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National Safe Work Australia Awards Winners Announced

28 April 2009

Outstanding workplace safety initiatives developed in Australia have been recognised at the 2008 national Safe Work Australia Awards, presented in Canberra last night.

Thirty-seven finalists from a broad range of industries and organisations competed in five categories, ranging from the best workplace health and safety management system to the best individual contribution to workplace health and safety

Group Manager of Safe Work Australia, Mr Rex Hoy (pictured below), said the five Awards recipients demonstrated an impressive commitment to workplace health and safety.

"The Safe Work Australia Awards are an opportunity to showcase the organisations and industries in Australia that are making workplace safety a key priority in their every day operations.

"The 2008 Awards winners and finalists have developed innovative solutions to combat the dangers of workplace injury and should be commended on their efforts," Mr Hoy said.

Finalists in each of the five Awards categories were winners of occupational health and safety (OHS) awards in their state or territory. An independent judging panel considered each finalist's award submission before deciding on the final winners.

Mr Hoy said the Awards focus attention on one of the most important aspects of



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OHS Networking Breakfast for Women

On the 12th of May 2009, the Victoria Division of the Safety Institute of Australia will conduct its second OHS networking breakfast for women.

This series of events was started by Sue Bottrell in 2008 as a way of encouraging female members of the SIA, and other women in the OHS profession, to think laterally and creatively about health and safety.

The event in 2008 was a sold out in a matter of days. This year we have secured a bigger and better venue on the 89th Floor of Eureka Tower.

This year's speakers include:

Sue Pennicuik – Former OHS Coordinator ACTU, Victorian Greens spokesperson for Industrial Relations

Topic: "OHS – Keeping it on the Agenda"

Click [Here](#) to view Sue Pennicuik's biography

Edie Hester – Communication Coach

Topic: "What if you could learn to let go?... Unpacking the skill of professional detachment"

Click [Here](#) to view Edie Hester's biography

This event is also a great opportunity for women in the profession to network with their peers whilst experiencing a delightful breakfast and magnificent views of the Melbourne CBD. At a cost of only \$50 for members and \$60 for Non Members book now to avoid disappointment.

Participants will go into the draw to win fantastic prizes from our Sponsor Simple OHS Solutions.

John Merritt has already shown his support for this event by agreeing to send a group of WorkSafe inspectors. Julie Honore will be participating with a team from Safesearch. WorkSafe Victoria and Safesearch are both proud SIA Corporate Partners.

To register to attend the 2nd OHS Networking Breakfast for Women on the 12th of May go to: http://www.sia.org.au/surveys/survey.asp?ContainerID=women_s_ohs_professional_network_12th_may



SIA NEWS

Sydney Safety Conference – Call for Papers

27-29 October 2009, Sydney Showground, Sydney Olympic Park.

The Sydney Safety Conference attracts health & safety personnel from a wide range of industries. The Conference Committee is currently working on the Speaker Program and is calling for papers from industry leaders who wish to present a session on relevant issues/objectives. Papers can take the form of case studies, research, workshops, time for presentation can vary from 20 to 45 minutes. For further information please go to <http://www.sia.org.au/>

SIA EVENTS

For further information on the following upcoming SIA Events please go to <http://www.sia.org.au/calendar>

SIAWA Regional Series: Emergency Management

Wed 6 May 2009, Lord Forrest Hotel, 20 Symmons Street, Bunbury

SIA WA Safety Law - Breakfast Series 8 May 2009

Fri 8 May 2009, Matilda Bay Restaurant, Hackett Drive, Crawley

SIA VIC Women in Health and Safety Network Breakfast- BOOK NOW

Tue 12 May 2009, Eureka Tower Level 89 7 Riverside Quay, Southbank

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employment for everyone – safety in the workplace.

“More than 135 000 Australians are seriously injured at work every year and more than 260 die as a result of work-related injuries. Many more die as a result of work-related disease.

“The tragedy is work-related injury, illness and death can be prevented through the adoption of safer work practices,” Mr Hoy said.

The national Safe Work Australia Awards is the first event hosted by Safe Work Australia. SafeWorkAustralia is driving the development of national OHS and workers’ compensation policy in Australia.

NATIONAL SAFE WORK AUSTRALIA AWARDS 2008 WINNERS

Category 1

Best Workplace Health and Safety Management System

ETSA Utilities, South Australia

Category 2

Best Solution to an Identified Workplace Health and Safety Issue

The Dorsal Boutique Hotel, New South Wales

Category 3

Best Workplace Health and Safety Practices in Small Business

WP Projects, New South Wales

Category 4

Public Sector Leadership Award for Injury Prevention and Management

Eraring Energy, New South Wales

Category 5

Best Individual Contribution to Workplace Health and Safety

Viki Coad, South Australia

Source: Safe Work Australia

Forestry - Preventing Wood Chipper Disc Failures

21 April 2009

This is a solution for preventing wood chipper disc failures. It is available for download at <http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/WorkSafe/Home/Forms+and+Publications/Health+and+Safety+Solution/Forestry+-+Preventing+wood+chipper+disc+failures>

Source: WorkSafe Victoria

National Campaign To Reduce Aggression-related Injuries In Hospitals

April 22, 2009

Workplace safety authorities across Australia are joining forces in an effort to reduce work-related injuries in hospitals related to aggression.

