

June 2015

Workplace Issues

Key stories inside

4 tips for winter safety

7 steps to workplace wellbeing

20 years of WHS excellence

Work Safe

TASMANIA

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

Making it easier to be **SAFE**

Society has laws in place to reduce the risk of harm and to promote fairness and ‘the common good’. This is especially true when we get down to the Acts and Regulations we have in place for work health and safety: they exist to make sure that we are all, as much as possible, free from the risk of suffering a work-related injury or illness. They impose responsibilities on everyone, at all levels of business — because we all have the right to go home safely at the end of each working day.

However, the governments that set these laws are increasingly keen to ensure these are not onerous. The Council of Australian Government (COAG) recently urged its members to investigate ways that our current work health and safety laws could be improved to reduce red tape, and make it easier for businesses and workers to comply with their responsibilities.

As the Minister responsible for work health and safety in Tasmania, I endorse this recommendation: work health and safety laws should be simple and free from red tape.

We have already committed to review the Work Health and Safety Act and its Regulations (as well as those for workers rehabilitation and compensation) to ensure that our regulatory and administrative requirements are free from unwanted or ineffective impositions — that they are the best way of delivering the outcomes of improved health and safety at work that we are all striving for.

We’re also behind many initiatives that provide you with the practical support you want in order to comply with these laws.

In this edition of Workplace Issues, you’ll read about some of these initiatives, where WorkSafe Tasmania works with business, industry and the wider community to make workplace safety an important issue.

For example, the new Farm Safe initiative is a collaboration between WorkSafe Tasmania and the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water



and the Environment to improve safety management and practices in the rural sector. WorkSafe’s redeveloped website provides improved access to practical guidance, especially for small business. The Advisory Service provides free hands-on advice to small and medium businesses to better manage safety and wellbeing. This year, WorkSafe Month will offer online webinars and podcasts, providing new opportunities for everyone to access safety information. And Better Work Tasmania is supporting businesses to network and mentor one another towards safer workplaces.

While diverse in their guises, all these projects have at their core the one objective: to help businesses and workers create safer and healthier workplaces for all Tasmanians.

Don't freeze out safety

Cold weather creates some safety challenges for people who work outside. Although we have reasonably mild winters compared to some northern hemisphere countries, a cold winter's day in Tasmania can still put workers at risk of injury or illness.

Hypothermia

Outdoor workers in Tasmania can be at risk of mild hypothermia under certain conditions, and should be alerted to the symptoms, risks and prevention strategies as part of their safety induction.

The symptoms are not likely to be extreme, but can lead to an increase in minor incidents and injuries and loss of productivity. Cold muscles are also more prone to sprains and strains from manual handling tasks.

Signs and symptoms

These symptoms are not always likely to be recognised, but rather put down to fatigue or just feeling off colour.

Mild hypothermia is where the body's core temperature, which is normally 37° C, drops to 37–35.5° C. Signs and symptoms include:

- shivering that's not under voluntary control
- not able to perform complex motor functions but can still walk and talk
- numb hands and feet.

Moderate hypothermia is where the body's core temperature drops to 35–33.8° C. Signs and symptoms include:

- dazed or 'fuzzy' thinking
- loss of fine motor coordination, particularly in hands
- slurred speech
- violent shivering
- irrational behaviour; an 'I don't care' attitude.

Look for the 'umbles' — stumbles, mumbles, fumbles, and grumbles.

How it happens

Hypothermia can result from extended exposure to cold temperatures or a cool, damp environment. It doesn't have to be snowing – even at temperatures of about 15° C, mild hypothermia can set in.

Hypothermia doesn't just happen in cold winter weather when there are low temperatures or low wind chill factors, but under more mild conditions as well. A rain shower that soaks you to the skin on a cool day can lead to hypothermia if you don't move inside to warm up and dry off.

Other contributing causes include inadequate clothing and neglecting to cover your head, hands and feet.

See the box at right for more causes.

Safety risks

Obviously even the mild symptoms can create a hazard on an outdoor worksite. Lack of mental and physical

co-ordination could put fellow workers at risk.

