

December 2017

Workplace

issues



"AT MY WORK WE HAVE BEEN
STRETCHED BEYOND CAPACITY;
I SHOULD HAVE DOUBLE CHECKED,
BUT IT'S NOT MY JOB."

**DON'T LEAVE IT TO
SOMEONE ELSE.**

WORKSAFE TASMANIA MONTH
1 – 31 OCTOBER 2017

STAYING HEALTHY AND SAFE AT WORK
IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY



Key stories inside

WorkSafe 2017

Changes to workers comp laws

New and young workers

Work Safe
TASMANIA

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Publisher

Published quarterly by
WorkSafe Tasmania.

Online

To see current and past editions, our warnings about telefraud and graphic images, and to subscribe, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au then choose the 'Resources' button then the 'Workplace Issues magazine' link.

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ISSN 1444-6316 (Print)

ISSN 2204-5597 (Online)

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

Learning for a safe and healthy future



Welcome to the December 2017 edition of Workplace Issues. At this time of the year, you may be winding down for the holiday season, reflecting upon the achievements of the past 12 months, and planning for the new year ahead.

Maybe your new year's resolution for your workplace is to improve health, safety and wellbeing for your workers, and your business performance. The link between healthy workers and safety, productivity and other business performance indicators is strong. It makes good business sense to nurture healthy and safe workers.

With this in mind, the Hodgman Liberal Government is investing over \$6.4 million over the next four years through its 'Healthy Tasmania Five Year Strategic Plan'. This plan includes workplaces

turning their good intentions into sustainable healthy habits, through the Healthy Tasmanian Workplaces Initiative.

I was proud to launch this important initiative during WorkSafe Month 2017. Healthy Tasmanian Workplaces aims to help workplaces turn their good intentions into sustainable healthy habits, and improve health and wellbeing for Tasmanian workers, particularly focusing on smoking, obesity, poor nutrition and low physical activity levels.

It will focus on a holistic approach to both physical and psychosocial lifestyle habits, and will build on existing resources, tools and partnerships.

This initiative was announced in the Tasmanian Government's Healthy Tasmania Five Year Strategic Plan (you'll find this on the Department of Health and Human Service's website at www.dhhs.tas.gov.au). WorkSafe Tasmania and the Department of Premier and Cabinet are leading this initiative, partnering with peak industry groups and service providers.

There's information about the Healthy Tasmanian Workplaces Initiative, and how you can use it to make positive changes in your workplace, at the worksafe website at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au. I encourage you to take a look — and start taking action.

Another great wellbeing initiative was WorkSafe Month's recent Walk for WHS and Wellbeing. It's the perfect example of how easy it is to incorporate healthy lifestyle choices into your day. People from across the community

joined together, discovering that it's not difficult or expensive to build exercise into each day. I encourage employers and workers to look at how they can do the same in each work day at their workplaces.

I hope you were able to attend the WorkSafe expo or some of the other WorkSafe Month events. The Expo, held in Salamanca, was well attended and participants relished the opportunity to meet these experts and service providers in safety, health and wellbeing under the one roof.

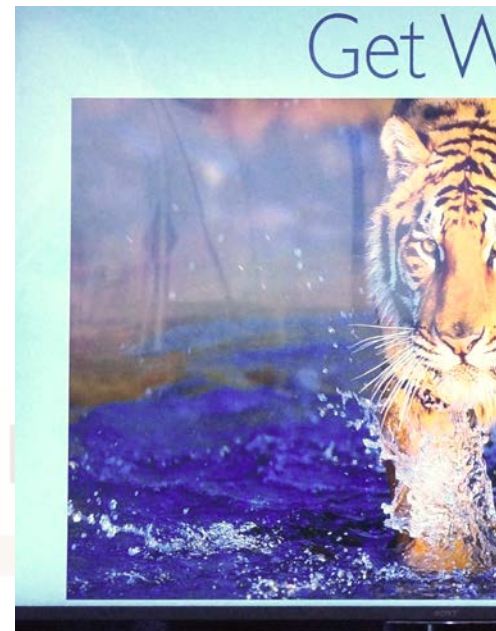
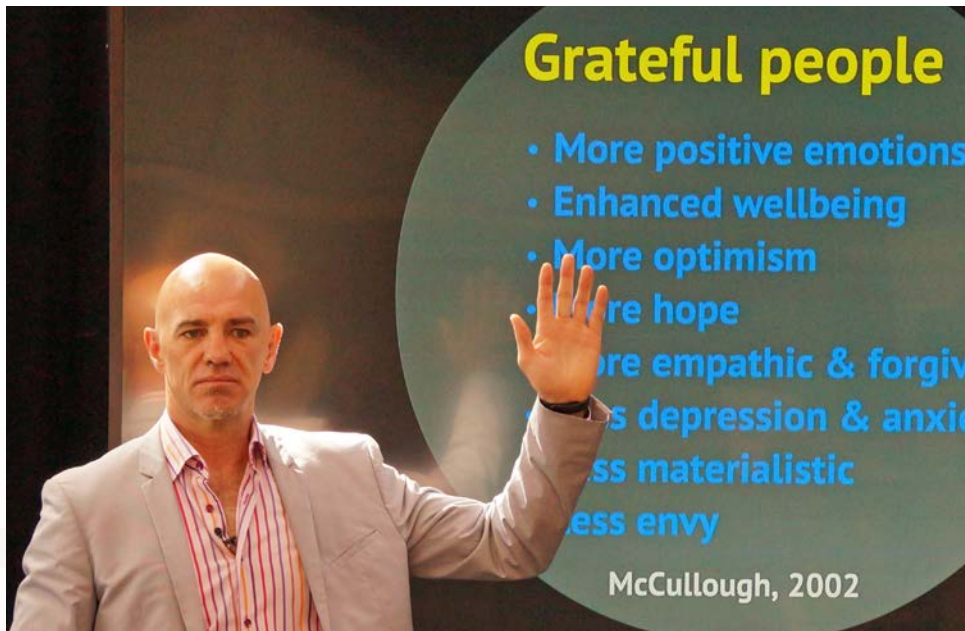
Along with the regional breakfast forums and Safe Work Australia's online video offerings, WorkSafe Month continued to successfully help employers, managers and workers from all industries learn the latest in safety, health and wellbeing — and take these lessons back to their workplace.

