

March 2017

# Workplace

## issues

RETURN TO WORK  
*a road to recovery*

**Key stories inside**

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**Feature: Return to work**

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**Meet our Overall Winners**

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**New: Safety case studies**

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# Contents



## COVER STORY

From practical guidance to an interview with an award winning workplace, our return to work feature will help you get your injured worker back to work. The feature starts on page .....6

## NEWS + EVENTS

Winning big with wellbeing .....	4
Award, Month: New directions .....	16
Learning from the past .....	18
Report: Scheme review .....	20
New building laws in force .....	20
Latest data on national fatalities .....	21



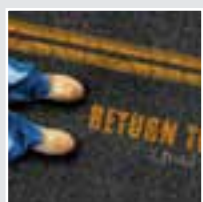
## SAFETY

What to do if you're accused of bullying .....	13
What to do if you're bullied .....	14
Who's bullied and how .....	15
Case study: Unlicensed use of an unsafe forklift .....	18
Case study: No toilet facilities for farm workers .....	19
Correction: First aid code .....	19



## RETURN TO WORK FEATURE

Health benefits of returning to work .....	6
IM: Going above and beyond .....	7
Gold star RTW to learn from .....	8
RTW: What's stopping you? .....	9
Clinical Framework: How it can help .....	10
Tools of the trade .....	11
Providing meaningful work .....	11
Tas scores high in national survey .....	12



## REGULARS

From the Minister .....	3
Everybody's talking .....	22

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Throughout, the acronyms 'WHS' stands for work health and safety and 'PCBU' stands for person conducting a business or undertaking.

# Make your year safe



## **Hello and welcome to the first Workplace Issues magazine of 2017.**

Many of us would have made New Year's resolutions to improve our health, pick up a new pastime or invest more in some worthwhile activity or relationship. But how many of us have thought about making a New Year's resolution for our workplace?

Most of us could find ideas to make our workplaces healthier, happier and safer upon further thought. I encourage you to put these ideas into practice during 2017.

A number of Tasmanian businesses and individuals that have done just this were recognised at the recent WorkSafe Awards.

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate these winners and finalists.

These prestigious Awards recognise Tasmanian workplaces and individuals who lead the way in work health and safety, wellbeing and return to work. Their commitment to leadership, innovation and continual improvement makes our workplaces and state safer and better places for us all. The Awards prove that safety is good for business.

In this edition you'll read about the 2016 Overall Winner, Merseylink. This Devonport-based bus company proves that wellbeing can be a winning part of any business. I visited the depot soon after the WorkSafe Awards, and was moved by the positive commitment Merseylink staff have to seizing these opportunities to improve their health.

WorkSafe Month again delivered an exciting program, with webinars, live streaming and videos presented by work health and safety professionals, business leaders and experts. These continue the Month's tradition of helping workers, managers and employers learn how to manage workplace hazards, work safely, and understand their rights and responsibilities.

With this technological evolution comes even greater opportunity to learn, regardless of your working hours or location. The presentations are still available online at [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/betterwork](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/betterwork) and I encourage you to watch them and share them with your colleagues. They're just another example of how WorkSafe Tasmania is helping Tasmanian businesses achieve safe and health workplaces.

Congratulations to everyone who took the leap to enter the WorkSafe Awards, or who tuned in to a WorkSafe Month online presentation. It's testament to your commitment we can go home safely from work every day. I hope you carry that commitment and inspiration through to a safe and healthy new year.

Finally, I encourage you to turn to our new regular column of case studies, starting this edition. We've listened to the suggestions of industry and regular readers, who wished to learn from the near misses, hazards and solutions of real workplaces. And with the practical guidance they contain, I know you'll find these columns to be valuable tools as you strive to make your own workplace safer and healthier.

# Winning big with



**If you're looking for a business whose wellbeing program is committed to improving physical fitness and stronger staff morale and positive friendships, then look no further than our 2016 WorkSafe Awards Overall Winner, Merseylink.**

## First steps

Merseylink's journey towards taking out the top gong — in its first year of entering the Awards, no less — began a few years ago.

Director Jan Bingley invited WorkSafe's wellbeing advisors to Merseylink, and armed with their 'good ideas and resources', began implementing changes.

'We added a wellbeing policy to our existing safety policy, and really committed to creating a safe, healthy

and supportive work environment for everyone,' she said.

'Some of our healthy lifestyle choices did not make me popular!' Jan laughed. 'We removed the chocolate fundraising boxes, the fizzy drinks from the social club, the lottery tickets and horse racing club [to make the workplace a gambling-free zone] and made the depots non-smoking areas.'

As a result of these and other measures, two workers have stopped smoking, a mechanic gave up his six-soft drink a day habit, and a driver lost 60 kilos.



# wellbeing

## Getting active

Bus driving is a sedentary job, so focussing on physical exercise has been a key component of Merseylink's wellbeing program.

The company installed gym equipment, which is free to use and has a personal trainer present two nights a week. It's proven popular with many of the company's 90 staff.

'I wouldn't go to a town gym, but I'm very happy to use the one here,' said Linda, a full-time driver. 'I started using the gym when I joined Merseylink about two years ago, and I've lost heaps of weight and it's really improved my fitness levels. I just feel really good in myself now.'

Other highlights are night walks held twice a week (with a cuppa at the end), and the Devonport parkrun, a five kilometre community event held every Saturday morning.

'We normally catch up in the morning before we start our driving, but then we don't see one another all day,' explained Sue, who has been driving for Merseylink for nine years. 'So the walks are a great way to catch up, and encourage one another to keep fit. We really enjoy the interaction.'

You could almost say the physical benefits are secondary: 'It's really good team work,' said Jamie, a school-run driver. 'We motivate one another and it really helps us all get along.'

## Beyond Tassie

As well as local Devonport events, staff have walked and run the Burnie Ten, Hobart's Run the Bridge and Point to Pinnacle, and Sydney's famous City to Surf. 'That was fantastic!' said Linda.

Jan said the company paid the entry fee but the 11 staff who participated paid their own flights to Sydney and accommodation. 'This cost about \$600 each, so that proves how committed everyone is to the exercise and the team.'

Next on the wish list is the Melbourne Marathon in October this year.



Merseylink CEO Grant Bingley with Director Jan Bingley and their 2016 WorkSafe Awards Overall Winner trophies. Opposite page: Grant and Jan with the Hon Guy Barnett (centre) after their win

## Bigger benefits

'Wellbeing is very important; it's great for morale. A good workforce means better productivity,' said CEO Grant Bingley.

