



SAFETY AT WORK BULLETIN

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Negligence the Only Crime in Backpacker's Death

By Karen Michelmore

ALICE SPRINGS, March 6 2006

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Criminal negligence was the only crime that may have been committed in the horrific outback burning of a Canadian tourist two years ago, an inquest heard today.

Cynthia Ching, 30, died six weeks after she was seriously burnt when aviation gas used in a lantern made out of a beer can was spilled on her and ignited.

The Northern Territory Coroner's Court was today told there was no malice or intent in the accident, at the remote Kings Creek Station 450km southwest of Alice Springs, in April 2004.

"The only crime, if any, that may have been committed in these circumstances is the perpetration of a dangerous act," counsel assisting the coroner Michael Grant said.

"I think the evidence will establish very clearly there's certainly no suggestion that this was a malicious or intended act."

New Zealand helicopter pilot Ned Lee was last year charged with committing a dangerous act causing death, but prosecutors were later forced to drop the charge because Mr Lee could not be extradited from New Zealand. There is no equivalent charge in New Zealand.

Ms Ching's parents Rafael and Sandy travelled from Canada for this week's inquest, hoping to learn more about their daughter's death.

They heard Ms Ching, who had been backpacking around Australia with her sister Carolyn, attended a social function at the station, where they had been working as cleaners and kitchen hands for two days.

After dining at the station restaurant, they were among a group of 13 people who went back to the residence of the two helicopter pilots at the station, to continue chatting and drinking.

The group sat outside in a semi-circle on the wooden deck attached to the pilot's cabin, with the only light coming from two makeshift lanterns crafted from VB beer cans filled with sand and aviation fuel.

Mr Grant said Mr Lee attempted to pour more fuel into the lanterns from a large glass jar.

"In doing so, his left arm caught alight, causing him to drop the jar of fuel he was using to refuel the lantern," Mr Grant said. "The fluid from this spilled onto the deceased and ignited at the same time. Immediately following that the pilot grabbed the deceased and rolled her onto the ground ... to extinguish the flames."

In the five to 10 seconds it took to put out the flames, Ms Ching, from Richmond near Vancouver,

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SIA ACT DIVISION PRESENTATION

"How the Scheme is influencing and impacting on Australian Government Agencies and the Construction Industry"

Ms Terasa Cremer, Director Accreditation Scheme, Office of the Federal Safety Commissioner

DATE: Wednesday, 22nd March 2006
 TIME: 5.30pm to 7.30pm

VENUE: National Press Club, National Circuit, Barton

RSVP: Fred Lehman on flehmann@tpg.com.au or Willi Harley on willi.harley@dewr.gov.au
 BY: COB, Tuesday 14th March 2005

COST: \$20.00
 Finger Foods with a drink on arrival (Further drinks can be purchased from the bar)



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suffered severe burns to 60 per cent of her body, including her legs, arms and chest. She was airlifted to Alice Springs and eventually to Adelaide for treatment, but died from multiple organ failure after her injuries became infected.

Among the issues NT Coroner Greg Cavanagh will investigate are whether the owners of Kings Creek Station or the helicopter company which operated tourist flights over the famous canyon knew of the practice of using aviation fuel in lanterns, and if they had any occupational health and safety obligation to their workers.

He will examine the time it took to evacuate Ms Ching for treatment, and why police did not investigate the accident until after her death on May 27, 2004, some six weeks later.

Mr Cavanagh will also consider whether to recommend the Director of Public Prosecutions again lay a charge against Mr Lee, even though he cannot be extradited.

The hearing continues tomorrow, when the court will hear from several witnesses including Ms Ching's sister Carolyn and Mr Lee, both via videolink. AAP

Man Dies After Vehicle Plunges From Car Park — Sydney CBD

6 March 2006

A man has died after his car plunged from a multi-storey car park at Haymarket, in central Sydney. About 6.15pm yesterday (Sunday 5 March), the 34-year-old Carlingford man was reversing his white Toyota Camry into a vacant car space on the second floor of a hotel car park in Thomas Street.

It appears the vehicle then accelerated, smashed through a guard rail to its rear and fell some 10m to the ground below. The car landed on its roof. Police from City Central Local Area Command and the Rescue Unit attended the scene. New South Wales Ambulance and Fire Brigade personnel were also present.

