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Throughout, the acronyms WHS’ stands for work health and safety and PCBU’ stands for person conducting a business or undertaking.
Welcome to the September edition of Workplace Issues.

I am pleased to take on ministerial responsibility for workplace safety in Tasmania. The Tasmanian Government is committed to improving the health, safety and wellbeing of all Tasmanian workers. We want to see fewer injuries, which is good for families and communities as well as better for business productivity and the overall economy of our State.

The 2019 WorkSafe Month and Expo are initiatives that can help us achieve these outcomes. Events this year include the popular wellness walk and the biennial Expo, this time being hosted in Launceston.

New to the program this year is the PTSD: Mental Health Matters Conference. Aimed at medical practitioners and specialists, injury management professionals, at-risk workers and employers, this conference supports the Tasmanian Government’s nation-leading work to legislate a presumptive provision that a post-traumatic stress disorder diagnosis is work-related.

After WorkSafe’s successful ‘Safety is Everything’ campaign, the Month continues to raise awareness of mental health in the workplace by hosting Oz Help’s Mental Health First Aid course and Positive Work Cultures workshops. These events provide the practical tools to create mentally healthy workplaces and support co-workers who may be struggling. With the number of mental health conditions increasing in our workplaces, the focus of these events is vital.

This is just the tip of the iceberg for this year’s range of offerings, and you’ll find more details and the program of events within this magazine. It’s not too late to register for you or your workers to attend these events, and I encourage you to participate.

Together, we can work towards not just safer and healthier workplaces, but a better Tasmania for all of us.

Update: PTSD laws now in force

Access to workers compensation has become more straightforward for Tasmanian Government workers and volunteer first responders suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Tasmania is the first Australian state to legislate a presumptive provision that a PTSD diagnosis is work-related. Where presumption applies, it will be assumed that the injury is work-related, unless evidence is presented by the employer to establish that the cause of the injury was not work-related.

The presumption has applied in practice since 30 October last year, when Tasmanian Government agencies, Government Business Enterprises and State-Owned Companies were instructed to automatically accept diagnosed claims for PTSD compensation as work-related.

These nation-leading changes apply to all Tasmanian Government workers, and particularly benefit Tasmania’s hardworking paramedics, police officers, firefighters, prison guards and other emergency services workers who keep our community safe in sometimes traumatic and trying circumstances.

The Hodgman Liberal Government is paving the way to ensuring there is proper recognition of this debilitating mental condition.
The Quad Bike Safety Rebate Scheme is available to Tasmanian farmers to improve safety on quad bikes. The Tasmanian Government is encouraging relevant workplaces to take part in the rebate scheme to help reduce quad bike injuries and deaths.

Rebates available

Under the scheme, a cash-back rebate of up to 50% of the purchase price (to a maximum of $500) for an approved operator/rollover/crush protection device is available, with a total of $1,000 available for each eligible farm workplace.

Rebates are available for operator/rollover/crush protection devices purchased from 1 July 2019. However, eligible farmers who purchase a device from 23 May 2019, and can provide valid proof of purchase, may also apply for the rebate from 1 July 2019.

Approved devices

An operator/rollover/crush protection device is an engineered attachment that is fitted to a quad bike. It is designed to help protect riders from crush-related injuries in the event of a rollover.

The device approved for this rebate scheme must have been designed and manufactured in accordance with approved engineering standards and independently tested to be eligible for the rebate.

There are currently two devices that meet this criteria and are eligible for the rebate:

- ATV Lifeguard: www.atvlifeguards.com / sales@atvlifeguards.com
- Quadbar™: www.quadbar.com / info@quadbar.com.au

The rebate does not cover installation.

Other models

The rebate will be available for any new operator/rollover/crush protection device that becomes available if it can be demonstrated that the product has been suitably designed and manufactured in accordance with appropriate engineering principles and that the product has been independently tested.

Eligibility

The rebate is available to workplaces that:

- have farming as their main source of income
- operate a business in Tasmania
- have no more than 20 full-time employees
- own a quad bike for work purposes.

Farmers who are owner-operators with no employees are also eligible to apply.

Definition of ‘farming’

A ‘farmer’ is a primary producer, as defined by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). According to the ATO, a primary producer is an individual, partnership, trust or company operating a primary production business. This rebate applies to primary producers who operate a business of animal or plant cultivation. Animal and plant cultivation includes:

- maintaining animals for the purpose of selling them or their bodily produce
- manufacturing dairy produce from raw material that you produced
- cultivating or propagating plants, fungi or their products or parts (including seeds, spores, bulbs and similar things) in any physical environment.

How to claim the rebate

Rebates for operator/rollover/crush protection devices will be available to claim from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 or until funds run out, whichever occurs first.

Rebates will be allocated on a first-in, first-served basis to eligible applicants who have submitted completed applications.

Can a business apply for more than one rebate if the business supports several families?

Eligible farm workplaces are able to apply for rebates up to the $1,000 maximum.

Can I use the rebate for purchases made before 1 July 2019?

You can apply for the rebate from 1 July 2019. Purchases of operator/rollover/crush protection devices made from 23 May 2019 may be eligible for a rebate. Valid proof of purchase must be provided. Purchases made before 23 May 2019 will not be eligible.
What is excluded from the rebate scheme

The rebate scheme will not cover:
• purchase of second-hand items
• the design or manufacturing of new items, including items that you have designed and manufactured to your specifications
• owner-built items*
• purchase of raw materials
• service repairs or maintenance
• installation
• products or equipment used for domestic, recreational or social activities.

*The rebate is only available for operator/rollover/crush protection devices that have been designed and manufactured in accordance with approved engineering standards. Any new design will need to be signed off by a competent and suitably qualified person, such as an engineer, and independently tested. Anyone seeking to build their own device takes on the responsibility of the designer and manufacturer, and both have duties under the Work Health and Safety Act 2012.

Will fitting a device void my warranty or affect my insurance?

An operator/rollover/crush protection device is an accessory for a quad bike that needs to be fitted in accordance with its manufacturer’s instructions.

Australian consumer law applies to the purchase of quad bikes and operator/rollover/crush protection devices, so if you buy something that isn’t right, you have consumer rights.

If you have any concerns in relation to insurance, seek advice from your insurer.

How to apply for the rebate

You can apply for the rebate online, by email or post.

Details and an application form are available at www.farmpoint.tas.gov.au or www.worksafe.tas.gov.au or call 1300 366 322 during business hours.

You will need to include proof of purchase with your application (for example, tax invoices and receipts). Your proof of purchase must include the business name, address, ABN, payment date, description and cost of the operator/rollover/crush protection for which the rebate is being claimed.

You will be advised in writing if your application does not comply with the eligibility criteria. You will have an opportunity to address any further requirements within 21 days of the notification, subject to fund availability.