While many outdoor worksites in Tasmania recognise the need to protect their workers in hot weather — providing sun protection and adequate rest and rehydration breaks — it's worthwhile performing the same risk assessment on outdoor workers in cold weather.

What you can do

Outdoor workers should remember the advice that follows with the simple acronym COLD:

C for Cover: Wear a hat or other protective covering to prevent body heat from escaping from your head, face and neck. If your job entails wearing a hard hat, then a thermal cap or balaclava that is thin enough to allow you to maintain a correct fit of the hard hat can be worn (no thick wool or pom-poms!).

Cover your hands with gloves or mittens (depending on the work to be performed). Mittens are more effective than gloves because mittens keep your fingers in closer contact with one another, but may be impractical for some tasks.

O for Overexertion: Avoid activities that would cause you to sweat a lot. The combination of wet clothing and cold weather can lead to rapid heat loss. Sweating increases dehydration, so make sure you keep your fluid intake up.



L for Layers: Wear loose-fitting, layered, lightweight clothing. Outer clothing made of tightly woven, water-repellent material is best for wind protection. Wool, silk or polypropylene inner layers hold more body heat than cotton does. Look for fabrics that wick moisture away from the body.

D for Dry: Stay as dry as possible. In the winter, pay special attention to your feet. Working in wet boots and socks in low temperatures can lead to a condition known as 'trench foot' or 'immersion foot', which is similar to frostbite but without freezing.

Your mother wasn't being fussy when she told you to 'rug up, wear a hat and scarf' before sending you outdoors as a child: she was just applying a commonsense strategy to reduce the possible effects of cold exposure. It makes sense to remember her advice if you are an outdoor worker!

Conditions that can lead to hypothermia

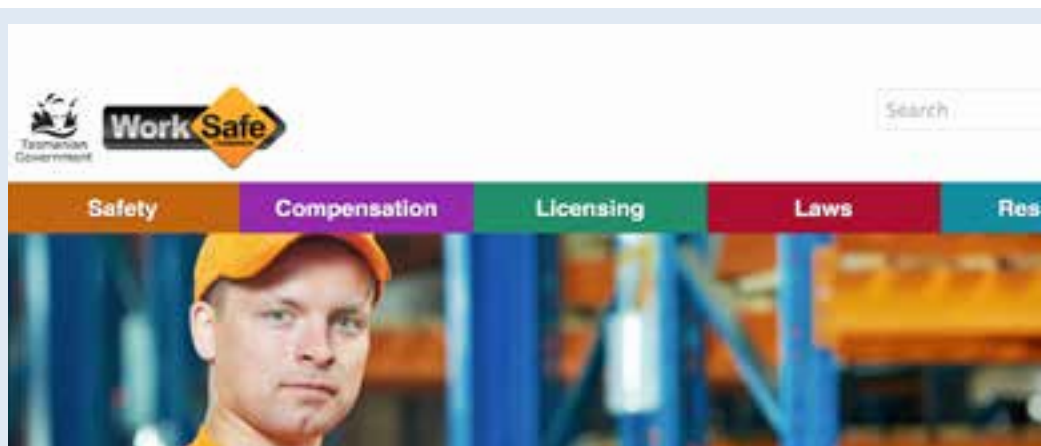
- Cold temperatures/wind chill
- Improper clothing and equipment
- Wetness from rain or perspiration
- Fatigue, exhaustion
- Dehydration
- Poor food intake
- Alcohol intake: causes increased blood flow to the extremities, leading to increased heat loss and increased dehydration.



External contributions now welcome

Workplace Issues is now accepting articles from commercial, community or government organisations that meet certain criteria.

For full details in our Policy and Guidelines, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'magazine'.



Have you seen our website lately?

Head over to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au — you'll be in for bright surprise!

We've redeveloped our website, and it's not just cosmetic. We've made sure your needs are at the heart of the redesign. For example, we've located always-popular information on codes of practice and public holidays on the home page, and created a section just for small business — one of our website's biggest users.

Another major change is drawing together all the workers compensation and return to work guidance in one central area (previously it was spread over two separate websites, WorkSafe's and the WorkCover Board's).

And features such as an improved search engine, drop-down menus and relevant resources for each area — safety, licensing, compensation, the laws and resources — mean you'll easily find what you need.