The man sustained head injuries in the incident. He was taken to Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in critical condition but died a short time later.

Investigations into the incident are continuing. A report will be prepared for the information of the NSW Coroner.

Source: NSW Police

Brady Corporation Acquires Australian Supplier of Safety Products and First-Aid Supplies

2 March 2006

Brady Corporation, a company dealing in identification solutions and specialty materials, today announced that it has acquired Accidental Health & Safety Pty. Ltd., and its business unit Trafalgar First Aid Pty. Ltd., headquartered in Glendenning, New South Wales, Australia. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

Accidental Health & Safety and Trafalgar are leading suppliers and distributors of customized first-aid kits and supplies, and related safety products and signage for commercial enterprises in the Australian market. The companies, which employ about 70 people, market through a national network of distributors as well as a direct sales force, and serve customers in all states in Australia. Its fiscal 2005 sales were approximately \$9 million (U.S.). "The acquisition of Accidental and Trafalgar will reinforce Brady's position as a leading provider of safety products and services in Australia by increasing our access to industrial and commercial markets and providing an expanded distribution network for our broader line of safety and workplace identification products," said Brady Australia Managing Director Stephen Millar. Continued on page 3

Safety In Action 2006 - Wellness

By Deb Burlington, CPMSIA

The Wellness stream explores how best to integrate health and wellness into the management of our greatest asset, our people. Papers presented in this stream illustrate methods that have been implemented and research that assists with introducing wellness successfully and other inspiring accounts that demonstrate the importance of this area to occupational health and safety.

Delegates attending the Wellness Stream will have the opportunity to hear from a variety of speakers on issues ranging from the practical application of a wellness program through to the impact of depression on the work force.

From a practical application approach **Cheryl Ormond** from Santos will describe how that company introduced a wellbeing standard and how this has assisted in creating an environment which encourages staff to achieve a healthy lifestyle. The Health Manager from AGL, **Megan Kingham** will review their journey from occupational health to a broader focus on physical, emotional, creative, social, spiritual and financial wellbeing. From the Queensland Police Service Senior Health and Safety Advisor **Eileen Mills** describes how they have delivered a corporate health program over a wide geographical area that includes remote areas.

In addition to these overviews of in-house applications, the stream will be opened by **Stuart Taylor** from the Resilience Institute who will challenge the audience to get beyond the constraints and traps of work life balance and find a more durable solutions.

International research results which provide compelling evidence of the direct relationship between health and productivity and health and absenteeism will be presented by **Bradley McDougall** from Health Services Australia Group. The importance of sleep friendly rostering will be explored by Associate Professor

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“Joining Brady gives us a great opportunity to further grow our business, and we look forward to working together to provide Australian customers the finest in first-aid and safety supplies,” said Tony de Rooy, Accidental Health & Safety managing director.

Brady’s presence in Australia dates back to 1970 when it opened its first sales office there, with production operations added in 1979. Brady acquired Visi Sign near Melbourne in 1999 and Safety Signs Service in Western Australia in 2001.

Source: PRNewswire

Workplaces Smokefree in Victoria

27 February 2006

From this week thousands of Victorian workers will enjoy the benefits of smoke-free workplaces as the latest tobacco reforms take effect.

Health Minister Bronwyn Pike said today that the workplace changes are among a range of tobacco reforms to come into force in Victoria from Wednesday, March 1 to reduce the harms from exposure to tobacco smoke and improve the health of all Victorians.

“Industry and businesses have embraced the reforms, with some, such as Tottenham cable manufacturer Olex Australia, becoming totally smoke-free on site at the beginning of the year. Olex became smoke-free indoors in January 2004, two years before the changes became law,” Ms Pike said. “Olex Australia has also assisted staff by providing a rebate of \$150 to employees who successfully give up smoking to cover the quitting costs such as nicotine replacement therapy.

“Around 80,000 Victorian workplaces will be required to introduce the changes from Wednesday this week. Tobacco is responsible for almost 5000 deaths in Victoria each year and costs the community over \$5 billion annually in health care and social costs. “Tobacco remains the risk factor associated with the greatest burden of disease in Australia, increasing the risk of coronary heart disease, stroke and peripheral vascular disease as well as a range of cancers and other diseases.

