



SAFETY AT WORK BULLETIN

Proudly Sponsored by the Safety Institute of Australia (Victoria Division)
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Illegal workers believed to have worked on collapsed wall

SYDNEY, November 1 2006

A collapsed wall which nearly destroyed a Sydney funeral home is believed to have been built by illegal Chinese workers, the union says.

The 4.5 metre wall caved in yesterday, crushing the garage, four vehicles and cutting power lines at Albert and Meyer Funerals at Thornleigh, in Sydney's north.

The Construction Forestry Mining Energy Union (CFMEU) said the wall was being built for a new commercial building on an adjacent construction site. CFMEU safety inspector Dick Whitehead said illegal Chinese workers were believed to have been used on the project.

"It is a miracle that no workers were killed by this collapse," he said. "Had anyone been working in the affected areas of the funeral home at the time of the collapse they would have been killed. Most concerning is the fact that we believe the workers who were constructing this wall were working illegally, did not have proper training and should never have been on this building site. Within minutes of the collapse they had fled the site to avoid the authorities."

Mr Whitehead said the site was still in danger today, with part of the 30 metre long wall still standing. He said the wall appeared to have fallen because its core had not been filled with concrete.

A Sydney Metro Projects spokesman has denied the builders are working illegally in Australia. He says the workers aren't illegal .. and all the paperwork is done. He's also denied the union's claims the workers fled when the wall collapsed yesterday afternoon. The spokesman says the workers had already finished work for the day and had left.

AAP

Safety at Bendigo pubs and clubs under the microscope

30 October 2006

WorkSafe inspectors issued 71 Improvement Notices and a Prohibition Notice during light night operations in central Bendigo on Friday and Saturday night.

Working with Victoria Police, WorkSafe's campaign followed last month's launch of guidance material aimed at security and safety issues in the entertainment sector.

WorkSafe visited 16 premises during the weekend campaign. The notices covered a range of safety issues including:

- Blocked emergency exits;
- Out of date fire extinguishers;
- Inadequate first aid facilities;
- Crowd control issues;
- Electrical safety. Live electrical circuit board – Prohibition notice;
- Manual handling issues for staff;
- Risk of slips, trips and falls;
- Lack of emergency planning.

WorkSafe has been working with the industry for more than a year to raise these issues, particularly in the area of security.

"Safety and security issues need to be sorted out before the doors open for business. It's no good trying to develop an emergency management plan when trouble starts," Mr Merritt said. "Venue operators have clear responsibility to their staff and patrons to ensure their premises are as safe as possible," WorkSafe's Executive Director, John Merritt, said. "The new guidance material aims to put this aspect of public events and professional venues on to a more professional footing. Venue operators and companies which provide crowd control or other staff have clear, shared, and long-established legal responsibilities to maximise the safety of their employees and patrons.

The new standards were developed in consultation with many organisations including the Crowd Controller Employers Association, Victoria Police and the

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ADVERTISING

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Australian Hotels and Hospitality Association. 'Crowd control at venues and events' is available in printed and electronic formats from WorkSafe. Source: WorkSafe

Work Safety Award winners lead the way in safety October 30, 2006

The three winners of the prestigious 2006 Work Safety Awards Western Australia were announced on Friday night.

Ausclad Group of Companies, PW & CJ Bradford and Royal Perth Hospital – Sir George Bedbrook Spinal Unit are the winners of the three award categories and will now be entered into the national Safe Work Australia Awards.

WorkSafe WA Commissioner Nina Lyhne said today that the three winners were terrific examples of the many excellent workplace innovations and occupational safety and health systems being developed in WA.

"These awards provide the opportunity for innovative Western Australians to gain national recognition for their achievements," Ms Lyhne said. "They recognise outstanding occupational safety and health management, solutions and innovation in WA workplaces that reduce the risk of work-related injury and disease. Awards such as these are all about encouraging best practice in safety and health, and the three winners are leading the way by making a significant contribution to reducing the injury toll in workplaces."

Category 1 of the Work Safety WA Awards is for the best workplace safety and health management system, won by **Ausclad Group of Companies**.

Ausclad supplies engineering solutions including fabrication, construction and maintenance services across a range of industries. The company has an excellent safety management system in place, resulting in a 39 per cent reduction in lost time injury and disease over the past year.

Category 2 is for the best solution to an identified workplace safety or health issue, won by **Royal Perth Hospital's Sir George Bedbrook Spinal Unit**.