Who's responsible for PPE?

WorkSafe Tasmania's Helpline is frequently asked about personal protective equipment (PPE). Below are the regulations from the Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 that Helpline inspectors refer to. You can find these on the WorkSafe Tasmania website: go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'regulations'.

Regulation 44: Where PPE is to be used to minimise a risk to health and safety, the person conducting a business or undertaking who directs the carrying out of work must provide the PPE to workers at the workplace, unless the PPE has been provided by another person conducting a business or undertaking.

Regulation 46: The worker must, so far as the worker is reasonably able, use or wear the equipment in accordance with any information, training or reasonable instruction by the person conducting the business or undertaking.

PPE is one of the least effective ways of controlling risks to health and safety and should only be used:

- when there are no other practical control measures available (as a last resort)
- as an interim measure until a more effective way of controlling the risk can be used, or
- to supplement higher level control measures (as a back-up).

A worker who is provided with PPE by a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) must:

- use or wear the PPE in accordance with any information, training or reasonable instruction provided by the PCBU, so far as they are reasonably able
- not intentionally misuse or damage the PPE
- advise the PCBU of any damage to, defect in, or need to clean or decontaminate any of the PPE that they are aware of.

If the PPE is uncomfortable or does not fit properly, the worker should consult with their manager.

PPE used at a workplace must be:

- selected to minimise risk to health and safety
- suitable for the nature of the work and any hazard associated with the work
- a suitable size and fit and reasonably comfortable for the person wearing it

- maintained, repaired or replaced so it continues to minimise the risk, including ensuring the equipment is clean, hygienic and in good working order.

Selection processes must include consulting with workers and their health and safety representatives and should also include:

- detailed evaluation of the risk and performance requirements for the PPE
- ensuring compatibility of PPE items where more than one type of PPE is required (for example, ear muffs with a hard hat)
- consultation with the supplier to ensure PPE is suitable for the work and workplace conditions
- preference for PPE that complies with the relevant Australian Standard or equivalent standard.

Other people, including visitors to the workplace, should also be provided with PPE to wear when they are at the workplace to protect them from health and safety risks (this might be hard hats, ear protection, and high visibility clothing). They must wear the PPE in accordance with any information, training and instruction provided to them by the PCBU.

Wellbeing

7 simple steps to healthier workplaces

Best-practice workplaces integrate their current

WHS practices with their wellbeing program — to directly capitalise on time and productivity benefits.

WorkSafe Tasmania's Health and Wellbeing Advisors provide a simple approach that can help your workplace implement a successful health and wellbeing program. Here's how:

1 Get the ball rolling

It's important there is commitment and support from senior managers, and that they have a clear understanding of the program's aims and expectations. Identify a coordinator who is motivated and resourced to drive your program.

2 Organise your program

Involve staff from all areas of your workplace to make up a working group. Their role is to help support the coordinator plan and implement the program.

3 Work out what you need

Your program will only succeed if it meets the requirements of your workers. You may address this step through a formal survey or by discussing it at your next staff meeting.

4 Develop an action plan

Now you know what your workers want, you can begin to plan your program. Identify your goals and objectives based on key issues identified in your needs assessment (see step 3). Your plan should be a mix of strategies that target people, places and policies; it should also identify resources, facilities and expertise within your workplace and within the community.

5 Implement your action plan

For each strategy, identify:

- what's going to take place
- who in your working group is going to be responsible
- when it will happen
- how it will be monitored and evaluated
- what resources it will require.

You may need to develop a range of promotional strategies to get information to particular staff groups. For example, any outdoor workers may need face-to-face information; office-based staff with access to email can have information distributed that way.

6 Monitor and evaluate your program

Keep track of what your program is doing — it's the only way to discover if it's actually working. Evaluating each strategy in your program will allow you to see if it's contributing towards your goals and objectives.

7 Update your program

Review your program's goals and objectives on an annual basis; this is also a good time to run another staff survey or discussion to gather feedback about your program. Take on board any changes in your workers' health needs and challenges to refocus your program and set new goals and objectives.

What else can you do?