Approved Devices

There are currently two devices which are eligible for the rebate:

✔ ATV Lifeguard
  www.atvlifeguards.com
  Sales@atvlifeguards.com

✔ Quadbar™
  www.quadbar.com
  info@quadbar.com.au

See www.worksafe.tas.gov.au for more information
A quad bike can be useful equipment on a farm, but it can have serious safety risks when used incorrectly.

Every year, quad bikes are among the leading causes of death and serious injury on Tasmanian farms.

The risks to your health and safety

Many deaths are due to rollovers, where riders die from asphyxiation, crush and head injuries.

Quad bikes can roll over in any direction — to the front, side or back — and rollovers can happen even at low speeds. The risk of a rollover increases if you’re travelling across uneven ground or slopes, at high speed, towing an attachment or carrying a heavy or unstable load.

Risks of a serious incident are also increased when operators:
• are inexperienced
• carry passengers
• do not have the physical strength to ride actively
• are under the influence of alcohol or drugs
• are not wearing suitable personal protective equipment such as a helmet.

Before you ride

• Ensure you have received the necessary information, training and instruction about the safe use of quad bikes.
• Decide if a quad bike is the right vehicle for the activity. Would a ute, tractor, motorbike or side-by-side be safer for the task and terrain?
• Maintain the quad bike so it’s in a safe condition.
• Read the operator manual. Follow the manufacturer’s safety warnings and recommended use of the vehicle.
• Tell someone where you plan to go and when you expect to return.

Ride safely — don’t take unnecessary risks

• Don’t carry passengers on quad bikes.
• Avoid riding on uneven terrain or steep slopes. Watch out for ground affected by rain or flooding.
• Ride on tracks and paths that you know, and beware of obstacles.
• Carry a mobile phone or radio device to use in case of an emergency.
• Never ride under the influence of alcohol/drugs.
• Only carry the accessories and attachments you need. These affect the weight and stability of your quad bike; so leave them behind if you don’t need them.
• Take care when carrying liquid loads as they can slosh about when turning corners or crossing slopes, and make the quad bike unstable.

Get training

• Training is essential to help reduce the risk of serious injury and death.
• No one should use a quad bike within a workplace without first receiving training and then having ongoing supervision to ensure they are following safe work procedures.

Use the right safety gear

• Always wear a properly fitting helmet - it’s the best protection against a head injury.
• Wear protective clothing and gear such as goggles, long sleeves, long pants, boots and gloves/hand protection.
• Fit a crush protection device to protect you in the event of a rollover.

Quad bikes and children

• Children are at greater risk of serious injury and death while operating quads. Youth size quad bikes pose a significant risk of death.
• Never let children ride quad bikes that are designed for adults, not even as passengers.
• Do not let children under 6 years of age ride any quad bike. Children under 16 years of age should not ride adult-size quad bikes.
• Supervise children at all times near any quad bike activity.
• Remove the keys from the quad bike when not in use.

Find more information at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au by searching for ‘quad bikes’, where you’ll find our fact sheet ‘Quad bike safety’. 
This July, a series of free farm safety sessions were held around the state. Aimed at farmers, their workers, and anyone else who operated a quad bike or tractor, these sessions focussed on how to operate these important pieces of farm machinery; as well as mental health and drugs and alcohol in rural workplaces.

Speakers included representatives from the two approved quad bike safety devices covered by our quad bike safety rebate scheme (see previous pages), TasTAFE, RAW (Rural Alive and Well) and The Drug Education Network.

Our Safe Farming Tasmania Consultant Phill John also participated, and was pleased about participants’ response to the information sessions.

‘We had good turnouts, but more than just great numbers, we had very positive conversations around the table,’ Phill said. ‘Everyone was committed to improving safety on their farms for their workers and themselves.’

The farm safety sessions were a joint initiative of Safe Farming Tasmania, the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association and WorkSafe Tasmania.
WorkSafe Month is here again!

This year’s theme of ‘Safe Bodies, Safe Minds’ focuses on the importance of physical and mental health and wellbeing at work, and what we all can do to ensure our work is safer, healthier and more productive.

We have so many health, safety, wellbeing and return to work activities planned around the state – your hardest decision will be working out how to fit them all in. We’ve summarised some of the key events here, but check out the program accompanying this magazine for full details.

So join us this October to learn about steps we can take at work to be safe and well every day.

Let’s all remember every mind is as important as every body!

WorkSafer Expo

This year’s Expo brings together innovative health, safety and wellbeing solutions and exciting keynote speakers.

Wednesday 30 October, 10am–4pm: Albert Hall, Launceston.

Mental Health First Aid

We are holding two-day Mental Health First Aid courses around the state.

Tuesday 1 and Wednesday 2 October: Launceston Conference Centre, Launceston

Monday 7 and Tuesday 8 October: WorkSafe Tasmania Conference Room, Hobart

Tuesday 29 and Wednesday 30 October: Montgomery Room, Ulverstone.
Steps for Wellness
The official launch of WorkSafe Month will be a walk around St David’s Park in Hobart to remind us to look after our minds and our bodies at work.
Wednesday 25 September, 12.30pm: Parliament Lawns, Salamanca Hobart.

Musculoskeletal Workshops
Learn all about effective early intervention strategies to help reduce manual task injuries at your workplace.
Tuesday 22 October, 2–4pm: Hotel Grand Chancellor Ballroom, Hobart
Wednesday 23 October, 2–4pm: Hotel Grand Chancellor Ballroom, Launceston.

PTSD: Mental Health Matters Conference
Learn about all things related to post-traumatic stress disorder from experts in the field.
Monday 14 October, 10am–4pm: Hotel Grand Chancellor Ballroom, Launceston
Tuesday 15 October, 10am–4pm: Hotel Grand Chancellor Chancellor Room 1, Hobart.

Positive Work Cultures
The safety culture we build at work is everyone’s responsibility, so come and learn how to create and maintain a mentally health workplace.
Tuesday 22 October, 9am–12.30pm: Hotel Grand Chancellor Ballroom, Hobart
Wednesday 23 October, 9am–12.30pm: Hotel Grand Chancellor Ballroom, Launceston
Thursday 24 October, 9am–12.30pm: Ulverstone Life Saving Club Main Room, Ulverstone.

Other things on offer
• Health and Safety Representatives Conference
• Flinders Island Show
• The Mind Games

Get involved
The full details and how to register to attend go to www.worksafetasmonth.com.au
You can also call our Helpline on 1300 366 322 or (03) 6166 4600 (outside Tasmania) or email us at wstinfo@justice.tas.gov.au.
Each edition this year we will focus on different industries that WorkSafe has identified as priority industries. This edition we will throw the spotlight on the Construction industry and the Transport, Postal and Warehousing industry.