'You can walk or run, you can bring your family, and we'll have a cuppa at a café afterwards. We make it a social event; it's not about your sporting ability,' said Grant. It's something that all the Merseylink staff we spoke to agreed on.

For the company's older workers or those without family of their own, this sense of inclusion has real benefits. 'We really look out for another — there's a real family feeling,' said Grant.

## Winners all round

The number of Merseylink staff taking part in the wellbeing program grows every year, and winning the 2016 WorkSafe Awards Overall Winner has been fantastic recognition of its value.

'We were ecstatic,' said Jan. 'We didn't think we had a chance, as the WorkSafe assessor gave us some tips for improving our entry next time! So to win the wellbeing category and then the Overall Winner was so exciting.'

The Hon Guy Barnett MP visited Merseylink soon after to congratulate the team on their win.

'The positive commitment at Merseylink is clearly evident,' he said. 'It's encouraging to see the support that Merseylink provides its employees, and the physical and emotional benefits this is having for workers.'

'I have been a long-time supporter of healthy lifestyles through my role as Diabetes Australia Ambassador and workplace wellbeing programs such as this are a great way of lifting people's health.'

'Healthier workplaces are generally more productive and enjoyable workplaces. This is clear at Merseylink, and I congratulate them on winning the 2016 WorkSafe Awards.'

News of Merseylink's win even made it to the Saturday morning parkrun. 'We had people come up to congratulate us!' said Grant. 'It's been a good thing for the whole town.'

*Merseylink is a Devonport-based bus company. It employs 90 staff and has 80 buses in operation.*



## RETURN TO WORK *feature*

# Health benefits of returning to work

Many people think an injured worker must be off work to recover, and that being injured is a barrier to returning to work.

However, you don't have to be fully recovered or to have finished medical treatment before you can return to work. In fact:

- a complete recovery is not often achieved before an injured worker returns to work
- the longer you are away from work, the less chance you have of ever returning.

### Why it's so important to return to work

While returning to work is not always easy, it is important to understand that work is generally good for health and wellbeing — and that long-term work absence, work disability and unemployment typically have a negative impact on health and wellbeing.

In specific terms, being out of work long term:

- increases the rate of suicide. In general it increases by six times; for young men out of work for six months or more, the rate of suicide increases 40 times
- is a greater health risk than most dangerous jobs
- can lead to adverse physical, psychological, social and financial effects, which worsen with each passing day.

People attempting to return to work after injury or illness face a complex situation with many variables. Good outcomes

are more likely when people understand the health benefits of work, and are empowered to take responsibility for their own situation.

### For workers: What you can do

Try to stay positive and motivated.

Recognise that you don't have to be 100% recovered before you return to work.

Seek advice and explanations about your injury so you can be confident about self managing your recovery.

Be an active participant in return to work processes.

Work with your employer to identify suitable duties.

Suggest ways your work tasks can be modified to accommodate restrictions.

Work within the restrictions provided by your doctor so you don't risk re-injury.

Regularly communicate with your employer, especially when away from work. For example, delivering your medical certificate to them in person is one way of staying in touch.

Make sure you raise any issues or concerns immediately.

### For employers and managers: What you can do

You can make a positive contribution to your injured worker's recovery and wellbeing by:

- providing meaningful alternative duties. For practical help doing this, go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'GB199'

- encouraging a supportive workplace culture
- moving beyond merely meeting your legislative requirements for workers compensation and injury management.

Work practices, workplace culture and relationships, and injury management programs are key factors in workers feeling valued and supported in their workplace, and of individual health, wellbeing and productivity. As an employer, manager or supervisor, you play a key role in shaping these factors for positive outcomes.

You can:

- make sure you have a copy of your insurer's injury management program, so you can review and look for opportunities to develop workplace systems to support this program
- train line managers and supervisors in injury management and communication
- develop a system to gather feedback on workplace injury management (such as a routine surveys of your injured workers)
- involve not just the injured workers to identify alternative duties, but also their co-workers and treating doctor
- seek specialist or external support for complex cases
- improve communication channels between everyone involved in the injury management process; for example, invite injured workers who are away from work to attend regular team meetings as well as social activities.



# Injury management: Going above and beyond

Many employers think injury management is simply a matter of lodging a workers compensation claim and taking a backseat while the insurer takes on the responsibility for managing the injured worker and their claim.

However this is far from the best approach. In most cases, the employer and their managers and supervisors have the greatest ability to positively shape the injury management process from start to finish.

## In the right place

As an employer, manager or supervisor, you can maintain close and regular contact with your workers.

As a result, best-practice injury management aims to shift exclusive 'ownership' of managing workplace injuries from external parties (such as insurers) to those who know the workplace and its workers best: the employer.

## The right outcomes

Employers and managers who actively participate in managing workplace injuries understand that injury management is as much about running a successful business as it is about achieving the best possible return to work outcomes for their injured workers.

Workplace-based injury management benefits everyone:

- for injured workers, their prospects of recovering and returning to their former lifestyle is maximised
- for employers and managers, experienced workers are retained, productivity is restored sooner, and claim costs are reduced.

## Nuts and bolts

Injury management encompasses those activities which directly affect an injured worker's recovery, including the management of medical treatment, rehabilitation, returning to work, and the relationships between those involved.

## Focus on what your worker can do

It's important that goals are set for the injury management processes, and that positive attitudes are fostered by ensuring that the employer and injured worker focus on what they can do as opposed to what they can't do.

Working together to achieve these goals will greatly improve an injured worker's motivation: they'll not only know and understand where they are heading, but also that the challenges which lie ahead are realistic and achievable.

## Other factors to consider

Have a solid WHS management program. It's the foundation for being committed to workers' health and safety — which flows through to your commitment to positive injury management.

Encourage your workers to report all injuries and incidents and foster a workplace where workers feel

comfortable doing so. This shows your workers you value their health and safety. Tell workers about your incident reporting and injury management processes before they have an injury: at inductions, training sessions and staff meetings.

## Find out more

This article is based on our guide 'Injury Management: Making it work'. Read it for more detail about the people involved in the injury management process, and how they should work together for the best outcomes for the injured worker. Go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'GB197'.



## RETURN TO WORK *feature*

# Gold star RTW to learn from



Steve Black from Nyrstar with the Hon Guy Barnett on the Awards night

*Nyrstar Hobart was a winner in the 2016 WorkSafe Awards for its return to work program. Here, Nyrstar shares the secrets of its success, and how these could translate to workplaces of any size.*

Nyrstar Hobart is proud to have won the 2016 WorkSafe Award for the best return to work program.