If you need more guidance, see the 'Build a wellbeing program' and 'Build a safety system' columns inside this magazine. They have the practical information you need to improve wellbeing and safety in your workplace in the new year.

Or arrange a free visit from one of WorkSafe's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Advisors. They can visit your workplace and tailor wellbeing and safety solutions to your business needs (to arrange a free visit, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'advisors').

I hope you're inspired to make 2018 a healthy, safe and prosperous year for your workers and your business.

Connecting with safety at



The first ever WorkSafer Expo saw workers, employers, health and safety reps, safety officers and human resources managers visit the Princes Wharf 1 space for two days of work health and safety, wellbeing and return to work.

The Expo hosted informative seminars that went beyond the standard approach to WHS and wellbeing. Speakers Helena Popovic, Paul Taylor,

Stephen Dowling, Joanne Curran and Jimmy Thomson talked safety and wellbeing, but from non-traditional starting points — and we're predicting they'll become 'the norm' in years to come. Are you taking cold showers or busting out with 30 seconds of manic exercise before each meal? You soon will be...

The trade show's 38 exhibitors ran the gamut of workplace needs and

issues: training providers, employment agencies, mental health support, workers compensation services, safety equipment, drug testing, rehabilitation, asbestos safety, farm safety — and so much more!

Marcus Walmsley and his team from SRTA Life & Rescue had the biggest stall at the expo, and attracted plenty of interest in their highly-visible safety equipment. 'The Expo has been a great

the WorkSafer Expo



opportunity to connect with our existing clients and meet potential customers from businesses such as the councils and major utilities,' said Marcus.

'It's already translated into significant business for us, and overcome barriers to making those important connections. We're very happy with our time here.'

'It's definitely been worthwhile,' said Julie Boulter from training provider Swinburne University of Technology.

'We've made really good connections, and helped people plan the qualifications they need to get ahead. In turn, they've helped us understand what Tasmania really needs, and the potential for collaboration has been amazing. The WHS community here is really strong and we're excited to be a part of it.'

Cafe conversations hosted more intimate, interactive connections. Round table discussions about mental health,

physical wellbeing and workplace safety were led by expo exhibitors, so they were the perfect opportunity to ask questions and also share ideas with others seated around each table.

Over the next few pages, we look at some of the other events held at the Expo and throughout the rest of WorkSafe Month 2017.

Making Healthy Tasmanian Workplaces



The Hon Guy Barnett, Paul Taylor and the Hon Michael Ferguson at the launch of the Healthy Tasmanian Workplaces initiative

Healthy Tasmanian Workplaces was launched during WorkSafe Month. This important initiative aims to help workplaces turn their good intentions into sustainable healthy habits, and improve health and wellbeing for Tasmanian workers, particularly focusing on smoking, obesity, poor nutrition and low physical activity levels.

Healthy Tasmanian Workplaces was announced in the Tasmanian Government's Healthy Tasmania Five Year Strategic Plan (find this on the Department of Health and Human Service's website at www.dhhs.tas.gov.au). WorkSafe Tasmania and the Department of Premier and Cabinet are leading this initiative, partnering with peak industry groups and service providers.

It was launched by the Minister for Building and Construction Guy Barnett and the Minister for Health Michael Ferguson at the WorkSafer Expo.

Focus

Healthy Tasmanian Workplaces will focus on a holistic approach to both physical and psychosocial lifestyle habits, and will build on existing resources, tools and partnerships.

WorkSafe Tasmania has many tools and resources for health and wellbeing, including:

- the online Simple Guide to Workplace Health and Wellbeing (go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'simple guide')
- our free, face-to-face Health, Safety and Wellbeing Advisory Service
- Better Work Tasmania networking events and online resources for members (go to www.betterwork.tas.gov.au)
- the annual WorkSafe Month activities
- Workplace Issues magazine!

A new, free resource being rolled out by the Department of Health and Human Services is Ritualize.

Ritualize

Ritualize is an award-winning program designed to improve overall health and wellbeing of workers at work and at home, by helping them build healthy habits in the areas of movement, nutrition, sleep, mindset and social connectedness.

Ritualise aims is to help Tasmanian workplaces engage with workers through a scalable app-based healthy and safe lifestyle program. It will do this by:

- challenging participants to embed incremental healthier and safer behaviours, including eating, physical activity, sleep, and resilience
- providing a useful and practical engagement tool for workplaces to promote health, safety and wellbeing.

