

ETU OHS REPS NEWSLETTER



SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENTS (SWMS)

The Construction provisions (part 5.1) of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations of 2007 came into effect as of the 1st of July 2008; these regulations seek to improve the level of safety in construction and are based on the National Standard for Construction Work.

These regulations include the requirement for an employer to ensure that a safe work method statement is prepared before any high-risk construction work is undertaken.

High-risk construction work includes any of the following where that work is undertaken at **any work place not only those work places that would traditionally be called construction sites:**

- Any construction work that involves a risk of a person falling more than 2 metres, demolition, removal or likely disturbance of asbestos, telecommunication towers, the use of temporary supports for structural alterations, confined space, a trench or shaft deeper than 1.5mtrs, a tunnel, explosives, on or near pressurised gas mains or piping, chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines, electrical installations or services, contaminated or flammable atmospheres, tilt-up precast concrete, next to roads or railways, powered mobile plant, artificial extremes of temperature, in – over or near liquids if there is a drowning risk and diving.

Preparing an SWMS is part of the planning process and is designed to help **EMPLOYERS** think through the hazards and risks involved in the work, and to choose effective control measures.

Each employer including contractors must ensure that SWMS are developed for their employees performing high risk construction

work, just prior to the work commencing.

OH&S Representatives of effected DWG's as well as employees must be consulted in the preparation stage of any SWMS.

A SWMS is developed by consulting with all of the employees of the DWG affected. A SWMS is developed by following the flow chart below.

The task must be done in the way outlined in the SWMS, if work can't continue in the method as outlined in the SWMS then work must stop immediately or as soon as it is safe to do so.

The activity must not restart until the SWMS has been reviewed and, if necessary changed.

The employer must keep a copy of the SWMS for as long as that high-risk construction work task is being performed.

STEP 1

Employer to develop work procedure/ or provide company work procedure.

STEP 2

Just prior to starting the high risk activity, the employees involved are to identify any additional hazards and risks at the worksite (JSA).

STEP 3

Amend the work procedure if necessary.

STEP 4

Start the high risk construction work.

STEP 5

If changes occur, stop the activity and return to STEP 2, and amend in STEP 3.

FATIGUE—Prevention in the workplace

Fatigue affects a person's health, increases the chance of workplace injuries occurring, and reduces performance and productivity within the workplace.

WorkSafe has produced a publication, *Fatigue – Prevention in the workplace*, that will assist people comply with OHS laws in relation to fatigue in the workplace. The guide provides advice that is generally applicable to any workplace within NSW and Victoria where fatigue is a health and safety issue.

The guide contains general information for employers and employees (including volunteers) in any job or industry. The guide can also be used by suppliers, importers, manufacturers and independent contractors. It complements other fatigue-related publications that apply to particular industries.

The factors contributing to fatigue outlined in the guide are:

- the mental and physical demands of work
- work scheduling and planning
- working time
- environmental conditions, and
- individual factors.

The guide explains how these factors and the way work is designed can be improved to address and reduce the risk of fatigue in the workplace.

The guide recommends ways to help employers and workers meet their obligations under OHS laws using a risk

management approach. Risk management is a way of recognising that each situation has its own characteristics, and these circumstances should be assessed to decide the best way of improving health and safety. This is achieved through a staged process that includes identifying potential hazards; assessing the severity, consequence and likelihood of those hazards causing injury or illness; and selecting and implementing risk control measures.

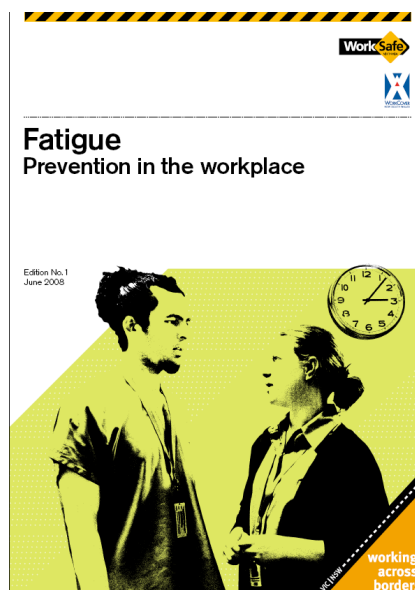
A risk management approach is a way for employers to prevent work-related fatigue and other OHS hazards.

The Appendices cover:

- Fatigue hazards identification checklist
- Risk assessment chart
- Tips on avoiding fatigue

Fatigue is a significant OHS issue for electrical workers. The full document can be accessed at

http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/resources/file/eb87fc08b727473/vwa_fatigue_handbook.pdf



2008 Calendar

EEIT OHS TRAINING DATES

10AM –12PM

Melbourne –

Held at old ETU Office

Swanston St Carlton South

27th August

29th October

OHS REP TRAINING

Contact Tanya—0393269377 to book into the courses below.

Initial 5 Day OHS REPS Course

September 10, 11, 15, 16, and 17

1 Day Refresher OHS Rep Course

Melbourne

12th November

Country

Shepparton—24th September

Mildura—26th November