Demonstrating an ability to go above and beyond, the zinc smelter's acclaimed return to work system is testament to a workplace committed to a caring and proactive approach when it comes to its employees' health and safety.

Nyrstar Workers Compensation Advisor Grant Pennicott and WHS Superintendent Steve Black believe being responsive and available are key to success.

'When an employee reports an injury, we contact them immediately to understand how they need help,' Grant said.

'The part-time doctor on site is also fully involved in the return to work process, providing an assessment, liaising with the employee's GP and any specialists involved in their medical treatment, to ensure a smooth transition back to work.'

Grant said the advantage of having a doctor on site was to have a better understanding of a major industrial workplace environment.

'This assists in making informed decisions regarding suitable return to work duties for the employee, and recommendations on assistance or adjustments required to perform the tasks safely,' he said.

Nyrstar Hobart believes retaining employees at work through an effective return to work program is important, even if it involves shorter hours to begin with.

Steve explained this may involve tasks that are not directly related to the employee's normal job, but are essential to the business.

'Ensuring the employee has a role which assists in creating value is important to them, as much as it is to the business,' he said.

Steve said Nyrstar also offers support to employees with non-work related injuries.

'We believe in a proactive approach, so if an employee requires a scan or physio treatment, we will fund this, as it can potentially save from a much bigger and more costly issue arising,' he said.

Steve and Grant's top tips for success:

- demonstrate a good level of care
- be personal and available
- be timely and proactive
- offer help and support
- don't pressure to return to work; rather, listen to the employee's concerns and condition updates, and work together on a return to work plan
- build a good relationship with local medical clinics [that your] employees attend. Invite them to your workplace along with the employee, so they can make informed decisions together with [your] business, to understand the true potential for suitable, alternative duties.

*This article supplied by Nyrstar Hobart.*



# Return to work: What's stopping you?

**A new review by Comcare has highlighted that good workplace relations and support from supervisors and co-workers can have a positive effect on an injured worker's return to work.**

## **Good relations = good RTW**

'Barriers to Return to Work' found that workplace relationships can aid the return to work process — or, if not supportive and appropriately managed, can hinder it.

Supportive work conditions — including feeling welcomed back to work, social support and quality of leadership — were important in increasing work ability and return to work. The relationship between the injured worker and their supervisor was a significant risk factor in return to work: poor relationships often resulted in negative outcomes.

'As much as we must consider the medical condition and functionality of the employee, we also must consider the environment they are returning (to),' states the review.

Returning an injured worker back to meaningful work needs more than just paperwork and procedures. It relies on positive attitudes, supportive workplace relationships and friendships, and the active collaboration between employers and workers.

## **It's not just physical**

Comcare's review also highlights how someone's perception of their injury, pain levels and chances of recovery can influence their recovery.

'It can actually be the perception of the injury or illness that can have a more profound effect on the outcome,' says the report. Therefore return to work programs must consider both the physical nature of the injury and the injured worker's 'self-assessed health status'.

While returning to work is not always easy, it's important to understand that work is generally good for your health and wellbeing, and that long-term work absence typically has a negative impact on health and wellbeing.

Good return to work outcomes are more likely when people understand the health benefits of work, and are empowered to take responsibility for their own situation.

## **What can you do?**

Do you recognise any of these 'psychosocial' factors in your workplace, and realise just how important they can be in achieving better return to work outcomes?

If you're involved in the return to work process — especially if you manage or supervise an injured worker — read

Comcare's review. You'll get a good overview of the challenges in achieving a timely and safe return to work, and the potential pit falls to avoid or influence. You'll find 'Barriers to Return to Work' by going to [www.comcare.gov.au](http://www.comcare.gov.au) and searching for 'barriers'.

You'll also find resources on WorkSafe's website. Go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'injury management'; the page you'll find has guides about the health benefits of return to work and the importance of working together in the injury management process.





## RETURN TO WORK *feature*

# Clinical Framework: How it can help

The Clinical Framework for the Delivery of Health Services is an evidence-based, best practice approach that guides health care professionals as they help injured workers recover and return to work.

It's recommended for use by doctors, workplace rehabilitation providers and injury management coordinators so they can maximise their injured worker's recovery.

So if you're an injured worker, what should you expect from your doctor or rehabilitation provider?

### Guiding principles

The Clinical Framework encourages health care providers to apply five guiding principles as they manage your return to work. These include:

- basing decisions about your treatment on the best available evidence about what will work for your circumstances
- developing and implementing recovery goals with you that are 'smart': specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed. Your progress should also be regularly assessed, and those goals re-set if necessary.

### Getting involved

Your health care provider should also empower you to manage your injury: that is, to be fully involved in your recovery. They should tell you about:

- the nature of your injury and expected timeframes for recovery
- the health benefits of being active at home, work and within your community/social activities; and the risks of prolonged inactivity
- the benefits and risks of the proposed treatments.

The ultimate aim is to avoid you becoming dependent on your health care provider and the treatment itself — for you to learn to manage your recovery and condition as independently as possible.

### Influencing beliefs

Your health care provider should also look out for and address any negative beliefs you might develop because of your injury — before these become entrenched and develop into major obstacles to participating in your work, home and social activities.

These counter-productive beliefs might include:

- fear-avoidance: 'increased pain means I've made my injury worse, so I must avoid any activity that aggravates my pain'
- catastrophising: 'my symptoms are severe and I'll never be able to work again'
- low self-efficacy: 'I can't do any work because of my pain'
- blame: 'it's their fault and so I need a lot of time away from work'.

### A well-rounded approach

So enabling your recovery is not just tackling the physical: your health care provider should also take a 'biopsychosocial' approach.

This means looking out for and managing any biological, mental health, psychological and social risk factors (or 'flags') you might have that would be detrimental to your recovery.

Essentially, they should be asking:

- what factors are preventing you from improving your function and participating at home, work or in the community today?
- how can these barriers be addressed?
- is your current treatment having the expected effect on your health, function, and participation at home, work and in the community?
- would other health providers, services or treatments improve your rate of recovery?

### Find the Framework

To read the Clinical Framework for the Delivery of Health Services for yourself (or perhaps ask or tell your health care provider about it), go to WorkSafe Victoria's website at [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au) and search for 'clinical framework'.



# Tools of the trade

Whether you are an employer or injured worker, as you move through the injury management process, you will be guided by:

## **Injury management programs**

Both employers and insurers are required to have an injury management program in place. Most employers will use their insurer's injury management program; however, some larger organisations may seek approval from their insurer to develop their own.