Tasmania’s construction industry

Construction is our state’s third largest employing industry with an estimated annual gross value of over $1.7 billion. It includes:
- residential and non-residential building construction
- heavy and civil engineering construction
- land development and site preparation.

Construction workforce

Approximately half the workers in this industry are under 35 years old.

The majority of construction workers are in building completion services. Non-residential building construction is the smallest employing group.

Construction injuries

There were 710 injuries in construction in 2018.

Construction reported the fourth highest number of injuries in 2018. Injury numbers for this industry have decreased 16% in the last ten years.

Who reported the most injuries?
- bricklayers, carpenters and joiners (22%)
- miscellaneous labourers (13%)
- construction and mining labourers (12%).

Older workers (aged between 55 and 64) were more likely to incur a serious injury compared with workers in other age groups, with a serious injury frequency rate of 12 serious injuries per million hours worked. Workers in the building installation services accounted for 20% of all serious injuries in the last ten years, but those in non-residential building construction had the highest serious injury frequency rate.

There were nine work-related fatalities in the last ten years.

Body stressing, falls slips and trips, and being hit by moving objects (including contact with powered tools and machinery) are the top three causes of injury in this industry.

Construction resources

Our Safety in Construction Kit helps PCBUs in residential construction develop a WHS management plan and safe work method statements (SWMS). It contains a sample WHS policy, site rules, tag and test register and more.

These are also the codes for Construction Work, Demolition Work and Preventing Falls in Housing Construction. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for ‘codes of practice’.

WorkSafe’s Industry snapshot reports and posters, which these columns draw on:
- survey the WHS performance of each industry group
- identify emerging or existing WHS issues for evaluation and action
- compare most current WHS performance relative to previous years and, where applicable, to other industries across Tasmania.

Find your industry’s snapshot: go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for ‘industry snapshots’.
Tasmania’s Transport, Postal and Warehousing (TPW) industry

This relatively small industry (in terms of employment and contribution to the economy) includes:
- road, rail and water transport, of both freight and passengers
- transport support services
- warehouse and storage services
- postal and courier services.

**TPW workforce**

In the TPW industry:
- 63% of its workers are older than 45 years, which is 20% higher than the average for all industries
- only 9% of its workers are younger than 25, compared to the all industry average of 18%.

The largest grouping within this industry is road freight transport.

**TPW injuries**

There were 329 injuries reported in the TPW industry in 2018.

Injury numbers have decreased 25% in the last ten years, compared with the statewide decrease of 18%.

The serious injury frequency rate is fifth highest of all industries, at approximately nine serious injuries per million hours worked in 2018.

Around 45% of injuries result in one week or more off work, higher than the statewide average. TPW has averaged 165 serious injuries each year. Truck drivers had the highest percentage of serious injuries.

Body stressing, falls slips and trips, being hit by moving objects, and vehicle incidents are the top causes of injury in this industry.

**TPW fatalities**

TPW accounts for the highest number of fatalities amongst all industries, reporting 33% of all work-related fatalities in the last ten years.

There have been 29 work related fatalities in TPW in the last ten years: 14 workers and 15 bystanders.

**TPW resources**

Vehicles as a Workplace is a guide jointly developed by all Australian and New Zealand WHS regulators. It’s held on the Workplace Health and Safety Queensland website, so go to www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/transport and click on the ‘guidance and case studies’ tab to find it.
Herbicide exposure

The use of herbicide is regulated by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA). Information on the safe use of herbicides is available on the APVMA website at www.apvma.gov.au.

Glyphosate has the highest worldwide production volume of all herbicides and is widely used in agriculture and domestically. In 2017, the APVMA reported that products containing glyphosate are safe using appropriate chemical handling measures.

Safe use, handling and storage of chemicals

If you use chemicals in your workplace, the codes of practice linked below will guide you on how to safely manage risks to health and safety:

- Managing the Risks of Hazardous Chemicals in the Workplace (CP120)
- Labelling of Workplace Hazardous Chemicals (CP115)
- Preparation of Safety Data Sheets for Hazardous Chemicals (CP126).

You can find these at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au by searching for the codes listed above.

Historical herbicide exposures

The substance of concern is the dioxin 2,3,7,8-Tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin (TCDD), a contaminant in the herbicide 2,4,5-T.

2,4,5-T is a herbicide that was used for vegetation clearance during the 1960s and 1970s.

It is possible that Hydro Electric Commission (HEC), Tasmanian State Service (TSS) employees and other workers may have been exposed to 2,4,5-T, during the 1970s and 1980s, that contained TCDD levels that are no longer considered acceptable.

The levels of TCDD used in 2,4,5-T was regulated in 1976, so the likelihood of employees having been exposed to 2,4,5-T that contained potentially high levels of TCDD reduces after that date.

Health concerns about the herbicide

2,4,5-T is a herbicide used for vegetation clearance during the 1960s and 1970s. A substance that was present in the formulations of 2,4,5-T used at the time is the dioxin known as TCDD.

A number of scientific studies have recognised possible links between high exposure to TCDD and an increased risk of certain cancers, skin conditions and possibly other health effects.

What is the risk of exposure to 2,4,5-T and cancer?

We understand that people will be looking for a definite link between 2,4,5-T and cancers and other illnesses relating to family, friends and work colleagues.

The likelihood of employees having been exposed to 2,4,5-T that contained potentially high levels of TCDD reduces after 1976 as maximum TCDD levels in both locally manufactured and imported 2,4,5-T started to be regulated in Australia.

What if I worked with herbicides and have concerns about my health?

We encourage anyone who may be concerned to read the information on our website in the first instance (go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for ‘herbicide’) and if you have concerns call WorkSafe Tasmania on 1300 366 322.

Current herbicide use

Is 2,4,5-T still used? No, the chemical 2,4,5-T is not used. It was withdrawn for use in Australia in the late 1980s and is no longer approved for use or marketed in Australia.

Are there concerns about current chemical use and practices in Tasmania?

Tasmania has a strong, effective regulatory framework in place for the regulation of chemicals. WorkSafe Tasmania administers work health and safety legislation which promotes the health and safety of employees and other people at work and imposes duties to ensure this. Under the regulatory framework, employers have a duty to ensure the health and safety of their workers and others within the workplace.

Compensation

The Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 establishes the rules for claiming workers compensation.

An entitlement to workers compensation depends on a number of factors:

- when you were incapacitated by or diagnosed with the injury/illness. Normally a workers compensation claim needs to be made within 6 months of when you were incapacitated by or diagnosed with the injury/illness
- whether you still work for the employer where you were exposed. Normally a workers compensation claims needs to be made before you voluntarily leave the employment
- your age. Normally once you reach the pension age, you are not entitled to workers compensation.