WorkSafe WA Commissioner Nina Lyhne said today that the national campaign aimed to reduce injury rates that resulted from aggression in emergency departments, other clinical areas and other hospital-based services.

The three-month national campaign will look at aggression management systems and examine how well existing controls are working.

Ms Lyhne said work-related injuries in hospitals arising from aggression were a continuing area of concern.

“There are close to eleven injuries each month to workers in WA hospitals related to aggression,” Ms Lyhne said.

“In 2006/07 there were 80 injuries of this type in WA, and more than quarter of them were serious enough to result in the workers involved having to take more than 60 days off work.

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Job Ads

Please note that the job advertisements can be viewed via the SIA website:

WA

Safesearch - Safety & Health Professional (OSH)-Contracts

More information on this job is available at <https://www.sia.org.au/services/employment/jobs/jobads-wa>

VIC

Jeremy Trotman and Associates Pty Ltd (JTA)

Occupational Hygiene Consultant & Hazardous Building Materials Consultant

More information on this job is available at <http://www.sia.org.au/services/employment/jobs/jobads-vic>

SIA - SUPPORTED EVENTS

HFESA Workshop

Ms Stroma Lawson, the HFESA National Professional Development Officer has organised a workshop titled "CHALLENGES FOR ARCHITECTS & ERGONOMISTS IN DESIGNING THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT OF THE FUTURE" which will be held in Perth on 7 May 2009, from 1pm – 4.30pm.

SIA members can earn ½ a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) point by attending this half-day seminar.

For detailed information visit http://sia.org.au/calendar/event.asp?ContentID=hfesa_challenges_architects_07_may_2009

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"The national figures are also quite alarming, showing that there were 2120 worker's compensation claims for work-related assaults during 2005/06.

"A large number of these assaults took place in hospitals – in fact, almost nine per cent of assault claims came from hospitals.

"The objective of this national campaign is to identify the risks associated with aggression in hospitals and to assist employers to find solutions that will lessen the risk of injury."

The campaign will run from this month until June, with around 160 hospitals being visited across Australia. The industry will be given feedback on the results of the campaign.

Approximately 30 hospitals will be visited in metropolitan and regional areas of WA.

All inspections across Australia will be conducted with the aid of one checklist to ensure consistency.

Some of the areas that will be looked at are:

- Aggression management policies;
- Training of employees in how to deal with aggression; and
- Workplace design issues.

Although the campaign's primary objective is to provide employers with information on how to comply with the laws, inspectors will take enforcement action if they find breaches.

Ms Lyhne said that national campaigns were an important means of ensuring national consistency in workplace safety and health.

"These campaigns are aimed at protecting workers by ensuring employers are aware of their responsibility under the laws to minimise the risk of injury," she said.

"They are also excellent examples of cooperation between the States.

"In the end, everybody gains from a higher level of awareness of workplace hazards and how to avoid injuries, particularly those related to aggression.

"Western Australia has a comprehensive Code of Practice on Violence, Aggression and Bullying at Work, and I encourage all workplaces that may have concerns about these hazards to have a copy of the code readily available at the workplace."

Copies of the Code of Practice on Violence, Aggression and Bullying at Work can be purchased for \$3.30 per copy or downloaded at no charge from the website

www.worksafe.wa.gov.au.

Source: WorkSafe WA

Catholic Church Fined Over Camping Injury

22 April 2009

A camping mishap, which left a school student severely burned, has resulted in the school's operator being fined in SA Industrial Relations Court today.

The Catholic Diocese of Port Pirie was fined \$19,125 after pleading guilty to breaching section 22(2) of the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act 1986 for failing to take reasonable care to avoid harm to people through an act or omission at work.

The Diocese was prosecuted in its role as the operator of Caritas College based in Port Augusta.

SafeWork SA prosecuted over an incident, which occurred on a school camp near Wilpena Pound in August 2004. At the time, a 15 year old Year 10 student suffered burns to his hands, legs, face and left ear when gas released from a canister ignited.

The student was helping another to assemble her camp stove, when the canister vented

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Dust Explosions Seminar - NSW

The SIA is supporting the Dust Explosions 2009 conference, which will be conducted by Informa, at the Penrith Panthers, Penrith NSW from 10-11 June 2009 inclusive.

