



Welcome

Dear Colleagues

Welcome to the second edition of Safety Net for 2006. Since the last edition, Dupont Australia has completed their Health and Safety Management System audit of the department and we are currently awaiting their final report.

Key departmental representatives, staff and community associations were involved in the consultation phase of the audit. A sample of schools and other sites across metropolitan, rural and remote regions were visited during the process to gather information about the range of issues managed by the department. The schools that participated are:

- Maroon Outdoor Education Centre
- Mount Gravatt West Special School
- Kelvin Grove State College
- Ferny Grove State High School
- Boronia Heights State School
- Harlaxton State School
- Warwick State High School
- Freestone State School
- Barcaldine State School
- Longreach School of Distance Education
- Longreach State High School

I would like to extend my thanks to all those who participated and especially those who welcomed the Dupont auditors into their schools. This process will help the department identify opportunities to improve organisational health and promote a culture that pro-actively manages health and safety risks.

Workplace Health and Safety Standing Committee

The Corporate Workplace Health and Safety Standing Committee is continuing its work to provide recommendations and information to the Executive Management Team, Schools and other departmental workplaces. The committee will meet six times per year to align with school and regional requirements.

Extra Health and Safety Staff

In the last edition of SafetyNet it was announced that a number of new Senior Health and Safety Consultant Positions had been created. I am pleased to advise that the positions have been advertised with applications closing on 29 May. The new positions consist of four full-time Senior Health and Safety Consultants for the Regions of Far North Queensland, Sunshine Coast, Moreton and South Coast, and one 'split' role of Senior Health and Safety and Rehabilitation Consultant in the Mackay Whitsunday Region. The creation of these new positions will ensure that every region has access to an experienced organisational health practitioner. Schools will be advised as soon as their new local Regional Consultant is appointed.

The 'Flu Vaccination Program has again been a great success this year with an estimated 100% increase in uptake since last year. Thank you to all those who have participated in and assisted with coordinating vaccination clinics.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your commitment to health and safety and hope that this newsletter provides you with useful information and updates on health and safety activities within the department.

Gary Barnes

Assistant Director-General , Office of Strategic Human Resources and Learning



Don't let these slip through the Net

First Aid

The provision of first aid is an important component of fulfilling our duty of care to students and our obligations to staff. Regardless of the severity of the trauma, there is usually some form of first aid provided by school staff. Schools may also obtain further assistance from the ambulance or local medical provider if required.

All schools should review their first aid systems to ensure that appropriate first aid can be delivered in a timely manner during all school activities including:

- Routine school activities e.g. playground duty and curriculum activities
- Sporting activities—at school and at other locations
- Off site activities such as excursions and camps
- Other activities hosted by the school e.g. fetes, concerts, school dances etc

The planning process must consider first aid requirements in terms of resources and equipment, the capability of staff or external agencies (e.g. ambulance or medical clinics to provide first aid and any training needs).

Schools should refer to DOEM policy *HS-14 First Aid for Schools and Non-School Locations* available at: <http://education.qld.gov.au/corporate/doem/healthsa/hs-14000/hs-14000.html> and use the guidance in the *Code of Practice for First Aid 2004*: <http://www.dir.qld.gov.au/workplace/law/codes/firstaid/index.html>

Release of Incident Information

Schools are reminded that parents/guardians are to be advised if their child has been injured during the course of the day. This is especially important if a student has been injured or unwell during the day and the school has been unable to contact the parent/guardian. Advice may be in the form of a simple note sent home with the student at the end of the day with details of the incident/illness and any treatment provided at the school.

Parents can request through the Principal a copy of a “Health & Safety Incident Notification Form” (from SMS) relating to their child. The Principal has the authority to release this information and should ensure it is an accurate and factual record of the incident prior to release to the parent. Please ensure that any information identifying other students or members of the public is obscured on the released copy.

What should happen in the event of a serious incident?

- Assess the situation
- Follow first aid process – e.g. first aid or call ambulance or local medical provider
- Contact parent/guardian
- Advise local (internal) relevant contacts as per critical incident and communication plans e.g. District Office, Facilities Account Manager or Senior H&S Consultant
- Advise other external agencies if required –WHSQ, Police, Emergency Services
- Ensure student is supervised until parent/guardian arrives
- Continue communication with parent/guardian
- Record information into SMS—adhere to HS-08 Policy
- Review your procedures

SMS—Registering Hazards

The school based WHS Module within the School Management System (SMS) has been designed to assist schools manage and monitor hazards within their environment. Please ensure that hazard details associated with an incident are always recorded as part of the process of entering an incident into the SMS— WHS Module. Your school WHSO can assist with identifying and categorising hazards and with processes to ensure controls are implemented to manage risks.

Casting the Net

Quick Checklist for Principals

Schools are extremely busy places where faces and numbers change from year to year. Listed below are some key compliance areas to address in terms of Organisational Health management.

