



SAFETY AT WORK BULLETIN

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Three Injured at Royal Adelaide Show

September 2 2006

SafeWork SA says its inspectors looked at a sideshow ride just hours before it broke .. injuring two girls at the Royal Adelaide Show.

The safety authority says the Twin Flip ride had recently been repaired .. and an inspector gave it the green light at lunchtime yesterday. But the ride broke at 7 pm (CST) last night when a carriage came loose and tipped over. Operators then stopped the ride suddenly injuring two teenage girls in the process. The girls were treated for bruising at the scene.

SafeWork SA has issued a prohibition notice on the ride .. closing it down indefinitely.

And in a second show accident stunt performer Lady Cannonball has been taken to hospital with spinal injuries when she missed her target after being fired 35 metres through the air.

SafeWork SA says it's inspected that site but won't be investigating the incident.

They say it was an accident which occurred even though all the proper hazard identification and risk assessment had been done.

Peter Adams from SafeWork SA says the Twin Flip had experienced problems with its hydraulic system about two weeks ago at the Royal Queensland Show although nobody was injured at the time.

He says the owners of the ride had engineers look over it and had an engineer fly in from Italy to investigate the ride's safety and obtained a new part.

Mr Adams says the Italian engineer examined the ride in South Australia between Wednesday and Friday and given it the all clear before it began operating for the public again yesterday afternoon.

A spokeswoman for the Royal Queensland Show says she's unaware the ride had any problems while it was at their show.

AAP

In a statement SafeWork clarified some of the South Australian media reports on the event.

"SafeWork SA wishes to clarify its position on self-employed workers in South Australia In the light of media reporting of the Human Cannonball Incident at the Royal Adelaide Show.

- Workplace incidents involving self-employed people are investigated by SafeWork SA in order to ascertain their cause.
- A self employed person such as a contractor or freelancer, just like an employer, has responsibilities under the Occupational Health Safety and Welfare Act 9986, to ensure the safety of persons at work.
- However the extent of those respncsblbltles is more limited in situations where they are working alone, in their own business, on their own premises or where their work does net present a risk to others.
- The Human Cannonball is effectively a stunt event involving a single individual In a public performance.The performance ls based on a planned risk

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management process which is unique to this type of activity, and where the risks are carried by the individual alone,

- It is SafeWork SA's understanding that Ms. Stephanie Smith is engaged by the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society of South Australia under arrangements in which she takes responsibility for her own safety in accordance with risk management principles used regularly by this performer.

In the one of the Human Cannonball incident, SafeWork SA inspectors attended the scene after the incident on Friday and ascertained details,

SafeWork SA has established that the operator has given attention to a process to identify hazards, manage associated risks and that all equipment was functioning properly, and that there was no danger to the general public.

However Safe Work SA inspectors will be making enquiries of the performer, Ms. Smith when she is well enough, to determine what went wrong and why.

Meanwhile the agency will also concentrate its efforts on investigating the malfunction of the "Twin Flip" ride on Friday evening. The ride remains closed under a Prohibition Notice, and investigations continue.

Source: SafeWork SA

BHP fined over worker's death

ADELAIDE, September 1 2006

BHP Billiton has been fined \$153,000 over the death of a worker at its Roxby Downs uranium mine in South Australia last year.

It was also ordered to pay \$20,000 in compensation to the family of 34-year-old miner Karl Eibl.

The company had earlier pleaded guilty in the Industrial Court to three counts of failing to provide a safe working environment in relation to the death of Mr Eibl in July, 2005.

Mr Eibl died when fellow workers drilled into explosives he had set in one tunnel of the mine, run by BHP subsidiary WMC Resources, about 570 km north-west of Adelaide.

Industrial Magistrate Michael Ardlie said BHP's offending was serious, but it was not a case of the defendant deliberately disregarding safety procedures.

Outside the South Australian Industrial Court in Adelaide, Mr Eibl's father, Bob, said the penalty was grossly inadequate and the equivalent of the price of a cup of coffee to the multi-national.

But a BHP spokesman said the company had no control over the penalties that were available or the penalties the court imposed.