A person is entitled to workers compensation if they have been injured at work or if their injury has contributed to by a substantial degree.

For more information on the workers compensation process, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/compensation.
Asbestos: Sorting facts from myths

FACT: Manufacturing and using asbestos is banned in Australia
All types of asbestos were prohibited in Australian workplaces from 31 December 2003. This ban is reflected in WHS laws in all states.

The ban on using asbestos in Australia is supplemented by the Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956. These ban the importing of all types of asbestos and products containing asbestos, except under limited circumstances.

Asbestos is still widely used in some countries. Despite being a prohibited import in Australia, goods containing asbestos are still being located at the border. Certification provided to importers from overseas manufacturers that goods are asbestos-free has sometimes been proven incorrect or unreliable.

Local standards in some countries may classify goods ‘asbestos free’ if they meet a certain low level of asbestos content. In Australia, a product found with any level of asbestos is prohibited. Importers should be aware of the varying definitions and standards applied in the country of origin and/or supply. The Australian Regulations will apply at the border.

MYTH: My building inspection report would have indicated the presence of asbestos
It’s not mandatory for building inspection reports to identify asbestos in homes. The seller is not obliged to tell you if the house contains asbestos, either.

Therefore, it’s possible that asbestos may be present in your home. As a general guide, if your house was built:

- before the mid-1980s: it’s highly likely it contains some asbestos products
- between the mid-1980s and 1990: it’s likely it would contain asbestos
- after 1990: it’s unlikely it would contain asbestos.

It’s important to know where asbestos is in your home. It’s recommended that you get a licenced asbestos assessor to inspect the property before any renovations take place. To find one, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for ‘asbestos assessor search’.

FACT: Inhaling asbestos fibres can be associated with diseases including asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma
Disturbing any amount of asbestos can release fibres into the air. These could be inhaled or swallowed, which may lead to diseases such as asbestosis or mesothelioma in later years.

Even limited or short-term exposure to asbestos fibres can be dangerous, but exposure does not make developing an asbestos-related disease inevitable. There is still much that is unknown about why some people are susceptible to asbestos-related diseases, while others who have been regularly exposed to asbestos may avoid them.

MYTH: Only people who worked heavily with asbestos will get an asbestos disease
In the past, many victims of asbestos-related disease were the children and wives of workers who brought asbestos home on their clothes.

We’re now seeing people who have never worked with asbestos but were exposed to it through activities such as home renovations suffer from these diseases.

FACT: Asbestos in good condition presents a very low risk to someone’s health
Scientific and medical evidence suggests that living in a building that contains asbestos is not dangerous, as long as the asbestos product is in good condition: that is, undamaged and undisturbed.

For example, asbestos cement sheeting does not pose an increased health risk as long as it is in good condition, well maintained and is not disturbed or damaged.

However, if the asbestos products become damaged or they start to deteriorate, this increases the likelihood that asbestos fibres may become airborne. It’s advisable to have them stabilised and removed.

Visually inspect the materials from time to time for deterioration and damage.

Asbestos Safety Month
November is Asbestos Awareness Month.
For more information go to www.asbestosawareness.com.au
How to manage risks for workers who work alone or remotely

WorkSafe Tasmania’s Helpline is frequently asked ‘How do I manage safety risks for workers who work alone or remotely?’

Below is the section of the Code of Practice ‘Managing the Work Environment and Facilities’ they refer to. You can find this code on the WorkSafe Tasmania website. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for ‘CP124’.

Remote or isolated work
Regulation 48: A person conducting a business or undertaking must manage the risks associated with remote or isolated work, including ensuring effective communication with the worker carrying out remote or isolated work.

Remote or isolated work is work that is isolated from the assistance of other people because of the location, time or nature of the work being done. Assistance from other people includes rescue, medical assistance and emergency services.

A worker may be isolated even if other people may be close by, for example, a cleaner working by themselves at night in a city office building. In other cases, a worker may be far away from populated areas, for example, on a farm. Remote and isolated work includes:

- all-night convenience store and service station attendants
- sales representatives, including real estate agents
- long distance freight transport drivers
- scientists, park rangers and others carrying out field work alone
- health and community workers working in isolation with members of the public.

In some situations, a worker may be alone for a short time. In other situations, the worker may be on their own for days or weeks in remote locations, for example, on sheep and cattle stations.

Assessing the risks
Working alone or remotely increases the risk of any job. Exposure to violence and poor access to emergency assistance are the main hazards that increase the risk of remote or isolated work. The following factors should be considered when assessing the risks:

- Is there a risk of attack by an animal, including reptiles, insects and sea creatures?
- Is there increased risk at certain times of day? For example, a service station attendant working alone late at night may be at greater risk of exposure to violence.

The length of time the person may be working alone
- How long would the person need to be alone to finish the job?

The time of day when a person may be working alone
- Is there an increased risk of violence or aggression when workers have to deal with clients or customers by themselves?
- Can environmental factors affect the safety of the worker? For example, exposure to extreme hot or cold environments?

The skills and capabilities of the worker
- What is the worker’s level of work experience and training? Is the worker able to make sound judgements about his or her own safety?
- Are you aware of a pre-existing medical condition that may increase risk?

Controlling the risks
Buddy system – some jobs present such a high level of risk that workers should not work alone, for example jobs where there is a risk of violence or where work is carried out in confined spaces.

Workplace layout and design – workplaces and their surrounds can be designed to reduce the likelihood of violence, for example by installing physical barriers, monitored CCTV and enhancing visibility.

Communication systems – the type of system chosen will depend on the distance from the base and the environment in which the worker will be located or through which he or she will be travelling. Expert advice and local knowledge may be needed to assist with the selection of an effective communication system.

If a worker is working alone in a workplace that has a telephone, communication via the telephone is adequate, provided the worker is able to reach the telephone in an emergency. In situations where a telephone is not available, a method of communication that will allow a worker to call for help in the event of an emergency at any time should be chosen, for example:

- Personal security systems, being wireless and portable, are suitable for people moving around or checking otherwise deserted workplaces. Some personal security systems include a non-movement sensor that will automatically activate an alarm transmission if the transmitter or transceiver has not moved within a certain time.
- Radio communication systems enable communication between two mobile users in different vehicles or from a mobile vehicle and a fixed station. These systems are dependent upon a number of factors such as frequency, power and distance from or between broadcasters.
Satellite communication systems enable communication with workers in geographically remote locations. Satellite phones allow voice transmission during transit, but their operation can be affected by damage to aerials, failure of vehicle power supplies, or vehicle damage.

Distress beacons should be provided where life-threatening emergencies may occur, to pinpoint location and to indicate by activation of the beacon that an emergency exists. Distress beacons include Emergency Position Indication Radio Beacons (EPIRB) used in ships and boats, Emergency Locator Transmitters (ELT) used in aircraft and Personal Locator Beacons (PLB) for personal use.

