

# WORKCOVER NEWS

# 67

The workplace safety and injury management magazine

December 2006 - February 2007





# Public Courses Training Calendar 2007

(WorkCover NSW Accredited & Specific Purpose Courses)

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## JANUARY 2007 to MARCH 2007

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### OHS Consultation

(A WorkCover NSW Accredited Course)

Jan	Thur	4	Fri	5	Thur	11	Fri	12	Parramatta	PAR1	Feb/Mar	Mon	26	Mon	5	Mon	12	Mon	19	City	CIT23
Jan	Mon	8	Tue	9	Mon	15	Tue	16	City	CIT1	Feb/Mar	Wed	28	Wed	7	Wed	14	Wed	21	City	CIT24
Jan	Mon	8	Tue	9	Mon	15	Tue	16	Parramatta	PAR1/2	Feb/Mar	Wed	28	Wed	7	Wed	14	Wed	21	Parramatta	PAR24
Jan	Wed	10	Thur	11	Wed	17	Thur	18	Parramatta	PAR1/3	Mar	Thur	1	Fri	2	Thur	8	Fri	9	City	CIT3
Jan	Mon	22	Tue	23	Mon	29	Tue	30	City	CIT1/2	Mar	Thur	1	Fri	2	Thur	8	Fri	9	Parramatta	PAR3
Jan/Feb	Tue	30	Tue	6	Tue	13	Tue	20	Parramatta	PAR1/4	Mar	Fri	2	Fri	9	Fri	16	Fri	23	Campbelltown	CAM3
Jan/Feb	Wed	31	Wed	7	Wed	14	Wed	21	City	CIT1/3	Mar	Fri	2	Fri	9	Fri	16	Fri	23	Rooty Hill	RH3
Feb	Thur	1	Fri	2	Thur	8	Fri	9	City	CIT2	Mar	Fri	2	Fri	9	Fri	16	Fri	23	Hurstville	HUR3
Feb	Fri	2	Fri	9	Fri	16	Fri	23	Rooty Hill	RH2	Mar	Mon	5	Mon	12	Mon	19	Mon	26	Wollongong	WOL3
Feb	Mon	5	Mon	12	Mon	19	Mon	26	Parramatta	PAR2	Mar	Mon	5	Mon	12	Mon	19	Mon	26	City	CIT32
Feb	Tue	6	Wed	7	Tue	13	Wed	14	Parramatta	PAR22	Mar	Mon	5	Tue	6	Mon	12	Tue	13	Parramatta	PAR32
Feb	Thur	15	Fri	16	Thur	22	Fri	23	Campbelltown	CAM2	Mar	Fri	9	Fri	16	Fri	23	Fri	30	City	CIT33
Feb	Thur	15	Fri	16	Thur	22	Fri	23	City	CIT22	Mar	Thur	22	Fri	23	Thur	29	Fri	30	Chatswood	CHA3
Feb	Thur	15	Fri	16	Thur	22	Fri	23	Parramatta	PAR23	Mar	Thur	22	Fri	23	Thur	29	Fri	30	City	CIT34
Feb	Tue	20	Wed	21	Tue	27	Wed	28	Wollongong	WOL2	Mar	Thur	22	Fri	23	Thur	29	Fri	30	Parramatta	PAR33
Feb	Tue	20	Wed	21	Tue	27	Wed	28	Hurstville	HUR2	Mar/Apr	Wed	28	Wed	4	Wed	11	Wed	18	Parramatta	PAR34
Feb/Mar	Mon	26	Tue	27	Mon	5	Tue	6	Chatswood	CHA2											

This course is required to be attended by committee members & OHS representatives. It provides participants with the skills to apply the principles of workplace OHS consultation & effectively carry out their functions under the OHS legislation

Course Length: 4 days (9am - 4pm). Course Fee: \$627 incl. gst

### ON-SITE TRAINING COURSES

Accident Investigation (1 day)  
Advanced Return to Work\* (1 day)  
BackBasics Manual Handling (2 hrs)  
BackBasics Manual Handling Risk Mgmt (3.5hrs)  
BackBasics Workstation Set-up & M/Handling (2 hrs)  
Course in OHS Consultation\* (4 days)  
Construction General OHS Induction\* (1 day)  
Developing Workplace Safety Culture: Behaviour & Values (1 Day)  
Intro to Return to Work Coordination\* (2 days)  
OHS Committee Chairperson (1 day)  
OHS Committee Refresher (1 day)  
OHS Induction for Employees (4 hrs)  
OHS Law for Directors & Managers (2 hrs)  
OHS Responsibilities for Super & Mgrs (2 hrs)  
OHS Risk Management (1 day)  
OHS Risk Mgmt for Super & Mgrs (1 or 2 days)  
Senior First Aid (2 days)  
Senior First Aid Recertification (1 day)  
Workplace Substances (1 day)

\*WorkCover NSW Accredited Course

### introduction to return to work co-ordination

(A WorkCover NSW Accredited Course)

This course is required to be attended by a return to work coordinator whose employer has a base tariff premium of more than \$50,000 pa. It develops the basic skills and knowledge needed to manage workplace injuries.

Course Fee: \$480 (gst free)

Course Length: 2 days (9am - 4:30pm).

Jan	Thur	18	Fri	19	City	CITR1
Jan	Thur	18	Fri	19	Parramatta	PARR1
Feb	Thur	8	Fri	9	Parramatta	PARR2
Feb	Mon	19	Tue	20	City	CITR2
Mar	Thur	15	Fri	16	City	CITR3
Mar	Thur	22	Fri	23	Parramatta	PARR3

### advanced return to work co-ordination

(A WorkCover NSW Accredited Workshop)

This course provides accredited return to work coordinators who have at least 6 months experience, with further knowledge and skills so they can effectively handle more complex return to work cases.

Course Fee: \$374 incl. gst

Course Length: 1 day (9am - 4pm).

Mar	Tue	13	City	CITE3
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### ohs risk management for supervisors & managers

(There is no WorkCover NSW Course)

This course provides participants with knowledge, skills and appropriate attitudes necessary to apply the principles of risk management and effectively manage health & safety in their areas of responsibility.

Course Fee: \$517 incl. gst

Course Length: 2 days (9am - 4pm).

Feb	Tue	13	Wed	14	City	CITS2
Feb	Tue	20	Wed	21	Parramatta	PARS2
Mar	Tue	20	Wed	21	Parramatta	PARS3
Mar	Tue	27	Wed	28	City	CITS3

### construction general ohs induction

(A WorkCover NSW Accredited Course)

courses run every week

This course is required to be attended by persons working on a construction site. It provides the general OHS knowledge and skills needed by construction workers.

Course Fee: \$150 (gst free)

Course Length: 5 hours (9am - 3pm).

Jan	Mon	29	City	CITCN1
Feb	Mon	5	Parramatta	PARCN2
Feb	Mon	12	City	CITCN2
Feb	Mon	19	Parramatta	PARCN22
Feb	Mon	26	City	CITCN22
Mar	Mon	5	Parramatta	PARCN3
Mar	Mon	12	City	CITCN3
Mar	Mon	19	Parramatta	PARCN32
Mar	Mon	26	City	CITCN32

### senior first aid

(A WorkCover NSW Approved Course)

This course is required to be attended by workplace first aid officers. It imparts the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are necessary to give competent care to the ill or injured until medical aid arrives.

Course Fee: \$176 incl. gst

Course Length: 2 days (8.30am - 5.00pm).

Jan	Wed	24	Thur	25	City	CITFA1
Jan	Wed	24	Thur	25	Parramatta	PARFA1
Feb	Mon	12	Tue	13	City	CITFA2
Feb	Thur	15	Fri	16	Parramatta	PARFA2
Mar	Tue	13	Wed	14	City	CITFA3
Mar	Tue	27	Wed	28	Parramatta	PARFA3

### workplace substances management

(There is no WorkCover NSW Accredited Course)

This course provides participants with practical knowledge to manage the risks associated with workplace substances.