“A recent study indicates that exposure to high levels of second hand tobacco smoke increases the risk of heart disease by 50 to 60 per cent. Exposure to second hand tobacco smoke can also increase the risk of lung cancer and other lung diseases in adults as well as cause ‘irritant’ effects on the eyes, nose, throat and airways. Tobacco legislation has come a long way in the past four years with the Bracks Government introducing laws to address exposure to second hand tobacco smoke and reduce smoking among young people. During the recent period of reforms we have seen a reduction in smoking rates by 4.7 per cent in adults and 4.1 per cent among young people,” Ms Pike said.

Other new tobacco laws will include a ban on smoking in covered areas of train station platforms, trams shelters and bus shelters.

“Everyday Victorians rely on the public transport system to commute. Non-smokers find it uncomfortable and unhealthy to walk through or wait for public transport in confined spaces that are smoky. The new laws will address this issue by ensuring all covered areas of train station platforms, bus and tram shelters are smoke-free,” Ms Pike said.

From Wednesday covered areas of around 7,300 bus shelters, 950 tram shelters and 289 train station platforms will become smoke-free.

“A covered area means any part of a train platform, tram or bus shelter that has a roof overhead, regardless of its height,” Mr Batchelor said. “This new law will include covered areas of public transport stops and station platforms where the cover is specifically provided for sheltering people. This does not include covered areas like shop awnings, verandas or overhanging balconies where the cover is intended for use other than to shelter people waiting for public transport.”

Mr Batchelor said the Victorian Government often received complaints from commuters about people smoking under covered areas at train station platforms and tram and bus shelters. “Non-smokers find it uncomfortable and unhealthy to walk through smoke or wait for public transport in confined spaces that are smoky,” Mr Batchelor said.

Mr Batchelor said people caught smoking in a covered area of a train platform and tram or bus shelter by authorised public transport officers could be fined \$154. For more information phone the Tobacco Information Line on 1300 136 775 or visit <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/tobaccoreforms/>.

Source: Department of Human Services, Department of Transport

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Matthew Naughton, Head General Respiratory and Sleep Medicine Alfred Hospital and Monash University. In addition to this **Michael Adeney** from Performance Dimensions will provide simple and useful approaches to strengthen an organisation’s defences against depression.

Finally Associate Professor **Maureen Dollard** from the University of South Australia will present the results from the VWA Stress Prevention Project in DHS and DE&T.

The Wellness Stream offers delegates an interesting array of speakers from a number of disciplines who offer insightful, practical methods to address the issue wellness within the workplace.

More information of the Safety In Action conference is available through www.sia.org.au or www.safetyinaction.org.au

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Man suffers severe injuries in bull attack

SYDNEY, February 25 2006

A farmer has suffered severe head and spinal injuries after being attacked by a bull on his property in central western NSW. The incident happened about 5pm (AEDT) today on a property at Winmalie, near Ulan, NRMA CareFlight director Ian Badham said.

Ambulance officers called the NRMA CareFlight trauma team to the property where they discovered the 52-year-old man with severe head and spinal injuries. A doctor resuscitated the farmer who was placed on a ventilator to control his breathing. He was flown to Orange Base Hospital where he was admitted in a critical condition at 8pm. He was expected to be transferred to the spinal injuries unit at Sydney's Prince of Wales Hospital later tonight.

AAP

Qld Launches New World-Class Training For Beauty Salon Operators

24 February 2006

One of the nation's growing industries, beauty therapy, now has access to world class management training developed in Queensland, Small Business Minister Chris Cummins announced today. "This is the first time training of this calibre has ever been offered to the beauty industry," he said. "It's a program that allows one-on-one consultations between salon owners and operators and two of the best consultants in the business."

Mr Cummins said the Queensland-developed training would be delivered in Sydney, New Zealand, London and throughout Europe this year. "This is a great example of the SmartState in action. Working smarter isn't just about technology, it's about thinking outside the square and being prepared to try a new approach," he said. "Up till now the beauty industry has focused heavily on skill training, but the time has come to ensure they have access to the best management training available."