Mobile phones cannot be relied upon as an effective means of communication in many locations. Coverage in the area where the worker will work should be confirmed before work commences. Geographical features may impede the use of mobile phones, especially at the edge of the coverage area, and different models have different capabilities in terms of effective range from the base station. Consult the provider if there is any doubt about the capability of a particular phone to sustain a signal for the entire period the worker is alone. If any gaps in coverage are likely, other methods of communication should be considered. It is important that batteries are kept charged and a spare is available.

Movement records – knowing where workers are expected to be can assist in controlling the risks, for example call-in systems with supervisors or colleagues. Satellite tracking systems or devices may also have the capability of sending messages as part of a scheduled call in system, and have distress or alert functions.

Training, information and instruction – workers need training to prepare them for working alone and, where relevant, in remote locations. For example, training in dealing with potentially aggressive clients, using communications systems, administering first aid, obtaining emergency assistance driving off-road vehicles or bush survival.

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. According to Cancer Council Australia:

- skin cancer accounts for over 80% of all new cases of cancer diagnosed in Australia each year
- more than 11,500 Australian men and women are diagnosed with a melanoma each year
- around 434,000 people are treated for one or more non-melanoma skin cancers.

Luckily, skin cancer is almost entirely preventable. Most of us know the ‘slip, slop, slap’ messages. But there are still a lot of misconceptions about skin cancer and sun protection.

Myths about sun protection

Some people mistakenly believe you can’t get sun damage on cloudy or cool days. But sun damage is caused by ultraviolet (UV) radiation, not temperature. So sun damage is possible on a cool or overcast day, as UV radiation can penetrate some clouds, and may even be more intense due to reflection off the clouds. With sun exposure causing around 99% of non-melanoma skin cancers and 95% of melanomas in Australia, it pays to be careful no matter what the day looks or feels like.

Excessive exposure to the sun doesn’t just happen when deliberately seeking a tan (which we hope by now you know is not safe). In a high UV environment like Australia, we can be exposed to dangerous levels of UV radiation during all sorts of daily activities, such as working outdoors, gardening, walking the dog or having a picnic. This sun exposure adds up over time, increasing the risk of skin cancer.

Being sunsmart at work

People who work outdoors receive up to 10 times more sun exposure than indoor workers. They:

- are exposed to sun for extended periods of time throughout their working life
- receive significantly more UV radiation than people who work indoors
- have a higher than average risk of developing common skin cancers.

Employers have a duty of care to ensure their workers are safe from the hazard of sun exposure.

Workers have a responsibility for their own safety and health, and must follow UV protection policies and use sun protective measures provided.

Control measures should include:

- planning to work indoors or in the shade during the middle of the day when UV radiation levels are strongest; and planning to do outdoor work tasks early in the morning or later in the afternoon when UV radiation levels are lower
- providing shade for breaks if it’s not available in the environment. This might be sheds, caravans, tents, windbreaks or portable shade canopies. In some situations, vehicles or public facilities may provide appropriate short-term shelter
- providing and maintaining equipment needed to protect workers from the sun. This includes long pants, shirts with long sleeves and turn-up collars, and hats with broad brims or legionnaire-style flaps (you can get attachments for helmets and hard hats), and sunglasses that meet the appropriate Australian Standard
- providing sunscreen of at least SPF 50 that is broad spectrum and water resistant
- providing information, instruction and training in using these and any other control measures properly to reduce UV exposure.

Get the guide

Cancer Council Australia has a detailed safety guide ‘Skin cancer and outdoor work: A work health and safety guide’ and brochure ‘Work outdoors! Use sun protection every day’. The guide is particularly detailed and is a great source of information for making your workplace sunsmart, covering risk assessment, sun protection policies, training and skin checks (and lots of templates and checklists to use). Go to www.cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection or search for ‘skin cancer and outdoor work’.

It’s not bullying, but...

You may have systems in place for managing and talking about bullying in your workplace. But what about behaviour that’s not necessarily bullying, but is still inappropriate and disrespectful? Do you know how damaging rudeness can be to a workplace culture — and do you manage it? Equal Opportunity Tasmania provides the following insights.

Rudeness in the workplace

Rudeness in the workplace can be intentional or not. It might be someone speaking over you or cutting you off in meetings, or ignoring your input. Other examples might be taking calls midway through a conversation (or using their devices throughout), talking to you disrespectfully, taking credit for your work, spreading rumours, using crude or offensive language, or taking their frustrations out on you.

These behaviours basically signal ‘I don’t care about you’. But how we treat one another at work matters — after all, it’s where most of us spend great deal of our time. Most of us spend more time with our work colleagues than we do with our family members.

This is fine if we like them, but what if we don’t? We should never feel uncomfortable or vulnerable at work because of the behaviours of our colleagues.

The effects on people

The effects of poor behaviour can radiate throughout the whole workplace if not stopped, damaging people’s morale, productivity, working relationships with their colleagues, and commitment to their workplace.

At the root of a dysfunctional workplace is often one or many disrespectful and unprofessional relationships and a culture of gossip, rumours, blame and allegations of bullying. In these situations, we see employees withdrawing, careful to protect themselves from discomfort at the expense of productivity and team spirit.

Rudeness can also be ‘contagious’, with people thinking ‘if you’re rude to me, I’ll be rude back’. It sets up bad standards that others soon accept as normal and go on to copy and perpetuate.

Look at the problem

It’s good practice to remind ourselves — at times of high stress, long hours, productivity demands and job insecurities — that our relationships with our work colleagues are professional relationships.

Most of us know and expect that our personal relationships require regular maintenance, yet we often expect our work relationships to manage themselves. We invest time, sweat and money into our work projects and businesses and sometimes forget the needs of us as people.

A simple, quiet conversation may be all it takes for someone to realise the way they address workmates is hurtful, or their swearing at the photocopier offends others.

Talk about standards

You can also discuss disrespectful behaviours as a team, as you would any safety issue. If things are really toxic, you may need to engage an external facilitator, but there are things you can do first:

• have a fresh look at your code of conduct; test how it is understood and followed; and communicate it at inductions and regular staff meetings
• don’t have a code of conduct? Create one! Consult with your workers as you would when developing any workplace policy or guiding document. Involving your workers means whatever you do reflects your workplace, and becomes a realistic guide for making your workplace a safe and respectful one
• talk about what you and your workers consider to be inappropriate and disrespectful, or as Louise calls it, ‘below the line’ behaviour
• be careful of rewarding those who may do good work or bring in good results for your company, but who are rude or disrespectful to their colleagues
• set an example: treat people the way you would like to be treated
• take any complaints seriously — follow them up before they start to fester.