Caring for patients with spinal injuries, the unit was unable to comply with the hospital's no-lift policy when turning spinal patients, who were lifted vertically and turned by four staff. Management and staff developed the Aeroplane Pillow which allows two staff to turn patients without lifting, significantly reducing the risk of manual handling injuries to staff.

Category 3 is for the best workplace safety and health practices in small business, won by **PW & CJ Bradford**.

Peter Bradford is a farmer and volunteer firefighter who recognized that lifting and positioning heavy water-filled hoses into water tanks on vehicles was putting firefighters at risk of manual handling injuries and the hazards of working at heights. In response, he developed a standpipe that allows mobile tanks to be filled with water from overhead, eliminating both the handling of heavy hoses and the risks associated with working at heights.

Winners of the national Safe Work Australia Awards will be announced early in 2007.

"Each of the category winners of the 2006 Work Safety WA Awards is a very worthy winner, and each now has the opportunity for their achievements to be recognised across Australia," Ms Lyhne said. "I heartily congratulate the winners, along with everyone else who nominated for the awards, and encourage businesses of all sizes to nominate for the 2007 Work Safety Awards Western Australia!" Source: DOCEP

Navy Wins Safety Award

October 30 2006

The Royal Australian Navy (RAN) has won two awards in the 2006 Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (SRCC) Safety Awards held recently at Parliament House, announced the Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence, Bruce Billson.

Mr Billson said the RAN's efforts with implementing Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) initiatives and winning these prestigious SRCC awards are in accordance with the finest traditions of the RAN and serve as a fine example of what teamwork and initiative can achieve.

This year there were 31 entries across five categories of the SRCC Safety awards including leadership Award for Injury Prevention and Management; Best Workplace; Health and Safety Management System; Best Solution to an identified Workplace Health and Safety Issue; Best Individual Contribution to Health and Safety and Rehabilitation and Return to Work Award.

The HMAS ANZAC Portable Pontoon entry provided the best solution to an identified workplace health and safety issue thereby winning the third category

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Perhaps I'm stating the obvious, but I would like to see the SIA take up the issue of harmonisation of OHS laws (with the results of our survey), with other employer groups - inc. ACEA (engineers), VECCI, ACCI etc.

With the looming VIC state elections (and others to come), I could see that employer groups could put some pressure on political groups' policies on this matter. It seems to me, the state governments are our audience to convince them that this is necessary.

Thanks for your ongoing efforts to get these publications out with such relevant content.

Amanda, Victoria

BROSH Safety Week Event

Victoria's Health and Safety Week had a great deal to offer and I found it difficult to choose between events however BROSH (Ballarat Regional Occupational Safety & Health Group) won me over.

Held in Doherty's Ballarat Lodge, in beautiful garden surroundings, this conference and mini trade show (excellently staged and informative) was a resounding success. The speakers were well grouped for 'continuity to the next speaker. Scott Franklin of the Stawell Goldmine set the scene.

We heard from Ross Pilkington (WorkSafe Vic), Tracey Browne (Australian Industry Group) and Bruce Harris (GIO) laying out succinctly for us the latest developments in workplace health and safety. Then Professor Kaj Frick, from the National Institute on Working Life, Sweden, spoke to us about the "Health" part of OHS. He raised valid points and had us all thinking about issues of the health of our employees and

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and the Fleet Intermediate Maintenance Authority (FIMA) Perth was highly commended for its workplace health and safety management system (Category 2).

Mr Billson said HMAS ANZAC personnel designed a portable floating pontoon that could be placed at the base of the accommodation ladder, which is used to transfer personnel and stores to and from the ship's boats. "As well as providing a larger, more stable and therefore safer platform for movement to and from the accommodation ladder, the pontoon can be stowed in one of the ship's boat spaces and accessed in the same manner," he said.

FIMA Perth has over 200 naval personnel, primarily technical sailors, in 13 workshops that provide maintenance support to the ships and submarines at Fleet Base West.

In 2004, FIMA Perth introduced an OHS management system that is embedded in the chain of command and not solely reliant on OHS experts. As well as providing both general and workshop specific OHS induction training, a 'point system' has also been introduced to reward individual workshops for their OHS commitment and performance.

"FIMA Perth has seen a significant cultural change in the way that OHS is viewed and managed by all ranks. This has led to a significant increase in the hazard identification and incident reporting with a decrease in the number of minor incidents in the workshops," Mr Billson said.