Course Fee: \$286 incl. gst

Course Length: 1 day (9am - 4pm).

Mar	Tue	20	City	CITWS3
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### developing workplace safety culture: behaviour & values

(There is no WorkCover NSW Accredited Course)

This course is designed to give participants an understanding of the nature of a positive safety culture and provide them with the tools to create one in their own workplace.

Course Fee: \$363 incl. gst

Course Length: 1 day (9am - 4pm)

First course is on Monday 7th May

### ohs committee refresher

(There is no WorkCover NSW Accredited Course)

This course is designed to refresh committee members on how to have an effective committee, revisit the OHS Act 2000 & OHS Regulation 2001 and provide updates on this legislation.

Course Fee: \$286 incl. gst

Course Length: 1 day (9am - 4pm).

Feb	Wed	14	Parramatta	PARF2
Mar	Wed	28	City	CITF3

### ohs committee chairperson

(There is no WorkCover NSW Accredited Course)

This course provides a chairperson with further skills and certainty so that they can operate the committee effectively and make a greater impact on health and safety.

Course Fee: \$286 incl. gst

Course Length: 1 day (9am - 4pm).

Feb	Tue	27	City	CITC2
Mar	Mon	26	Parramatta	PARC3

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All our scheduled courses are delivered.

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delivered without cancellation is 402.

\*From October 2004 to July 2006, when this Training Calendar went to print.

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for information on our courses, OHS information, search facility & recent editions of our publication 'Your Safety Matters'

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# Chief Executive Officer



**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE WINNERS AND FINALISTS OF THE WORKCOVER NSW SAFE WORK AWARDS, WHO RECEIVED WELL DESERVED ACCOLADES AT THE AWARDS PRESENTATION HELD AT HOMEBUSH BAY ON 18 OCTOBER IN SYDNEY.**

The awards, now in their third year, were presented by Parliamentary Secretary to the NSW Minister for Commerce, Graham West MP. They demonstrated wonderfully how much creativity is being shown by businesses in our State to improve workplace health and safety.

Small businesses are no exception. The WorkCover Business Assistance Unit's (BAU) new DVD, which helps reinforce the message that safe business is good business, drew much attention when it was shown at the recent Safety Show and Conference, of which WorkCover NSW is principal sponsor. It will be shown at various business events and exhibitions around NSW in the coming months.

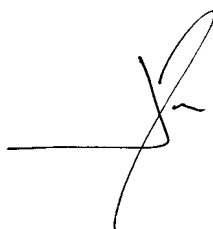
The BAU has also successfully concluded its pilot mentor program in partnership with Bovis Lend Lease. Launched in July, Bovis Lend Lease mentored 10 small construction businesses on the steps they can take to improve workplace safety, with participants receiving their certificates from the Minister for Commerce, John Della Bosca in November.

All NSW employers, injured workers and young people will reap the rewards of Workers Compensation initiatives, announced by NSW Premier, Morris Iemma on 28 September.

The initiatives include a \$74 million incentive to increase the employment of apprentices, a 10 per cent increase in permanent impairment benefits for injured workers, and a further five per cent reduction in workers compensation premiums for all businesses.

The NSW Minister for Commerce, John Della Bosca, has also announced changes to workers compensation legislation to further improve the claims dispute resolution process, and give injured workers greater peace of mind when accessing their benefits.

More congratulations are due to the two winning entries in the WorkCover NSW Young Workers Poster Competition. Both displayed an exceptional talent for design and innovative presentation of the workplace safety message – a message that all of us need to be aware of every day we are at work.



**Jon Blackwell**

Chief Executive Officer  
WorkCover NSW



Recommendations of the recent review of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 have been referred to an eminent former judge for advice and review.

The review is expected to help employers and unions come to an agreement on the draft legislation following its release for consultation earlier this year.

Minister for Commerce, John Della Bosca, said “NSW has the lowest levels of workplace injuries and fatalities in 18 years.

We must be certain that any changes we make strengthen that record, while reducing red tape, upholding safety standards and maintaining a culture of workplace cooperation, which has been a key to our success.”

The Honourable Paul Stein AM, QC, has been asked to examine the existing legislation and the proposed changes, with particular attention to elements where no consensus has emerged.

A former Judge of the NSW Court of Appeal and of the Supreme Court of NSW, he recently conducted a similar review of the unfair contracts jurisdiction, which produced an excellent outcome.

“The success of our current workplace safety legislation has assisted the continued reduction of workers compensation premiums in NSW”, Mr Della Bosca said.

“Mr Stein will provide the acute legal analysis and advice to help us continue to reduce workplace injuries and fatalities, while alleviating any unnecessary regulatory burden on business.

Our aim must be to have safe, healthy and profitable workplaces.”

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. To review the proposals arising from the *Report on the Review of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000*, tabled in the NSW Parliament on the 2 May 2006 and consider whether these, or any changes, are required to the occupational health and safety legislation to better secure the health, safety and welfare of people at work.
2. Consider the impacts of the above proposals, having regard to best practice solutions that will remove unnecessary regulatory burdens on business, without compromising safety.
3. Consult with industry and union leaders, employers, employees and other relevant stakeholders as considered necessary.
4. Report recommendations to the Minister by 30 April 2007.

# Mentor program

a success

WorkCover NSW has successfully concluded its pilot mentor program in partnership with Bovis Lend Lease.

The program was launched in July 2006 to help small business improve their workplace safety. For the past six months, Bovis Lend Lease has mentored ten small construction businesses on the steps they can take to improve their level of workplace safety.

Participants in the pilot program took part in workshops, discussions and site visits with designated Bovis Lend Lease Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) officers to discuss specific safety areas of concern and how to improve them.

The pilot phase involved an orientation session, two site visits, a workshop to develop action plans, and a program review. WorkCover provided additional technical expertise to the program through the provision of OHS, injury management and workers compensation specialists at all group sessions.

In a presentation ceremony held at Bovis Lend Lease in November, certificates were awarded to the pilot construction industry program participants.

NSW Minister for Commerce, John Della Bosca, and Global Chief Executive Officer of Retail and Communities, Lend Lease Corporation, Ross Taylor, addressed the ceremony and presented certificates.

"I congratulate Bovis Lend Lease for agreeing to pass on its expertise to smaller businesses and contractors," Mr Della Bosca said.

"Now the pilot program has been completed within the construction industry it is anticipated that it will be rolled out to other industries in the future."

WorkCover anticipates the program will be launched in the manufacturing industry in March 2007, and is seeking agreement from large business to become mentors for small business.

The program forms parts of the WorkCover NSW Business Assistance Unit, which has a range of services aimed at assisting small to medium businesses improve the safety of their workplaces.

## MENTOR PROFILE

**Graeme Mauger, Bovis Lend Lease, NSW EHS Manager**

**Mentee to Paul Martin, Ledacon P/L**

"My role as a mentor was to assess my mentee's safety system and to help him get to where he needed to be.

I met Paul at his office a number of times to discuss how he does things and how this compares to what's out there in the industry. When we had his safety management system in place, I went back to review his progress and help with any fine tuning.

I got involved because I saw it as a way to help out. Here was a subcontractor who had put his hand up to say he really wanted to learn how to do things better. It was rewarding working with someone who was really motivated to improve their OHS system – not because he had to, but because he wanted to.

Paul would often ring me with a problem and I'd point him in the right direction. Even though the program has finished, he knows he can call me anytime he needs help."



Minister for Commerce, John Della Bosca with Paul Martin from Ledacon P/L

## MENTEE PROFILE

**Paul Martin, Ledacon P/L, Civil Construction Company based in Wollongong**

**Mentored by Graeme Mauger, Bovis Lend Lease**

"I got involved in the mentor program because I was looking to improve the safety systems inside my business.

I contract to large companies and government departments, and because of my lack of understanding of the OHS legislation, I found my safety system was geared more to meet my clients' needs than the needs of my business.

This program has given me greater awareness of building an appropriate system for my business. I now understand the terminology associated with safety, so I can talk to my clients on a higher level with greater confidence.