- Download or print the Wellbeing Advisors' useful checklist that summarises these seven steps, and use it to track your progress. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'summary checklist'.
- Talk with a Wellbeing Advisor — they'll provide free help and support so you can improve the wellbeing of your workers. To book a visit, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'book a visit'.

Integrating health, safety and wellbeing

The role health and wellbeing plays in business is now widely acknowledged. Programs such as WorkSafe Tasmania's Health and Wellbeing Advisory Service and the Federal Government's Healthy Workers initiative help workers, managers and employers make workplaces — and ultimately our communities — healthier.

While WHS has a legislated position in Australian workplaces, the emphasis has traditionally been on safety and compliance, rather than worker health and wellbeing. The 'health' in health and safety is often missed.

However, the tide is starting to turn.

Safe and healthy

The mantra 'you can't be a safe worker if you're not a healthy worker' is being heard by more and more workplaces.

WHS measures require all workers to know the safest choice when acting at work and unsurprisingly, the safest choice is most often the healthiest choice. In return, workplaces can make this easier for workers by making the healthy choice the easy choice.

For example, correct lifting procedures minimise acute and immediate injury

for workers, but also overall muscle strain, which reduces the chance of a subsequent injury which may not be work-related. Following guidelines around fatigue management at work not only makes for safer workers when in the workplace, it also minimises the harm caused to an individual by long-term sleep debt.

Code of practice

The codes of practice concentrate on particular safety issues. However, some also refer to welfare or wellbeing issues.

For example, Managing the Work Environment and Facilities (CP124) states that a workplace must provide workers with clean drinking water at all times, including for workers at mobile or remote sites. This code also encourages workplaces to provide dining facilities for eating, preparing and storing food. This links strongly to the healthy eating and hydration messages advocated when promoting workplace health and wellbeing.

Codes are currently being developed for managing workplace fatigue and responding to workplace bullying, two other areas with a big impact on worker wellbeing (for these and other codes, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'codes').

What can you do?

- Learn about the benefits of investing in wellbeing by using the Healthy Workers' Workplace Health Savings Calculator. Go to www.healthyworkers.gov.au and search for 'savings calculator'.
- Assess the health risk of your workers by using the online Good Health Good Business Employee Health and Wellbeing Survey. Go to www.dhhs.tas.gov.au and search for 'healthy workplaces survey'.
- Start building your workplace wellbeing program with the Simple Guide to Workplace Health and Wellbeing toolkit, used by the Wellbeing Advisors. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'simple guide'.
- Foster mentally healthy workplaces with free Heads Up resources. Go to www.headsup.org.au. Heads Up is an initiative of beyondblue and the Federal Government's Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance.



Better Work: Open for business



Guest speaker Paul Taylor inspired the audience

Better Work Tasmania was officially launched in April, and now enters an exciting new phase for helping workplaces work together to improve WHS.

The launch was held at Blundstone Arena, and attracted a full-house of 300 people. Guests heard from internationally-recognised motivational speaker Paul Taylor, whose invigorating presentation explored the difference between managing and leading, influence and authority, in today's competitive workplaces; and the importance between sharing lessons, including mistakes. Paul showed guests how these themes are directly relevant to

workplace safety and wellbeing.

Others inspiring the audience were David Johnstone from Cricket Tasmania, Dr Andrew Palmer from the Menzies Research Institute Tasmania, and injured footballer David Wood.

Better Work's networking and mentoring programs were then explained in detail (see right for more information).

'Better Work Tasmania provides an ideal mechanism for small, medium and large businesses, both private and public, to help support and assist each other by providing a central resource for practical information and sharing of WHS ideas and solutions,' said WorkCover Tasmania Board member Richard

Lowrie, who attended the launch.

General Manager of the Hobart City Council, and Better Work Tasmania prototype participant Nick Heath also took part in the day. 'The networking and mentoring elements of the Better Work program are especially appealing for small businesses, who will be able to learn from each other and also from big businesses willing to share their ideas and experience,' he said.

'Better Work has the potential to reshape the future of WHS in Tasmania by sharing, networking and learning through the mechanisms set up by this free program.'

What can you do?

Join one of the industry-based **networks** to share your WHS information and practical ideas with others. These network groups will meet three to four times a year to discuss the issues directly affecting them.

