how exists to construct a safe repository for Australia's nuclear waste.

The inquiry is looking at issues surrounding the federal government's selection of one of three sites in the Northern Territory to house Australia's nuclear-waste, which is mainly low-level from medical, research and industrial uses.

Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency chief executive Dr John Loy was asked if it were possible to build and engineer a facility to the level of safety required under strict international standards. "I think that it the case," Dr Loy replied. "You're looking at basically making an argument for the safety of the material being isolated from the

Continued on page 2





SAFETY AT WORK BULLETIN

Adobe Acrobat V7 Information

Some readers have expressed difficulty in upgrading to the latest version of Acrobat Reader with one of the problems being that the download can be over 25 megabytes - a substantial burden to dial-up internet connections.

Safety At Work publishers are now allowed to distribute the latest edition of Acrobat Reader on a CD. If you want a copy of Acrobat Reader 7.00 please email me at jonesk@sia.org.au and include your full postal address. A CD will be mailed to you shortly after.

The CD won't be pretty as it is a burnt copy of the software that Adobe permits us to distribute. It is not allowed to be given to anyone other than the person requesting the CD and all CDs will be checked with Norton Antivirus before distribution.

Continued from page 1

environment for the requisite period of time. You make that on the basis of the material itself, the containers in which you put it, any additional filling you have in those containers and then, if you place it in a engineered barrier, the qualities of that barrier, and then the qualities of the site itself. These a whole range of arguments coming through from the material itself through its containers, through to engineering of the facility to the site itself. All of those arguments can be made to demonstrate the safety of the overall facility."

Dr Loy said the issue of transportation of nuclear waste was no longer regarded as of concern. "The transport of the material is very much an issue, I think, that at least the radiation protection community would regard as pretty much a solved issue," he said. "A lot of work over the years has gone into looking at the containers that you use for the transport of different forms of radioactive material." AAP

Restricted Access To Hazardous Materials

21 November 2005

Legislation restricting access to Security-Sensitive Dangerous Substances (SSDS) will take effect in Tasmania from 21 November.

The Minister for Infrastructure, Energy and Resources, Bryan Green, said today that the legislation reflected a national approach to control access to hazardous materials as part of Australia's counter-terrorism initiatives.

"The first substance to be regulated by this legislation is Security Sensitive Ammonium Nitrate (SSAN) because of its history of use by terrorists and concerns about its ready availability," he said. "Consistent with all other States and Territories, a six-month transitional period to full compliance will apply. This will allow businesses and individuals to work with Workplace Standards Tasmania to complete applications and assessments required in order to comply with the legislation."

The Tasmanian legislation is based on principles developed by the Council of Australian Governments for the regulation of security-sensitive ammonium nitrate.

"The principles restrict access to the substance to those who can demonstrate a legitimate need for it," Mr Green said. "According to the legislation, a business or person with a legitimate need to have access to security sensitive ammonium nitrate will require a permit issued by the Director of Industry Safety at Workplace Standards Tasmania. The legislation is intended to safeguard the Tasmanian community and to ensure that we give full effect to national security measures." Source: Minister for Infrastructure, Energy and Resources

ACT Among The Best At Tackling Depression, Kennett Says

November 23 2005

The ACT is doing a better job than most in dealing with depression, former Victorian premier Jeff Kennett says.

Mr Kennett was in Canberra today to sign a funding agreement with the ACT Assembly in his capacity as chairman of the national depression initiative beyondblue.

"Some states are behind others in terms of services and facilities," he said. "None are at a position which I am comfortable with in terms of anywhere near meeting demand, but you've got to weigh that up against where we've come from in terms of the last 60 years. For the last 50 years mental health hasn't even been on the register and when anyone has behaved a little differently we have either locked them up in a prison or we've institutionalised them."

Mr Kennett said state and territory governments were trying desperately to improve but the ACT was doing better than most. "Without being overly specific because I don't think that's fair, let's just say there's a top half and a bottom half," he said. "You are certainly top half."

As part of the funding agreement, beyondblue will begin a program in the ACT dealing with post-natal depression, workplace depression and depression in schools. AAP

Continued on page 3

BECOME AN OHS SUPERHERO

AND HELP IMPROVE WORKERS' SAFETY

Enrol in the new national Certificate IV in Occupational Health and Safety (BSB 41604)

* Advance your career * Nationally accredited * Train online anywhere, anytime



For more information, call 1300 139 153 or go to www.educationonline.asn.au





SAFETY AT WORK BULLETIN

Continued from page 2

To The Editor

Open Letter to the Federal IR Minister

Dear Kevin Andrews,

I note that there appears to be no proposed exemption from unfair dismissal in a workplace of less than 100 people, if the worker is dismissed because of a health and safety complaint they have made.