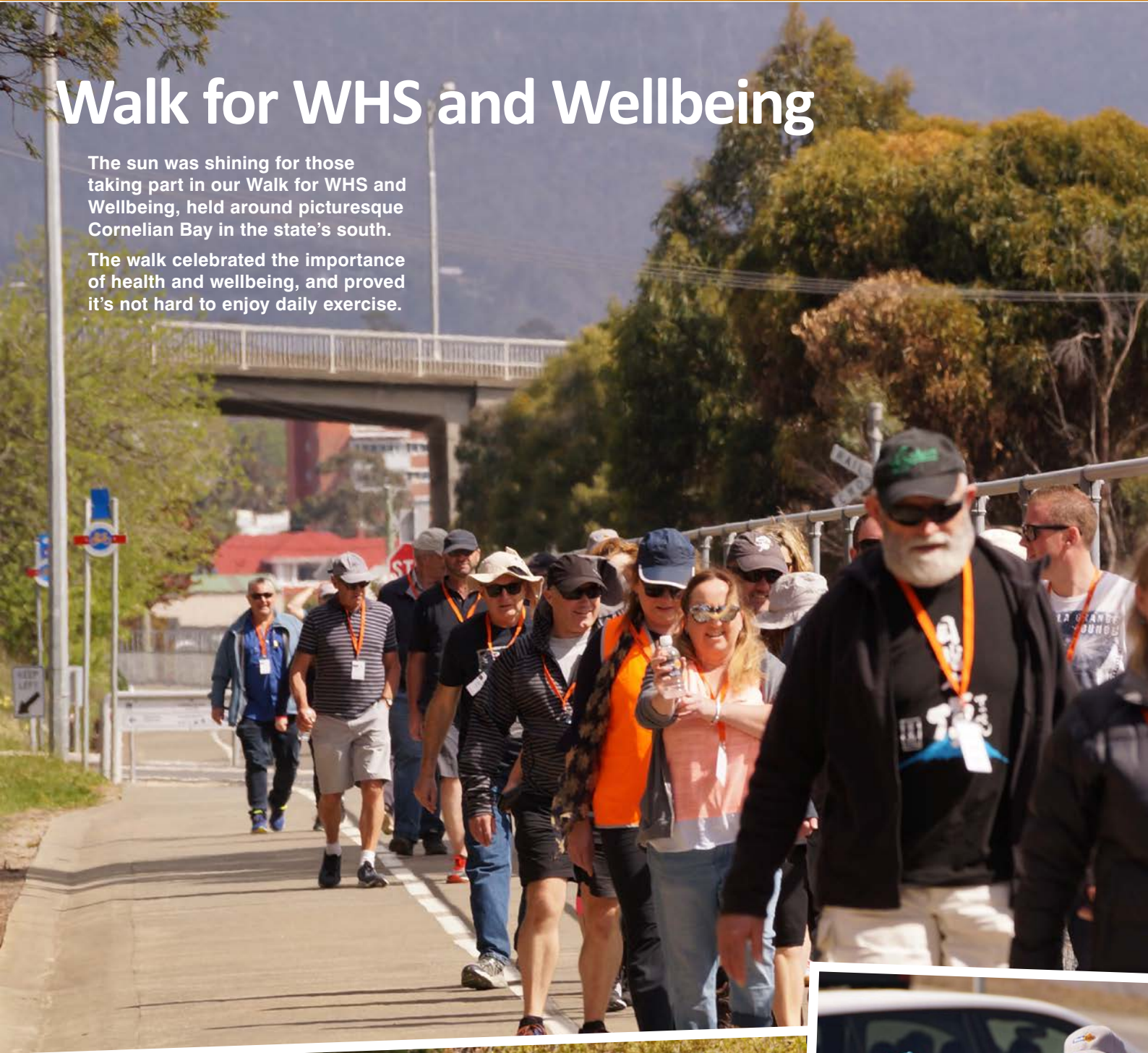
It will be available free to every workplace — so there's no budgetary reasons for you not to get involved.

To find out more go to www.ritualize.com/main/healthytasmania

Walk for WHS and Wellbeing

The sun was shining for those taking part in our Walk for WHS and Wellbeing, held around picturesque Cornelian Bay in the state's south.

The walk celebrated the importance of health and wellbeing, and proved it's not hard to enjoy daily exercise.



Betty shares asbestos safety message

Do you know if you've got asbestos in your home, or the houses and buildings you're renovating or re-building? Hint: With asbestos added to over 3,000 products before it was prohibited in 2003 — including those found in bathrooms, kitchens, carports, roofs and more — chances are, asbestos is there.

Many Tasmanians found this out when they encountered Betty the Asbestos Bus on her first-ever tour of the State, during November.

Betty is a purpose built, mobile model home demonstrating where asbestos might be found in and around Australian homes. Betty might be a little house, but she delivers a big and powerful message about the dangers of asbestos to every community she visits.

She is designed to educate all Australians about the dangers of asbestos — so they think smart, think safe, think 'asbestosawareness.com.au'.



Betty's interior, showing potential asbestos

Age, attitudes + return to work



Panel members at the Hobart hypothetical

The intersection between age, safety, return to work and wellbeing were explored in forums held in Ulverstone, Hobart and Launceston.

The forum's hypothetical situation focussed on Colin, an older worker in the health care sector whose lifestyle factors — shrinking social activity, sedentary

lifestyle and a diet heavily reliant on takeaways — affected his health.

Forum panel member and medical practitioner Dr Rob Walters said that Colin's health profile was sadly the norm for many older Tasmanians.

The hypothetical then discussed what happened when Colin hurt his back at

work. The role of age in incidents is a surprising one — while many people assume younger workers are more at risk, it's not always the case. Those lifestyle factors can make remaining 'fit for work' a challenge.

Ageing is not always a barrier to safety or health, but it's a factor that must be considered. And with our ageing population, it's one employers need to start addressing. 'We need to be age prepared,' said small business employer Lisa Burnell of Ronald Young & Co Builders.

Occupational Therapist Angela Kerrison-Smith highlighted the processes, relationships and attitudes needed to ensure a safe and sustainable return to work for Colin and others in his situation. 'Communication, collaboration and empowerment — we need to look at what's possible, not the limitations,' she said. WorkSafe Inspector Paul Kitchener explained the role inspectors and advisors can play in helping workers and employers find the right path.