Please note that, according to a course spokesperson, the current training referred to in this edited media release does not include any training on the occupational health and safety hazards associated with beauty salons. The spokesperson advised **SAFETY AT WORK** that an OHS component will be included in future training courses.

East Gippsland looking to make safety improvements.

24 February 2006

WorkSafe's Safer Work Zones campaign at Bairnsdale last week has been one of the best received so far. A team of 13 inspectors visited 100 workplaces during the campaign and issued 180 improvement and prohibition notices.

WorkSafe's Ross Pilkington said 20 voluntary compliance issues were dealt with by employers on the spot. "Fork-lifts, plant maintenance, equipment guarding and dangerous goods were among the main problem areas identified during visits. Inspectors also identified a need for business operators and workers to look at manual handling, spray painting, maintenance of storage racks and electrical leads, working at height and asbestos. Most of the businesses visited were 'having a go', but there is a need for safety to be taken more seriously."

Mr Pilkington said setting up health and safety committees and electing health and safety representatives was a simple way that even small businesses could make improvements. "Most places have regular team or tool box meetings of one sort or another. These can easily incorporate discussion about safety issues and set the scene for those issues to be eliminated and managed. What needs to happen is that safety ceases to be a 'special' subject – in reality it is an operational issue.

"Once people build safety into their basic operations, it becomes part of the culture," Mr Pilkington said.

WorkSafe inspectors will carry out follow-up visits in around six weeks when premises where notices were issued would be checked for compliance.

Claims on Victoria's employer-funded workplace injury insurance system cost more than one-billion dollars a year. In Gippsland over the past five financial years, there have been more than 4,700 claims on the system at a cost exceeding \$90.5 million.

Source: WorkSafe

Control measures can save lives in tree felling

28 February 2006

WorkSafe has highlighted the danger of failing to develop and follow proper control measures during tree felling operations – a move that can have fatal consequences. Paul Alan Francis Pty Ltd trading as Able Tree Services was today convicted and fined \$70,000 after pleading guilty to two charges laid under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 1985.

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The charges arose out of an incident in May 2002 in which a man died during a tree felling operation in Langwarrin. Among his workmates was his then 22-year-old son.

Judge Chettle, in the County Court, was told the man was working at a residential subdivision, trimming foliage on trees that had already been felled when a 21 metre high tree fell on him.

WorkSafe's investigation, which included a report by an arborist, found a number of safety deficiencies and departures from industry practice had contributed to the man's death. These included:

- felling trees using only a back-cut, which results in less control over the direction of the fall;
- not removing rot from the tree prior to felling;
- felling against the lean and crown weight of the tree;
- not enforcing the personnel exclusion zone (two times the height of the tree);
- not undertaking a job safety analysis or risk assessment for each individual tree;
- tree stumps and unfelled trees in the fall zone creating a risk of the tree not falling as intended.

WorkSafe's Executive Director, John Merritt, said the unsafe felling or lopping of trees could have disastrous results, with workers or members of the public at risk of being killed or injured, and property damaged.

Source: WorkSafe

Workplace Safety A Priority For Future Workforce

1 March 2006

Northern Territory Minister for Employment, Education and Training Syd Stirling today officially launched the new Safe Start Education Resource kit at Sanderson High School. The kit will be an educational resource for teachers and help highlight the importance of occupational health and safety (OH&S) training to Territory secondary students – our workforce of the future.

Mr Stirling said it will ensure workplace safety is recognised as paramount by secondary students. The Safe Start project involved various working groups, with representatives from NT WorkSafe; the Department of Employment, Education and Training; the Department of Corporate and Information Services and wider industry.

The kit is divided into the four key sections: prevention, hazards, workplace relations, and compensation/rehabilitation. It includes a folder containing OH&S information, student resource pages, English as a Second Language modified overhead transparencies, the NTWS Putting Safety First booklet, sample workers' compensation claim forms and an accompanying Safe Start CD.

All sections contain information and activities related to safety issues, with examples and issues relevant to young Territorians living in the Top End, Central Australia and remote communities.

Source: Minister For Employment, Education & Training

Adobe Acrobat 7.07 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 20 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 7.07 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 for viruses before distribution.

For those readers who are unconcerned about download limits, the latest version of Acrobat Reader is available for free from <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

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