



ETU OHS NEWSLETTER

MAY 2005

MAIN STORY—Importance of isolating and making electrical equipment safe.

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The Office of the Chief Electrical Inspector warns registered electrical contractors and licensed electricians that electrical equipment must be isolated and made safe before work is carried out on it.

The OCEI reminds all registered electrical contractors and licensed electricians that they must observe the *Code of Practice for Safe Electrical Work-Low Voltage Electrical Installations*.

Attention is directed particularly to Section 13, *Isolation and Making Safe (Preparation for Working on De-energised Equipment)*.

The OCEI provides the following advice:

“Electrical Safety depends to a great extent on appropriate job planning and correct testing procedures and techniques.

“All electrical equipment, unless proven to be de-energised, must be treated as live.

“The electrical equipment to be worked on must be isolated from all sources of supply.

“Equipment must be tested before touching.

“Persons required to work on electrical equipment must be appropriately trained and competent in testing procedures and in the use of testing equipment.

“Where practicable, appropriate warning tags should be placed at all points of switching, isolation or disconnection.

“When cutting cables, the cable should be treated as live

and appropriate testing and inspection procedures must be implemented to ensure the cables have been isolated from electricity supply.

The Code of Practice can be downloaded from the OCEI website at www.ocei.vic.gov.au

Information on this subject can also be obtained by reading AS/NZS 4836: 2001 Safe Electrical Work on Low Voltage Electrical Installations. The Australian Standard is based on the Victorian Code of Practice as well as input from other state jurisdictions, employer representatives and unions.

OHS Reps Meetings 2005
10am—12pm

30th June—Melbourne
21st July—Portland Trades Hall
25th August—Melbourne
22nd September—Shepparton Trades Hall
27th October—Melbourne
17th November—Geelong ETU Office
8th December—Melbourne

Services for Protect Members

Incolink Member Services Department provide a range of counselling services and direct assistance for **Protect** members and their families who may have situations where they need help.

Rob Dawson (Coordinator South East Region) and Dave Cronin (Coordinator North West Region) are full time Member Support Workers who are professionally trained

counsellors. They have been working within the building industry for several years and have extensive experience in providing counselling and crisis support services.

Rob and Dave are available to provide support, follow up and debriefing following a critical incident and are also available to offer free and confidential support to members and their families who may be dealing with

issues and crisis in their lives.

They also work directly with Union Reps in assisting them support their workers.

For more information about this service to ETU Members please contact Rob on 0419 568 605 or Dave on 0418 470 409. Regional and Rural Members can call Toll free on 1800 337 789.

OHS PERSON IN FOCUS— MIKE SYMON

As a member of the Safety Committee, I have a responsibility to look out for the OH&S interests of all workers on site, not just the ETU members. We have a good co-operation with the other Unions on site, which allows the OH&S reps to help each other out on a daily basis. Of course my particular field is electrical safety and there are issues with inappropriate use of electric leads and power tools every day that have to be resolved.

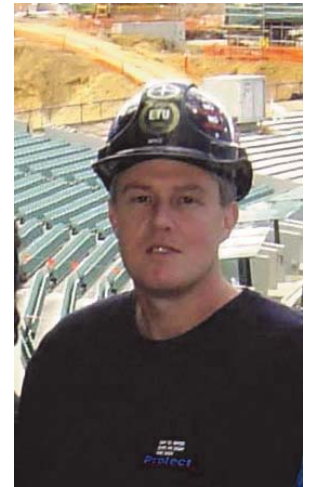
It can be difficult to stay up to date with developments in OH&S

and Electrical Standards, but I have found that by regularly attending OH&S meetings and calling other OH&S reps on the phone, that the answer is usually out there.

I also try to ensure that all incidents are reported back to the Union where these reports can be compared against similar reports from other sites to identify trends or patterns of unsafe work practices. If I have a problem on the MCG site it

is usually happening somewhere else too. The ETU can then issue safety alerts or policies to provide information and guidance to everyone in the industry and hopefully prevent accidents occurring elsewhere.

The rewards of being a safety rep are not material, rather it is the feel good factor of seeing members walk out the site gate in as good as, or better condition than when they arrived in the morning.



Mike Symon—OHS Committee member and OHS Rep at work at the MCG

SUMMARY OF THE OHS ACT 2004

The summary of the Act gives an overview of duties and rights under the Act to all those who have health and safety responsibilities or roles, including employers, those who manage or control workplaces, employees, HSR's, suppliers, designers and manufacturers.

Cross-references to specific sections of the Act are provided after each heading in the summary (e.g. S21, S91-94).

Selected definitions from the Act,

and other useful terms and abbreviations used in the summary can be found in the glossary at the end of the summary.

To obtain a copy of the Act, go to www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au

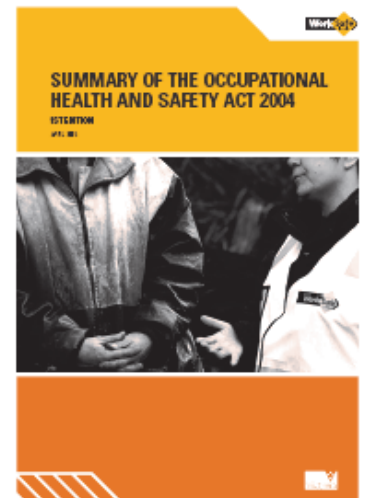
Contact Danny at the ETU or drop into the office to get a copy of the summary of the Act, or see your local Workcover office.

Workcover continue to roll out information about provisions of the OHS Act.

Information sheets have been developed which provide guidance on the Act specifically for employers, employees, duties of contractors etc.

Go to :www.workcover.vic.gov.au/dir090/vwa/home.nsf/pages/ohsact

for specific information.



OHS- HIGH VISIBILITY CLOTHING

The use of high visibility clothing in the workplace has increased over the last few years.

The wearing of the clothing in some circumstances exceeds the use for which the clothing was designed, i.e. where there is an interaction between mobile powered plant and people.

Some construction and manufacturing sites have made it mandatory to wear such

equipment whilst at work.

The problem arises when this clothing is being worn where a risk of fire or explosion exists, such as working "Live".

Workers must consider the suitability of the PPE being provided in relation to all of the hazards and risks associated with their work.

Flame retardant high visibility vests are available and should be worn for work where the risk of fire or explosions exists.

The following is an extract from Worksafe's Safety Soap Box.

In a recent incident, a rigger using an oxy-acetylene cutting torch and working in the basket of a cherry picker

suffered burns when his high-visibility vest caught fire. His safety harness also sustained fire damage.

WorkSafe's Construction & Utilities Director told the Soapbox, "Whilst WorkSafe encourages the wearing of high-visibility clothing where there is a risk from mobile plant and operating cranes, vests may not be suitable in some situations."