A new perspective on safety signage

Tasmanian street artist Jamin was in residence at the WorkSafe Expo, working with the familiar yellow and black striped caution tape to create a mural.

'When I think of workplace safety, the first image that comes to mind is the classic yellow caution tape, and when I was approached with the concept I knew I had to incorporate this powerful imagery,' said Jamin.

Jamin has held residencies in Paris and Visual Curatorship of Faux Mo, Mona Foma's pop up night club.



Work in progress: Artist Jamin with his mural

New data: Significant drop in Tasmanian workplace injuries



Board member Steve Walch

New figures released at the launch of WorkSafe Tasmania Month 2017 reveal the number of workplace injuries in Tasmania has dropped by 26% between 2010 and 2016, from 9,711 down to 7,161.

To take an even bigger step back, in 1996, more than 16,000 people across the state were impacted by injuries at work each year — that's 44 Tasmanians injured every single day.

'Today, after 20 years of active WHS promotion, we are proud to say that the number of Tasmanians injured at work has reduced by more than half to just over 7,000 last year,' said WorkCover Tasmania Board member Dr Rob Walters at the official launch of WorkSafe Month for 2017.

'It should be up to all of us to do everything within our power to reduce the risks and associated costs of workplace injuries. We want every Tasmanian to return home from work in the same condition that they arrived in, which is why WorkSafe Tasmania Month is so important.

'It is imperative to remind everyone — whether it is the junior tradesman or the boss of the biggest corporation in the state — that we all have a responsibility towards health and safety.'

That sentiment was echoed by fellow Board member Paul Arnold, who is the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry's representative on the Board. 'As business leaders, we need to set an example that by engaging, educating and raising awareness within our community, we can change attitudes and behaviours that lead to safer and healthier workplaces,' he said.

Steve Walch, Board member and Unions Tasmania representative, said 'We are excited to be involved with (WorkSafe Month), as we strive to make Tasmanian workplaces safer and healthier. It's certainly a strong Month-long program, and I look forward to helping spread the message that safety is everyone's responsibility.'

Talking safety with your new and young workers

It's vital to ensure your new and young workers receive effective induction, training and information.

Why

If safety messages are properly 'sold' during an induction, workers can implement these messages on the job, which means you'll benefit from fewer accidents occurring.

You can also use an induction as an opportunity to empower your workers so they can better look after themselves and their co-workers.

Safety messages are more likely to be implemented if your workers are convinced by your level of commitment. Unless workers understand and believe what is said, the message is lost, and induction becomes ineffective. So how you impart this message is as important as the message itself.

What

WorkSafe research reveals that new young workers have a higher tendency to get injured within their first year of employment.

Our research also shows that younger Tasmanian workers (compared with other age groups) have lower levels of WHS awareness, understanding and engagement.

Other findings about younger workers include:

- WHS tends to be ranked lower than other workplace issues amongst younger workers
- younger workers tend not to know who to talk to at work about WHS issues
- they're also less likely than older workers to know where to go outside of work for information about WHS
- however, most young workers surveyed felt they knew what to do to work safely. They strongly disagreed with the statement 'it's okay to take shortcuts with safety'
- they're less likely to raise a WHS issue with their managers or to report an incident or injury (reasons might include fear they'll lose their job, especially if no one else is asking questions; or fear they'll appear to be complaining. This might include asking for training or supervision)
- they're least likely to speak up when they thought a workmate was not working safely.

Some other points to keep in mind about your new and young workers:

- they may not think an injury is worth mentioning unless they can't continue to work

- they may assume the equipment and chemicals they work with are safe
- they may think the protective equipment isn't cool and won't wear it unless someone makes them. They may not know how to use this equipment properly
- they may not be aware of the hazards associated with work being done by others around them.

As you can see, there are good reasons to put the time and energy into talking safety with your new and young workers!

How

- WorkSafe Victoria has guidance for managers, parents and educators of young workers. Go to www.worksafe.vic.gov.au and search for 'young workers'.
- Fair Work Australia has great information for employers of young workers. Go to www.fairwork.gov.au and search for 'employing young workers'.
- WorkSafe Tasmania has a guide for young workers, so why not download a copy to go through with your new young worker? Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'GB140'.



Talking safety when you're a **new** worker

It's important to talk with people at your workplace, discuss issues and situations, and share information. As a new worker, take the opportunity to learn from them and be safe.

What can you say?

Perhaps you're unsure how to raise a WHS issue with your supervisor or WHS representative. You could say or ask:

- I don't feel safe using that equipment by myself just yet.
- Is there training I can do so I know I'm using these chemicals safely?
- Could someone show me how to do this task correctly and safely?
- Could we go through the instructions for doing this task once more?
- I'm not sure what the safest way to do this task is.
- What protective equipment could I use when doing this so I don't hurt myself?
- What can I do to make sure I don't injure myself doing my work?

You can't be sacked for raising WHS issues. So if you don't know — ask.

Your responsibilities

There are things you need to do to contribute to a safe workplace too. You must:

- obey all reasonable instructions

- follow the safe procedures for doing your job
- use any equipment (including personal protective equipment) safely and correctly
- not put yourself or your co-workers at risk
- report hazards, incidents or near misses
- work with your employer and co-workers to improve WHS at your workplace.

Your rights

Your employer's responsibilities are closely linked to your rights. As a worker, you have the right to:

- work in a safe workplace
- work in a safe manner
- ask questions and raise concerns about WHS
- get information; be supervised and trained
- be involved in WHS.

Take the stress out of being a new worker

Here are some pointers to get off to the right start in your new job, and make life a little easier.

Some are courtesy. Some may be covered by your employer in the induction or training meetings that

introduce you to your new workplace. If they aren't, ask your employer, your supervisor, or your new workmates.

