



ETU OHS NEWSLETTER

JULY 2005

MAIN STORY—OVERVIEW OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF LABOUR HIRE

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OHS Reps Meetings 2005
10am—12pm

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

Labour hire workers are in a situation of lose-lose. Quite often they are hired from the labour hire agency to do a job that no-one else wants to do. If they complain about the conditions in the workplace the labour hire agency is often told to remove the worker.

Worksafe have developed a guideline in relation to labour hire.

Labour hire agencies owe duties of employers to all their employees (including hired workers), wherever the work is performed. An important aspect of fulfilling their duties as employers is for labour hire agencies to ensure that their workers are placed in safe workplaces and that the agency has taken all reasonable steps to ensure risks are controlled in the host workplace. Records need to be kept to demonstrate steps taken and to monitor and review

effectiveness of actions taken. The general responsibilities of the labour hire agency as outlined in the Guide include

- Gathering information: This includes obtaining information to enable you to make a judgement of the safety of the host employers operations, the tasks to be undertaken by the worker and the qualifications and experience the worker should possess in order to perform the work adequately and safely
- Assess the host workplace: This can include visiting, monitoring and reviewing the host workplace to ensure the agency meets its duty to place a worker in a safe workplace;
- Assess adequacy of controls and negotiate change: For

OBLIGATION TO TRAIN OHS REPS.

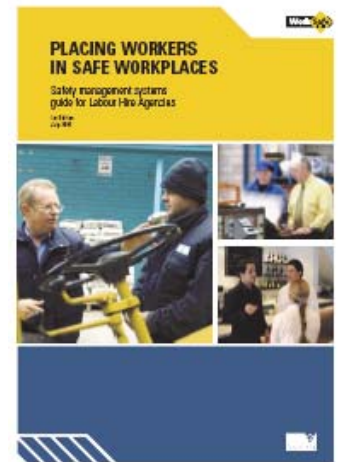
As from the 1st July 2005 there are changes to the rights of OHS Reps regarding training in OHS. Section 67 of the OHS Act 2004 outlines these requirements, which allows the reps to attend OHS courses.

Initial course after being elected and refresher courses are identified in the new Act. Section 67(2) is important as this identifies that a request to attend a course must not be

made less than 14 days before the course is to start.

The employer must allow each health and safety rep time off work to attend the courses with such pay as he or she would otherwise be entitled to receive from the employer for working during that period and pay the costs associated with each HSR's attendance at the course.

Training for OHS reps is essential



example, ensure induction training occurs at the host workplace, ensure procedures are in place for labour hire workers to report hazards to the host employer and that copies are sent to the labour hire agency and negotiate to improve risk controls if they are found to be inadequate.

to keep up to date with new developments in OHS. For reps that have not been trained now is the time to approach your employer and request training. The ETU can provide training in OHS and the dates can be found on the ETU web site under the training section.

You as an OHS rep are entitled to this training. If you have any questions regarding this contact the ETU.

OHS PERSON IN FOCUS— PETER AUDINO

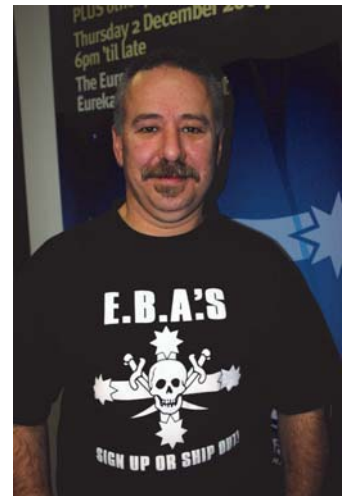
I have been a steward and OHS Rep for almost 7 years. I became a steward because I felt I had the temperament and desire to represent fellow electrical workers in the construction industry. During the past 7 years I have come to realise that, although our work is fundamentally the same on each worksite, each job has its own peculiarities that need to be addressed from a fresh perspective each time. Having just finished GMH Headquarters in Pt. Melbourne and starting down at

Karingal Hub Shopping Centre is evidence of this. Karingal Hub comes with the most obvious considerations about the safety of the public (as an existing shopping centre) and the delineation between work areas and public access areas. These considerations have a direct bearing on how and when certain works can be performed.

On a personal level, I have enjoyed playing in bands (in days gone by!!); enjoy

listening to music and watching movies; and spending as much time at home with my family.

One of the more important initiatives taken by the building industry unions is the locking down of the principle of 'leisure time'. We have done this primarily by upholding the 36 hour week and limits placed on overtime. I remind us all to be vigilant and remember to stand fast and stand together.



Peter Audino—OHS Committee member and OHS Rep

FORKLIFT SAFETY - REDUCING THE RISK - FORKLIFT INSTABILITY

Work Safe together with industry has developed new guidance material to extend the current state of knowledge on forklift safety in general, and on forklift instability in particular. Some of the document discusses:

Driving with raised forks, cornering too fast, striking low doors or beams, driving across inclines and uneven ground are the main causes of forklifts overturning.

Colliding with another vehicle,

braking too quickly and towing disabled forklifts have also caused overturns and fatalities. **These incidents are preventable.**

Safe work environments, effective employee training, well maintained machinery, systematic traffic management and effective supervision all play an important role in reducing the risks posed by forklifts in the workplace.

Deaths, injuries and workplace losses attributed to forklifts:

- In the 20-year period from 1985-2005, 54 forklift-related fatalities have been reported to Work Safe Victoria.
- 29 of these involved pedestrians; 15 were hit by loads and 14 struck by a forklift.
- Nine of the other deaths were forklift operators who

either jumped or fell from a forklift in a tip over and were then crushed between the forklift and the ground.

- Tip overs (forward or lateral overturning) are the second highest cause of fork lift-related deaths.
- Forklifts tip over too often and cause too many workplace injuries.

To find out more detail look up the work safe web site. www.workcover.vic.gov.au

DOES YOUR RESPIRATORY PROTECTIVE DEVICE (RPD) MEET AN APPROPRIATE STANDARD?

When selecting RPDs and filters, ensure that the equipment meets an appropriate standard. The information supplied with RPDs and filters should include:

A performance statement that the filter, along with the designated face piece, meets the requirements of the relevant Australian Standard or its equivalent. The currently recognised product safety

standard for the respirator industry is Australian Standard AS/NZS 1716 – 2003: *Respiratory protective devices*;

A quality assurance statement and/or symbol by a recognised authority demonstrating that the respirator and filters have been manufactured under conditions that ensure

product integrity. One recognised quality assurance system is the Australian Standards Mark (5 Ticks) including the Standard and Licence Number. Look for markings on the respirator and filter or their packaging; and Clear and appropriate instructions on their correct use.

Other relevant information includes:

The type of substance(s) that the filter can protect against.

The class of the filter (indicating the level of absorption capacity of the filter), and

The designated face piece the filter is to be used with.