An injury management program consists of documented policies and procedures specific to key events in the

claim and injury management process; for example, the process for reporting an injury and making a claim.

Injury management programs set out a clear direction on what to do and who should do it throughout the injury management process.

## **Injury management plans and return to work plans**

Injury management plans and return to work plans co-ordinate and manage the treatment, rehabilitation and return to work of an injured worker.

A return to work plan is a simple plan. It is prepared where a worker is likely to be

incapacitated for more than 5 working days but less than 28 calendar days.

On the other hand, an injury management plan is a comprehensive plan and is prepared where the injured worker is likely to be incapacitated for more than 28 days.

Everyone, including the injured worker, should be involved in developing these plans.

## **Find out more**

For more detail about these plans, WorkSafe has three information sheets. Go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'IS014', 'IS015' and 'IS016'.

# Providing meaningful work for your injured worker

In many instances, an injured worker may not be able to perform their normal duties, but will have the capacity to undertake other suitable duties. These may either be:

- pre-injury work tasks that are somehow altered or restricted, or
- a completely new set of work tasks (perhaps even a different work area) compared to those performed before the injury.

Employers and managers are responsible for identifying and providing an injured worker with suitable duties.

Employers should never thrust an injured worker into the first available

set of suitable duties without careful consideration, as it may seriously affect their recovery.

Suitable duties that do not add value to a workplace or aren't meaningful to the worker will usually lead to dissatisfied and unmotivated injured workers; they can also cause co-workers to become disgruntled due to the perception that the injured worker is either not pulling their weight or being counter-productive.

Workers also need to be flexible when taking on alternative duties. In many workplaces (especially smaller ones), it's often difficult for an employer to find other suitable tasks for their injured worker. The worker needs to recognise

that the tasks may not be ideal, but they're usually only short term and their aim is to help with a return to full fitness.

Suitable duties must be carefully considered by both the employer and the injured worker, to make sure they meet any restrictions specified by the treating doctor and are meaningful to both the injured worker and the workplace.

For practical help listing suitable alternative duties, use our checklist. Go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'GB199'.





## RETURN TO WORK *feature*

# Tas scores high in national survey

**Safe Work Australia recently released the findings of its 2015–16 National Return to Work Survey. The survey is conducted by the Social Research Centre and includes workers injured in the last two years who have had at least one day off work because of their injury.**

### Tasmanian findings

Tasmania is performing well in the key measures of return to work rates:

- 92% of respondents had returned to work since their injury
- 86% were working at the time of the survey
- 66% had been working regularly over the preceding three months.

Each of these scores is higher than the national score and an improvement on Tasmania's score in the 2014–15 survey.

### Impact on workers' lives

Results show that not being able to return to work due to injury can have a negative impact on one's life:

- 11% of respondents nationally were receiving workers compensation payments to replace lost income, and just under a quarter reported that they needed to take additional paid or unpaid leave
- 21% considered their general health post-injury to be only fair or poor.

This correlates to other findings that long-term work absence, work disability and unemployment typically

have a negative impact on health and wellbeing (see the article 'Health benefits of returning to work' in this feature for details).

Promisingly, 80% of respondents believed they would fully or almost fully recover from their injury or illness.

### Experience of being on workers compensation

Tasmania scored well in areas that asked the workers if they thought the claims process was 'open and honest' and 'helped with [their] recovery'.

Questions that asked if 'the system was working to protect [their] best interests' and 'there was good communication between the various people and organisations [they] dealt with' scored the lowest. This was consistent with national responses, suggesting room for improvement in communication, consultation and processes that take the worker's best interests into account.

### Getting back to work

Medical providers play a key role in the return to work process, and it's pleasing to see the majority of providers (84%) are advising workers of the physical benefits of returning to work.

Nearly all (93%) providers issuing certificates detailed what duties the worker would be able to do, assisting their employer to find suitable duties.

Workplace rehabilitation providers play a slightly larger role in Tasmania than

on a national level, with 79% of injured workers having received rehabilitation services in their recovery, compared to 74% nationally.

### Support and community

Absence from work and returning to work after injury can be a difficult time; the support of colleagues and supervisors plays a vital part in a successful return to work for injured workers.

This sense of community and support was particularly strong in small business nationally, as was the belief in commitment to health and safety by colleagues and supervisors.

See the article 'Health benefits of returning to work' in this feature for further guidance on how employers and managers can support their injured worker's recovery.



# What to do if you're accused of bullying

This is an excerpt from WorkSafe's new guide 'How to prevent and manage workplace bullying'. To get your copy of the full guide plus posters to display in your workplace, go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/bullying](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/bullying) or call our Helpline on 1300 366 322.

Being accused of bullying someone can be upsetting and may come as a shock, but it's important to be open to feedback from others, and be prepared to change your behaviour.

You may be approached by the person who perceives you are bullying them; or someone (such as a health and safety representative or manager) may speak to you on their behalf. You might have upset other colleagues beyond the person coming to you.

Keep the following points in mind:

## Don't dismiss the complaint

If someone approaches you about your behaviour, try to remain calm and avoid worsening what is likely to be an already difficult situation.

The other person is more likely to share their views with you in a neutral space, and if you ask open questions and don't try to justify your behaviour.

Listen carefully to the person's concerns. Apologise for causing offence and discuss how you might work together more effectively. Reflect on the information you've been provided and decide how you will react or modify your behaviour.

If you don't understand the complaint, talk someone you trust, such as your:

- manager or supervisor
- contact/grievance officer
- health and safety representative
- union representative.

Any discussion should be strictly confidential.

If you believe you're being unjustly accused, or the complaint is malicious, discuss this with your manager or human resources officer. It may be that an informal discussion between you, the person making the report, and a third party will solve the problem.

## Stop doing anything that causes offence

If you've been made aware that your behaviour is considered unreasonable, think about what you're doing, and consider stopping or changing your behaviour.

If you're found to have kept bullying someone after their objection to your behaviour was made known to you, the fact that you persisted will make the offence more serious if disciplinary proceedings begin.

## Understand your rights

It is essential that people are protected against false and malicious accusations. People may be falsely accused of workplace bullying because of:

- a desire by others to harm them
- an over-reaction to a trivial or isolated incident.

Someone accused of bullying has the right to:

- be fully informed of the complaint
- be fully informed about the complaint process
- reply in full to the complaint
- be considered innocent until proven guilty
- be represented by a person of their choice
- have confidentiality maintained
- be told of any rights of appeal.