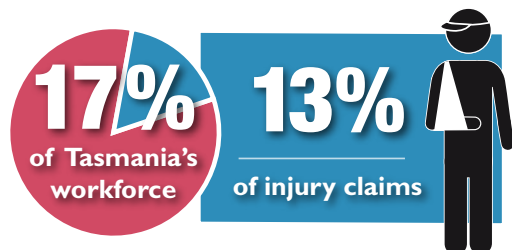
Some are related to WHS, so think about the reasons for doing these and the dangerous consequences if you don't.

Find out how to let your supervisor or manager know if you're sick or not coming in to work. Do they prefer to speak to you in a phone call? Or is it okay to send a text?

- Check your clothing, footwear or uniform requirements.
- Find out if you need to wear an identification badge or security pass or carry a security key.
- Remember confidentiality. Some information is 'for the workplace only'.
- Find out if your workplace has rules about making or receiving private phone calls, using your mobile or texting while you're at work.
- Ask if it's okay for your family or friends to visit your workplace, and how they should do so.

YOUNG WORKERS:

Injuries and Risks



In general, young workers as a group are less likely to make a claim than other workers:

Young workers make up 17% of Tasmania's workforce but only 13% of injury claims.

However, young workers' injury risks are higher than other age groups for certain industries, occupations and injury types.

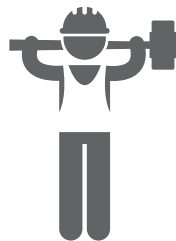
The top 3 industries employing young Tasmanians:



1. Accommodation & Food Services



2. Retail



3. Construction

Top 3 industries of young worker injury claims:



1. Manufacturing



2. Construction



3. Retail

24%

Almost a quarter of young Tasmanian workers work in the Accommodation and food services industry.

Food trades assistants, chefs and kitchenhands are at almost twice the risk of getting burns, wounds and lacerations.

51%

Over half of injured young workers in the Manufacturing industry, worked in Food Manufacturing (specifically, in Meat, Poultry, and Seafood Processing).

40% of their injuries were wounds caused by sharp tools.

Over half of injured young workers in the Construction industry work as:



• Bricklayers, Carpenters and Joiners



• Electricians



• Plumbers

Young workers are at higher risk of:



1. Burns



2. Wounds, lacerations, amputations and internal organ damage



3. Skin and subcutaneous tissue diseases

Young workers have a higher tendency of getting injured within their first year of employment.

In this infographic, young workers are those aged 25 years and under. Data selection is based on injuries occurring between 2012 and 2016 calendar years.

Safety is good for business. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au for resources to help you



Changes to workers comp laws

Amendments to Tasmania's Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 have passed through Parliament.

Aim

The aim of these changes is to remove excessive 'red tape' associated with the state's workers rehabilitation and compensation scheme. Instead the focus will be directed to achieving positive outcomes for injured workers and employers.

How the changes affect you

Workers

The changes introduce improvements for workers who have been affected by workplace injuries, including:

- allowing medical certificates to be issued for up to 28 days instead of 14
- improved access to workers compensation payments for older workers (current age restrictions have been removed and replaced with a link to the Social Securities Act 1991).

Employers

Employers will:

- no longer need to display the details of their insurer and a copy of the Act in their workplace

- only need to appoint a return to work co-ordinator if they employ more than 100 workers (rather than 50 workers)
- are no longer prevented from insuring against the first \$200 of benefits payable under the Act or the first weekly payment.

Insurers

Changes for licensed and self insurers include:

- licences and permits no longer expire after three years: they remain in force until they are surrendered by the holder or revoked by the Board
- insurers no longer need to provide indicative workers compensation industry rates to the Board.

Health providers

For doctors and workplace rehabilitation providers, there will be changes in their accreditation process, including:

- doctors no longer need to be accredited to issue medical certificates (however, accreditation will still be required for those who wish to assess the degree of a worker's permanent impairment)
- the definition of 'medical practitioner' will be broadened to include legally qualified doctors from other countries.

- workplace rehabilitation providers no longer need to apply for re-accreditation after three years; it remains in force until it is surrendered by the holder or revoked by the Board.