Probably the best thing to come out of the program was the positive relationship I have developed with WorkCover and the Business Assistance Unit. I'm a firm believer that safety is all about communication and building relationships. The more open you are and the better your communication lines, the more chance you have to improve your levels of safety."

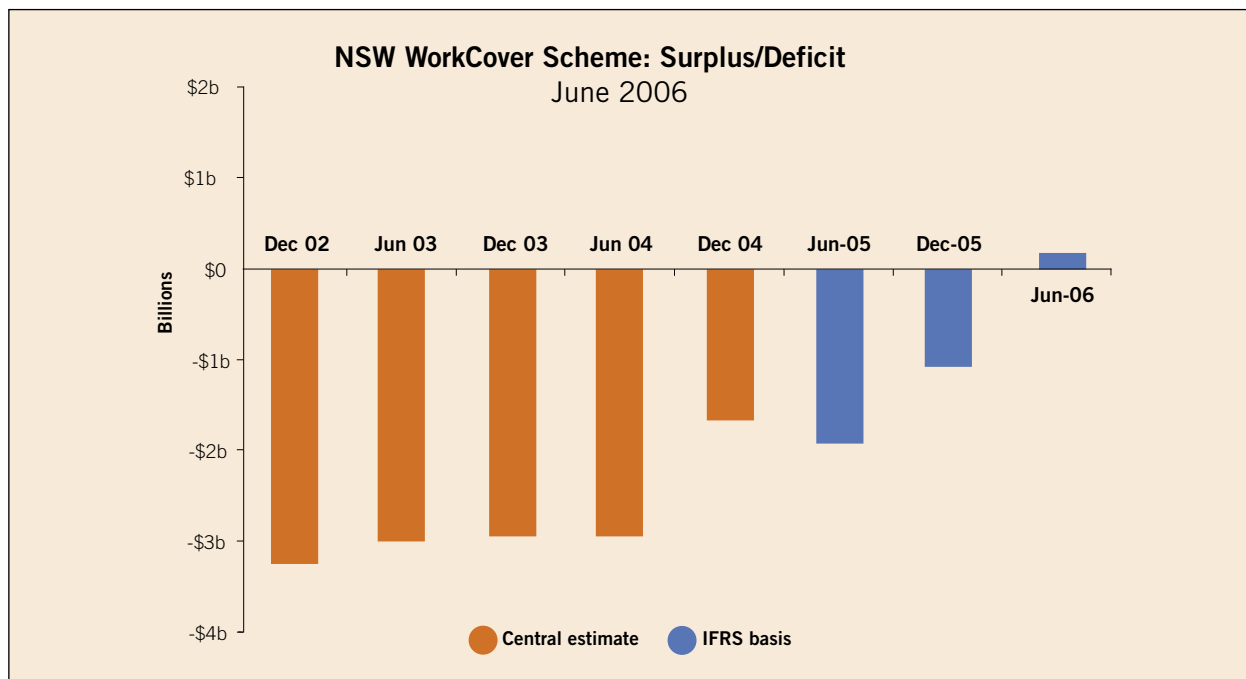


Ross Taylor, Global CEO, Retail and Communities, Lend Lease Corporation



Mentor program participants

# WorkCover Scheme in surplus



The latest independent valuation as at 30 June 2006 released in September showed the WorkCover NSW Scheme had a \$1.247 billion improvement in the six months from December 2005, due largely to improved claims management.

The NSW Government has turned around the \$3.2 billion deficit recorded in December 2002, with the Workers Compensation Scheme now showing a surplus of \$85 million.

This result has been due to the Scheme's outstanding financial performance combined with a strong focus by the NSW Government, WorkCover NSW and Scheme Agents working together on improving claims management and return to work outcomes.

The WorkCover NSW Scheme now has a greater focus on immediate medical care, financial support and assistance to return to work. WorkCover NSW continued attention to occupational health and safety in partnership with employers

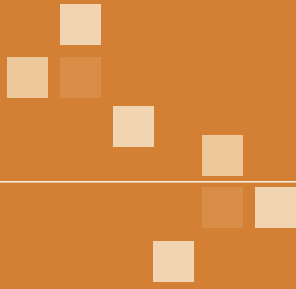
and workers has also been instrumental in delivering these positive results. New South Wales has recently recorded its lowest injury and fatality rate in 18 years.

The NSW Government is passing these significant improvements directly back to NSW employers and workers.

On 28 September 2006 the NSW Premier, Morris Iemma, announced a range of Workers Compensation initiatives. These initiatives will see NSW employers, injured workers and young people reap the benefits from the WorkCover NSW Scheme's return to financial health.

The new initiatives include a \$74 million incentive to increase the employment of apprentices, a ten per cent increase in permanent impairment benefits for injured workers, and a further five per cent (\$130 million a year) reduction in workers compensation premiums for all NSW businesses.





In just 12 months the NSW Government has twice increased benefits to injured workers and reduced premiums by 20 per cent, resulting in savings to employers of \$560 million a year.

## **PREMIUM RATE REDUCTION**

The ongoing improvement in the Scheme's financial performance has enabled the NSW Government to provide 20 per cent in rate reductions, since June 2005.

The 20 per cent rate reductions apply to all WorkCover NSW Industry Classification (WIC) rates and were implemented as follows:

- Five per cent premium rate reduction effective for policies commencing on or after 31 December 2005.
- A further 10 per cent premium rate reduction effective for policies commencing on or after 30 June 2006.
- Followed by a further 5 per cent premium rate reduction effective for policies commencing on or after 31 December 2006.

From 31 December 2006, the target collection rate for the WorkCover NSW Scheme will have reduced to 1.99 per cent, down from 2.57 per cent in June 2005.

## **PREMIUM EXAMPLES WITH FIVE PER CENT RATE REDUCTION**

### **Small employers**

1. For a small employer operating a bread shop in the Sutherland Shire with wages of \$168,950, the rate reduction will result in the premium rate for this employer being 3.625 per cent of wages and a premium for the next year of \$6209.25 saving \$322. If the reduction had not occurred the rate would have been 3.816 per

cent with a premium of \$6531.61. The employer is not experience adjusted and therefore any claims incurred will not impact on their premium.

If an apprentice baker's wages of \$25,000 per annum were included in this employer's wages then the employer would save a further \$906 as a result of the reforms.

2. An employer operating a preschool on the NSW South Coast with wages of \$241,499 will have a premium rate of 2.676 per cent and a premium of \$5,793 when their policy renews compared to a premium rate of 2.817 per cent and a premium of \$6,096 if the reduction had not occurred.

### **Medium employers**

1. An employer located in Sydney's South East engaged in the wholesaling of building supplies with wages of \$1,630,109 has a basic tariff premium of \$54,494.54. This is as a result of the reduced rate of 3.343 per cent, rather than a basic tariff premium of \$57,363.53 if the rate had not reduced from 3.519 per cent. The employer has had some recent small claims and, being a medium sized employer, the premium will be experience adjusted. As a result of a further 5 per cent rate reduction, this employer's premium will reduce from \$50,984.76 to \$48,788.81, saving \$2196.

If the employer's wages included 3 apprentices with an average of \$25,000 per annum, then the employer would save a further \$2,507.29.

2. An employer engaged in plastics manufacturing in Sydney's west with wages of \$4,810,147 had a basic tariff premium of \$218,188. However, the reduction of the rate applicable for this employer from 4.536 per cent to 4.309 per cent means that the basic tariff premium will

# WorkCover Scheme in surplus

be \$207,269. The premium is experience adjusted and the employer has experienced some claims in the last couple of years. However, as the employer has a good claims experience compared to other employers in the industry, as a result of the new experience formula and the 5 per cent rate reduction, the employer will pay a total premium of \$209,063.66 rather than a total premium of \$218,416.82, saving \$9353.

If the employer's wages included five apprentices with an average wage of \$25,000 per annum then the employer would save a further \$5386.25.