If a person accused of bullying is denied these rights, then any formal action taken against them may be overturned should they appeal against it.

# What to do if you're bullied

*This is an edited excerpt from WorkSafe's new guide 'How to prevent and manage workplace bullying'. To get your copy plus posters to display in your workplace, go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/bullying](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/bullying) or call our Helpline on 1300 366 322.*

## Check your workplace policy and procedure

First, see if your workplace has a bullying policy and reporting procedure:

- ask your manager, supervisor, HR manager, or health and safety representative
- check noticeboards, intranets or in staff newsletters
- check other WHS policies or codes of conduct.

There may also be a grievance/complaint procedure in your industrial award or employment agreement.

## Keep a record

Make a detailed and accurate record of what happens: the place, date, time, names of people and what was said or done, the date you raised the matter and who with. This information may be useful later, particularly if more formal steps need to be taken.

## Consider speaking to the other person

If you feel safe and comfortable doing so, calmly tell the other person you object to their behaviour and ask that it stop. They may not realise the effect their behaviour is having on you and

your feedback may give them the opportunity to change their actions.

Make it quite clear to the person involved that the behaviour is unwanted and unacceptable, and that if it doesn't stop, you'll take further action.

You can also ask your health and safety representative, union representative, or manager or supervisor for help and to accompany you when you approach the person.

## Use a counselling service

Counselling may help you develop ways of dealing with a bully or the effects of bullying.

Some workplaces offer free counselling services through their employee assistance program; ask your HR manager.

Your union may be able to tell you about sources of support, particularly if your workplace is a small organisation where employee assistance programs or formal procedures for dealing with complaints may not exist.

## Report it

If you believe you are experiencing or witnessing workplace bullying, report it as early as possible. Your employer or manager can't address the problem if they don't know about it.

If your manager or supervisor is the person whose behaviour concerns you, consider reporting their behaviour to someone like your health and safety representative who can make a report on your behalf if you give them permission, or give you advice

on how to make a report (they are not responsible for resolving the matter).

You can find a sample 'Notification of bullying behaviour' form at [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/bullying](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/bullying) that you might use to record and notify any bullying behaviour.

## What you should expect of your workplace

If you tell your workplace that you're experiencing workplace bullying, it should:

- act promptly
- treat all matters seriously
- ensure procedural fairness
- be neutral
- support everyone involved
- don't victimise
- communicate process and outcomes
- keep records
- maintain confidentiality
- maintain transparency.

Your workplace may decide to investigate reports of a serious or complex nature.

If the matter is resolved, your workplace should follow-up with you to review if the actions taken have been effective. Your workplace may also provide you with ongoing support or advise you of external support or counselling services.



# Who's bullied and how: National research

If you're not satisfied with the action taken by your workplace, you could contact:

- your union
- WorkSafe Tasmania on 1300 366 322
- Fair Work Commission on 1300 799 675.

## Why people don't report it

There are many reasons why people don't report being bullied or witnessing it, or don't co-operate in inquiries. These may include:

- lack of response from their employer, manager or supervisor
- lack of knowledge about bullying behaviours and their effects
- not knowing if there is a policy and procedure in place for reporting bullying
- uncertainty about where to seek help
- fear of retribution from the bully
- feeling intimidated or embarrassed
- believing the behaviour is part of the workplace culture
- thinking nothing will change
- thinking their opportunities for promotion at work or the wider industry will be affected.
- 

A Safe Work Australia report reveals a snapshot of who is bullied in Australia, in what way and how frequently, and who by. Alarming, despite increased awareness and education, bullying also appears to be on the rise.

## The findings

The report 'Bullying and Harassment in Australian Workplaces' shows that:

- almost 10% of Australian workers have been bullied at work (and that number has risen over the past five years)
- of these, 12% are bullied daily, and almost a third are bullied at least once a week.

The industries with the highest levels of bullying were:

- electricity, gas and water
- health and community services
- government and defence
- transport and storage
- mining.

The most common forms of harassment were being sworn or yelled at (37%) and being humiliated in front of others (23%). People were also targeted because of their gender or ethnicity.

The report also highlights that in 62% of cases, the bully was a supervisor — and this is more than twice the rate of the next cited bully (a co-worker, in 28% of cases).

## Why it matters

Safe Work Australia said workplaces should take bullying seriously. Bullying is associated with an increased intention to leave, absenteeism, and decreased job commitment — and these can have serious consequences for any business.

## What can be done

Safe Work Australia specifically recommends that 'since supervisors are ... the source of bullying behaviours, efforts should be made to provide education and training [about] appropriate supervisory behaviours, particularly [when] managing the performance of employees.'

The report also recommends that 'workplaces should establish policies or guidelines for respectful behaviour, particularly toward women and people from diverse ethnic backgrounds, and how to address bullying and harassment should it occur; attention should be drawn to the legal and WHS implications and organisational sanctions.'

## Resources for you

WorkSafe's guide 'How to prevent and respond to workplace bullying' specifically addresses both these recommendations. It also contains practical templates so you can develop a policy; and a competency register to help identify the appropriate communication and management skills your managers need.

You'll find the guide plus copies of the templates on the WorkSafe website. Go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/bullying](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/bullying).

## Read the report

You'll find the Safe Work Australian report at [www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au). Search for 'workplace mental health' and follow the links to the report 'Bullying and Harassment in Australian Workplaces'.



## Awards, Month: New directions

**After many successful years of celebrating and encouraging workplaces in WHS, we're shaking things up with our annual Awards and Month programs.**

From now on, we'll be alternating events each year. In 2017, we'll be running statewide tradeshows and Better Work Tasmania networking events; then in 2018, the Awards and Conference will be back.

There are many reasons behind the changes — the main one ensuring greater experiences for you.

We're reinvigorating the Awards process. This means you'll have more time to develop quality entries for the prestigious Awards. We foresee this will make an already strong competition even stiffer!

And providing major safety events every second year will maximise the quality of speakers and presentations we provide to workplaces. We'll again offer events in all the major regions, in face to face events; and continue to provide online events, too. Your opportunities to improve how you manage WHS will be even greater! We're currently developing the 2017 program, so watch the next edition of Workplace Issues for details.

We'll also be aligning our local initiatives with what's happening on a national level. These include what Safe Work Australia offers each year with its online seminars and podcasts, and other campaigns and projects that aim to improve WHS.

Our successful Better Work Tasmania program — with over 1,000 members — is also aligning with the new Month

and Awards programs. Better Work has a proven history of hosting leading experts in safety and wellbeing, targeting specific industries and issues, and providing networking opportunities for people to share what works for them.

