



ETU OHS REPS NEWSLETTER

HEARING LOSS

Hearing loss is an issue for everyone in the electrical trades, especially if you're working on a site where you may be exposed to loud noises over a prolonged period.

In Victoria, there are regulations that deal with noise exposure. As part of the OHS Regulations 2007, Chapter 3 Part 2 considers exposure to noise. The regulation describes the noise exposure standard as being:

(a) the 8 hour equivalent continuous sound pressure level of 85dB(A) measured in A-weighted decibels referenced to 20 micropascals at an employee's ear position; or

(b) the C-weighted peak hold sound pressure level reading of 140dB(C) measured in decibels referenced to 20 micropascals at an employee's ear position;

If an employer is required under regulation 3.2.4(1)(d) to provide hearing protectors to an employee, the employer must provide for audiometric testing for that employee—

(a) within 3 months after the employee commences the work in relation to which the hearing protectors are required; and

(b) at any time when reasonably requested to do so by the health and safety representative of the designated work group of which the employee is a member; and

(c) in any event, at least every 2 years.

The audiometric assessment provides a measurement of your hearing ability at a point in time.

Don't discount hearing loss as simply getting old. If you're having difficulty hearing, see a doctor and talk to the union lawyers.

You may have read about a recent case where Maurice Blackburn represented an ETU

member who had lost 13 per cent of his hearing.

Turning up the TV volume, problems hearing people in group conversations and ringing in the ears were symptoms that Jack (Not his real name), dismissed as part of growing older until his ETU delegate convinced him to call the union lawyers and get his ears checked.

Jack is an ETU member with 30 years experience as a maintenance electrician. He was exposed to a noisy work environment in his job maintaining equipment in a factory.

Maurice Blackburn settled Jack's claim out of court in less than two months, and he only had one medical examination.

Jack was awarded almost \$24,000 compensation for his hearing loss and he's entitled to free hearing aids.

The compensation and hearing aids will improve Jack's quality of life.

Taking precautions to protect your hearing is important. Unfortunately, sometimes damage has already been done. Once you have hearing loss, there is no cure.

Maurice Blackburn are the ETU lawyers. They're working for a better life for ETU members, and can help you if you think you may have a hearing loss caused by work. They also help people who have been injured in other ways at work or in a road accident, and your first consultation is free.

For more information including how Maurice Blackburn can represent you on a no win, no charge basis, go to www.mauriceblackburn.com.au or call freecall 1800 810 812.

NEWS**Construction Induction**

The Construction Induction Card (CI White Card) will enable participants to work safely in the construction industry.

The course is for any person working on building and construction sites, including trainees, apprentices and trades people.

This course consists of the following:

- Identifying OH&S legislative requirements
- Identifying construction hazards and control measures
- Identifying OHS communication and reporting processes
- Identifying OHS incident responses

On completion of the course, participants will be issued with a Statement of Attainment and the Construction Induction Card will then be issued by WorkSafe Victoria.

For those persons wishing to do the Construction Induction Course, bookings can now be made through EEIT.

Contact Tanya on 03-93269377 or visit their web site www.eeit.org.au for further information.

Courses are conducted by RMIT.

MODEL ACT Submission

The Model Act submission period has now closed. Any person or organisation wishing to make comment had until 5pm on the 9th November to send in their submission.

The ETU Victorian Branch sent in a submission along with other unions, VTHC and the ACTU.

The ETU submission was 36 pages in length and compared what we currently have to what was proposed in the Model Act.

The Model Act is not due to be in force until 1 January 2012.

We still have a long way to go yet and the Model Act certainly does Victoria a disservice.

The Model OHS Act and the Victoria OHS Act certainly have some similarities but also some significant negatives.

We would be much worse off if we were stuck with the Model OHS Act in its current form.

Changes need to occur to reflect the significant role that OHS representatives (HSRs) play in the workplace.

WorkSafe Victoria on many occasions has stated that the HSRs play a pivotal role in OHS in the workplace.

Lets see this reflected in legislation then.

2009 Calendar**EEIT OHS TRAINING DATES**

10AM -12PM

Melbourne –

Held at old ETU Office

Swanston St Carlton South

OHS REP TRAINING

Contact Tanya—0393269377 to book into the courses below.

Initial 5 Day OHS REPS Course

1 Day Refresher OHS Rep Course

Melbourne

Country