



ETU OHS NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2006

INCIDENTS INVOLVING ELEVATED WORK PLATFORMS

TRAINING DATES
OHS—CONTACT
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INITIAL 5 DAY

To Be Advised

1 DAY REFRESHER

To Be Advised

There have been several incidents relating to elevated work platforms in the last few months.

On the **18th July 2006**, an EWP Levelling rod failed while two men were in the basket one metre above the ground and preparing to use the EPV.

The equipment effected is a 350 kg 18 metre EWP (SW350/18) Abbey design manufactured by GMJ Equipment Pty Ltd in 2000.

Contributing Factors

It has been reported that there was inadequate control during the assembly process specifically in relation to:

- lack of surface preparation resulting in poor bond strength,
- lack of resin, possibility of a quantity of resin was lost down the hollow levelling rod, and

- the complete failure may have been prevented had the dowel pin been in place.

An incident occurred in Queensland in **mid August** involving a Redmond Gary EWP where the worker was seriously injured.

Preliminary advice is that:

- The incident may have involved mechanical failure of the attachment of the turret to the vehicle chassis causing the EWP mechanism to separate from the vehicle while in use.

The mechanism of failure appears to be the bolts securing the main slew bearing to the pedestal have released.

- As a result, the boom has crashed to the ground and the operator has been seriously injured.

It should be noted that an issue

has occurred previously with Redmond Gary EWPs (See ETU Alert 3 9 March 2000).

On the **23rd August 2006** a GMJ Model EWP No LLF16-350 \6 suffered a mechanical failure whilst workers were working on HV powerlines.

The failure resulted in the basket of the EWP tipping and ending up in an inverted position. One lineworker managed to maintain his position in the basket, the other fell approximately 7m. The cause of the failure has yet to be identified.

On the **22nd August 2006** a lineworker was working from an EWP on HV powerlines when he received an electric shock and fell. This incident is also under investigation but does not relate to a failure of the EWP as per the previous incidents.

OHS Reps Meetings 2006
10am—12pm

27th Sept—Trades and Labour Shepparton

29th November— Mallee Murray Trades and Labour Council 162 Seventh St Mildura

December tbc—Melbourne

OH&S REPS SEMINAR

Please note that the next scheduled OHS Reps meeting for Melbourne on the 25th October will not be held as it is on the same day as the 1 Day OHS Reps Day Seminar.

The Workshop this year is called **Lets Band Together**.

The seminar provides an opportunity to update OHS Reps knowledge on key aspects of the OHS Act 2004 and to hear about the latest developments in OHS.

All elected Health and Safety Representatives are entitled to attend on paid time. This is a WorkSafe Victoria approved seminar under S69 of the OHS Act 2004. You must give your employer at least 14 days notice of your intention to attend this Seminar.

Various guest speakers will enlighten the seminar participants on different aspects of OHS.

Registration is a must, as seating is strictly limited. Complete the registration form on the back page of the VTHC application form and return via fax, email or mail:

Fax: 03 9639 0408

Email: ohstrain@vthc.org.au

Post: HSR Seminar OHS Unit, VTHC, 54 Victoria St Carlton South, 3053.

Registration forms can also be obtained from the ETU web site under What's New.

THE STAGGERING REALITY OF STROKE

500,000 Australians will have a stroke over the next decade. Stroke is Australia's third largest killer and a leading cause of disability. Yet stroke has a low profile.

Each year in Australia over 50,000 people have a stroke. Many of these strokes can be prevented through a healthy lifestyle and management of risk factors such as high blood pressure. Of the 3 million Australians over the age of 25 who have high blood pressure, only half of them know it.

Historically stroke has been viewed as an inevitable risk of growing old, with little to be

done for those who suffer a stroke, other than trying to make them comfortable. We now know that stroke can be treated and prompt, coordinated care can save lives and reduce disability. However, less than a quarter of people who have had a stroke are getting access to coordinated care on a stroke unit.

There are an estimated 350,000 people living in Australia who have had a stroke. Around half of these people are disabled and rely on others for assistance with everyday activities. Most of these people live at home

with only about 10% of them living in supported accommodation. Only about 4000 of these people are thought to be accessing valuable peer support.

The current national cost of the stroke burden is estimated at \$1.3 billion per annum. Despite these disturbing figures, stroke has a relatively low profile in Australia.

Although it is listed as a National Health Priority Area, it has yet to receive an allocation in a federal budget and community support is low for stroke compared to heart disease and cancer.

Stroke risk is influenced by a number of factors. Some of these stroke factors, such as age, gender and a family history of stroke, cannot be controlled.

However, there are a number of risk factors for stroke which you can control, for example keep your blood pressure low, quit smoking, eat a healthy diet and maintain regular physical activity.

For more information go to: www.strokefoundation.com.au

SECOND HAND ELECTRICAL GOODS – ESV MEDIA RELEASE

The following is a précis taken from a Media Release from Energy Safe Victoria, for the full document go to:

www.esv.vic.gov.au/downloads/2nd%20Hand%20Electrical%20Equipment%20Warning.pdf.

Organisations and individuals supplying or offering to supply second hand electrical equipment should be aware of the important legal obligations imposed on them under the electricity safety legislation.

1. A person supplying or

offering to supply second hand electrical equipment must have a label attached to the equipment stating that the equipment is second hand;

2. A business– including charities supplying or offering to supply second hand equipment must also attach a label stating that the equipment is second hand and that the

equipment has been inspected and tested and complies to AS/NZS 3760; or

3. If not tested, the business must include a clear statement on the label stating that the equipment is second hand and with additional words in regards to do not use or connect to supply until it has been tested by a competent person

The legislation is about

protecting people from faulty and dangerous second hand equipment.

ESV advises people to use the services of a competent person such as a licensed electrician for the inspection and testing process.

Electricians performing this work are required to ensure that the proper labels are attached for any second hand goods that the worker may test and tag.

NEW ETU OH&S ALERTS

The ETU has produced 2 new OHS Alerts as of the end of August (Alerts 28 & 29).

The first Alert (Alert 28) relates to an issue that is not new, but has been raised in our newsletter previously but was felt by the OHS Reps at a recent meeting that an Alert would have more impact.

The issue relates to the breaking

off of insulated pins on 3 pin plug tops. It continues to be of concern certainly in and around construction sites, but is certainly not an issue exclusively to construction.

The second Alert (Alert 29) provides information on one way of how electrical workers can test portable

RCDs for a trip in time on construction sites.

Whilst using an isolating transformer is certainly not the only permitted way in which portable RCDs can be tested it has been found to be the easiest. The difficulty arose because socket outlets on construction sites are required

to be protected by a 30mA RCD which is exactly the same rating as the portable RCD.

So when the portable RCD was being tested by the RCD tester, both fixed and portable RCD would generally trip.

Download both Alerts on the ETU web page under OHS Alert.