The company had faced a maximum fine of \$300,000.

AAP

Govt to legislate to be able to remove violent students

SYDNEY, August 29 2006

The NSW government will legislate to give itself the power to remove violent students from school.

Education Minister Carmel Tebbutt will today announce plans to amend the Education Act to give Director-General Andrew Cappie-Wood the power to deal with "severely disruptive or violent" students, The Daily Telegraph reports today.

Under the changes, Mr Cappie-Wood will have the right to send violent students who threaten the safety of students or teachers directly to a behaviour school.

Currently, violent students are not removed without agreement between parents and the school.

The changes were signed off by cabinet last week and legislation is expected to be introduced before the end of the year.

"Violence in schools is rare but one case is one too many and we need to do everything possible to protect our students and teachers," Mrs Tebbutt told the newspaper.

"We have redoubled our efforts to tackle disruptive behaviour among a small but persistent minority." AAP

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Four plead guilty to Xmas party workplace charges MELBOURNE, August 30 2006

Christmas party high jinks ended with a carpentry worker being badly burned after a colleague sprayed his bare torso with paint thinner, a court has been told.

Four employees of Spence Carpentry and Joinery, at Colac, south-west of Melbourne were playing around with chemicals at their staff party last December when two of the men were injured.

One of the workers, Dale Angus, suffered serious burns when a colleague sprayed him with paint thinner, which caught fire as a result of the flame from a lit spray-can.

Mr Angus was taken to Melbourne's The Alfred hospital where he was put in an induced coma for 12 days.

His co-worker John Robb was treated for burns to his hand.

Angus and Robb, together with Simon Spence and Joshua McDonald, pleaded guilty to charges under the 2004 Occupational Health and Safety Act at Colac Magistrates' Court.

On Monday, the four men were placed on a 12-month good behaviour bond and ordered to take a one-day health and safety course as well as pay court costs.

The incident was a reminder to all workers that they shared responsibility for workplace safety, WorkSafe Victoria executive director John Merritt said.

"Everyone has a role to play in making sure that no one is exposed to risk while at their workplace. That extends to things like work related functions.

"We all like to have a good time and while there may be no intent to hurt someone, the potential for a disastrous outcome is high," Mr Merritt said.

AAP

Toxic Dust Report

One of the SIA's Fellows has asked that members be reminded of the following:

The Community Affairs Reference Committee Senate Committee final report on their "Inquiry into Workplace Exposure to Toxic dust" has been published in May 2006.

Copies are now available (free) by contacting communityaffairs@aph.ov.au or by phoning Canberra (02) 6277 3515

New policy allows passengers to exit trains in emergencies

SYDNEY, August 29 2006

Train carriages throughout Sydney will be upgraded over the next four years to allow passengers to escape them in an emergency.

NSW Transport Minister John Watkins today announced a partial containment policy to meet the recommendations of the inquiry into the January 2003 Waterfall train disaster in which seven people died.

Under the previous policy, commuters could not be released from train carriages unless the driver or guard unlocked the doors.

The new directive will result in the installation of new door release mechanisms for the use of passengers in 1,200 CityRail carriages.

"The new policy does allow for passenger-initiated escape but only when the train is stationary," Mr Watkins said in a statement today.

An alarm will warn the train's crew when the exterior door release is activated.

All carriages on the CityRail network with a life expectancy beyond 2011 will be upgraded to meet the new policy over the next four years, Mr Watkins said.

Opposition transport spokesman Barry O'Farrell said train carriages must be upgraded as soon as possible to enable passengers to escape during an emergency.

"While Labor claims safety is its top priority on the rail network, too often safety improvements are delayed," Mr O'Farrell said in a statement. "Even under this latest Labor safety timetable, commuters won't have the vital ability to free themselves from carriages until at least 2010."

AAP

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Hospital mistakes the result of over worked staff:AMA

SYDNEY, August 30 2006

Hospital mistakes which sometimes end in death are the result of over-worked medical staff, Australian Medical Association (AMA) president Dr Mukesh Haikerwal says.