Be a **mentor** and provide practical help to others about managing WHS, wellbeing and more. Or ask to be mentored and learn from by taking a closer look at how other businesses manage safety.

There are also free **resources** (such as an online induction tool) available when you become a member of Better Work Tasmania. It's free to join.

For all these options, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/betterwork

WorkSafe Awards 2015

20 years of celebrating

What's new in 2015

This year we've made a number of changes to the Awards program, to better reflect how businesses approach innovation and manage WHS and wellbeing. We've changed the categories, focussing them to the Tasmanian working community, and we're offering more opportunities to win and be recognised.

Work health and safety awards

- Beyond Compliance Award
- Best WHS Initiative
- Micro Business – Macro Wins
- Better Work Tasmania Award for WHS Leadership.

These awards recognise continual WHS improvement, leadership and innovation. The 'Micro-Business – Macro Wins' replaces our small business category. And wellbeing has been incorporated into all categories, acknowledging that it is complementary to improving the health and safety of workers.

Industry awards

- Commitment to body stressing prevention and management

These awards recognise organisations in high-risk industries that target significant injury/illness types. Industry awards will change focus every few years, to respond to emerging issues.

So in 2015, these awards will focus on the Retail Trade sector, and the Health Care and Social Assistance sector; and recognise those organisations that have made significant effort to prevent body stressing injuries and to support workers who have sustained these injuries at work.

Special awards

- Overall Winner
- Commitment to WHS Excellence
- WorkCover Injury Management Scholarships

Why are these award recipients 'special'? Because they'll be selected from both the current and all previous years' award entrants. You can't enter or nominate in these categories — this is our chance to showcase the stand-outs of past and present. We also recognise return to work professionals taking further study to improve injury management.

Find details and criteria of all categories at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/awards

Enter or nominate

Enter your own organisation — or nominate individuals, teams and organisations you've worked with who have made a strong commitment to WHS. Just make sure you just hit the 'nominate' button instead of 'enter' on the website. Your nominee will be able to accept or decline your nomination just after you make the submission.

Our new online entry forms allow you to save drafts, so you can come back and edit your entry at any time. Once validated by WorkSafe, your entry will be promoted on our website (once validated). This way, more people can share in your life-changing initiatives.

Sponsor the Awards

By aligning your organisation with the Awards, you're promoting the vital importance of WHS, health and wellbeing, and return to work — and your own organisation's commitment to these.

In return, you'll be recognised in the lead-up to, during and after the Awards: including at the Presentation Dinner (see below) and on our website.

Our new sponsorship offerings mean any business that wants to support the WorkSafe Awards is sure to find a package to suit. However you choose to be involved, you'll be supporting the people, teams and organisations of all sizes who make an effort to ensure everyone goes home safe and healthy at the end of the day.

Apply to sponsor the Awards using our online Sponsorship Application Form at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/awards

Presentation dinner

This year's Presentation Dinner will be held at the new Blundstone Arena Function Centre on Saturday 24 October.

Guests will enjoy a welcome reception with complimentary drinks upon arrival, plus a three course dinner, with quality drinks and entertainment. This year WorkSafe presents Aria chart artist Rose Carleo and her band for you to enjoy following the official presentation.

Make an early bird booking for the Awards Presentation Dinner at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/awards

Key dates +

Entries/nominations close
24 July 2015

Presentation Dinner: 24 October 2015
at Blundstone Arena

Get dinner tickets now for early bird prices

www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/awards



WHS excellence 15 winners to be recognised this year!

Some of our previous winners...

We've been trawling through the many excellent Awards entries from the past 20 years, and here are some of the winning organisations over the years:



1999: Coles Supermarkets Tasmania, Best WHS promotion

Coles Supermarkets Tasmania developed the Safe Day concept and encouraged workers to review their day in terms of safety. Positive reinforcement encouraged safe operating procedures; by acknowledging desired safe working behaviours it was hoped they would be repeated. So successful was the first year that it was repeated; it also attracted interest from Coles-Myer operations in other states.



2005: D Williams Builders, Overall Winners and Best WHS practices in small business

The team at D Williams sought to meet and maintain safety practices and systems, and to build a culture of continual improvement in meaningful ways. The small business introduced practical tools and processes to support the reporting and management of any issues.