Turning it around

This is not about taking the joy and humour out of the workplace (if anything, it may help people feel valued and productive, and enjoy being at work again). It’s about recognising that some behaviour is just not socially acceptable.

Get some training

Equal Opportunity Tasmania delivers a diverse range of training for workplaces. Please go to its website www.equalopportunitytas.gov.au for more information.
WorkSafe Tasmania on behalf of WorkCover Tasmania is pleased to announce a grant program to support innovation, research, and education and training that will improve work health and safety, culture and injury management for workers and employers in Tasmania.

The Grant Program is now open to workplaces, researchers and other eligible individuals and organisations who wish to make a difference to work health and safety, culture and injury management for Tasmanian workers and employers. This could be by conducting leading-edge research, developing innovative engineering solutions, or preparing/delivering training programs.

Categories
Applicants may apply for grant funding in one or more of the following categories:

• **Innovation**: To change and improve a specific work health and safety environment, resulting in lower occurrence of work related injuries, illness and diseases resulting in a positive outcome within a workplace.

• **Research**: To identify and develop a stronger understanding and further knowledge in areas of strategic focus that supports evidence based decision making, supports the translation of research insights that help shape practice and improves workplace health and safety performance.

• **Education and Training**: To develop education and training to assist workers and employers in identifying, improving and promoting work health safety and wellbeing, including injury management, and preventing health hazards in the workplace.

Funding levels
The Grant Program has two funding levels: minor grants with funding up to $10,000, and major grants with funding up to $50,000.

Eligibility
The Grant Program targets eligible organisations to develop initiatives that promote and help improve workplaces and work practices that are focused on work health and safety and workers compensation to injured workers and employers.

Eligible organisations include not for profit organisations, individuals, industry bodies, private businesses, community organisations and educational institutions holding an ABN.

Research proposals from teams that include PhD students or early career researchers will be viewed favourably as this will support the development of a workforce of researchers in the area of health and safety, wellbeing and workers compensation.

Apply now
Applications are open now and close 29 October 2019.

For detailed guidelines and to apply (online only) go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au.

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**Workers comp insurance rates**

Each year, WorkCover Tasmania publishes a set of suggested industry premium rates for workers compensation for each industry.

The purpose of this is to better inform the marketplace of the cost of workers compensation insurance cover:

• licensed insurers may use these suggested rates as a guide to setting their premiums for the following year.

• employers may refer to these suggested rates as they consider quotes for workers compensation from insurance companies.

The average suggested premium rate across all industries for 2019-20 is 2.08% of wages, a decrease from 2.10% in 2018-19. At an industry level the suggested rates vary from 0.40% to 9.23% of wages.

To find out the suggested rate for your industry, ask your insurer or broker for the ANZSIC code your business falls under then go to the WorkCover Tasmania website at www.workcover.tas.gov.au and search for ‘suggested industry premium rates’.
Survey results: Your attitude to safety

Is it okay to take shortcuts with safety at work? Are incidents ‘part of the job’? Do you only think about safety when something’s gone wrong or someone’s been hurt?

These are just some of the questions we asked in our annual survey to map Tasmanian workers’ WHS awareness, understanding and engagement.

Findings
Here is a summary of some of the responses — positive and negative:

• the number of people who believe it’s okay to take shortcuts with safety has dropped
• around 8% of people only think about safety if there’s an incident
• the number of people who would report a workplace incident has gone up, as has the number of people who would speak to a workmate who they thought was not working safely
• only 7% think incidents are part of the job and can’t be prevented
• almost a third said safety was better in their workplace than 12 months ago; two thirds said it was about the same.

Workplace wellbeing scored highly: 75% of respondents indicated their workplace valued wellbeing; and 61% could name at least one wellbeing activity happening in their workplace.

WHS concerns
We also asked people to name the main health and safety concerns in their workplace. Among the most commonly identified issues were:

• workload and work pressures
• manual handling and lifting
• using equipment correctly.

However, when combined, all mental health issues (including bullying) accounted for close to half of all issues identified.

Resources
If you share any of these concerns, you can find guidance on our website. There are codes of practice for hazardous manual tasks and plant (equipment), and guidance on managing workplace bullying. Head to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au.

Or book a free visit with one of our Advisors, who can come to your workplace and discuss all your issues in person. Find our more at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/safety/advisors.

What about your workplace?
We’d like to think if you’re reading Workplace Issues, you’re pretty engaged with WHS and make it a priority. Perhaps you’re a safety officer or health and safety rep, so you have a responsibility to ‘do safety’.

But what about the rest of your workplace? Why not discuss some of the survey findings with your colleagues or in a team meeting, to uncover their attitudes to safety?

About the survey
Since 2014, WorkSafe Tasmania has commissioned Myriad Research to measure people’s WHS awareness, understanding and engagement. Using online and telephone surveys, this year 410 Tasmanian workers over the age of 16 in paid and volunteer employment were canvassed.

Starting conversations
The national RU OK? Day held in September each year is a national day of awareness and action, reminding us that any day is the day to ask ‘Are you okay?’ and support our family, friends and work colleagues struggling with life. The conversation you have could change a life.

Mental health and work
According to RU OK? (www.ruok.org.au/meaningful-conversation-is-good-for-business), stress and depression are the largest contributors to lost productivity in Australia. Each year, just over three days per worker are lost due to workplace stress.

Early intervention and support can make a difference. Productivity losses are halved when workers with mental health conditions seek early intervention or treatment.

Making a difference
One of the ways we can all make a difference is to discuss the benefits of getting help in a genuine, positive way.

RU OK? says that people can be unlikely to disclose a mental health condition to their employer for fear of repercussions. So it’s important we wipe out stigma and discrimination while ensuring we reach out and support our colleagues when it’s needed.

How workers can help
• Notice the small signs that might suggest a colleague is not doing so well.
• If you sense something’s not right, approach them and start a conversation.
• Avoid trying to solve their problems for them. Instead, offer support and help them to identify potential next steps.
about mental health

- Follow up and check in with them after the conversation.
- If you don’t know a colleague well you can encourage someone who has a closer relationship to check in with them.

How managers can help

- Encourage workers to speak to their manager or supervisor if they’re having any issues.
- If a worker comes to you, treat them with sensitivity, respect and empathy.
- If you’re going to ask someone an employee ‘Are you okay?’, pick your moment. Choose a private and informal location, and suitable time. Make sure you’ve blocked out enough time for the conversation.
- Listen without judgement and take what they say seriously.
- Encourage them to take action such as talking to family, a trusted friend, their doctor or if you have one, your employee assistance provider (EAP).
- Have a record of the details of your local EAP contact and your Human Resources Department that you can pass on.
- Maintain their confidentiality and privacy.
- Remember to follow up in a few days and check how they’re going.