Is this correct?

Thank you

Geoff Taylor, Life Member
Safety Institute of Australia.
18 Parklands Sq, Riverton 6148

Work And Family Publication Launched

25 November, 2005

At the annual ACCI/BCA National Work and Family Awards last night the Minister released a new Government publication entitled **Work and Family: The Importance of Workplace Flexibility in Promoting Balance Between Work and Family** (PDF 137kB)

This booklet provides an up-to-date overview of work and family issues in Australia, from labour market statistics to legislation protecting parents. It also details current Government policies to assist families, as well as the legal protections and opportunities under the new workplace relations legislation.

Source: Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations

Unusual Reaction Causes Factory Fire

November 23 2005

Emergency crews rushed to a factory in Melbourne's outer west today after an "unusual reaction" caused a chemical vat to catch alight.

One worker required medical treatment after he was exposed to fumes caused by the chemical fire, at Huntsman Polyurethanes (Australia) Pty Ltd in Deer Park.

Five Metropolitan Fire Brigade units and an ambulance arrived at the scene just after 6am (AEDT) today, and the clean-up effort continued until about 9am.

Huntsman Polyurethanes (Australia) Managing Director Mario Budisa said a problem had occurred during a chemical mixing process. "There was an unusual reaction in one of our blending pots that caused it to heat up," he said today. "We're going through an investigation as we speak to ensure it doesn't happen again."

Mr Budisa said the affected worker was treated as a precautionary measure after a report of eye soreness. AAP

New Laws To Boost Safety In Queensland Clubs And Pubs

November 24 2005

All Brisbane pubs and clubs trading after 1am must employ crowd controllers, ban drinking competitions and install closed circuit television cameras under new laws.

Queensland Liquor Licensing Minister Margaret Keech today said the legislation, passed through state parliament last night, aimed to boost safety and would take effect from March 1 next year.

"Licensees will have to employ a specified ratio of crowd controllers according to patron numbers, drinking competitions will be banned on premises and closed circuit television cameras will have to be installed at all public entry and exit points on premises," Ms Keech said. "In addition, crowd controllers will have to maintain surveillance outside the premises for at least one hour after the designated closing time."

Ms Keech said the new laws also required licensees to train all staff to responsibly serve alcohol. "Licensees will have to develop and display a house policy outlining community and patron safety measures, management strategies and a code of conduct for staff," Ms Keech said.

The laws applied to all pubs and clubs within the Brisbane City Council's boundaries.

She said the laws, part of the Brisbane City Safety Action Plan unveiled earlier this year, were prompted by the deaths of two young men and a number of other violent, alcohol-fuelled incidents. Gold Coast concreter Paul Markham, 24, died in hospital on February 13 this year after allegedly being bashed for his designer shoes outside central Brisbane's Embassy Hotel. AAP

Man dies in fall from truck

November 25 2005

A man died when he fell four metres from a truck today, in the fourth industrial accident in regional Victoria in a month.

WorkSafe inspectors believe the 52-year-old man, who was working at a grain supply company in Drouin, West Gippsland, was not wearing a safety harness and the vehicle was not fitted with fall protection.

WorkSafe executive director John Merritt said the number of recent deaths in regional communities was shocking. "There is no room for complacency. There is room for taking the time to review safety and work practices and to ensure workers and workmates are doing the right thing," Mr Merritt said.

"At this time of year it might be busier than usual, you might have a lot on your mind about approaching pre-Christmas business and some holidays, but safety must not be compromised." AAP

Winners Of National Work And Family Awards

25 November, 2005

The winners of the 2005 ACCI/BCA National Work and Family Awards were announced last night by Kevin Andrews, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations.

The Awards recognise outstanding leadership and innovation from business in the promotion of a better balance between work and family in the workplace. Employees interviewed by the judging panel have reported significant benefits arising from their family friendly working arrangements, including lower stress levels, greater morale and job satisfaction and importantly, improved quality of life with their families.

Winning organisations have identified a range of business benefits such as greater staff retention, lower staff turnover, increased productivity, lower employee absence days, a higher rate of return from maternity leave and increased customer satisfaction through their work and family policies.

