

General Induction Training - "Construction Blue Card"

Recent amendments to the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995* have broadened the definition of 'construction work' which means that some work activities undertaken by school staff (e.g. Schools Officers) may be regarded as construction work, including:

- repairs to structures such as walls
- excavation or landscaping associated with the construction of a wall, building or other construction
- refurbishment/top dressing of ovals

A consequence of these changes is that school staff undertaking 'construction work' will be required to undertake an approved General Induction training course. A 'Construction Blue Card' is issued on completion of general induction training.

School staff currently performing construction activities have until **1 July 2007** to complete general induction training. However, newly hired employees will need to obtain a construction 'blue card' prior to engaging in any construction activities. **As existing employees have approximately 12 months to obtain appropriate training, School Administrators should not feel pressured to send these staff to external training courses.**

The Organisational Health Unit is developing an in-house process to deliver General Induction Training to Schools Officers across the state that provides both the basic 'Blue Card' training and additional school specific information. Schools will be advised of the training calendar and the method to nominate relevant staff to attend the training.

Volunteers

General Induction requirements are administered by Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, Department of Industrial Relations. Workplace Health and Safety Queensland recognises the important contribution that volunteers make to an organisation such as Education Queensland. Workplace Health and Safety Queensland has now adopted an enforcement approach that differentiates between low risk and high risk construction work undertaken by volunteers.

Volunteers who undertake only **low risk** construction work do **not** require a General Induction Training (Construction Blue Card). Examples of low risk construction work include:

- Brick laying
- Sanding and painting or preparing walls
- Replacing broken window panes
- Rehanging doors
- Replacing carpet
- Basic joinery
- Building rock walls
- Repairing cracked footpaths
- Landscaping around newly constructed facilities

A volunteer who undertakes high risk construction work activities **would need** to complete General Induction Training. Examples of high risk construction activities include;

- Work on a roof to repair tin sheets or lay tarpaulins
- Trenching* or excavation for laying pipes
- Working on ladders over 2m without adequate controls to prevent falls

* a trench is excavation where the maximum depth is more than the minimum width (the trench is deeper than it is wide)