Get resources

The RU OK? website has resources created for workplaces. Go to www.ruok.org.au/work and you’ll find videos you can share and watch at staff meetings, and a practical guide with more in depth information on how to spot if someone needs support and how manage a conversation with someone.

About workers comp: Independent medical examinations (IMEs)

What is an IME

An IME is an impartial medical assessment conducted by an appropriately qualified medical practitioner.

An employer or insurer may request an injured worker to undergo an IME to provide them with an independent opinion about a worker’s injury or illness, work capacity and treatment.

The IME report will help an employer or insurer make decisions about a worker’s rehabilitation, treatment and recovery and return to work.

The independent medical examiner does not provide the injured worker with treatment.

Communicate

Effective communication is important to ensure everyone involved in the IME process understands their roles and responsibilities.

If an IME is required, the employer/insurer must:

- discuss the reasons for the IME with the injured worker’s treating doctor
- provide the worker with written reasons why the IME is required.

Once the independent medical practitioner prepares the IME report they must provide it to the person who requested the IME.

The employer/insurer must then provide a copy of the report (within seven days of receiving it) to:

- the worker’s treating doctor
- the worker’s appointed injury management co-ordinator.

Resources

WorkCover has developed two resources:

- Guideline: Independent Medical Examinations. This will help medical practitioners conducting IMEs understand their role and responsibilities in the Tasmanian workers compensation scheme.
- Information sheet IS-155: Independent Medical Examinations. This will help workers understand the reasons why an independent medical examination may be required by an employer or their insurer, and the obligations of everyone involved in the process.

Insurers are required to:

- provide the Guideline to independent medical practitioners engaged to conduct IMEs, and encourage them to use it
- provide the Information Sheet to workers who have been asked to attend an IME.

Find these resources at www.workcover.tas.gov.au by searching by GN106 and IS-155.
Amusement rides at shows: Inspect for safety

With show season upon us, NT WorkSafe's alert about the need to inspect and test amusement rides is timely.

Earlier in the year at a Northern Territory show, the arm of an amusement ride buckled, causing its support rod to break. The ride went around twice more before crashing to the ground. The gondola at the end of the affected arm held two adults inside.

Some of the contributing factors that NT WorkSafe's investigation found were:

- the affected arm showed signs of previous welded repair work, which may have affected the arm’s structural integrity
- the break point showed signs of erosion
- records for the amusement ride showed that ‘non-destructive testing’ (required by the relevant Australian Standards) may not have been conducted.

What you should do
If you own and/or operate an amusement ride or device, you must ensure:

- it is properly maintained as specified in the manufacturer’s operating manual
- a competent person carries out inspections and testing to the frequency required by the Australian Standard 3533.3.

A major inspection is required (as specified in AS 3533.2) additional to the annual inspection.

Mining industry critical risk

Tasmania’s mining, minerals and energy industry gathered in Burnie recently to learn more about the critical control management (CCM) process.

CCM is where critical risk controls at a workplace are identified, performance standards are written for the controls, and systems are developed so the controls are monitored against the standards to ensure they are effectively controlling the risks. CCM is widely used in major hazard facilities and high hazard process plants for oil and gas, but is uncommon in the mining industry.

Hosted by the Tasmanian Minerals and Energy Council and WorkSafe Tasmania, speakers at the Burnie forum were Carmel Bofinger, Associate Professor at the Minerals Industry Safety and Health Centre at the University of Queensland, Gilbert Charles of Grange Resources, Riaan Pienaar of MMG Rosebery, and David Hamilton.
Everybody’s Talking...
Questions and answers from our Helpline

What is a workers compensation ‘right to make a claim’ notice, and when do I have to give it to my workers?
You must provide a ‘Notice of Right to make a Workers Compensation Claim’ form to a worker within 14 days of them notifying you that they’ve suffered an injury at work. This is regardless of whether or not they have already sought medical treatment for their injury.
You can find this form at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au by searching for ‘GF172’.
After providing this form, it’s up to the worker to decide whether or not they wish to lodge a workers compensation claim. If they choose to do so, you need to provide them with a workers compensation claim form, which you can get from your insurer.

Where can I find information about providing toilets in my workplace?
The code of practice for Managing the Work Environment and Facilities says access to clean toilets must be provided for all workers while they are at work. Where reasonably practicable, these should be toilets you provide, rather than relying on access to external public toilets.
The Code goes into greater detail about appropriate number of toilets and basins and references the National Construction Code as well.
Find the code at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au by searching for CP124.

What Tasmanian show days are left for 2019?
Go to our website at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and hit the ‘public holidays’ link. You’ll find the listing for this year.
Call the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 to check your award or agreement and to determine your eligibility.
Under the Tasmanian Statutory Holidays Act 2000 the days specified are:
• Burnie Show: Friday 4 October
• Royal Launceston Show: Thursday 10 October
• Flinders Island Show: Friday 18 October
• Royal Hobart Show: Thursday 24 October
• Devonport Show: Friday 29 November.

Can you please clarify ‘a notifiable incident’ under the Work Health and Safety Act 2012?
WorkSafe Tasmania received over 850 phone notifications of incidents in the past 12 months. A number of these are not notifiable, according to the definitions of the Act. There are three types of notifiable incidents, for:
• the death of a person
• the serious injury or illness of a person
• a dangerous incident.
To understand these, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for ‘incident’.
Electric shocks must be notified to both WorkSafe Tasmania and TasNetworks (call 132 004).
Safe Work Australia also has a fact sheet explaining various ‘triggers’ for notification and examples of things that are and are not notifiable. To find this fact sheet, go to www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au and search for ‘incident fact sheet’.
The key trigger is that the incident arises out of the conduct of the business or undertaking. Using this as a guide, it can be seen that something like a child at school falling over while playing sport, an elderly resident of a nursing home suffering a heart attack, or a minor motor vehicle accident will not normally be notifiable.
If you think in terms of an incident being caused by some failure of a process, fault in a piece of equipment, or insufficient training or supervision, then this will help your decision on notification.
Although WorkSafe Tasmania may not require notification, the PCBU must still investigate and where possible, instigate actions to prevent a recurrence.
A notifiable incident requires the PCBU to preserve the scene (other than what’s necessary to make safe or provide assistance to any injured person), and provide a written report of the incident to WorkSafe Tasmania within 48 hours - unless advised otherwise by a WorkSafe Tasmania Inspector.
You can notify WorkSafe Tasmania at any time by calling 1300 366 322.
Build a safety system: Emergencies

In this edition we look at how to prepare and plan for potential emergencies at your workplace. Emergency plans can control and reduce the risks to health and safety and reduce damage to property in the event of an emergency.