The Winners of the ACCI/BCA National Work & Family Awards 2005 are:

Gold Award – Private Sector SC Johnson

Gold Award – Public Sector University of South Australia

Large Business Award - Greenslopes Private Hospital

Medium Business Award - SC Johnson

Small Business Award - Austral Tree and Stump Services

Rising Star Award - Acclaim Apprentices and Trainees

Regional and Rural Award - Grampians Community Health Centre

Source: Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations



SAFETY AT WORK BULLETIN

Certified Safety Professionals In Australia

By Kevin Jones

There is a growing demand in Australia for a solid qualification of a safety practitioner. This demand is coming from several sources. Several government OHS authorities are looking for a benchmark of advice upon which they can rely and that is independent of their inspectorates. Several OHS membership organisations, such as the Safety Institute of Australia (SIA) and Industrial Foundation for Accident Prevention (IFAP), are looking to upgrade their Certified Safety Practitioner qualifications to provide more authority to the qualifications.

Recently, this demand was perhaps satisfied by a visit from Roger Brauer, CEO of the Board of Certified Safety Professionals (pictured below). The BCSP is an American not-for-profit organisation that is fundamentally an organisation that examines and certifies professionals in occupational safety and health. Roger was at pains to stress that the BCSP is not a membership organisation but one that provides and verifies skills and qualifications to a benchmark qualification. BCSP has strong relationships with a number of professional organisations but it has no members of its own.

The provision of an independent certification and enforcement organisation has some obvious benefits for safety organisations. Firstly, as I see it, the administration of an intensive certification process is outsourced. The BCSP already has examination services in several Australian capitals and they are looking to expand. The BCSP enforces its certification and has cancelled the qualification of safety professionals in the US.

Secondly, member organisations support their members and may encourage members to reach certification but the examination is independent of the membership. Non-members can become CSPs, or members can choose not to be CSPs. This structure should avoid accusations of bias or favouritism in certifications.

Thirdly, OHS government authorities can recommend a certification that is independent of member organisations, universities or commercial bodies.

At an individual level, Roger showed that the certification could provide substantial financial rewards by allowing individual CSPs to set premium rates for their expertise.

While some readers may be seeing dollar signs in their mind, it needs to be stressed



that the certification does not yet have an Australian base. Australians are welcome to achieve certification on an American basis but the recognition, or branding, of the CSP is not established in Australia yet and without that, the applicability of the CSP qualification may be extremely limited.

Roger stressed that, at the moment, the advantages for Australians to have CSP would be if they were to work in the Asian/Pacific region for a US-based company.

I was concerned when Roger began to identify the expected income differentiation between CSP and non-CSP as I saw there was a possible for some professionals to consider themselves an elite. But I realised that this wasn't my response to the BSCP but a response to the audience. There were several knowing whispers in the audience by organisations who, I think, were seeing the certification as a way of cementing their turf in the Australian safety industry. This short-sighted attitude masks that member organisations build their strength and credibility by providing good value for the membership dollar. Certification, such as that of BCSP, is not a core element of membership but a goal that members may choose to attempt.

There are going to be many transitional challenges for Roger to implement CSP into Australia. When I asked him why he chose Australia before Asian options, such as Singapore, he said that the main reason was translation. There are less societal barriers to CSP in Australia than elsewhere. I understand the response but still wonder why Australia is preferable to an English-speaking country like Singapore which would provide a good launching pad for the burgeoning Asian industries and still include Australia through the regional trade agreements.

All of the information that Roger provided was very good and I could see many opportunities and advantages. Thankfully, there was not one element of hard-sell in Roger's presentations. It restored some faith in me for American professionals.

Kevin Jones is a Fellow of the Safety Institute of Australia, editor of **SAFETY AT WORK** publications, an OHS consultant and freelance writer. He has written for SIA and other publications over several years.

SIA Safety At Work Bulletin
Issue 30, November 28, 2005
ISSN 1832-6714

Editor Kevin Jones
Editorial Inquiries +61 (0)3 9478 9484
jonesk@sia.org.au

Designer/Publisher:
Workplace Safety Services Pty Ltd
849 High Street, Regent VIC 3073 Australia
A.B.N. 68 091 088 621
www.safetyatwork.biz

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

Disclaimer

Entire contents, Copyright © 2004 – 2005 Workplace Safety Services P/L and its partners unless otherwise stated. All rights reserved. Reproduction, and redistribution, of this publication in any form without prior written permission is forbidden. The information contained herein has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable.

Workplace Safety Services P/L and the Safety Institute of Australia shall have no liability for errors, omissions or inadequacies in the information contained herein or for interpretations thereof. The reader assumes sole responsibility for the selection of these materials to achieve its intended results. The opinions expressed herein are of the authors.

No part of this magazine may be published or copied without permission from the publisher.

This file cannot be forwarded without the formal and written permission of the Safety Institute of Australia and Workplace Safety Services P/L.