2009: Anne Taylor of PASS, Overall Winner

As a direct result of the number of fatalities on farms in northern Tasmania, Anne Taylor formed voluntary grass-roots organisation Proactive Agricultural Safety and Support (PASS) to raise the profile of farm safety and provide safety resources and support to farmers. Anne's work as the major contributor and motivator of PASS made an outstanding contribution towards raising the profile of safety management in the rural industry.



2010: Botanical Resources Australia, Best solution to an identified WHS issue

Botanical Resources Australia constructed an automated pellet handling facility to replace the original labour-intensive, hazardous process which included operating vehicles in extremely dusty and fire-conducive conditions. At the time of winning, there had been no incidents relating to normal pellet-feed operations since the automated facility was introduced.



2011: Kraft Foods Australia, Overall Winner and Best workplace health and wellbeing program

Kraft Foods Australia enhanced its existing wellbeing program by offering a 24/7 gym, walking groups, life coaching and subsidised quit smoking programs.



New support for rural safety

Farm Safe Tasmania is a new initiative to reduce farm-work related death, injury and disease and improve the health and safety of workers in the state's farming industry by:

- raising awareness of farm safety issues, including packing and processing
- producing targeted information about farm safety
- working with industry stakeholders to provide training and education on farm safety issues.

Leading the program is Senior WHS Consultant Phill John. Phill has many years experience working as both an inspector and a safety advisor at WorkSafe. He specialised in providing practical advice to rural, forestry and other small businesses, and as an advisor established strong ties with rural stakeholder groups. Phill also grew up on a dairy farm in the rural community of South Riana, and worked in the rural and forestry sectors before moving to WHS.

'I'll be providing practical guidance to workplaces, looking at what they are

doing to manage safety, and either providing direction myself or referring workplaces to other services,' explained Phill.

'I'll also be focussing on education about farm safety issues, and meeting with industry groups and stakeholders to strengthen our ties and work together to reduce deaths and injuries on our farms.'

Farm Safe is a joint initiative of WorkSafe Tasmania and the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment (DPIPWE). To talk to Phill, call 0407 015 400.

RETURN TO WORK



MAMS: Doctors helping doctors

The WorkCover Tasmania Board is embarking on an 18 month trial of its Medical Advisory and Mentoring Service. This service puts doctors in touch with other doctors, to help them navigate the complexities of managing workplace injuries.

MAMS will provide telephone advice, information and support to doctors managing workers compensation patients. It aims to:

- improve medical management, especially of more complex cases
- ensure better outcomes for everyone involved in the return to work process.

At the end of the trial, the Board will evaluate MAMS to measure how well it achieved these aims.

The Board is currently recruiting suitable mentors, and the service will start in the second half of 2015.

Everybody's Talking...

Questions and answers from our Helpline

What is the safe lifting limit for people doing manual handling?

There is no single 'safe' limit which applies to all people and in all situations.

Because each workplace is different and every worker has their own unique physical characteristics, the PCBU must identify the manual handling tasks in their business and control any risks these might present to workers.

You can find more information in our Hazardous Manual Tasks Code of Practice. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'CP110'.

We receive many enquiries about long service leave. These two are common questions.

While I was on long service leave I was ill. Can I claim sick leave for this and have my long service re-credited?

Unfortunately the Long Service Leave Act 1976 makes no provision for this to happen.

What is the long service leave for casuals?

Long service leave is a leave entitlement granted to employees for 'long service' to an employer or at times a workplace.

Entitlements are contained in state legislation, federal awards or agreements, and the TasBuild portable long service leave scheme. So first, please check whether you are covered by any federal long service leave legislation by calling the Office of the Fair Work Ombudsman on 13 13 94 or going to www.fairwork.gov.au

In Tasmania the main legislation covering employees in the private sector is the Long Service Leave Act 1976.

Section 5(3) of this Act states that casual and part-time employees are entitled to long service leave if they have completed 10 years of 'continuous employment'. They are considered to be continuously employed if they've been regularly working for 32 hours or more in each consecutive period of four weeks.