**Identify potential emergencies**

What could happen at your workplace or nearby to impact you, your workers and your infrastructure? Identify potential emergencies by considering:

- the work tasks done and any chemicals and plant used or stored at your workplace
- the hazards at your workplace
- the size and location of your workplace
- the number and composition of workers and others at your workplace.

When we say ‘location’, think beyond your own premises. For example, if one of your neighbours uses hazardous chemicals, a spill at their workplace might affect you. Or maybe a spill at your workplace will affect your neighbours. A building fire on an adjoining property or a bushfire maybe also be possibilities.

Other emergency situations might include bomb threats and other threatening situations, vehicle collisions, or a medical emergency.

**What to include**

Your emergency plan should include:

- an effective response to an emergency
- evacuation procedures
- notifying emergency services organisations
- medical treatment and assistance
- effective communication between the authorised person who co-ordinates the emergency response and everyone else at the workplace and any neighbours who may be affected
- testing your emergency procedures, including how frequently you’ll do this
- information, training and instruction to your workers about implementing the emergency procedures.

**Responsible people**

You’ll need to allocate emergency duties to staff who can manage the emergency situation. This includes fire warden or first aid officer. Their responsibilities, authority and accountability should be defined. Your emergency plan should list these people.

You’ll also need to appoint fire wardens and first aid persons for any workers you have who work ‘in the field’; indeed, make sure your plan has procedures for managing off-site emergency situations.

Make sure you communicate who these people are, by email, posters, in staff meetings and in inductions.

Finally, make sure these responsible people have helmets, hi-vis vests or other items that clearly identify them.

**Informing emergency services**

Fire fighters and other emergency services personnel may be exposed to the hazards at your workplace when they attend an emergency. Providing them with all the relevant information will help them reduce the risks to their health and safety and determine the best response to the emergency.

Tell them about the qualities and locations of hazardous chemicals present (your should have a register or inventory covering this) and safety data sheets. Tell them about any dangerous plant, radiation sources, asbestos, restricted access points, drains, excavations, unstable grounds, or systems that may activate automatically.

Have a map or site plan that shows where your hazards are near your workplace’s entry. Any required placarding and signage you have up is also vital for emergency services.

**Emergency equipment**

You’ll need to have equipment appropriate to the potential emergency scenarios you’ve identified, and it needs to be located where it’s readily accessible by workers in the event of an emergency. Use signage so people can see where the equipment is kept.

You may need to seek advice from competent professionals and emergency services; also get them to regularly check what you put in place is still current and suitable.

Check the WHS laws to see if there are any requirements specific to the work and hazards in your workplace.

You should also make sure your emergency equipment, signage, lighting, fire extinguishers, sprinklers, fire hoses, alarm/detection/ warning systems and so on are regularly inspected, tested and maintained. Inspection and testing intervals are usually specified in Australian and international standards.

**First aid**

You need to make sure you have assessed your first aid requirements — personnel, equipment, kits. The best way to do this is by using the First Aid in the Workplace code of practice. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for ‘CP108’.

Your emergency plan needs to document your assessment, records of training, what equipment and kits are provided, and what you have in place for workers in the field.

**Worker exposure to critical incidents**

Don’t just think about fire extinguishers, first aid kits and evacuation drills. Think about your workers.

Critical incident stress management is required in many industries, such as emergency services, health care and banking. A critical incident can be defined as one that directly or indirectly causes significant distress to them, either at the time or after it occurs.

As part of your hazard identification and risk management process, you should identify the tasks or areas where workers may be exposed to critical incidents as part of their work. Define what a critical incident might be in your workplace.

You should develop a policy, procedures and training to help workers who are at risk of being exposed to a critical incident.

You should also provide debriefing and counselling support, using appropriately trained personnel/services. Tell workers directly about these, and maybe display posters in the workplace too.

**Train your workers**

All workers need to be trained in the relevant
emergency procedures. As well as general evacuation drills for the entire workplace, some workers may need specific training and ‘rehearsals’: for example, workers required to work in confined spaces should know rescue and first aid procedures relevant to working in that environment.

People appointed to manage emergency situations need training so they have the skills, knowledge and confidence to respond to an emergency immediately and competently. This includes using any emergency equipment and providing first aid.

**Document it**

As well as the emergency procedures and policies themselves, document:
- the risk assessments you’ve done to inform your emergency planning
- the schedule of tests, drills and reviews of your procedures, and records of how these went
- records of any meetings where you’ve discussed/planned the emergency procedures
- records of meetings or correspondence you’ve had with any industry experts in emergency management
- records of your staff consultation in drawing up the plans and then communicating them
- records of training in your emergency procedures: who, what, when
- records of inspections, tests and maintenance of your emergency equipment
- plans that show where emergency equipment is located
- records of counselling and debriefing services provided (this does not usually identify the worker, just the times the services were used).

**Review your plans**

To make sure they remain current and effective, you should review your emergency plans regularly, or whenever there is a change in your workplace or in the surrounding businesses or environment.

In this regular series, we’ve guided you through building a workplace wellbeing program.

This edition, we look at engaging external service providers to enhance your program. You might find you need to bring in someone with specialist expertise to provide activities such as exercise or yoga classes, seminars on topics of interest, or health checks.

**How to select a provider**

Obviously you need someone who is experienced and knowledgeable in the chosen activity or topic. But how do you find and choose that person or organisation?

Keep the following in mind. Remember, not every point will apply to every external provider you use.

- They need to be a member of a relevant body or have recognised accreditation. Is your on-site massage therapist a member of an accredited association? Ask for their registration number and check it on the association website.
- They need to have the required professional indemnity or liability insurance. Ask for copies of their certificates.
- They need to practice in accordance with their industry body code of ethics.
- They need to ensure responsible referral and follow-up of high-risk individuals. For example, an employee identified as ‘at risk’ of cardiovascular disease during a workplace health check needs to be followed up through appropriate medical channels.
- They need to provide comprehensive reporting. Ask for an example of their record-keeping procedures.
- They need to practice according to a comprehensive privacy policy. Ask to see a copy of their privacy policy, or ask how their records are kept and stored.
- They should have a track record. Ask about similar programs they have delivered in the past, and ask for testimonials or references from those workplaces.

Don’t forget well-known not-for-profit and government organisations such as the Heart Foundation, the Cancer Council and so on. These established groups often have speakers who can come to your workplace to give presentations and provide resources on specific health topics. To find a list, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for ‘wellbeing resources’.
WORK SAFER EXPO
SAFE BODIES, SAFE MINDS
WEDNESDAY 30 OCTOBER, 10AM – 4PM
ALBERT HALL, LAUNCESTON
FREE EVENT
Discover innovative and collaborative solutions to make your work safer, healthier and more productive.
This is a must attend event for all health, safety and wellbeing professionals.
visit www.worksaferexpo.com.au to find out more.