## Large employer

1. A large Western Sydney manufacturer has annual wages of over \$37,000,000 and a basic tariff premium of \$1,628,923. This is based on a reduction in premium rates for this industry from 4.599 per cent to 4.3569 per cent. Without the rate reduction the basic tariff premium would be \$1,714,656.25. After experience adjustment the new total premium payable will be \$3,465,633, rather than \$3,656,375, saving \$190,742.

If the employer's wages included 10 apprentices with an average wage of \$25,000 per annum, then the employer would save a further \$10,892.50.

2. A very large financial institution with annual wages over \$865,000,000 will now have a basic tariff premium of \$2,220,146 as a result of the reduction in premium rates for this industry from 0.27 per cent to 0.256 per cent. Without the rate reduction the basic tariff premium would be \$2,336,995. The total premium for this employer after experience adjustment will be \$1,463,373, rather than \$1,524,241, saving \$60,868.

# Growing our skills: Apprent

New South Wales is facing historically strong employment levels.

However, these levels, combined with an ageing population and the movement away from trade vocations by school leavers, has left the state facing a skills shortage. This shortage of skilled labour is having an impact on some of the state's growing industries.

In particular, the high number of small businesses in the skilled trades creates difficulties in meeting training demands due to the financial burden associated with training. Adding to this problem is the fluctuating demand in the industry and the increasing use of short-term contracts.

Changes in demand are also more easily absorbed by larger enterprises than by small ones, making it difficult for smaller enterprises to commit to long-term training. Consequently, there is a need for government support programs and incentives to ensure that undertaking training becomes more attractive to employers, particularly small business.

Because the NSW Government recognises that the number of workers with formal skill qualifications will need to keep increasing if the economy is to continue growing, it has developed the *Growing Our Skills: Apprentice Incentive Scheme*, which will provide premium relief for NSW employers with apprentices.

The NSW Premier, Morris Iemma announced the Scheme on 28 September 2006. As a result, apprentice wages will effectively no longer be included in the assessment of an employer's premium. An employer will not experience any rise in workers compensation premium because they employ an apprentice.

This incentive scheme is anticipated to increase the number of apprentices in New South Wales by more than five percent, resulting in an extra 1000 apprentices a year.

### HOW WILL THE SCHEME WORK?

To encourage the introduction of more apprenticeships in 2007 and to ensure these changes benefit employers quickly, the new Apprentice Incentive Scheme will apply to new or renewed policies commencing on or after 31 December 2006.

For an employer to be eligible for exemption they must:

- have a valid (new or renewed) workers compensation policy commencing on or after 31 December 2006
- have entered into a NSW Department of Education and Training (NSW DET) approved 'Training Contract' with their apprentice in a designated trade vocation.

The Scheme is to be introduced in two phases, as Scheme Agents will need time to introduce the necessary systems required for the apprentice premium exemption.

For that reason, during the first year of the Apprentice Incentive Scheme the premium saving will be included in the final premium calculated by your Agent at the end of the policy period (using actual wages declared at the end of the policy period). Your Scheme Agent will rebate any credit owing as a result of the adjustment.

In subsequent years, the exemption for apprentices will apply at the beginning of the policy period based on estimated wages, as well as being incorporated into the premium adjustment at the end of the policy period.

### WHAT SORT OF SAVINGS CAN I EXPECT UNDER THE SCHEME?

The amount you save will vary depending on the number of apprentices employed, the apprentice's wage rate and the type of industry in which the work is performed.

**For example:** The employer of a first year junior apprentice carpenter working in the house construction industry earning \$17,128 (including allowances) would save \$1089.91. This

is based on an industry tariff rate of 6.363 per cent (house construction WorkCover NSW Industry Classification – WIC).

For a fourth year junior apprentice hairdresser earning \$26,843 with a tariff rate of 2.223 per cent (hairdresser WIC), the employer's premium saving would be \$596.73.

For **medium and large employers** who have their premiums experience adjusted to take into account the cost of their claims, the claims costs associated with any apprentice injured at work will still be used to calculate the final premium payable under the Apprentice Incentive Scheme. Therefore, an employer with a claims experience better than the industry average will have their premiums reduced even further.

**For example:** A large employer with a payroll of \$11.1 million who employs 330 apprentices out of a total of 390 workers and has a good claims experience currently pays an experience-adjusted premium of \$460,627. With the new apprentice premium exemption, this employer's premium saving would be \$406,350, reducing their premium to \$54,277.

On the other hand, if this same employer had a poor claims history, they would have an experience-adjusted premium of \$641,922.76. Including their apprentice premium exemption saving, the employer's premium would be \$253,572.

*The Growing Our Skills:* Apprentice Incentive Scheme, along with other financial initiatives developed by the NSW State Government, demonstrates the Government's commitment to maximising the opportunities for people to obtain vocational skills to support continued economic growth in New South Wales.

For more information visit the WorkCover NSW website **[www.workcover.nsw.gov.au](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au)** or call the WorkCover Assistance Service on **13 10 50**.

# safe work awards

Cutting edge solutions to workplace safety were among the winners of the 2006 WorkCover NSW Safe Work Awards and include a fall from heights prevention device, innovative OHS risk assessment tools and injury prevention strategies.

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Commerce, Graham West MP, presented five awards as well as three 'highly commended' certificates to successful entrants at the third annual Safe Work Awards held on 18 October at Homebush Bay.

While presenting the awards, Mr West said employers and workers had developed some ingenious solutions to creating safer workplaces and that it was gratifying to see such a high standard of submissions from the 84 entrants.

The award for *Best solution to an identified workplace health and safety issue* went to Waterloo company JLG ProLift for its innovative personnel lift. The lift was developed to boost productivity and eliminate the risk of falls from ladders in the workplace. Known as the Liftpod, it provides a safe, battery powered portable personnel lift at an affordable price for ladder users.

William Carey Christian School at Prestons collected the award for *Best workplace health and safety management system*. Over the past four years, the school has implemented an extensive OHS management system to develop policies and targets, address injury management and organise training activities.

*Best workplace health and safety practices in a small business* went to Beverley Park company Platinum Freight Management for its system to maintain a safe and healthy workplace for staff, visitors and contractors at its customs brokerage operation.

RailCorp's Inner West/Bankstown Health and Safety Environment Committee won the *Public sector leadership award for injury prevention and management*. The committee received the award after implementing a range of OHS improvements including inspections for 31 stations within the region, mentoring of front line staff and the development of new workplace manuals.

The title of *Best individual contribution to workplace health and safety* was shared between Ron Christianson, a Transport Workers Union delegate from Toll Ipec at Moorebank, and Robert Petrovski from the TNT Express Mascot depot.

Ron Christianson implemented the development of safe driving plans for all drivers working with Toll Ipec and as a result of his work, all drivers are appropriately inducted and a system of monitoring driving hours has been introduced.

Robert Petrovski is a health and safety representative whose application of the consultative process, coupled with a rational approach, has made an exceptional difference to health and safety at TNT Express.

Special 'highly commended' certificates were awarded to EMT JV for their work on the Sydney Water Ocean Outfall Sewer Rehabilitation Project, the Hunter Region SLSA Helicopter Rescue Service for its safety management system, and Homelessness NSW/ACT for the development of a Client Risk Assessment Tool.

This year's award winners will also be entered in their respective category in the national Safe Work Australia Awards to be held next year.



From L to R: WorkCover NSW CEO Jon Blackwell and Graham West MP with RailCorp Award winners.



From L to R: Graham West MP, MC Suzie Elelman and WorkCover NSW CEO Jon Blackwell



## 2006 SAFE WORK AWARD FINALISTS

The 23 finalists cover a range of industry groups including manufacturing, health, government, retail and education.

Small, medium and large businesses and organisations were represented, with a majority of the finalists from the Sydney metropolitan area and Newcastle. Others came from as far north as Armidale and Port Macquarie and as far south as Unanderra.