All these changes are all guided by our five year strategic plan for delivering the Month, Awards and Better Work Tasmania. This strategic direction will ensure WorkSafe delivers you the best events and information you need to excel in work health and safety and wellbeing.





**It's free!**  
**Become a member  
and gain the benefits.**



## Get on board with Better Work

**Better Work Tasmania has the year off to a good start with two networking sessions discussing various WHS issues.**

The February event 'Creating mentally safe and healthy workplaces' was attended by 150 people. They heard about psychosocial risks in the workplace from expert speakers, and gained practical skills for reducing the risk of psychological injury from and at work. This was supported by a discussion on current case law in this area. This session was co-hosted by the Safety Institute of Australia and Employer of Choice.

The February networking session targeted those working in the health care sector, and was co-hosted by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Tasmania. Topics included fatigue management, mental health, manual tasks, and handling violence and aggression in patients.

Both events were live-streamed and recorded for those who could not attend on the day. You can find these at [www.betterwork.tas.gov.au](http://www.betterwork.tas.gov.au).

## WorkSafe Month: What you said

Last year, the WorkSafe Month program saw our first two-day conference plus our usual face-to-face forums and online options.

We surveyed over 230 people — some who had attended WorkSafe Month events, others who hadn't; from across all major business sectors, business sizes and regions of the state — to find out how this program met expectations.

### Positive responses

91% of respondents said their organisation took part in WorkSafe Month to improve WHS. They said it:

- promoted greater workplace discussions
- increased their awareness and understanding of WHS issues
- gave them access to new information and emerging issues, professional development opportunities and industry-specific information.

There's been a consistent increase in participation each year since the Month was formed in 2011.

### Online vs in person

The survey revealed that a combination of face-to-face and online was preferred. Respondents praised our expert speakers:

*I am so inspired by the conference and thoroughly enjoyed the diversity of presenters.*

*The speakers were excellent and did an amazing job with delivery of information.*

*The presenters giving the webinars were of high quality and all the information was very relevant. The webinars [were] a great initiative that enabled me to be part of the Month.*

People said workplace commitments and time pressures were reasons for not attending the events they registered for. If that's you, don't despair — you can find a selection of recordings at the Better Work Tasmania website at [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/betterwork](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/betterwork).

#### *Congratulations to:*

- Cassie Plaza, Bolduans Bay Oysters, Smithton
- Gary Streets, Factory Blinds, Invermay
- Mandy King, Langford Support Services, Moonah

They've each won a Coles Myer voucher valued at \$100 for responding to our survey. Thank you to everyone who participated.

# Learning from the past

WorkSafe Tasmania has received the final report from the University of Tasmania, which analysed the findings and recommendations from coroners' reports into workplace-deaths in Tasmania and Australia over the last ten years.

As well as the coroner's findings, responses and recommendations, the university's research also looked at:

- how industry and WHS regulators responded to these coroner's reports
- the relevant laws from each state, to compare and analyse coroners' powers and the legislated basis of their findings.

The purpose of this analysis — and interviews with coroners and others in Tasmania and Australia — was to identify recurring or key WHS issues and challenges.

Out of this, the university has presented a number of recommendations for WorkSafe to consider. These mainly focus on:

- improving collaboration between the coroner's office and WorkSafe
- creating new opportunities and mechanisms for WorkSafe to collaborate with workplaces and industry.

The ultimate goal is to prevent re-occurrences of the incidents and fatalities that went before the coroner.

## Case study:

# Unlicensed use of an unsafe forklift

*In this series of case studies, we'll examine the facts of incidents and situations that WorkSafe has been involved. Maybe these touch on safety issues in your workplace? If so, read on to learn how you can manage them.*

## What happened?

Deliveries are unloaded at a shop in a public carpark, using a forklift. This happens three or four times a day. There is apparently no marked-out loading zone, and the forklift's lights and reversing alarms don't work.

This raised concerns for the safety of customers and their vehicles.

## What were the safety issues?

The shop owner admitted he drove the forklift without having a high risk work licence to do so. This is illegal.

The forklift was also in poor condition, with the hydraulic hoses in the mast being severely damaged.

## How was this problem fixed?

The shop owner enrolled with a registered training organisation to get a high risk work licence to operate a forklift.

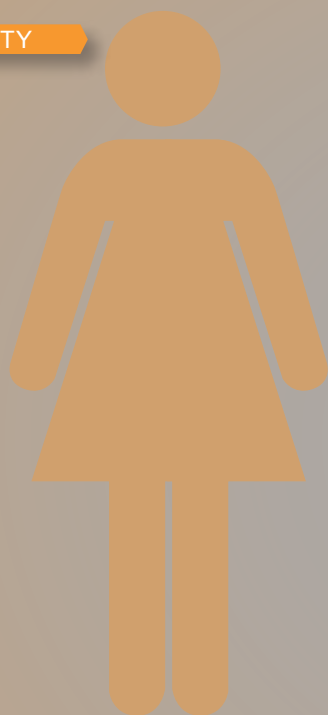
## What can you do?

Make sure you or your workers are licenced to operate a forklift. To find out about high risk work licences, go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and look under the 'licensing' tab.

Learn how to safely operate and maintain your forklift. Our practical guide 'Forklift safety: Reducing the risks' covers these, plus traffic management, training and pre-start checks. Find this guide at the WorkSafe website at [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) by searching for 'NHP001'.

If you need further help understanding forklift safety and licensing requirements, talk to our Helpline or request a free visit from one of our Safety Advisors. Call 13300 366 322.





## Case study:

# No toilet facilities for farm workers

*In this series of case studies, we'll examine the facts of incidents and situations that WorkSafe has been involved in. Maybe these touch on safety issues in your workplace? If so, read on to learn how you can manage them.*

## What happened?

A farm where backpackers worked had no toilets: they worked a 13-hour day without access to a toilet.

The backpacker felt it was the responsibility of the labour-hire agency (that sent the workers to the farm) to make sure the workplace adequate facilities for workers.

He didn't feel like he could raise the matter with his employer, as he had just started working for them. He was also concerned that the other workers, many from non-English speaking backgrounds, would be unlikely to complain or know about WHS requirements.

## What were the safety issues?

The labour-hire agency's operations manager had conducted pre-site visits before they sent workers to the workplace, so she was unable to explain why toilets were not provided for workers at this particular worksite.

## How was this problem fixed?

The labour-hire manager arranged for toilets to be in place before work began the next day.