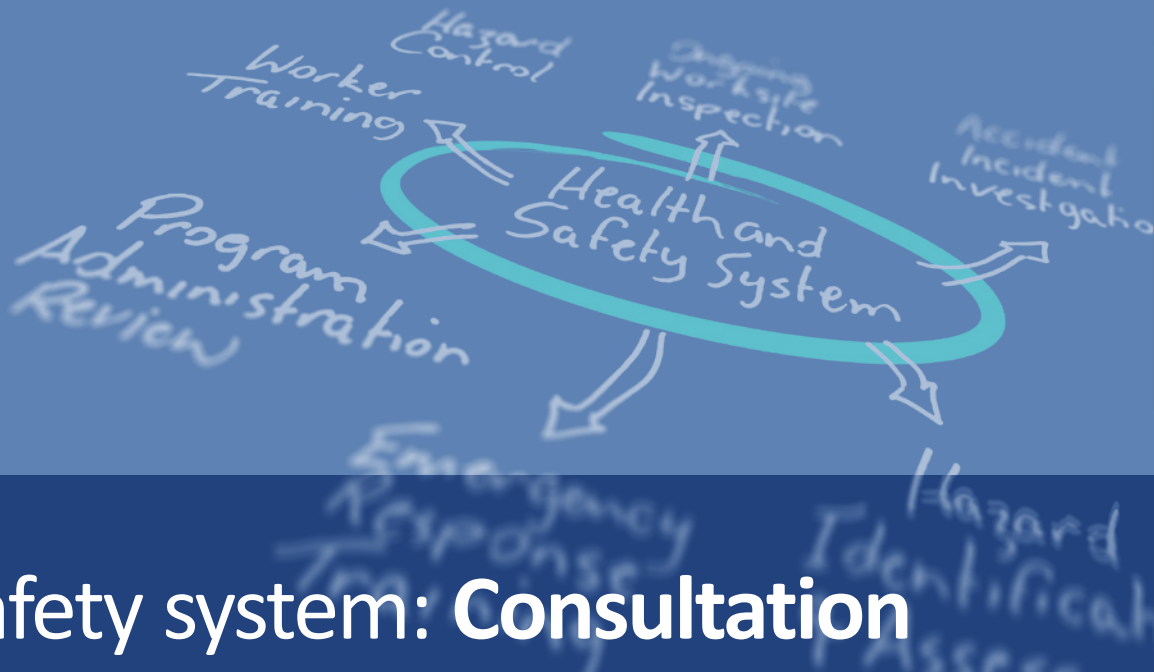
Administration

The Schedule of diseases deemed to be work-related will be removed from the Act. Instead, the Board will give notice of relevant diseases. This will ensure the list of deemed diseases can be responsive as new research and findings into work-related disease becomes available.

There will be changes to the composition of the WorkCover Tasmania Board, from the current representative Board to a skills-based Board. Members will be selected based upon the skills they have, not who they represent. This change is consistent with contemporary governance practice.

More information

We are in the process of updating all online information and documents to reflect the amended laws and provide you with information about how the changes may affect you. Go to www.workcover.tas.gov.au for fact sheets that list all the changes plus information specific to each stakeholder.



Build a safety system: Consultation

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 (starting from the September 2015 edition) at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au under the Resources tab.

In the next couple of editions, we'll look at different facets of consultation — it's that big and that important! First, a refresher on what consultation is and why it's important.

About consultation

Consultation is actually a legal requirement and an essential part of managing WHS risks. Consultation means both providing your workers with information **and** taking into account their views before making decisions affecting WHS.

A safe workplace is more easily achieved when everyone involved in the work communicates with each other to identify hazards and risks, talks about any WHS concerns, and works together to find solutions.

This includes co-operation between the people who manage or control the work and those who carry out the work or who are affected by the work.

By drawing on the knowledge and experience of your workers, more informed decisions can be made about how the work should be carried out safely.

What should you have in place?

You should have procedures, developed and agreed upon with workers, that outline your workers' involvement and consultation in WHS matters/issues, and proposed changes in the workplace.

WHS matters/issues

Define:

- what these matters/issues are in your workplace. While some may immediately spring to mind, talk to your workers, safety committee or safety representatives, and look at incident reports to find out more
- how these matters/issues are to be reported and who to
- how these are to be resolved
- who will be involved: workers and their representatives, supervisors, managers; any external parties (like unions) if the issue can't be resolved in-house.

Proposed changes

These are proposed changes to your work environment, processes, practices, or purchasing decisions (for example, of chemicals or equipment) that affect workers' health and safety.

Consult with relevant workers on these changes, so that potential WHS issues can be identified and resolved **before** the change is implemented; that is, before a safe work procedure is changed, or a new chemical or item of plant is bought.

Other consultation procedures

You could also develop:

- the terms and reference of your WHS committee, if you have one

- WHS issues resolution procedure
- how workers will be consulted with in any project you conduct, if relevant to your business.

Document it

Involve your workers (or their representatives) as you develop these consultation procedures. Make sure your workers get to discuss and agree upon the final drafts.

Then — yes, it's a common theme in this series — write it down!

Moving forward, you should also keep records of your consultation with workers on WHS matters/issues and proposed changes (including WHS committee meetings). So make sure your procedures prompt you to do that.

Then let everyone know the procedures are in place: by email, inductions and team meetings, noticeboards and whatever other communication channels you use in your workplace.

There's a code for that!

Can't wait for our next column on consultation? See the code of practice on Work Health and Safety Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination.

It discusses the kind of information to share, the most effective ways of workers and employers consulting with one another, and how to consult with others you do business with, such as labour hire organisations and contractors. There is also a useful consultation checklist that you can copy and start working with.

Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'codes 2016'.

Build a wellbeing program: Why invest in wellbeing?

With Australians spending about one third of their lives at work, it makes good sense to consider the workplace as an important setting to improve health and wellbeing. In this series we'll help you build your workplace wellbeing program. In this edition, we look at how you can calculate the financial benefit to your workplace.

Your business productivity

A wellbeing program has the potential to have a positive impact on your business productivity.

In the short term, the success of your wellbeing program will be demonstrated by improvements in the way your workers:

- work together
- engage in their jobs
- enjoy their work.

In the long term, you should see the positive influence of your program on your organisation's business performance through:

- gains in staff retention
- improved efficiency
- reduced absenteeism and presenteeism
- reduced disability claims
- enhanced corporate image.

Some of these improvements are harder to measure than others, but each will contribute to improving your business bottom line.

Facts and figures

- For every dollar invested in workplace wellbeing programs, there is a return on investment of between three and six dollars.
- Reduced performance costs employers two to seven times more than absenteeism.
- In 2005–06, the cost of work-related injury and illness in Australia was estimated to be \$57.5 billion (5.9% GDP), of which employers bore \$10.2 billion.
- The greater the number of health risks per worker, the greater the negative impact on their productivity.
- Implementing a wellbeing program can reduce worker risk factors by up to 56%.

Into the future

Your wellbeing program may also have a direct impact on your business environment by addressing some emerging business issues.

For example:

- over the next 15 years, there will be a four to five times increase in the number of Australian workers eligible for retirement. The potential impact of wellbeing programs could mean healthier workers stay in the workforce longer
- 82% of Australian businesses report they have a skills gap, which leads to higher levels of work stress and lower morale. Wellbeing programs can help manage work stress levels and improve moral amongst workers.