### Category 1 – Best workplace health and safety management system

- William Carey Christian School, Prestons, *OHS Management System (winner)*
- EMT JV, Malabar, *Lower SWSOOS Rehabilitation Project*
- Hunter Region SLSA Helicopter Rescue Service Ltd, New Lambton, *Introduction and Implementation of Company Safety Management System*
- D&D Services Australia, Unanderra, *Better...Better...Best*

### Category 2 – Best solution to an identified workplace health and safety issue

- JLG ProLift Pty Ltd, Waterloo, *Liftpod (winner)*
- Port Macquarie Hastings Council, Port Macquarie, *New Sewer Well Washer*
- Machinery Automation & Robotics, Silverwater, *Blade Stop*
- Star City Casino, Sydney, *Commissary Kitchen Bulk Cooking Process*
- Homelessness NSW/ACT, Redfern, *Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) to Create Change*



From L to R: WorkCover NSW CEO Jon Blackwell, TWU representative Keith McGucken accepting Award on behalf of Ron Christianson, Robert Petrovski and Graham West MP

- Down Under Distribution t/a Down Under Safety, Fairymeadow, *Metatarsal Foot Injury Prevention*
- RailCorp, Asset Management Group, Chippendale, *Track Alignment Trolley*
- Thiess Hochtief Joint Venture, North Ryde, *Innovative Solutions for a Safe and Successful Tunnel Operation*
- Kellogg (Aust) Pty Ltd, Pagewood, *Pallecon Lid Removal Tool*
- Sport UNE, Armidale, *Portable Soccer Goal Post Lifter*
- PipeSafe Australia and New Zealand, Belmont, *Pipe Plug*
- Leighton Contractors, Chatswood, *The ROPS2 (Roll Over Preventative System)*

### Category 3 – Best workplace health and safety practices in a small business

- Platinum Freight Management Pty Ltd, Beverley Park **(winner)**
- Hunt's Carpets and Blinds, Armidale

### Category 4 – Public sector leadership award for injury prevention and management

- RailCorp Service Delivery Group Inner West/Bankstown Health and Safety Environment Committee **(winner)**

### Category 5 – Best individual contribution to workplace health and safety

- Robert Petrovski, TNT Express Mascot **(winner)**
- Ron Christianson, TWU delegate Toll Ipec Moorebank **(winner)**
- Andrew Harris, Scotts Head Reserve Trust
- Stephen Winner, RailCorp Service Delivery Group South/Southern Highlands



From L to R: WorkCover NSW CEO Jon Blackwell, Desiree and Peter McCrae from Platinum Freight, Graham West MP

# OHS system

a proven success



With no lost time injuries in two years since the introduction of a new safety and injury management system, it is little wonder that RailCorp's Inner West/Bankstown Health and Safety Environment Committee won the *Public sector leadership award for injury prevention and management*.

The Inner West/Bankstown Health and Safety Environment Committee, part of RailCorp's Service Delivery Group Division, were applauded for achieving outstanding results in implementing a range of policies and procedures that have set safety benchmarks within the organisation.

The Committee received the award after demonstrating it played an integral role in developing a range of OHS improvements. This included inspections for 31 stations within the region, education and mentoring of front line staff as well as the development of new manual handling and station presentation manuals.

"The safety and injury management system was implemented to try and correct the significant number of injuries and lost work time being sustained by staff," says John Tsiros, Regional Business Manager, RailCorp Inner West/Bankstown Region.

"Many of the injuries resulted from staff not following safe work method statements or not adhering to the required safe operating procedures. A significant number were also from simple carelessness – things like straining their backs from picking up loads or incorrectly bending over," he adds.

"The end result was a lot of injuries occurring that could have been prevented with a bit of management. We realised

we had to put some processes in place to assist the station managers and their staff to better manage these type of incidents.

## CREATING A SAFETY CULTURE

The committee focused on creating a safety culture, encompassed within a neatly packaged injury management approach, that integrated comprehensive induction and training programs, an extensive communications strategy and audit compliance initiatives.

To foster a culture of safety among staff, the committee established a centralised suggestion box, where staff could offer safety suggestions or express concerns. They also conducted regular pre-work briefings for station staff, produced a region specific monthly OHS news bulletin and performed a direct mail out to staff highlighting workplace safety issues.

## OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS

The committee's initiatives have proven to be extremely successful. As a result, the Service Delivery Group's Inner West/Bankstown region has achieved a significant reduction in injuries.

Amazingly, from a workforce of 446, there have been no injuries that have resulted in lost time since 2004. During the same period, from October 2004 to October 2006, the reduction of lost time frequency was also reduced from 28.5 per cent to zero.

"The feedback from staff has been very positive – they are grateful there are now processes and systems in place. They actually have something that is black and white that works and there is no more guess work to managing and preventing injuries," says Mr Tsiros.

Not content to sit still, the committee hopes to raise the bar and take their safety and injury management system to the next level.

"The systems we have developed are now being used as a benchmark and prototype for other systems that are being developed across RailCorp," adds Mr Tsiros.

The 11 member committee, represented by staff positioned in locations across Sydney's inner and southwest, have been working together since 2004. Acting as the benchmark for the entire Service Delivery Group, the Inner West Bankstown Health and Safety Environment Committee are now mentoring other sub-groups across the division.

DVD spreads

# safety message

The Business Assistance Unit has produced a promotional DVD that helps reinforce the message that safe business is good business.

Shown for the first time at the recent Safety Show 2006, the DVD will be presented at various business related events and exhibitions around NSW over the coming months.

The DVD presents representatives from WorkCover NSW, employer groups, unions and small business discussing the benefits of having a WorkCover NSW unit that is specifically focused on providing advisory services to small and medium business throughout New South Wales.

Small business operator, Craig Browning, from OAS Computers in Newcastle, makes the comment "Having safety as the number one priority in our business has certainly improved our bottom line. Getting advice from the Business Assistance Unit is a must for any small business."

Another small business operator, Shane Flanagan, from Erina Glass, is also featured in the DVD. He admits that it is easy to let safety issues lapse when you're caught up with other aspects of running your business.

"When it gets busy it is hard to see the hazards, so they might slip past you and someone may get injured. The Business Assistance Unit helped us identify and rectify the problems", he said.

Industry representatives from WorkCover NSW, Australian Business Limited, Australian Industry Group, NSW Farmers Federation and Unions NSW call for employers to work with their employees on matters of safety. "The safest workplaces are where there is a shared sense of responsibility about safety and where both employers and employees take equal responsibility."

Jon Blackwell, WorkCover NSW Chief Executive Officer, adds, "At WorkCover NSW we understand it's not always easy for small businesses to dedicate the time and resources to workplace safety. That's why we have developed our Business Assistance Unit. It's specifically designed to help small to medium businesses – not only in making their workplaces safer, but also in assisting with management of injuries and issues when things go wrong."



# poster competition

The two winning entries in the WorkCover NSW Young Workers Poster Competition displayed design of a very high calibre and strongly portrayed the message of workplace safety for young workers and their employers.

Young workers and students were called on to design a poster that would educate workers and employers. Promoted via email, SMS, a dedicated website and school visits, over 330 entries were received from high school, college and university students across the state.

Finalists received recognition for their entries at an awards ceremony held in October in Sydney. The winning student from the tertiary category was Edie, aged 17, from St George TAFE. Second place went to John, aged 20, from St George Design College, and third place to Rohini, aged 19, from the University of New South Wales.

In the high school category, Christopher, aged 16, from Epping Boys High scooped the winning prize. Students who made the top ten runners up and next 16 runners up category were also commended. Three of these were from Epping Boys High – the same high school as the winning entry. One student from the top ten category had entered 23 separate posters!

The posters were illustrated with a range of slogans, from 'Protect young workers now - they are our future' to 'Put the YOU in Youth'.

Twenty four year old paralympian, Heath Francis, was present at the awards ceremony to share the story of his workplace accident, recovery process and success as a paralympian. Heath is a member of WorkCover NSW Paralympian Sponsorship program, which sponsors paralympian athletes who have experienced workplace accidents to promote safe work practices.