## What can you do?

The 'Managing the Work Environment and Facilities' code of practice will help you identify what facilities are needed for workers, including toilets and handwashing. It includes an extensive checklist for auditing your workplace.

You'll find this at the WorkSafe website at [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) — search for the code 'CP124'.

Our March 2016 edition of Workplace Issues magazine had a feature on managing the safety of labour-hire workers, whether you're the agency providing them or the workplace using them. Find the magazine on our website at [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) under the resources tab.

If you need further help understanding facilities for workers in your workplace, talk to our Helpline or request a free visit from one of our Safety Advisors. Call 13300 366 322.

# Correction: First aid code

Our December 2016 edition's article 'First aiders: How many, how trained?' referred to the Tasmanian First Aid Code of Practice.

This Code was replaced on 1 October with the National First Aid Code of Practice, which has updated references to the training competencies.

The section titled 'Types of First Aid Training' should now read:

First aiders should hold nationally recognised Statement/s of Attainment issued by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) for the nationally endorsed first aid unit/s of competency.

Provide First Aid — provides competencies required to recognise and respond to common life-threatening injuries or illnesses, including life-support using cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and to manage the casualty and incident until the arrival of medical or other assistance. In low risk workplaces, first aiders are sufficiently trained if they can perform CPR and treat minor illnesses and injuries.

Provide Advanced First Aid and Provide Advance First Aid Response — provides additional competencies required to apply advanced first aid procedures. This type of training is suitable for some high risk workplaces.

Manage First Aid Services and Resources — provides competencies required to apply advanced first aid procedures and to manage a first aid room.

Provide First Aid in Remote Situations — provides the competencies required to administer first aid in a remote and/or isolated situation, including preparing for aero-medical evacuation. This type of training is suitable for high risk workplaces that are likely to have a major delay in accessing emergency services.



## Report: Scheme review

The latest review of Tasmania's workers compensation scheme for 2015–16 has been produced for the WorkCover Tasmania Board.

### What's the review about?

The scheme review looks at the workers compensation scheme to 30 June 2016. It considers the operation and performance of the scheme by analysing the claims experience of injured workers, the scheme costs, and any changes that may have impacted the scheme. It also provides projections for the next financial year.

### What are the highlights of the review?

This year, there were 7,592 claims reported, which is a 2% decrease compared to the previous year. There was also a \$10 million reduction in total claim payments this year, down to \$153 million.

The number of new claims where an injured worker required time off work increased during the year. Despite this increase, the total number of lost time claims has fallen.

### What payments were made this year?

Lump sum payments were around \$52 million and medical payments were \$43 million (a 5% reduction on the previous year).

Legal and investigation payments increased by \$2 million to \$15 million, continuing a trend.

### What's in the future?

In 2016–17, we're expecting to see similar trends to this year; so we're projecting a further reduction in claims.

### Who should read the review, and where can we find it?

We expect scheme participants such as licensed insurers and self-insurers will find the review's data particularly useful, as will anyone involved in claims management or interested in workers compensation trends.

It's available on the Board's website at [www.workcover.tas.gov.au](http://www.workcover.tas.gov.au); search for 'scheme review'.



## New building

Tasmania's new Building Act 2016 came into effect on 1 January 2017 and takes an entirely new approach to determining whether building, demolition and plumbing work needs a council permit to proceed.

### Maintenance of essential safety features

There's now a greater focus on ensuring the essential safety features of a public-use building have been maintained. Rather than requiring the owner or occupant to display a signed certificate in the foyer, the owner must perform maintenance according to an approved schedule and make this schedule and evidence of compliance available on request. A building surveyor works with the responsible owner to prepare and approve the schedule of maintenance.

We've seen too many instances of a lovely certificate in the foyer, but fire doors blocked and safety features not maintained.

### New processes for demolition

Under the old building act, you had to go through the same approval process to knock something down as you did to construct a new building.

The new act simplifies the approval process for demolition that's not part of building work. Some low-risk demolition projects can be carried out without



## laws in force

a permit. Larger demolition projects may be assessed and authorised by a building surveyor, and high-risk demolitions still need a full council permit to proceed.

The emphasis is now on WHS and complying with other relevant legislation, such as dealing with asbestos.

### Risk-based approval process

Rather than a 'one size fits all' approach where almost all work required a permit, the new act takes a risk-based approach to approvals, matching the approval process to the level of risk.

So relatively low-risk projects (such as building a small shed, carport or deck) may be able to proceed without any permit from your local council. At the other end of the scale, high-risk projects (such as commercial and industrial buildings) will still need a full council permit process.

### Need more?

Get more detail from Consumer, Building and Occupational Services, which administers the new law, at [www.justice.tas.gov.au/building/regulation/review](http://www.justice.tas.gov.au/building/regulation/review).

**Safe Work Australia has released its Work-related Traumatic Injury Fatalities report, which provides details on the number of people who have died in Australia from work-related injuries.**

### Key points

The new report captures what happened in 2015: 195 workers died from injuries received at work. While this is an unfortunate number, it is the lowest rate since the report began in 2003.

Some other statistics for 2015:

- male workers accounted for 96% of fatalities
- almost 60% of fatalities involved vehicles
- 26 workers died after falling from height
- almost half the fatalities (52) occurred in the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry.

### Find the report

You can find the 2015 and previous reports at the Safe Work Australia website. Go to [www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au) and look under the statistics tab.

The 2015 report has a colourful infographic of the key findings that you could display in your workplace.

### What you can do

If you're in the **agriculture, forestry and fishing industry**, WorkSafe has plenty of resources to help you make sure your workers stay safe. Go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'farming' to pull up various guides and resources. Or search for 'COP006' to find the Forestry Safety Code (Tasmania). Our Safe Farming Tasmania Consultant Phill John can also help you; to book a visit, call Phill directly on 0407 015 400.

If **working at height** is done in your workplace, read the two codes Managing the Risk of Falls at Workplaces, and Preventing Falls in Housing Construction. Go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'CP122' and 'CP127'.

For a range of **safety management basics**, check out the codes of practice such as How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks, and Managing the Work Environment and Facilities. Go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'codes 2016'.

Finally, if you need some **hands-on help**, get a free visit from one of our Safety Advisors. They help small to medium sized business to better manage safety and implement solutions that are relevant, practical and affordable. Go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'advisors'.



## Latest data on national fatalities

# Everybody's Talking...

## Questions and answers from our Helpline

**Our premises have inadequate heating to warm it. Inside it was 3 degrees Celsius last week, and it's often below 10 degrees Celsius during the winter months. We're currently wearing several layers of clothing, gloves and so on. Is this sufficient?**

Optimum comfort for sedentary work is between 20 and 26 degrees Celsius. Temperatures outside this range can potentially lead to fatigue and heat or cold related illnesses, depending on the time of year and the clothing that you wear.