Calculating the financial benefit for your workplace

Two tangible ways that worker wellbeing can have an immediate financial benefit to your workplace is through reducing sick leave/absenteeism and staff turnover.

On our website we have a return on investment calculator you can download to plug in some numbers and find out the annual savings for your workplace. Go to [worksafe.tas.gov.au/safety/advisors/simple_guide_resources](https://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/safety/advisors/simple_guide_resources).

If you need even more convincing with hard stats and research, Comcare has a guide that provides further evidence for investing in worker wellbeing. Go to www.comcare.gov.au and search for 'benefits to business'.

Facts and statistics from 'Your simple guide to workplace health and wellbeing' at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au.

Everybody's Talking...

Questions and answers from our Helpline / 1300 366 322

As a PCBU, what do I need to know about PPE?

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is usually supplied by the business (PCBU) responsible for directing the work to be carried out at the worksite. In some cases, it may be supplied by another PCBU (for example, a plant or labour hire company).

PCBUs are responsible for:

- supplying workers with suitable PPE of a size and fit that is reasonably comfortable
- providing workers with information and training (if necessary) in the proper use, wearing, storage and maintenance of the PPE
- ensuring PPE is maintained to a clean and hygienic standard
- ensuring PPE is maintained in good working order, or repaired or replaced as necessary
- ensuring PPE is used or worn by the worker, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Workers must:

- use or wear the PPE (so far as they are able to) according to any information, training or reasonable instruction they are given by the PCBU
- not intentionally misuse or damage the PPE
- inform the PCBU if the PPE is damaged, has any defect, or needs to be cleaned or decontaminated.

I'm about to employ a worker. What do I do about workers comp?

You must have an insurance policy with a licensed insurer to cover you for any workers compensation claims made by your workers. It's an offence (you can be fined) for not having this policy.

So before employing a worker, get quotes and arrange a policy from an insurer who is licensed in Tasmania by the WorkCover Tasmania Board. You'll find a list at www.workcover.tas.gov.au/insurance/licensed_insurers.

(In certain circumstances, employers can apply to the WorkCover Tasmania Board for a permit to self-insure; this is usually large, national businesses. You'll find more information at www.workcover.tas.gov.au/insurance/self_insurers.)

Who needs a white card? How do I get one?

To work in the construction industry, you must have an induction card, which is also known as a white card. This is needed whether you're someone:

- with control of construction projects; for example, a principal contractor, project manager, main contractor, builder, employer or self-employed person
- with control of construction work; for example, an employer, self-employed person, principal contractor, main contractor or sub-

contractor

- carrying out work on a construction site; for example, an employee, contractor or labour-hire worker.

To get a white card, you must:

- successfully complete general construction induction training in Tasmania
- apply at a Service Tasmania shop.

To apply, you'll need:

- a completed application form; go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'GF087'
- a copy of the Statement of Attainment confirming you've successfully completed the course
- evidence of identity documents; for example, driver's licence, passport and so on. A full list is on the application form.

You'll also need to pay a fee (listed on the application form).

Service Tasmania reviews your paperwork and forwards your application to WorkSafe. You should receive your white card in 60 days.

People who don't need a white card are:

- visitors to a construction site who are accompanied by a person who has received the induction training
- people temporarily at a construction site to deliver supplies, materials, plant or services where a risk assessment shows that any risks to them can be controlled through

Tas performs well in national workers comp report



Safe Work Australia has released the Comparative Performance Monitoring Report (19th edition) into WHS Performance, and Tasmania performs well in some of the key measures.

Key findings

Key findings in the CPM Report include:

- the Australian incidence rate for serious claims has steadily declined over the past four years, decreasing by 19%. Tasmania has declined by 22% — better than the national average
- all Australian jurisdictions recorded a decrease in incidence rates of long term claims over the past four years. Tasmania has performed well in comparison with other jurisdictions; our reduction is in line with the national total, and greater than a number of other jurisdictions
- Tasmania (and Queensland) had the lowest percentage (6%) of claims continuing past 52 weeks of compensation
- Tasmania recorded the largest decrease in incidence rates in the manufacturing industry (down by 53%)
- Tasmania recorded the lowest incidence rate of claims in the wholesale trade industry (8.7 claims per 1000 workers).

The Australian frequency rate of serious claims decreased over the past four years by 18%, down to 6.0 claims per one million hours worked. Tasmania reported the highest frequency rate in 2015–16; however, the state has

achieved a 24% reduction over the last four years, higher than the decrease nationally (one reason for this higher frequency rate may be that Tasmania has a higher proportion of part-time workers than the national average, which translates to the number of hours worked for the number of people working is lower in Tas than in other states).

About the CPM report

The CPM Report is published annually by Safe Work Australia. The data is supplied by Australian and New Zealand jurisdictions for the 2015–16 financial year, plus updates back to 2010–11. WorkSafe Tasmania supplies data for Tasmania.

You can find the CPM Report by going to www.workcover.tas.gov.au/statistics/comparative_performance_reporting.

The report aims to facilitate improvement of WHS and workers compensation in Australian and New Zealand. One way it does this is by monitoring the comparative performance of jurisdictions over time; it also allows jurisdictions to identify best practice, to support policy making.

Definitions

Incidence rate: Number of claims per 1,000 workers.

Frequency rate: Number of claims per million hours worked.

Serious claim: A claim where the worker has required more than one week off work due to their injury.

Long term claim: A claim where the worker has required more than 12 weeks of work due to their injury (the term 'severe' is also used for this).

other measures: for example, your visitor management plans, restricted access to low-risk areas, and visitor sign-in/out procedures.