Source: Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence

Asbestos Awareness Organisation

October 2006

The Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization (ADAO <http://www.asbestosdiseaseawareness.org>) is an American organisation that was founded by asbestos victims and their families to provide support and information. It recently released a new web commercial which can be viewed at <http://avimailer.com/adao1/index.htm>.

Free Advice On How To Avoid Serious Injury From Farm Machinery

October 31 2006

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland is offering rural producers free advice on how to avoid incidents involving mobile farm machinery that could endanger their livelihoods and even their lives.

Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations John Mickel said 14 free seminars on "Managing risk from mobile plant in rural workplaces" will be conducted throughout Queensland during November.

"Mobile plant, such as tractors and all terrain vehicles, is the major cause of death and serious injury in rural workplaces," Mr Mickel said. "Education activities such as these seminars, along with regular industry audits, are part of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland's ongoing rural industry safety intervention plan. Rural producers should try to make time to get along to one of these seminars. They'll get an opportunity to talk face-to-face with specialist rural inspectors and get practical advice about their specific health and safety concerns."

The seminars will cover:

- How to identify the major risks from rural mobile plant
- How to implement sound health and safety management practices on farms
- Current laws and how they apply to the rural industry
- Key issues uncovered during previous audits of rural mobile plant
- Rollover Protective Structures (ROPS) on tractors - mandatory from 1 July 2007
- Practical risk management exercise.

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland will also be conducting a statewide audit of mobile plant in November, including the safe design of elevated work platforms and compliance with guarding and the new ROPs regulation.

Inspectors will assess how well workplace health and safety management practices are being implemented to ensure the safe use of mobile plant in the vegetable, fruit, grain, cotton and sugar cane growing sectors and the grain-sheep, grain-beef and dairy cattle farming sectors. Book into a seminar online at www.deir.qld.gov.au

Source: Minister for State Development, Employment and Industrial Relations

Hardie deadline extended again

November 1 2006

The NSW government has extended until November 14 the deadline for James Hardie to finalise the funding deal relating to its compensation obligations for victims of its asbestos products.

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indeed the health of a company that ignores this issue.

The highlight (for me) was the Hypothetical – Myths and Legends in OHS, facilitated by a lively and personable Gerrie Carr-MacFie (vicCHACC), starring Andrea Shaw, (boss's daughter), Cameron Montgomery (great playing the injured worker), with Tracey Browne, Prof Kaj Frick and Ross Pilkington et al on the panel. We were taken down a path of manual handling injuries, forklift incidents, little or no consultation, inadequate return to work processes and economic disaster for a once thriving company.

We were shown insights into psychological issues by Andrea Shaw, Susan Yates, Liz Pratt and a brilliant presentation by Heidi Ravenscroft of Victoria Police.

Joanne Blurton (Bulla Dairy Foods) showed us why her company truly deserved to be a 2005 WorkSafe Awards Winner for their consultative processes and following on with their community efforts to share their experiences and solutions with local industry groups. There is definitely a lesson there for all of us.

Cameron Montgomery (Chair BROSH) mentioned the SIA when ending the conference. I was very pleased to be acknowledged by Cameron who graciously recognised SIA's attendance and support of BROSH initiatives and permitted an announcement of the forthcoming Safety in Action Conference and Tradeshow in March 2007.

Sheryl Dell



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The previous deadline expired yesterday with the building products company still to reach an agreement with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) over the status of the compensation fund.

The deal was thrown into doubt after a tax office ruling in June this year that the fund, worth up to \$4.5 billion over 40 years, could not be treated as a charity for tax purposes. The deadline for finalising the fund has been repeatedly pushed back from its original date of July 31.

Asbestos Diseases Foundation president Barry Robson today branded the two-week extension as "another rabbit out of the hat" and said he had little hope the deal would be finalised in a fortnight.

"Hardie's pulled another rabbit out of the hat once again. It's been three years of extensions, simple as that," Mr Robson said. "I'm never hopeful dealing with Hardie. We've been down this road so many times over the last three years, we just don't believe them in anything they say or do."

Mr Robson said he didn't blame the NSW government for the delays, rather James Hardie should back down in its stand-off with the ATO. "The government is trying to do the right thing by getting Hardie to change the fund so it's more acceptable to the Australian Taxation Office," he said. "The easiest way for all of this to be resolved is for Hardie to change the fund so it is acceptable to the taxation office."

If the deal was not finalised by Christmas, Mr Robson said, James Hardie Industries chairwoman Meredith Hellicar should expect a crowd of carol singers outside her home - made up of asbestos campaigners.

"I hope we don't have to do it, but we have people writing the Christmas carols already and we're in the process of organising buses and practising singing," he said.

