



## ETU OHS NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2005

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**OHS Reps Meetings 2005**  
10am—12pm

**24th March**—Geelong ETU Office

**28th April**—Melbourne

**19th May**—ETU Morwell

**30th June**—Melbourne

**21st July**—Portland Trades Hall

**25th August**—Melbourne

**22nd September**—Sheparton Trades Hall

**27th October**—Melbourne

**17th November**—Geelong ETU Office

**8th December**—Melbourne

### MAIN STORY—Certificate requirements for boom type elevating work platforms

There have been numerous questions raised regarding the use of elevated work platforms, the purpose of this notice is to clarify the meaning of 'boom length of 11 metres or more' within the definition of boom-type elevating work platforms. This information was taken from Victorian Workcover Authority's web site ([www.workcover.vic.gov.au](http://www.workcover.vic.gov.au)).

The Occupational Health and Safety (Certification of Plant Users and Operators) Regulations 1994 define a boom-type elevating work platform as:

*"a powered telescoping device, hinged device or articulated device or any combination of these used to support a platform on which personnel, equipment and materials may be elevated to perform work and which has a boom length of 11 metres or*

*more"*.

#### **Certificate of Competency**

From 1 July 1996 a certificate of competency is required to operate a boom-type elevating work platform which has a boom length of 11 metres or more.

The boom length of an elevating work platform is the greater of :

- (a) the vertical distance from the floor of the platform to the support surface at its maximum height; or
- (b) the nominal reach, measured horizontally, from the centre point of rotation to the outer edge of the platform in its most extended position.

#### **TRAINING**

Whether a certificate of competency is required or not,

the Occupational Health and Safety Act 1985, places responsibility on employers to provide information, instruction, training and supervision to employees as are necessary to enable them to perform their work in a manner that is safe and without risks to health.

Similarly the OHS (Plant) Regulations 1995 provide that if a hazard related to plant and its associated systems of work is identified and assessed to be a risk, an employer must provide training, instruction and information to supervisors and employees who are likely to be exposed to risks, arising from the operation of boom type elevating work platforms.

### OHS REP MEETING DATES

There seems to be some confusion in relation to the Reps meeting dates notification.

In years gone past a reminder notification would be sent to OHS Reps reminding them of the upcoming meeting. Since the inception of the OHS Reps Newsletter, no notifications are being sent as the meeting dates and venues are nominated on the

front left hand corner at the bottom of the newsletter.

As the newsletter is sent monthly and in the middle of the month, OHS Reps should ensure that the date is placed in their diaries so they can avail themselves if they wish to attend the meetings.

As the meeting date passes it will be removed from the list.

All OHS Reps please take note that this newsletter is for information relevant to yourselves. If you identify anything that you believe would be worthy of inclusion in the newsletter please contact Allan Mulvena—0419132833 or Danny Timmers—0419378404 or Fax 0383415566 or e-mail [allan@etu.asn.au](mailto:allan@etu.asn.au)

**OHS PERSON IN FOCUS— TREVOR DARWALL**

My experience as an OH&S Rep/Shop Steward with the ETU goes back to about 1995 where I first took on the roll at Melbourne Airport. Since then I have had the pleasure of representing our member’s on other projects like City Link (elevated road section) and Colonial Stadium (now Telstra Dome) and I am currently the OH&S Rep/Shop Steward at Royal Domain Tower in St Kilda Rd opposite the Shrine.

One of my fondest memories of doing this job would have to be

Colonial Stadium with Adrian MacNamara as the Shop Steward where we had 200 members onsite. As you can imagine this many people always made safety meetings very interesting. As I would quite often say to the site manager when he was having a cry on my shoulder about his boss giving him a hard time “imagine how I feel, I have two hundred bosses”.

Because that’s how this job

is, it’s not about the union, it’s not about me, it’s about the people that I have the privilege to represent and it’s about having their best interests at heart. If I can do this job with that in mind and do it with integrity, I feel confident that my member’s will appreciate what I do and that the ETU will always come out on top.



Photo Trevor Darwall

ETU Safety Committee Member

**DOCUMENT IN REVIEW – A GUIDE TO MANUAL HANDLING IN THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY.**

New guidance material was launched this week regarding Manual handling in the automotive industry.

Manual handling covers a wide range of activities, including repetitive tasks such as packaging, assembling, using hand tools and operating machinery and equipment.

In the MV&P industry, manual handling is the primary cause of musculoskeletal disorders, such as sprains and strains and joint

disorders, which account for more than half of all injuries.

To help reduce risk of these types of injuries, work safe have produced this new publication which details common manual handling tasks carried out within the MV&P industry.

Work Safe encourages everyone involved in MV&P manufacturing to read this publication and take action

to incorporate the recommendations highlighted into their existing safety systems.

The new guidance material can be accessed on the Work Safe web site. [www.workcover.vic.gov.au](http://www.workcover.vic.gov.au)



**OHS- WARNING ON THE DANGERS OF MANOEUVRING LADDERS NEAR OVERHEAD POWER LINES.**

The following is an extract of an OCEI Media release 8th March 2005.

*People face the risk of serious injury or death from electric shock or electrocution when they manoeuvre ladders near live overhead electric lines, Victoria’s Chief Electrical Inspector, Mr Ken Gardiner, warned.*

*People must exercise extreme care and perform a detailed safety assessment and use a registered safety observer or spotter when plant or equipment, including ladders, is being operated or manoeuvred near overhead power lines.*

*The warning follows a recent incident where an employee of Shepparton Distilleries*

*Pty Ltd, was manoeuvring an aluminium ladder on top of a metal vat at the plant. When the ladder touched a bare overhead 22000 volt line, the employee was thrown off the vat and he sustained a broken leg. While the employee suffered a serious injury, he could have easily been electrocuted.*

*People in Victoria must realise that the electrical industry have established rules in place and they must be followed when plant or equipment, including ladders, are used close to power lines.*

Go to [www.ocei.vic.gov.au/downloads/Ladders08-03-05.pdf](http://www.ocei.vic.gov.au/downloads/Ladders08-03-05.pdf) to obtain a copy of the full document.