(The ideal work temperatures for people doing other of work will vary, depending on factors such as what work you're doing and the amount of clothing you're wearing).

A cold environment can easily move from one that is uncomfortable for workers to one that is unsafe. The symptoms of hypothermia include:

- numbness in hands or fingers
- uncontrolled shivering
- loss of fine motor skills, particularly in hands – you may have trouble with buttons, laces, zips
- slurred speech and difficulty thinking clearly
- irrational behaviour; for example, a person will even begin to discard their clothing.

Immediate treatment is required for workers with these symptoms.

Your PCBU has the primary duty under the Work Health and Safety Act 2012 to ensure (so far as is reasonably

practicable) that you aren't exposed to health and safety risks arising from the business or undertaking.

It is extremely important in the situation you've described that the PCBU carefully monitor both the conditions and the health of staff.

The PCBU should consult with workers, and specialists if necessary, on the most effective ways to provide a warmer and therefore safer working environment. More efficient heating may be one outcome, but the control of draughts may also help.

The code of practice Managing the Work Environment and Facilities provides more information and practical guidance on ensuring your work environment is safe for workers. Go to [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) and search for 'CP124'.

**What's the recommended safety footwear when using a chainsaw? Australian Standard AS 2210.1 indicates footwear marked with a chainsaw image is the correct footwear to use, but are there alternatives to these specially-made boots? Is there a list of requirements, such as steel caps or cut-resistant material? This will help us assess the suitability of our current safety boots, and determine if they'll suit chainsaw work.**

AS/NZS 2210.1:2010 Safety, protective and occupational footwear—Guide to selection, care and use provides guidance on the requirements for safety footwear.

When considering footwear for chainsaw operators (or for other industry or specialist uses), you should conduct a risk assessment of the work to be performed.

The PCBU needs to understand exactly what its chainsaw operators do: how much chainsaw work is done, how they do the work, the typical environments they operate in and what other work they do. This should lead to a clearer indication of the type of boots most suitable for their purposes.

If there's no history of foot and lower limb injuries while operating chainsaws, it might mean that the focus should not be entirely on the cut-resistant material of specialist boots. Other factors such as ankle support or slip and water resistance may be equally or more important.

This Australian Standard discusses these issues and has a sample hazard identification and risk assessment worksheet in Table 2.1. You can find it at [infostore.saiglobal.com](http://infostore.saiglobal.com).

**When must I have a return to work and/or injury management plan?**

When a Tasmanian worker suffers a significant injury, an injury management coordinator must ensure there's a plan for managing the worker's treatment, rehabilitation and return to work.

There are two types of plan for this: return to work plans and injury management plans. The type of plan used depends on the time the worker is (or is likely to be) incapacitated for work:

A return to work plan:

- is a simple plan for coordinating and managing the treatment,



# Build a safety system: Training part 2

rehabilitation and return to work of an injured worker. It may simply be based upon the information provided in the initial medical certificate accompanying the worker's claim, such as time off work, medical restrictions and alternative duties

- is required where a worker is likely to be totally or partially incapacitated for work for more than 5 working days but less than 28 days
- must be prepared before the expiration of 5 days after the worker becomes incapacitated for more than 5 working days; that is, 10 days after the worker becomes incapacitated.

An injury management plan:

- is a comprehensive plan for co-ordinating and managing the treatment, rehabilitation and return to work of an injured worker. It is more complex than a return to work plan
- is required where a worker is likely to be totally or partially incapacitated for work for 28 days or more
- must be prepared before the expiration of 5 days after the worker becomes incapacitated for more than 28 days; that is, 33 days after the worker becomes incapacitated

Further information about preparing plans can be found in the guides <http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/compensation>. You'll also find specific information aimed at workers and employers.

In this series, we've helped you build an effective safety management system, specific to your workplace needs. You'll find previous articles in past editions at [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) under the resources tab. In the previous edition, we looked at making sure your workers are trained to safely do their work; here, we wrap up the topic.

## Once someone is trained

Once you've put your worker through training, make sure they understand and can apply their new skills and knowledge. Make sure this training, and your workers' new competencies, match the requirements you identified right at the beginning. Do this assessment before they start performing their work tasks.

Keep records of all the training done, even if it is on the job.

## A word on trainers

Obviously you need to make sure that training and assessment of training is delivered by a competent person with the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience. And they need to be able to impart that to others!

Look at the trainer's qualifications and experience; this applies whether they're an external provider or someone from within your workplace. For the latter, you might consider giving them 'train the trainer' preparation.

## Train your managers

Managers in your workplace must be trained in the WHS practices and principles appropriate to their role and responsibilities. They need to be trained so they:

- understand their WHS obligations
- can make sure the workers they manage are working safely.

Include managers in the hazard management process and developing WHS management plans, too; think of these as training exercises.

## Keep it fresh

Don't think training is a one-off event. Refresher training may be needed, especially for tasks that are not performed regularly. Consider including this in your training plans.

And regularly review the training plans you create for individual workers and your whole organisation. You should also do this if there are changes to the laws, requirements around licensing or other required competencies, or in your workplace (such as the work processes, equipment or chemicals used). This will ensure your training is relevant and current — and your workers stay safe.

*Next edition we look at recruitment and inductions. If you have particular issues you'd like addressed, email us at [wstinfo@justice.tas.gov.au](mailto:wstinfo@justice.tas.gov.au) with the subject line 'magazine safety article'.*



TOXIC  
RECRUITMENT

# AGGRESSIVE ASSISTANT

This position requires a self-motivated person with a “can-not-do” attitude. You will treat your workmates with utter contempt. You will be quick thinking and devious, with the flexibility to change your story at a moment’s notice. A willingness to create conflict is vital. People with empathy and compassion need not apply.

**Nobody deliberately employs a workplace bully, but they do exist.**

**But keeping the workplace safe from bullying — that’s a real job, for everyone.**

**Bullying is just another workplace hazard. If you’re an employer, it’s up to you to prevent it or manage it. If you’re a worker who is experiencing repeated and unreasonable behaviour, it’s up to you to report it.**

**Whether you’re a worker, employer or manager, get WorkSafe Tasmania’s practical information on psychosocial hazards and workplace bullying, including posters and checklists, from [www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/bullying](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/bullying) or call our Helpline on 1300 366 322.**