His experience highlights some of the dangers that young people face in the workplace. Almost 14 per cent of NSW workplace injuries occur among the state's 210,000 young workers. Twenty young workers get hurt on the job every day, whether from inexperience or employers not properly training their young employees.

Continued improvement in occupational health and safety has seen injuries and fatalities in NSW fall to their lowest level in 18 years, but it is vital that employers consider the inexperience of young workers by educating them about safety issues and anticipating, eliminating and controlling risks in the workplace.

This is particularly relevant in light of the recent NSW government announcement of a \$74 million incentive scheme to reduce the cost of employing apprentices. As increasing numbers of young people enter the workforce, the safety message must be effectively communicated to all workplaces.

WorkCover NSW CEO, Jon Blackwell, presented the awards and commended students on the quality of their entries.

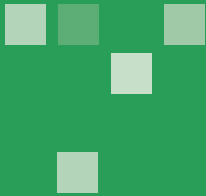
"Looking around at the exhibition of posters today, I am sure everyone will agree that the standard of entries is very high and that the ideas and visuals of the posters demonstrate a real understanding of workplace safety."

A collection of the winning posters will be available in early 2007. Posters will be free and orders of up to 10 copies each can be made online at [www.youngworkers.com.au](http://www.youngworkers.com.au).

Large organisations with multiple facilities or campuses that require more than ten copies should contact [info@youngworkers.com.au](mailto:info@youngworkers.com.au).

To view the winning posters go to [www.youngworkers.com.au](http://www.youngworkers.com.au)





Student Chris with his winning poster and design teacher.



Ben with his winning poster Protect Young Workers Now.



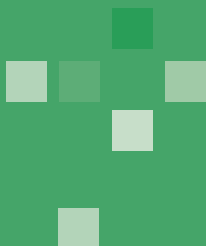
Jennifer and her winning safety poster.



WorkCover NSW CEO, Jon Blackwell, presents High School runner-up Nicholas, with his award.



Heath Francis telling his story.



# Asbestos awareness

improves in local government

Local government is becoming increasingly competent at dealing with the management of materials containing asbestos, thanks to the success of a WorkCover NSW initiative.

The Asbestos Awareness for Local Government initiative is an ongoing intervention strategy aimed at local government organisations. Shire and Municipal Councils, in particular, are being educated to identify and manage building and renovation works involving the safe removal and disposal of asbestos containing materials that fall within WorkCover NSW jurisdiction.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT PRESENTATION

As part of a joint government initiative aimed at improving and sharing knowledge about asbestos and demolition, WorkCover NSW Asbestos and Demolition Unit developed a presentation for local government.

The presentation specifically deals with the legislation governing demolition, asbestos removal, licensing and permits, with a strong emphasis on the identification and management of asbestos containing material in a non-occupational environment.

It covers health risks associated with the respiratory diseases caused by inhalation of asbestos. The presentation also clarifies the roles of local council and WorkCover NSW in relation to the management of materials containing asbestos.

## POSITIVE FEEDBACK

A recent survey has demonstrated the value of the overall asbestos awareness and management strategy that focused on legislation, licensing and permits. Over 90 per cent of

the participants surveyed (2429 participants from 70 local government organisations across NSW) gave a positive response when asked about the content, relevance and potential for future use of the information presented.

Survey participants stated that the information presented would be useful in a variety of ways, such as for identifying and managing legislative requirements, filling out documentation, conducting internal training, and carrying out inspections and land clearances.

## NATIONAL INTERVENTION PROGRAM

WorkCover NSW also participated in the Heads of Workplace Safety Authorities (HWSA) Demolition and Asbestos Compliance Project, which included all Australian States and Territories (except Tasmania), and New Zealand.

This intervention initiative focused on OHS inspectors providing information to specialist contractors on effective and practical approaches for the safe removal of asbestos and demolition work.

Participation in this national intervention program provided the opportunity for dialogue and knowledge sharing between the states, resulting in the identification of additional strategies to assist in improved communication with the asbestos and demolition industry.

Renovators and home owners can find further information on the WorkCover NSW website [www.workcover.nsw.gov.au](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au) and in *Fibro and Asbestos – A renovator and homeowners guide* located at [www.nsw.gov.au/fibro](http://www.nsw.gov.au/fibro).

# Silo safety rebate

## for farmers

From the start of the New Year, NSW farmers will be eligible to receive a rebate to carry out safety upgrades of their existing on-farm silos and field bins.

This \$750,000 incentive scheme was introduced alongside an Industry Code of Practice to assist the users of silos and field bins to operate their equipment more safely.

The WorkCover Safer Silos Program offers NSW farmers up to half the cost of making safety improvements. A dollar for dollar rebate, up to \$750, will be provided to assist farmers reduce or eliminate the safety risks of operating their silos and bins.

The rebate will be available from 1 January 2007 for a period of two years or until funds are expended. It applies only to existing silos and field bins supplied prior to 1 January 2007. After this date, safety compliance of silos and field bins supplied to new farmers will be the responsibility of the importer, manufacturer or supplier, under the requirements of existing plant safety legislation.

Under the new scheme, farmers can receive assistance to upgrade silos and field bins with a range of safety improvements, including:

- Silo lid openers that operate from ground level
- Grain level indicators, some of which attach to the silo, others of which attach to the grain auger
- Improved grain discharge mechanisms
- Ladders and walkways
- Safety signage.

In total, 13 specific safety items or improvements can be funded, allowing farmers to fit the devices that are best suit their operational needs.

Advice from industry and WorkCover's own in-field research with farmers has shown that making safety improvements is not just about reducing risks. Fitting safety items has been shown to have operational benefits including less time spent climbing, reduced grain loss or overflow, more accurate grain management, prevention of unauthorised access to silos and simpler cleaning and maintenance.

Information and application packages can be obtained by contacting WorkCover on **13 10 50** or its Rural Industry Team directly on **(02) 4321 5286**. Further information is also be available on [www.workcover.nsw.gov.au](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au)

### INFORMATION SEMINARS

Under the Safer Silos Program, WorkCover has conducted information seminars for silo manufacturers, importers and suppliers, at Gunnedah and Wagga Wagga. These events have proven to be an opportunity to discuss technical and design issues with WorkCover representatives.

Information seminars have also been run in at Narrabri and West Wyalong, both major grain growing and storage areas in regional NSW, specifically for on-farm users of silos and field bins. At the events, farmers have been able to talk with WorkCover Inspectors, about the new Code of Practice, the rebate scheme and how to improve their own silo safety. Farmers have also raised general farm safety risk management questions and received practical information, including WorkCover's 15 Minute Farm Safety Check.

Further seminars will be conducted in 2007, where sufficient demand exists in an area. Contact WorkCover on **(02) 4321 5286** to enquire.

### CHECKLIST

How safe are your silos and field bins? Can you answer yes to the following:

- Are augers and/or conveyors guarded to prevent limbs, hair or clothing from getting caught?
- Are silos and field bins regularly inspected for structural damage or wear?
- Do you secure access ladders and hatches to prevent unauthorised access?
- Is fall protection provided and worn when working on top of the silo or bin?
- When moving equipment, do you watch for power lines and maintain safety clearance?
- Are confined spaces procedures followed when entering silos or field bins?
- Are silos and field bins fitted with appropriate safety signage, warning of hazards and providing instructions for safe working practices?
- Are appropriate respirators worn when loading dusty grain?
- Are respirators kept clean according to manufacturer's instructions?

# safety with us

If you work in hot environments, it makes sense to ensure you are protected against the heat.

Over exposure to heat can lead to 'heat stress', a serious condition that can take the form of muscular cramps, heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

It's important to be aware of these early warning signs so action can be taken before heat stress becomes life threatening.

For outdoor work, this could mean reducing the workload, seeking shade, replacing lost fluids (drink water – avoid caffeine) and resting frequently if the job cannot be put off until a cooler time of day. Light, loose fitting clothing will help, but if protective clothing and equipment has been determined as necessary, it must not be discarded.

For all work involving exposure to heat, every workplace must develop first aid and emergency procedures appropriate to

its operation and hazards, and make sure that employees understand them.