This conference is supported by the SIA. As such, SIA members will be eligible to receive a 10% discount on registering, as well as receive 1 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) point per day of the conference.

More information is available at <http://www.informa.com.au/dustexplosions>

Workcover Victoria Prosecution Results Summaries

Paul & Barbara Kavanagh Pty. Ltd.
Summary: Failure to provide a safe system of work; Explosion

<http://www1.worksafe.vic.gov.au/vwa/vwa097-002.nsf/content/159942-2>

Bwarca Nominees Pty Ltd trading as Pugg Mahones Irish Pub

Summary: Non complied improvement notice

<http://www1.worksafe.vic.gov.au/vwa/vwa097-002.nsf/content/LSID%20160251>

Midfield Co-Products Pty Ltd

Summary: Failure to provide a safe system of work; Explosion

<http://www1.worksafe.vic.gov.au/vwa/vwa097-002.nsf/content/159942-1>

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gas as it was being installed into the stove apparatus for use. The male student was engulfed in a ball of flame when the gas ultimately ignited.

After investigating the circumstances, SafeWork SA found that:

- students were not trained or supervised in safely assembling the camp stoves
- supervisors were not aware of let alone trained in what aspects they had to supervise
- the general risk assessment was inadequate.

The school has since upgraded its safety procedures for camps, and while it pleaded guilty, Industrial Magistrate Richard Hardy expressed the opinion that the matter could have and should have been resolved sooner had the defendant not sought adjournments to await the result of an appeal in another case. (i.e. Diemould/Santos)

Magistrate Hardy said that while the student has largely recovered from the physical effects of his burns, he has suffered considerable psychological trauma and restrictions to his lifestyle, and that the incident was of concern "because of the mix of children, gas and fire."

SafeWork SA said the identification and assessment of hazards and risks on adventure activities cannot be half-hearted, especially where the safety of children is concerned.

"This case proves that nothing should ever be taken for granted, as it apparently had been on a camp that had previously been run successfully for 20 years.

"The failure to account for the fire hazards posed by the gas canisters could well have had far more serious consequences in this case," said Acting Executive Director, Juanita Lovatt.

Source: SafeWork SA

Fine Over Saw Injury

April 22, 2009

An Adelaide flooring business was fined \$14,400 last Friday after an employee cut his hand on a circular saw.

Parquetry Flooring Company Pty Ltd had already pleaded guilty to one count of breaching section 19(1) of the of the Occupational Health Safety and Welfare Act 1986, admitting that it failed to provide a safe system of work and maintain plant in a safe condition.

In June 2006, a male employee was using the saw to cut timber at a Marden residence. The machine was inadequately guarded and did not possess an accessible emergency stop device. SafeWork SA also alleged that training and any safety analysis in the use of the machine were both insufficient.

In the process of cutting, the timber caught and kicked his left hand onto the blade, severely lacerating tendons, nerves and ligaments of two fingers.

It's expected the worker will make a full recovery, while the company has since replaced the saw and upgraded its safety procedures.

Source: SafeWork SA

Peel Construction Safety Inspection Program Reveals Continuing Problems With Falls And Electricity

April 22, 2009

A WorkSafe WA targeted inspection program of construction sites in the Peel region of WA has revealed some areas of concern, but also some good standards of compliance.

Construction inspectors from Perth conducted 23 investigations in the area from Rockingham to Pinjarra over the first two weeks of this month.

They visited demolition sites, tilt-up construction projects, general construction and commercial construction sites.

Inspectors issued 21 improvement notices and five prohibition notices, along with verbal directions to inform the industry in the Peel region of their obligations under the Occupational Safety and Health Act and Regulations.

WorkSafe WA Commissioner Nina Lyhne said today that feedback on the levels of compliance with workplace safety and health requirements given by WorkSafe inspectors was mostly positive, but with some concerns.

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Australian Workplace Health Initiatives Survey 2009

Organisations throughout Australia are invited to participate in a national survey of workplace health initiatives as part of a Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments' review of workplace-based initiatives to support improved worker health.

The survey aims to determine the nature and extent of workplace health promotion initiatives across small, medium and large organisations, and across a wide range of industries. It also seeks information about current attitudes towards workplace health initiatives, and about barriers and enablers to implementation to assist in informing future efforts in this important area.

The survey is being conducted by The University of Melbourne (ABN: 84 002 705 224) and is supported by the Safety Institute of Australia Inc. Responses are sought from all organisations across Australia, including those who are and are not currently conducting workplace health initiatives.

The survey should be completed by the person responsible for the implementation of health and wellbeing initiatives or for human resources management within the organisation.

Please contribute confidentially to this research by completing an online survey available at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=yKfRqjIG3HygOlgBcdJag_3d_3d

The survey can also be downloaded from the site and completed in hard copy. Free post information can be obtained on the website.

