

2/05/2013

I take this opportunity to congratulate the NTCA on their annual conference in Alice Springs 21 & 22 March a massive undertaking requiring a huge amount of co-ordination and behind the scenes preparation demonstrated by the seamless agenda. It was an amazing opportunity to encounter the vagaries of the industry and to meet a diverse group of people together with a common interest. It was a great venue for us to promote Safety and many contacts were made, you may already have been contacted by Kaara Ainslie from our PISAFE office to arrange resources or subsequent site visit.

I started as Project Officer early last September and have been familiarising myself with the multitude of issues within the three major Primary Industries. The assistance in co-ordination from the CEO's to ascertain what resources are already available, and to access individual's particular problems has been invaluable. I feel the key is in simplifying the requirements of compliance to overcome the initial trepidation caused by the perception of enormity of the task. Most Persons Conducting a Business or undertaking (PCBU's) I have spoken with are very WHS conscious and welcome the opportunity to have a non-regulator advisor to consult. The sanctions for non-compliance are substantial enough to cause discomfort also!

The requirement of (PCBU's) to maintain **mandatory** Safety Management Systems or Plans (SMS/P) is causing the most headaches for all three industries, be it a remote cattle station, a mango farm, fishing trawler, food processor or packing sheds. The SMS/P is to demonstrate current safety procedures are in place and being used. For example, the induction of new and existing employees in workplaces must be documented and systems of recording hazards, identification and the control measures taken. A practical method to document this is by regular checklists or audits, signed and dated by the employer and employee.

I use the term **mandatory** somewhat loosely as it is mandatory for all commercial vessels to have a mandatory Safety Management System/Plan on board to comply with Marine Safety Regulations much the same for the fruit farmers and their HACCP compliance for the product/s they produce. **However it is advisable for cattle stations to also have a SMS/P to demonstrate their compliance and to record their diligence in WHS given an incident occurs.** It is probable that insurance companies could use not having a compliant Safety Management System as a means to reduce their liability in claims.

A "WHS Start-up kit" has been compiled by PISAFE to provide initial reference to elements of the WHS Act, Regulations, Codes of Practice and Industry guides and resources.

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Also a "Guide" has been constructed to give an overview of the Work Health and Safety ACT and for inclusion in the "WHS Start-up kit" with references to find the full documentation. I am available to explain how to access the information and help with all your WHS concerns.

A full SMS is in production which will address "Reasonably Foreseeable" Incidents and hazard identification. This includes relevant information for the most common items of safety concern, with checklists to complete on a regular time frame to demonstrate currency.

Perhaps the most common point of discussion I have with PCBU's in regard to Safety Issues are their concern for employees who for varied reasons do not adhere to safe working directives. Almost all employers have stories of workers who undergo safe work inductions and training but do not comply when "out of sight" this leaves employers with few options particularly if replacement labour is not an option. There are instances where employers find horrendous breaches of safety posted on media sites by their staff purely to appeal to their friends of their bravado, coolness or just plain stupidity.

If you have concerns regarding your "Duty of Care" in regards to your workers or contractors or require any other information contact me. There are resources and links available on our site www.pitac.org.au refer to the PISAFE for assistance and services offered, this is a free of charge service.

Funding for Training

PITAC has funding available for any qualification Certificate II and above. This funding will be available until the end of year. If you would like to know more please contact PITAC;

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