A report in The Bulletin magazine today said 18,000 Australians die each year as a result of medical mistakes made during their stay in hospitals.

However, Dr Haikerwal said the statistics reported are 11 years old and do not reflect the current situation.

“(Now) we do many more things to many more patients - often who are sicker, often who are older, often who have many other medical conditions,” Dr Haikerwal told the Seven Network this morning. “Yes there are mistakes in the hospitals ... but the world has changed in 11 years.”

Dr Haikerwal said that while one mistake was one mistake too many, it was important to support the medical and nursing staff who are “striving for excellence and quality” under difficult conditions. “You don’t allow truck drivers to drive long hours anymore, airline pilots have rest times - so too should medical and nursing staff;” he said.

AAP

Guidance on the Principles of Safe Design for Work

August 23 2006

According to the ASCC website, the Australian Safety and Compensation Council (ASCC) has developed a guidance document to help employers and individuals understand the principles of Safe Design for Work, and how these might be implemented in a workplace.

The Guidance on the Principles of Safe Design for Work can be downloaded at <http://www.ascc.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/37B6F203-61BA-484F-8307-C38F35726AF9/0/Safedesignforwork.pdf>

Penalty highlights risks to young workers

Adelaide, 29 August 2006

The need to protect young workers, and properly train them in safe working procedures has been highlighted in the South Australian Industrial Relations Court today, in a prosecution brought by SafeWork SA.

The court heard how on 29 January last year, an 18 year old man just two months on the job at a Magill salvage yard, slipped and fell through an opening while working on top of a mesh recycling cage.

His left armpit was badly cut, and he suffered bruising and abrasions to his knees.

The firm, Dakatasi Pty Ltd (trading as Magill Recycling & Salvage) pleaded guilty to breaching the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act 1986, in failing to ensure that its employee was safe from injury, whilst at work.

After hearing submissions today, Industrial Magistrate Michael Ardlie convicted and fined the company \$14,875.

“Time and time again, our experience and research shows that young workers new to the job, face the greatest risk of workplace injury,” says SafeWork SA’s Acting Director of Field and Frontline Services, Neill Baker.

“It is imperative that new recruits are given the most thorough induction and safety training possible on the job. Both the company and this young man are very lucky that the situation here was not any worse,” Mr. Baker says.

SafeWork SA

Removalist fatally crushed between two reversing trucks

SYDNEY, August 31 2006

A Sydney removalist has been crushed to death between two reversing trucks.

The 19-year-old’s body was found by colleagues at a business on Victoria Road in inner-western Marrickville about 8.30am (AEST) today, police said.

The man had been working on one of the two removalist trucks. The vehicles had been parked, with their backs facing each other. Police said the truck drivers reversed at the same time.

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The teenaged removalist was pronounced dead at the scene by ambulance officers.

WorkCover is investigating the incident. A report will be prepared for the coroner.

AAP

Firm fined over workplace amputation

Adelaide, 1 September 2006

A Queensland based-company has been fined over a workplace accident two years ago, in which an employee had two fingers amputated.

At the end of a prosecution brought by SafeWork SA, today in the SA Industrial Relations Court, Orrcon Operations Pty Ltd, was fined \$17,600 after pleading guilty to a breach of Section 19(1) of the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare 1986, in failing to ensure its employee was safe from injury and risks to health, whilst at work.

The court heard that at the company's O'Sullivan Beach factory on 6 October 2004, the 34 year old employee and a supervisor were pressing sharpening stones against the blades of a slitting machine, whilst it was running.

Contact with the blade instantly amputated the employee's right index finger at the top knuckle and severed his middle finger, which was later reattached.

In his judgement today: Industrial Magistrate Richard Hardy said, I think that it was quite possible that a much more serious injury could have occurred.....the danger posed was not immediately apparent but still substantial and ought to have been addressed by the defendant...There was clearly little thought given to this process in terms of instruction, safety and training."

SafeWork SA says the case is the latest of several this week to highlight the extent of hand injuries suffered by workers through poorly-guarded machinery, and a lack of proper hazard identification and risk assessment.

Source: SafeWork SA

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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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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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