It's also important to note that casual and part-time employees may have an entitlement to pro rata long service leave if employment is terminated after seven years of 'continuous employment'. An employee, including part-time and casual employees, may be entitled to a payment for pro rata long service leave on termination after completing 7 (5 for mine workers) but less than 10 years of 'continuous employment'. The payment of a pro rata entitlement is not automatic and is only available in certain circumstances

Wellbeing Advisors update

WorkSafe Tasmania's Advisory Service and its 'Healthy Workers Active Learning and Networking' series has been supporting workplaces in their wellbeing journeys. The guest speakers and information sharing opportunities of this series have helped many workplaces build their capacity to develop strong, integrated health, safety and wellbeing systems.

In 2015, our Wellbeing Advisors have already partnered with Skills Tasmania for its May conference, which looked at the role skills, health, safety and wellbeing can play in productivity. In April, they partnered with Employer of Choice for a breakfast seminar examining the connection between diversity and productivity.

Next they'll be rolling out:

- workplace-to-workplace shared learning groups: small networks of

5–6 workplaces that meet regularly to share wellbeing ideas and resources

- training packages in workplace wellbeing: to build the capacity of workplace wellness champions.

They will be again partnering with Employer of Choice to reward and recognise workplaces excelling in the area of workplace health, safety and wellbeing.



Snapshot: Health care workers

Do you work in the health care and social assistance sector? Are you involved in caring for the elderly or disabled? If so, you are one of the most likely workers to be injured in Tasmania on any given day.

In the previous edition of Workplace Issues we covered the WorkSafe Tasmania project that's focusing on body stressing injuries in the health care and social assistance (HCSA) sector. This edition, we take a closer look at the sector and the occupations most at risk.

At a glance

In 2014, there were 1,326 injuries reported for the HCSA sector. This accounts for 17.5% — almost 1 in 5 — of all injuries reported for the year.

In 2012, the HCSA sector overtook manufacturing as the industry with the highest number of injuries, for the first time since the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act began in 1988.

Working in HCSA

Within the sector, the occupations reporting the most injuries are:

- carers and aides, particularly carers of aged and disabled people (these

are also the third most-likely of all occupations statewide to be injured), followed by

- nursing support and personal care workers, followed by
- welfare workers.

The common thread between these occupations is that all are directly involved in the hands-on care of patients, often involving manual handling tasks, which is where we see many injuries arising.

63% percent of the injuries to carers and aides in 2014 were traumatic strain injuries, most frequently caused by manual handling of people. Strains were four times more likely than the sector's next most common type of injury, which was wounds and lacerations.

What's the cost?

The cost of these injuries can be measured in terms of money and time.

- For every 40 days worked in the HCSA sector in 2014, there was one day lost for workers compensation injury.
- 48 out of every 1,000 workers in the industry reported an injury last year.
- Of the 317 claims made by carers and aides for strain injuries in the last

year, 199 have required time away from work with an average of 32 days lost time per claim.

Of course, this doesn't include the toll on the injured worker and their families when they suffer an injury.

What can you do?

WorkSafe Tasmania has gathered practical guidance from around Australia that addresses preventing body stressing injuries in the HCSA sector.

These include the Manual Tasks Guide for Carers, Transferring People Safety Guide, and Hazardous Manual Tasks Code of Practice.

To find these and more, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'body stressing project'.

Work health and safety stats:

Health care and social assistance sector

In 2014, there were 2,326 injuries reported for this sector



1 day is lost for every 40 days worked



In 2012 this sector became the industry with the highest number of injuries



Almost 1 in 20 workers in the industry reported a claim

63%

of injuries to carers and aides were traumatic strain injuries.

WORKSAFE MONTH 2015

5–30 October 2015



New ways to be safe and healthy at work

Learn how to improve your workplace safety, wellbeing or return to work performance at this year's WorkSafe Month

Industry-specific seminars and forums in the major centres

NEW online podcasts, webinars and videos — making it easy and convenient for your whole workplace to take part in WorkSafe Month, no matter where you are in the state

Program of Events available in the major newspapers in September

For program details, registering to present or registering to attend, see our website below.

1300 366 322 www.worksafe.tas.gov.au