TOPIC ONE: SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES
SAFETY IS EVERYONE’S BUSINESS

The health and safety of everyone in the workplace is your responsibility too!!

When an industrial accident occurs, everyone suffers.

When most people think about workplace accidents, they think of only the direct costs of caring for the injured person.

Workplace injuries impose costs on everyone:

Each ten thousand injured workers means:

- 1500 years of lost work time (our national prosperity) and
- $50 million in insurance payouts

This all has to be paid for by taxpayers (you and me).

In 2000-1, 142, 738 workers were reported inured Australia wide and 319 people were killed. These figures are lower than the statistics reported ten years earlier, due to increasing awareness of safety issues.

This is only the tip of the iceberg, as this graphic shows.

Workplace accidents also cause serious problems to the lives of individuals.

The extensive legal process to claim compensation adds stress to the trauma of coping with the accident and incident.

The person who is injured may suffer disability, pain and loss of self-esteem for a lifetime.

The hidden costs of workplace accidents can range from downtime due to staff gossip right through to the costs of replacing people and damaged equipment.

You play an important part in reducing these costs and in ensuring that the people you work with every day are kept healthy and productive.
THE MAJOR CAUSES OF INCIDENTS, ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

- poor lifting and manual handling techniques;
- bad design of workplaces and workstations;
- injuries sustained while lifting and assisting people;
- infectious diseases (both notifiable diseases and non-notifiable diseases like influenza);
- needle stick injuries;
- structural faults in premises or in interior design;
- bad environments: overcrowding, noise, heating, lighting and ventilation;
- bad ergonomic design of workstations;
- poor general housekeeping;
- inappropriate storage and handling of chemicals;
- non compliance with use of machinery guards and safety equipment;
- non-compliance with safety instructions;
- fire hazards;
- general emergencies;
- violent and aggressive behaviour from clients and staff;
- robberies and opportunistic violence;
- work situations where the individual feels unrewarded or unimportant can be as much a contributing factor to incidents as real physical hazards.

The probability of accidents and incidents is also increased by:

- cutting corners and rushing;
- working too long without breaks;
- workaholism;
- taking on too many tasks (not wanting to say 'no');
- lack of concentration on work procedures;
- larrikinism and inappropriate behaviour;
- poor posture and failure to perform prescribed exercises;
- poor personal hygiene;
- stress;
- psychological abuse;
- physical abuse;
- violence;
- drugs and alcohol;
- resentment of others (especially taking orders);
- hating the job or task.

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A ‘SAFE’ WORKPLACE OR OCCUPATION!

A quarter of the reported deaths and slightly more than half the reported injuries come from the 'safe' service industries.
SAFETY LEGISLATION

Laws and regulations fall into two categories:

**mandatory** (i.e. you **must** obey them)
- Acts of Parliament
- Regulations

**voluntary** (i.e. you **should** obey them)
- Codes of Practice
- Australian Standards
- National Standards
- Industry Specific Standards/Guidance Notes

The Queensland *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995* is about making workplaces and work practices safer for everyone. The following extract is taken from the Department of Industrial Relations web site:

*The Act establishes a framework for preventing or minimising exposure to risk by:*

- imposing **workplace health and safety obligations on people who may affect the health and safety of others by what they do, or fail to do**
- establishing **benchmarks for industry through the making of regulations and codes of practice**
- establishing a **workplace health and safety board that encourages industry participation and cooperation**
- appointing workplace **health and safety officers to help employers and principal contractors manage workplace health and safety**
- encouraging workplaces to have **workplace health and safety committees involving workers and management**
- supporting worker **involvement through the establishment of workplace health and safety representatives in the workplace**
- appointing accredited providers to assist industry in managing particular risks
- appointing inspectors to monitor and **enforce compliance with the Act**.

You need to be familiar with the Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995 *in order to understand your obligations and safety requirements.*

You can find more information on the Act and its regulations on [www.dir.qld.gov.au](http://www.dir.qld.gov.au)
## ASSIGNMENT/ASSESSMENT RECORD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>CA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two: Risk analysis and control</td>
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Assessor’s comments:

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Assessment two: Identification and control of risks

Part A:

Think about the conditions in an average office or business (or in any organisation in which you do volunteer work).

Look at the chart below and see if you can work out:

- How likely it is that an event will happen
- How serious that event might be
- The priority for dealing with the risk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likelihood: How likely is it to happen?</th>
<th>Will it have a severe effect on life and limb?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extreme – death or disability</td>
<td>Major – serious injury or illness</td>
<td>Moderate – requires medical attention</td>
<td>Minor – first aid without lost time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Very likely/</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Happens frequently</td>
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<td>Likely/</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Happens occasionally</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unlikely/</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Happens rarely</td>
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<tr>
<td>Very unlikely/</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Will probably never happen</td>
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Scoring the risk assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>Priority One: Act immediately as these are high risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4, 5</td>
<td>Priority Two: Act as soon as possible as these are moderately high risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6, 7</td>
<td>Priority Three: Plan ahead if these are undefined events that have a low risk of happening</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Cause of accidents and injuries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause of accidents and injuries</th>
<th>Likelihood</th>
<th>Severity</th>
<th>Control Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Building structural design faults</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Environmental: heat, noise, lighting, ventilation</td>
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<td>3. Bad ergonomic design of workstations</td>
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<td>4. Poor general housekeeping</td>
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<td>5. Inappropriate storage and handling of chemicals</td>
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<td>6. Security arrangements</td>
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<td>7. Failure to use machine guards or safety equipment</td>
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<td>8. Non-compliance with safety instructions</td>
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<td>9. Lifting and handling practices</td>
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<td>10. Cross infection risks</td>
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<td>11. Needle stick injuries</td>
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<td>12. Assisting clients</td>
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<td>13. Fire hazards</td>
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<td>14. General emergencies</td>
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<td>15. Workplace bullying</td>
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<td>16. Psychological trauma/Stress</td>
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### Questions to be answered:

Which of the above events is the most serious?  

Which is the least serious?  

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What are the six ways in which risks are generally controlled?

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Give six examples of how each of the six control methods are applied in your workplace?

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