AAP



LEAD AUDITOR COURSE Occupational Health & Safety (AS 4801)

Monday, 20th – Thursday, 24th November 2006

Located at Sustainability's training room in North Beach (Perth), this 4 day course combines both Internal and Fast Track OH&S Audit Courses (AS 4801) and is designed for people who wish to be able to complete both internal and external audits.

Course learning outcomes:

- Demonstrate an in depth understanding of the AS 4801 requirements;
- Apply the knowledge and skills required to plan, perform and complete internal and external audits of an OH&S Management System, AS 4801;
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- Show knowledge of a systematic and practical approach to OH&S Management System auditing and a broad understanding of the scope of OH&S Management System auditor responsibilities; and
- Demonstrable understanding of the intent and application of relevant Acts, Standards, Codes of Practice, and other documents relevant to State/Commonwealth legislation.

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For more information about Sustainability please visit our website by clicking [HERE](#).



Notices lifted on Beaconsfield mine main decline

HOBART, November 2 2006

Workplace Standards Tasmania has rescinded notices at the Beaconsfield Gold Mine, allowing work to recommence on the main decline.

Allstate Explorations administrator Michael Ryan has welcomed the decision but said today it was only a "first step" towards a return to production and key stakeholders, including joint venture partner Beaconsfield Gold NL, still needed to be consulted.

The mine has been closed since a rock fall in April that killed Larry Knight and trapped Todd Russell and Brant Webb for 14 days.

Mr Ryan said the decision to rescind notices followed a rigorous review of work practices, with independent consultants developing a case for safety. "However this is only the first step towards a return to production and we do not want to get ahead of ourselves," he said in a statement. "There is much more work to do before a decision can be made as to whether it is safe to restart mining activity."

Mr Ryan said independent consultants Coffey Mining Pty Ltd and SP Solutions would continue to work with mine management to build a case for safely reopening mining operations. "Additionally, further work also needs to be done to ensure that reopening the mine will be financially viable," he said.

AAP

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Task force set up to curb attacks in hospitals

ADELAIDE, November 1 2006

South Australia has set up a task force to investigate how best to deal with aggressive hospital patients and prevent attacks on medical staff. The number of code black calls for emergency help in the state's public hospitals rose to 4,427 last financial year, 201 more than the previous year.

SA Health Minister John Hill said that while such incidents were still uncommon, they did occur. "The majority of inappropriate behaviour is caused by illness, including organic brain syndrome, which can be caused by infection or diabetes, by people affected by drugs or alcohol or by patients with post-operative confusion," Mr Hill said.

The minister said the task force would consult with the Australian Medical Association (AMA) and the Australian Nursing Federation. It would look at setting up strategies to deal with patients whose conditions could cause inappropriate and unexpected behaviour.

Mr Hill also urged all South Australians to treat doctors, nurses and healthcare workers with respect. "I want people to think about their actions towards health workers in our public hospitals, medical clinics and surgeries, and remember to treat them respectfully," he said. "Working in hospitals is a vocation which asks for a very high level of commitment and care -- these people are very special and valued. I urge patients, their families and visitors to show our health workers the respect they deserve."

AAP

Woman killed by garbage truck

November 1 2006

A woman has died when run over by a reversing garbage truck west of Brisbane.

The 48-year-old woman was behind the truck when it reversed and hit her about 7.45am (AEST) today on Tower Street, at Eastern Heights in suburban Ipswich.

Police said it was not yet known why the woman was behind the truck. She was declared dead on arrival at Ipswich Hospital. Police are investigating the accident.

AAP

Farmer dies after being caught in a pump

MELBOURNE, October 31 2006

The death of a man on a farm in north-western Victoria has prompted calls for people working on rural properties to take greater care.

WorkSafe said the 77-year-old man died after his clothes became caught in an unguarded shaft on a water pump at a property on Snow Road, at Whorouly, near Wangaratta. Initially, paramedics who attended the scene at 6.30am (AEDT) today thought the man had been killed in a tractor accident. It's thought the man was priming the pump when his clothes got tangled in the machinery.

WorkSafe spokesman Trevor Martin said the man's death reinforced the need for farm equipment to be properly guarded. "Whether it's a farm, factory or supermarket, the dangers, and potential consequences, of unguarded equipment are well-known," Mr Martin said. "Inadequately guarded fast-rotating equipment, such as augers ... have similar risks," he said. "Guarding for farm equipment is readily available, easy to fit and inexpensive."