In the case of isolated or remote work, it is critical that you know emergency procedures and contact numbers before you start the job.

It's also important to make sure that any heat related incident is reported and investigated. Other people will learn from your experience, and preventive measures can be reviewed and improved.

The WorkCover NSW fact sheet *Work in Hot Environments* provides basic information for workers who could be affected by exposure to heat. More detailed information is available in the *Code of practice: Work in hot or cold environments* (Catalogue No. 309) that is available on the WorkCover NSW website and also on the *Talk safety with us* CD ROM. Contact the WorkCover NSW Publications Hotline on **1300 799 003** to obtain a copy.

## Improvements set to reduce workers

# compensation

## claim disputes

On 1 November 2006, the NSW Minister for Commerce, John Della Bosca, announced changes to workers compensation legislation designed to further improve the claims dispute resolution process.

The changes provide greater clarity for injured workers in understanding decisions made about their benefits if a workers compensation insurer declines, reduces or stops benefit payments on a claim.

Under the new arrangements, an injured worker will receive a copy of all information used in such decisions. This means that all information is exchanged and considered before an application for dispute resolution can be lodged with the Workers Compensation Commission.

An injured worker can ask for a review of the insurer's decision and can seek advice from WorkCover NSW Claims Assistance Service.

While many of these changes are intended to reduce unnecessary disputes, those workers who lodge an application for dispute resolution with the Workers Compensation Commission will also be assisted by new streamlined processes.

If the dispute is about the level of permanent impairment, an approved medical specialist will review all medical evidence, assess the worker, and make a final determination on the level of permanent impairment for a lump sum compensation payment.

Other disputes that are considered by arbitrators will be scheduled for a teleconference in 35 days.

A new fee schedule for legal practitioners that will appropriately remunerate the profession for resolving disputes about workers' claims in a timely manner has also been introduced. WorkCover NSW worked with the Law Society of NSW to produce the new legal costs schedule.

These latest improvements to the dispute resolution system build on the 2001 reforms and have been developed in consultation with key stakeholder groups including employers, unions, insurers and medical and legal professionals.

For more information visit the WorkCover NSW website **[www.workcover.nsw.gov.au](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au)** or call the WorkCover NSW Assistance Service on **13 10 50**.



# Grants open for sports injury

prevention research



## NSW SPORTING INJURIES INSURANCE SCHEME

Nominations have opened for the 2007 Sports Research and Injury Prevention Scheme Grants.

Applications are invited for applied research grants aimed at preventing or reducing the risk of injuries in NSW sport.

Grants are provided by the NSW Sporting Injuries Committee and applications should demonstrate how the project or initiative would contribute to a reduction in the incidence or severity of serious sporting injuries in NSW.

Since the inception of the Research and Injury Prevention Scheme in 1991, more than \$1.4 million in grants has been awarded to leading NSW medical researchers.

The University of Sydney is a recipient of the 2006 grant program and will use the funding to investigate whether stretching before and after exercise contributes to injury prevention in sport.

The Australian Catholic University's School of Exercise Science also received funding to track the health and

performance of talented female adolescent athletes over three years, across track and field, swimming and gymnastics.

In 2005, Sports Medicine Australia (NSW branch) received funding to launch the *Smartplay* program, a community project aimed at reducing sporting injuries among school children.

Other research projects funded in previous years include a survey of sports safety policies and practices in community rugby league, an investigation into the workload and physical preparation of junior cricket fast bowlers, and a study of the long term physical consequences of playing baseball.

The NSW Sporting Injuries Committee is a non profit statutory organisation that encourages sports injury prevention initiatives within the NSW community.

The NSW Sporting Injuries Committee is a non profit statutory organisation that encourages sports injury prevention initiatives within the NSW community.

Participation in sport plays an important part in the health of the NSW community, and money invested through the grants scheme will ultimately lead to a safer environment for all sporting participants.

Grant applications close on 1 March 2007.

Application forms and guidelines are available from the NSW Sporting Injuries Committee website at

**[www.sportinginjuries.nsw.gov.au](http://www.sportinginjuries.nsw.gov.au)** or by calling (02) 4321 5392.

Bookmark this

# website

Looking for information and practical resources to help your business with its OHS and workers compensation responsibilities?

Log on to the 'safe business is good business' website at [www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/safebusiness](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/safebusiness). You'll find a host of practical information organised by industry to help employers of small to medium businesses understand what their OHS and workers compensation requirements are and how to meet them.

There are industry specific homepages, covering construction, consumer and business services, health and community services, manufacturing, retail and wholesale, rural, transport and storage.

Information is presented in a user friendly, easy to read format, using frequently asked questions, checklists, publication downloads and self assessments.

The self assessment tool enables you to find out how well you are managing the health and safety of your workers. Simply follow the prompts and you will be asked a series of questions

about your workers compensation and incident history, as well as how you are managing 10 common hazards.

A list of upcoming events such as free workshops and business advisory days are listed on the website. These dates and other safe business information can be sent to you electronically through a free e-bulletin service (go to the safe business website to subscribe).

Details of the WorkCover NSW Safety Bus are also featured on the site. This customised service travels to regions throughout NSW at a time and place to meet local business needs.

The website has been designed to meet accessibility guidelines, so it can be easily used by small businesses with limited internet accessibility. It is fast to download and offers text only versions, ensuring the information is available to everyone regardless of bandwidth.

The 'safe business is good business' website can be found at [www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/safebusiness](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/safebusiness). Alternatively, go to the WorkCover NSW website and click on the 'small business safety website' icon on the lower right hand side of the screen.

New

# publications

## WORK NEAR OVERHEAD POWER LINES

You don't have to be in direct contact with a high voltage overhead power line to receive a fatal electric shock – simply being too close can kill.

The *Code of practice: Work near overhead power lines* (Catalogue No. 1394) is now available and has been developed to protect the health and safety of those who work near overhead power lines and other electrical apparatus.

The code systematically outlines safety measures to be put in place near overhead power lines, such as how to:

- determine and set approach distances and no-go zones
- visibly identify risk areas
- safely operate cranes and mobile plants
- safely carry out tree and vegetation management work
- safely work with scaffolding
- safely carry out agricultural work.

The code includes resources such as an example risk assessment checklist and Safe Work Method Statement, to assist the safe planning and carrying out of work near overhead power lines.

## CODE OF PRACTICE: TUNNELS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

The *Code of practice: Tunnels under construction* (Catalogue No. 10) is also now available, a detailed guide to the safety measures that should be considered at all stages of underground construction work.

The code is especially valuable in its consideration of issues and risks particular to tunnels. It includes a hazard classification of common fuels and atmospheric contaminants in tunnelling and outlines the risks posed by dust and silica, diesel emissions and asbestos.

The code also makes clear that good communication across the construction site is fundamental to the safety and efficiency of all aspects of a tunnel project. It outlines various modes of communications that can be used to maximise safety and minimise risk, including voice communication and electronic signalling systems.

Contact the WorkCover NSW Publications Hotline on **1300 799 003** to obtain a copy of either code of practice. Both publications are also available on the Publications section of the WorkCover NSW website [www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/publications](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/publications).

# Prosecutions

## **\$355,000 IN FINES AFTER WORKERS EXPOSED TO DEADLY GASES**

Two companies involved in steel manufacturing at Port Kembla have been fined a total of \$355,500 in the NSW Industrial Court following a 2004 incident in which workers were exposed to deadly blast furnace gases.

One worker was rendered unconscious and several others were affected by a leak of potentially fatal carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, hydrogen and nitrogen gases on 11 April 2004.

A WorkCover NSW investigation found that there had been a degree of complacency in sounding the alarms after the leak was detected in a 'precipitator', which is used to channel gases and dusts from the blast furnaces.

Bluescope Steel (AIS) Pty Ltd was fined a total of \$240,000 for breaching section 8(1) and section 8(2) of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* for failing to ensure the health and safety of its employers and other workers no in its employ.