For more information about white cards go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'induction'.

I'm resigning with over 12 years of service. How do I find out about my long service leave entitlement?

First check your award or agreement with Fair Work Australia by calling 13 13 94, as it may contain a long service leave provision.

If not, and the Tasmanian Long Service Leave Act 1976 applies (not the acts for the State Service, Construction or Local Government), you're entitled to receive your first 10 years accrual of 8.66667 weeks plus the proportion of your next accrual of 4.33333 weeks per 5 years up to the date of resignation, less any you have already taken.

Note that a mining employee receives 13 weeks of long service leave for 10 years of service.

The importance of sleep

Getting a good night's sleep is something we often take for granted — until something goes wrong. With our hectic lifestyles, crammed full of deadlines and family commitments and with little room for relaxation, our sleep can suffer. A recent survey by the University of Adelaide showed that many people, most nights, used the internet and did work just before going to bed. It's no wonder a restful night's sleep can be elusive.

Research shows that many adults have a 'sleep debt' — that is, they regularly sleep less than 8 hours a night. This can lead to negative health effects such as:

- fatigue
- heart disease
- obesity
- high blood pressure
- diabetes
- reduced immunity to illness.

Lack of sleep can also lead to health and safety problems in the workplace. A sleep-deprived worker's concentration, alertness and reaction times may be reduced; these can lead to an increased risk of incidents and injury, and decreased productivity.

Combined with increased sick leave from any negative health effects, poorly managed sleep can eat away at a business's bottom dollar.

What individuals can do

- Make sure your bedroom is quiet and cosy. Remove unnecessary distractions like TVs, mobile phones, computers and radios, use soft lighting, and ensure your bedroom is a comfortable temperature.
- Avoid 'sleep stealers' like caffeine, alcohol and nicotine, which are detrimental to your body's ability to relax effectively.
- Choose wisely the activities you perform before bedtime. Go for quiet activities that help you wind down and prepare for rest. Having a warm bath and listening to quiet music are two good examples.
- Get your body into a routine of sleeping and waking. Go to bed and rise at the same time each day — even on weekends if you can. While a long sleep-in feels nice, it can often leave you feeling groggy and extra tired.
- If you feel the need to enjoy a nap during the day, limit it to less than 30

minutes. Any longer can disrupt your sleep at night.

- Upon waking, expose your body to bright light or sunshine, as this helps stimulate your body's natural hormones that cause you to wake and feel alert.

What workplaces can do

- Educate workers on the importance of good sleep and how to achieve it (and the consequences of poor sleep). Implementing a wellbeing program that includes this is one way.
- Having flexible work hours can help accommodate different sleep patterns and schedules.
- Discourage your workers from taking work home; encourage them to disconnect from their work devices and screens in the evenings.

You can find other useful information at the Division of Sleep Medicine at Harvard Medical School's website at <http://healthysleep.med.harvard.edu/healthy/matters>.

The information in this article does not replace medical advice. We recommend you consult your doctor for medical advice.



Alcohol + workplace parties

It's party season — time to farewell 2017! But if you serve alcohol at your workplace social event, you need to consider how to make your celebrations safe ones. This includes making sure your workers are safe once they leave the workplace too.

Some ways to do this include:

- make sure your drug and alcohol policy addresses alcohol at workplace social events
- make sure everyone knows they are expected to act responsibly
- provide plenty of non-alcoholic drinks
- provide plenty of food, and not just salty, greasy options that can make people thirsty. Foods rich in protein and carbohydrates stay in the stomach longer and slow the absorption of alcohol into the bloodstream
- designate 'party managers' to implement your drug and alcohol policy if necessary
- anticipate the need for alternative transport (such as taxis or public transport) and encourage people to use this if necessary
- Stop serving alcohol before the event officially ends.
- the ways you will reduce or remove drugs and alcohol from your workplace
- the procedures and disciplinary actions you will take if you find someone drinking or using drugs at your workplace, or working under the influence.

Drug and alcohol policy

A drug and alcohol policy supports your broad WHS policy. You can find a template to adapt at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au — search for 'advisors' then once you're on the advisors page, look for the link to 'sample forms, policies and registers'.

Your policy should state:

- that you will not allow drugs or alcohol in your workplace (except prescription or over-the-counter medication taken for legitimate medical reasons, or any specified workplace-based social event), and you take their threat to personal and WHS seriously

More important than writing a policy is enforcing it, fairly and consistently. WorkSafe, the unions or the courts will consider if or how your policy, procedures and disciplinary actions have been followed (for example, if they have been applied to some workers but not others).

Make sure everyone knows and understands your drug and alcohol policy. Before your event, circulate it by email or internal mail to everyone, display it on notice boards, and discuss it at staff meetings (it should be part of your regular training and inductions, too).



Photo courtesy Neil Richardson from the Examiner.

SAFE FARMING New rural resources launched

Safe Farming Tasmania has new resources: a pocket-sized induction handbook and a suite of induction videos.

These resources contain WHS information, and will help farmers with practical workplace inductions for their new workers. They aim to overcome literacy issues, too (many seasonal workers are from non-

English speaking backgrounds).

The handbook will help new workers better identify the hazards and risks that may be present in their work environment.

To find a link to the videos, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'farming'.

For a copy of the handbook, call AgriGrowth Tasmania on 1800 291 100 or email AGT.Admin@dpipwe.tas.gov.au.

To arrange a free visit from Phill John, Senior Consultant for Safe Farming Tasmania, call 0407 015 400 or email phillip.john@dpipwe.tas.gov.au.

The Safe Farming Tasmania program is a joint initiative of WorkSafe Tasmania and the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment (DPIPWE).