Mr Martin said people working on properties or hobby farms should be aware of potential hazards and put safeguards in place. "Tragedies like today's are a reminder that, despite the continuing reduction in deaths in the farm sector, constant vigilance is essential," he said.

AAP

Outworkers to be protected under new SA govt code

ADELAIDE, October 30 2006

The South Australian government has moved to stamp out sweatshop working conditions in Adelaide's suburbs by proposing better protection for clothing outworkers.

Acting Industrial Relations Minister John Hill has released for public consultation a new code of practice which would improve the wages and conditions for outworkers. It also would ensure the clothing industry operated in a more transparent fashion, by forcing retailers, suppliers and contractors to keep better records.

"Outworkers are one of the most vulnerable groups in the workforce," Mr Hill said. "These often hardworking and underpaid individuals are not just confined to the sweatshops of distant overseas countries. The truth is they're slaving away in backyard sheds and other obscure locations."

Mr Hill said many outworkers were from non-English speaking backgrounds and were paid as little as \$2 an hour to sew garments. "This is because they often fall through the cracks due to their employment situation being outside the conventional industrial relations framework," he said. "The nature of the clothing industry means that often outworkers are engaged through a long chain of contractors. Those retailers who act honestly and responsibly are undercut by rogue employers who hide behind these complex chains to deny outworkers their proper pay and conditions."

AAP

New Anaphylaxis Guidelines For Queensland Schools

November 3 2006

The State Government has introduced new guidelines to assist Queensland schools in managing students with anaphylaxis, a potentially life-threatening allergic reaction.

Education Minister, Rod Welford, said the Anaphylaxis Guidelines for Queensland Schools provided specific information for school staff on how to care for students diagnosed by a medical practitioner as being anaphylactic.

"Anaphylaxis is a severe and sudden allergic reaction," Mr Welford said. "It is a health condition which is potentially life threatening and always requires an emergency response. It is increasingly common in children and it is important that school staff

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understand the management and treatment of students. The guidelines provide information on the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis, emergency treatment procedures and strategies for reducing the risks.

“There is an action plan that incorporates information and planned responses to an individual student’s anaphylactic reaction. This was developed by the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy.”

Mr Welford said the guidelines also provided information and advice for schools on education and training requirements for staff. “State school principals must ensure a range of school staff are trained in the use of emergency treatments,” he said. “To complement the guidelines a PowerPoint presentation has also been developed for schools.”

Mr Welford said the guidelines followed extensive consultation with peak allergy bodies, government agencies and parents and citizens associations and government. The guidelines and PowerPoint are available from the Education Queensland website at <http://education.qld.gov.au>

Source: Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Women

Code of Practice on Working Hours proves successful

November 2, 2006

WA’s Code of Practice on Working Hours – launched in July – is generating widespread discussion across the State.

WorkSafe WA Commissioner Nina Lyhne said a recent visit to regional areas had resulted in positive feedback on the usefulness of the code. “I have visited several regional areas over the past couple of weeks with the MineSafe Roadshow, as well as conducting a number of information sessions in Perth, and have had many discussions with employers and employees about the code,” Ms Lyhne said. “The feedback I have received so far confirms that the code is seen as a highly practical document, and the risk management guidelines are seen as an excellent aid to structuring working hours in workplaces to improve safety and health.

“Workplaces are realising that they can make changes to their working hours arrangements to improve safety and health – just because certain arrangements have been in place for some time, it doesn’t mean they cannot change. The latest figures on working hours across the country confirmed that WA still has the highest average hours worked per week by full-time employees, and the code is intended to be used to design working hours arrangements that are as safe and healthy as possible. With the help of the code, working hours arrangements can be tailored to any industry or workplace, and it seems that many workplaces will be benefiting from the guidelines contained in the code.”

The Code of Practice on Working Hours is Australia’s first comprehensive code for addressing the occupational safety and health risks associated with a range of working hours issues across all industries. It promotes a holistic approach to identifying the hazards and assessing the risks of extended working hours, and provides guidelines that allow workplaces to gauge the level of risk in their specific workplace so control measures can be put into place.

“I’m very pleased with the good reaction to the code and the positive feedback I have received, particularly in regional areas,” Ms Lyhne said. “I strongly urge all employers to retain a copy of the code and to use the guidelines to assess the unique risks of long working hours in their own workplaces.” Further information on long working hours and copies of the code of practice can be obtained on the website at www.worksafe.wa.gov.au.

Source: DOCEP

Adobe Acrobat V7.08 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.

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