Serco Australia Pty Ltd was fined \$115,500 for breaching section 8(1) of the Act for failing to ensure the health and safety of its employees, who were engaged in the rescue operations following the gas leak.

## **COMPANY FINED \$154,000 AFTER WORKER FELL 15 METRES**

A Minto company and its director have been fined a total of \$154,000 in the NSW Industrial Court after a 19-year-old worker was severely injured in a 15 metre fall from a building under construction.

Skyrise Installations and its director, Domenico Vullo, pleaded guilty to a breach of Section 8(1) of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* for failing to ensure the health and safety of the worker.

In March 2003, the 19-year-old employee spent four days on life support after falling from the construction site at Rhodes Corporate Park.

The worker, who was operating the lifting crane to install curtain wall panels, was not attached to a safety line at the time.

Skyrise Installations was fined \$140,000 and its director \$14,000.

## **FORMER FORKLIFT ASSESSOR FINED \$66,000**

A former accredited assessor was fined a total of \$66,000 in Sydney today for issuing false Certificates of Competency to operate forklift trucks.

Chief Industrial Magistrate Hart said the evidence proved the former assessor had been holidaying overseas on the dates he claimed to have assessed most of the 11 applicants.

Mr Quang Tran, who was fined in his absence, was the last of nine former accredited assessors to be prosecuted by WorkCover NSW in 2005-06.

WorkCover NSW identified possible corrupt activity in the national Certificates of Competency licensing process in May 2004, and immediately referred the matter to the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC).

CIM Hart said the offences were not breaches of a technical nature, or even the result of laziness, but deliberate conduct in breach of the required conduct as an accredited assessor.

## **COMPANY FINED \$100,000 AFTER WORKER LOSES LEG**

A building supplies company has been fined a total of \$100,000 in the NSW Industrial Court following a forklift incident that resulted in the amputation of a worker's leg.

James Hardie Australia Pty Ltd pleaded guilty to a breach of section 8(2) of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* for failing to ensure the health and safety of a contract truck driver.

The conviction resulted from an incident at the company's *Rosehill* warehouse in October 2003, where the worker's right leg was amputated below the knee after he was run over by a forklift while assisting with the loading of his truck.

The court heard that since the incident, the company has put in place a number of new safety measures in its warehouse, including a requirement that forklift drivers must switch off their machine when a person comes within two metres.

Further information about managing risks with forklift use can be found in WorkCover NSW's *Making your forklift work for you* publication and in the *Frequently Asked Questions* section of WorkCover NSW's website.

# Fatalities

The following is a list of workplace fatalities occurring in New South Wales since those listed in Volume 66 of WorkCover News. This covers traumatic incidents that resulted in a fatality, occurring from 1 July 2006 to 30 September 2006 inclusive.

- A machine operator was releasing a jammed conveyor belt when he became crushed between pallets. He died later from his injuries.
- A worker was critically injured when hit by timber kicked back by a saw. He died on the way to hospital.
- A farm worker who had been spraying herbicide in a paddock collapsed and died some hours after his spray rig collided with a tree.
- A worker was seriously injured when a process machine he was cleaning was inadvertently switched on. He suffered cardiac arrest and died later in hospital.
- An electrician assisting with cable installation fell from a ladder, sustaining critical head injuries. He died later that night.
- A farmer on a grazing property was killed when his quad bike rolled onto him.
- A truck driver was fatally crushed between two vehicles when he attempted to jump-start a truck.
- A roofer was killed when he fell through a skylight in a high ceiling.
- A stuntman undergoing scuba diving training reported difficulties via a communication system to the shore supervisor. When the rescue party reached him he was no longer breathing and could not be revived.

**Disclaimer:** These reports are of a preliminary nature and are based on initial reports from WorkCover NSW Inspectors. Full details of incidents will be available after the completion of coronial and other processes. No liability on the part of any parties referred to herein can be inferred from these reports.

## WorkCover NSW Offices

### Head Office

Office hours  
8:30am – 5:00pm  
Monday to Friday  
92-100 Donnison Street  
GOSFORD 2250  
Phone (02) 4321 5000  
Fax (02) 4325 4145  
Postal Address:  
WorkCover NSW  
Locked Bag 2906  
LISAROW 2252

### WorkCover Assistance Service

Office hours  
8:30am – 5:00pm  
Monday to Friday  
92-100 Donnison Street  
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Phone 13 10 50

### LABORATORIES

#### Thornleigh

5A Pioneer Avenue  
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Fax (02) 9980 6849

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Phone (02) 4724 4900  
Fax (02) 4724 4999

### REGIONAL and LOCAL OFFICES

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Monday to Friday

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Fax (02) 4940 8558

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January - April 2007



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### Sydney - Harris Park

Course name	Days	Members	Non Members	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
OHS Consultation - OHS Workplace Committee/Representatives 	4 Days	\$530	\$590	11, 12 18, 19 22, 23 29, 30	8, 9 15, 16	8, 9 15, 16 19, 20 26, 27	3, 4 10, 11 16, 17 23, 24
					22, 23 February 1, 2 March		
OHS General Induction for Construction Work in NSW 	6 Hrs	\$115	\$115	15, 29	5, 12, 19, 26	5, 12, 19, 26	2, 10, 16, 23, 30
Return to Work Coordination - Introduction 	2 Days	\$455	\$500		6 + 7	28 + 29	
Return to Work Coordination - Advanced 	1 Day	\$280	\$320			27	

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- > Manual handling and ergonomics
- > Legionella and cooling towers
- > Plant safety

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For Information Contact:

Greg Harradine

Phone: 02 9889 1800

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### OHS Risk Management

> 14, 15 February > 12, 13 March > 2, 3 May  
> 4, 5 June > 23, 24 July > 12, 13 September  
> 17, 18 October > 26, 27 November

### OHS Consultation

> 5, 6, 12, 13 February > 14, 15, 21, 22 March  
> 16, 17, 18, 19 April > 1, 8, 15, 22 May  
> 18, 19, 25, 26 June > 16, 17, 18, 19 July  
> 6, 7, 13, 14 August > 4, 11, 18, 25 September  
> 15, 16, 22, 23 October > 5, 6, 7, 8 November  
> 3, 4, 10, 11 December

### OHS Workplace Committee

#### Chairpersons Course

> 28 June > 13 December

### OHS Committee Refresher Training

> 7 June > 29 October

### OHS Fundamentals

> 6, 13, 20, 27 March > 30 May &  
6, 13, 20 June > 2, 9, 16, 23 August

### Managing Plant Hazards

> 9, 10 May > 28, 29 November

### Applying Principles of Occupational Health

> 23, 24 April > 12, 13 November

### Developing & Implementing OHS Management Systems

> 7, 8 March > 28, 29 May > 19, 20 September

### How to Conduct an OHS Audit of Your Workplace

> 26, 27 March > 3, 4 October

### First Aid Certificate

> 7, 8 February > 16, 17 May > 25, 26 July  
> 5, 6 September > 19, 20 November

### First Aid Refresher

> 8 February > 17 May > 26 July  
> 6 September > 20 November

### OHS Incident Investigation

> 23, 24 May > 29, 30 August

### Manual Handling Employee Awareness

> 19 March > 12 June > 27 September  
> 12 December

### Introduction to Return-to-Work Co-ordination

> 26, 27 February > 18, 19 June  
> 20, 21 August > 14, 15 November

### OHS Construction Induction (Green Card)

> 21 February > 5 March > 4 April > 14 May  
> 14 June > 20 July > 15 August  
> 10 September > 9 October > 19 November

Unless otherwise stated, courses are held in our training rooms in the city • All courses can be delivered on site at your workplace.

Our aim is to continue to provide quality training and consultancy services tailored to our clients' requirements. Our trainers have qualifications in OHS and Adult Education. They are WorkCover Accredited and have extensive industry experience in OHS and training.

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- > Managing Contractor Safety
- > OHS Workplace Committee – Refresher
- > OHS Employee Induction
- > OHS Employee Induction – Construction

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- > Noise in the Workplace
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