For more information go to http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=yKfRqjIG3HygOlgBcdJag_3d_3d or contact Nicola Reavley on 03 8344 5237 or 8344 3147 awhis-info@unimelb.edu.au

Survey contributions close on Thursday 7th May

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"Despite the satisfactory performance of the construction industry in Peel, there were a couple of areas of concern, specifically with electrical safety and falls from height," Ms Lynhe said.

"These areas of concern seem to be quite persistent, and I'm not sure that the messages on electrical safety and prevention of falls are getting through as well as they could be.

"After a similar campaign a couple of years ago, inspectors reported that it had been difficult to get portable electrical equipment tested and tagged because local electrical contractors were not providing this service.

"But the situation has changed since then, and testing and tagging of electrical equipment can now be undertaken by a suitably trained competent person using a portable appliance tester.

"Despite the fact that an improvement was noted in testing and tagging, concerns remain about electrical safety, especially with regard to residual current devices (RCDs) on construction sites.

"The other continuing area of concern we have is the prevention of falls from height – this was one of the most common hazards found on construction sites in the Peel region.

"It's really disappointing to see a lack of fall protection in some workplaces because falls are readily preventable and it need not be difficult or costly to ensure that suitable barriers or fall arrest systems are organised before a tragedy can occur.

"Falls are one of the most significant causes of workplace death in the construction industry, and five Western Australian workers have died in less than two years as a result of falls. A further 1260 are injured each year, many seriously and permanently.

"It is absolutely crucial that action is taken on every risk in the workplace and that safe work practices are in place on every construction site in the State.

"Overall, a positive attitude to workplace safety was evident in the Peel region, and also a proactive approach to workplace safety and health by many involved in the industry there."

Source: WorkSafe WA

Code of Practice for Working Hours - Call for Submissions

SafeWork SA's website has the following information:

Interested organisations, groups and individuals are invited to make a submission on the Proposed Approved Code of Practice for Working Hours in South Australia.

The discussion paper, produced specifically to highlight issues that need to be considered when making a submission, looks at the following:

- why address fatigue in the workplace
- a draft model - the Western Australian Code of Practice on Working Hours 2006
- regulation of fatigue in other states
- background to the proposal and next steps.

Submissions via mail or email should be addressed to:

Proposed Approved Code of Practice for Working Hours
GPO Box 465
Adelaide SA 5001

email ward.justin2@dpc.sa.gov.au

Closing date for submissions: Tuesday, 30 June 2009

More information is available at http://www.saferwork.com/show_page.jsp?id=6660

Source: SafeWorkSA

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Letters to the Editor

If you have any safety issues to discuss, or concerns about SafetyWeek itself, please consider communicating with the Editor through natadmin@sia.org.au

SafetyWeek
Issue 190, 27 April 2009
ISSN 1834-8297

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NSW Seeks To Fine Overcharging Lawyers

April 16, 2009

Law firms that overcharge and exploit their clients could face financial penalties as part of a package of options to reform the legal profession, said NSW Attorney General John Hatzistergos.

Mr Hatzistergos will present the options to the Standing Committee of Attorneys General (SCAG) in Canberra today.

“The overwhelming majority of the legal profession act with integrity,” said Mr Hatzistergos. “However, there have been allegations of a number of lawyers grossly overcharging clients, particularly those with limited English-language skills.”

“The NSW Government has developed a package of options that seek to ensure greater transparency and accountability in the area of legal fees.”

The following options will be presented for consideration:

- Strengthening the existing provision that a written disclosure to a client may be in a language other than English if the client is more familiar with that language;
- Requiring law practices to provide periodic, itemised bills to clients in personal injury matters;
- Prohibiting law practices from seeking clients' authorities to deduct legal costs from a settlement amount without having first informed the client of the settlement amount and issued the client with a bill (which must be itemised in personal injury matters);
- Providing that a bill or covering letter must be signed by a principal of a law practice (rather than a legal practitioner or other person); and
- Prohibiting law practices from charging excessive costs in a legal matter, and providing a financial penalty for breach of this provision without a reasonable excuse.

Mr Hatzistergos said these options could send a strong message to law firms that overcharging vulnerable clients is unacceptable.

“The risk of having an adverse finding against a law practice would make its principals careful to ensure their firm is compliant with the law.”

Mr Hatzistergos said he would ask Attorneys General at SCAG to consider the NSW options and refer them to a national working party which would consult stakeholders in home states and territories.

COAG is undertaking a wider review of national model laws on legal profession regulation.

Source: NSW Attorney General

ADVERTISING

A limited amount of advertising has been approved by the Safety Institute of Australia.

If you want to advertise to over 3,000 safety professionals in Australia, please contact the SIA Secretariat through natadmin@sia.org.au

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