- Does your school have a forum for raising and discussing health and safety issues e.g. a committee or a standing item on your staff meeting agenda?
- Does your school have over 30 staff? If yes...
 - Does the school have a trained and active Workplace Health and Safety Officer (WHSO) and a Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator?
- Is your school utilising the Workplace Health and Safety Module in SMS to record incidents?
- Are hazards recorded and managed?
- Are incidents investigated?
- Do you conduct an annual review of your health and safety status? Check out information about the Annual Assessment at: <http://education.qld.gov.au/health/healthsafety/annual-assess.html>

Congratulations to Townsville !

The Townsville area successfully hosted its 'Safety & Schools—It's our Priority' Conference on May 12. Almost 100 participants attended with a range of school staff represented. Principals attended the morning session which focused on managing health and safety issues in the school environment. There has been great feedback about the conference and people travelled from neighbouring districts to attend. Well done to the organisers, presenters and participants!

Welcome – Ross Abberfield, Training Officer

Ross Abberfield has joined Education Queensland, working with Alan Singleton on the in-house WHSO Training Program. Ross comes to us with many years experience as a both a trainer and H&S practitioner.

Ross is based in central office and at this stage is working with the Organisational Health Unit until September. A number of concurrent projects are underway including the registration of OHU as a Registered Training Provider (RTO), accreditation of a new WHSO course & establishment of Construction Induction Training.



Date Claimer—Cairns June 8!

Cairns WHSOs will be able to network at the local health and safety information day on June 8. Topics to be covered include local emergency planning, conducting audits, facilities issues and more! Contact the Cairns District Office for more details.

Welcome – Stuart Barrett Senior Health and Safety Consultant – Northern Region

We would like to welcome the newest member of the Organisational Health Team - Stuart Barrett. Stuart was successful in gaining the position of Senior Health and Safety Consultant (Northern Region) which takes in the districts of Townsville and Mt Isa. Having worked in the health and safety field for 12 years within both the private consulting area and with industry groups such as disability services, employment and defence Stuart comes to the department with a wealth of knowledge on health and safety and a great deal of experience. Stuart is based in our Townsville office.





Casting the Net

Fetes!

Here comes the fete season! Many schools are busily organising one of the major events for their fundraising calendar. During this time please don't overlook safety aspects in your planning.

Rides/Amusement Devices

Please remember to use the checklist for mobile amusement devices. The checklist has been prepared to assist school event organisers to select and monitor amusement ride/device operators. It is recommended that the school event organiser present and discuss the checklist with the owner/operator of a mobile amusement device and request that they complete the relevant sections.

The checklist was developed in consultation with Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ) and the Organisational Health Unit. Inspectors from WHSQ may visit fetes to discuss health and issues with Amusement Ride Operators. The checklist is available at:

<http://education.qld.gov.au/health/pdfs/healthsafety/amusement-rides.pdf>

Fireworks

A checklist for school fireworks display organisers has been prepared in consultation with the Department of Mines and Energy to assist schools in selecting and monitoring appropriate operators to provide fireworks displays. You can find the checklist at:

<http://education.qld.gov.au/health/pdfs/healthsafety/fireworks-checklist.pdf>.

Looking after our Volunteers

Volunteers at our schools are invaluable. Many of the "extras" that happen in schools would not be achieved without their contributions and assistance. Although 'volunteering' their time and expertise without expectation of payment— these people are performing 'work' activities for the department and must be provided with appropriate equipment, training and information to ensure they can carry out these activities safely.

Please remember when planning working bees, P&C functions and other activities that involve parents or members of the community that you consider the health and safety of these people. Ensure your principal is aware of the work being undertaken and the equipment, information and supervision requirements.

And... **THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS!!**

WHSO Courses

Education Queensland has been successfully running its own Workplace Health and Safety Officer Courses and Re-certification courses for the last year. These courses offer school staff a tailored course for the education environment and practical case studies and assessment pieces. The course is also offered at a price that is more competitive than courses provided by private training companies.

All course details are available at:

<http://education.qld.gov.au/health/pdfs/healthsafety/whso-train-calendar06.pdf>

Blue Card Update

The department is currently seeking clarification regarding the requirement for staff such as schools officers to hold a Blue Card (General Induction Training - Construction Blue Card) from the Department of Industrial Relations. Legislation surrounding the requirement is not clear and has some broad implications when applied to the educational environment. The requirement for existing employees to obtain a "Construction Blue Card" does not come into effect until January 2007. The Organisational Health Unit are investigating the development of an "in-house" construction blue card course which would have the benefits of addressing issues specific to the department as well as providing important professional development to specific work groups.

Playing Safely!

The purpose of impact absorbing material (or soft fall) is to minimise the incidence and severity of head injury and reduce the occurrence of bone injury. With this in mind it is vital that the material maintain the quality of 'absorbing impact'. If the material becomes packed down and hard it will not be effective. Loose 'soft fall' must be regularly checked and maintained (e.g. raked and 'fluffed up!') to ensure it is of an adequate depth and not compacted.

Pandemic Influenza Management Plan

Education Queensland has been involved in national teleconferences and whole of government forums relating to Pandemic Planning for education departments. The Office of Education Queensland and the Organisational Health Unit have represented the department in these discussions and are also working with Queensland Emergency Services for state-wide planning.