



## Dear Colleagues

Welcome to the third edition of Safety Net for 2008. The department has recently taken part in Safe Work Australia Week which places a national focus on workplace safety. Safe Work Australia Week aims to encourage all working Queenslanders to get involved in safety at their workplace to reduce death, injury and disease.

You may have seen the recent television advertising campaign which draws our attention to the fact that the most important reason for making your workplace safe, is not at work at all. This year's campaign is a reminder of why coming home safely at the end of each day to your family, friends and loved ones is the most important reason for making your workplace safe.

Each year in Queensland around 100 people are killed as a result of work-related accidents and disease. In 2007-08 around 105,000 Queenslanders lodged a workers' compensation claim. It is estimated that in 2008-09, about one in every 22 workers will suffer some form of compensable work-related injury or disease.

Most departmental regions held Safe Work Australia Week promotional activities which were well attended, including ergonomics sessions held for Central Office employees seeking to optimise their workstation set-ups to minimise musculoskeletal injury. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved for supporting the health, safety and well-being of staff and students within our department.

**Tom Barlow**

**Executive Director—Human Resource Strategy (Training)**

**Chair - Corporate Workplace Health and Safety Standing Committee.**

## Workplace Health & Safety Representatives (WHSR) Training

The Organisational Health Unit (OHU) is developing a program to deliver training for Workplace Health and Safety Representatives (WHSR) throughout the state. The approved course - '30630QLD Course in Functioning as a Workplace Health and Safety Representative' - is delivered over 3 days by an OHU staff member. As well as having a school focus, it provides an excellent networking opportunity for staff.

Three trial courses have been conducted in Ipswich, Moreton and Far Northern Regions to gather feedback and comments to tailor the course to the school environment. A huge thank you to these regions and participants for their support, enthusiastic participation and valuable contributions to the course.

### Jan jets up to the tropics



Our intrepid trainer Janet Edgar is pictured with the group of trainees at the Workplace Health and Safety Representatives course in Cairns. Janet Edgar (Senior Health and Safety Consultant - Organisational Health Unit) and Brett (Regional Senior Health and Safety Consultant - Far North Queensland Region - also pictured) incorporated Safety Week and Mental Health week into the program.

Whilst the weather was a little muggy for the girl from Dalby, she enjoyed her 3 days in Cairns and has vowed to return in 2009. This was the final of a well received series of trials for the new *Workplace Health and Safety Representatives Course*, with feedback being very positive from participants who also provided valuable assistance in "fine tuning" the program. The training will be rolled out across the department during 2009.

Participants of the recent Cairns Workplace Health and Safety Representatives Training with Janet Edgar and Brett Moore.

## Calling for an Ambulance

In an emergency call triple zero (000).

In any emergency situation involving sudden illness or injury, it is essential that emergency service organisations be contacted as soon as possible. Call triple zero (000) immediately to activate the emergency services.

When a call is made to Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) for ambulance assistance, a trained QAS communications officer will ask the caller a number of questions.

Remain calm while answering these questions and ensure that your responses are clear and concise. The QAS communications officer will provide you with first aid instructions and dispatch the paramedics. Do not end the call until you are told to do so by the QAS communications officer.

### Emergency contacts

Ambulance, fire, police Call triple zero (000)

If triple zero (000) fails from a mobile phone 112

Non urgent ambulance transport (authorised by a medical practitioner) 13 12 33

Deaf emergency number 106

Poisons information centre 13 11 26

#### Note:

If you are calling from a mobile phone and triple zero (000) does not work call 112. It should be noted that triple zero (000) and 112 does work on the Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) network, however, the 112 service does not have some of the advanced capabilities available on the Global System for Mobile (GSM) network.

QAS encourages you to be prepared for an emergency.

Enrol in a QAS first aid course to learn vital life saving first aid skills.

Book online at  
[www.ambulance.qld.gov.au](http://www.ambulance.qld.gov.au)  
or call 1300 369 003



## Queensland Ambulance Service Media Campaign

Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) has recently run a series of advertisements requesting that people consider alternatives to calling (000) if an ambulance is not necessary.

Given the unique circumstances of the school environment, the Department has sought clarification regarding schools calling for an ambulance, particularly in the event of a student injury.

QAS have advised that one of the key things to remember is that the classification of an emergency or non-emergency is determined by the Queensland Ambulance Services (QAS) Emergency Medical Dispatcher when taking the call. Therefore, if in doubt, call triple zero (000) for further assistance.

The aim of the media campaign was to try to reduce the number of call-outs where immediate treatment or transport is not required however the community is still encouraged to call triple zero (000) for life threatening, critical or serious injuries.

Another key point is that the caller should have as many details available for the Medical Dispatcher, as this will allow the call to be logged and paramedics dispatched with the appropriate response code.

The following link provides guidance from QAS with regards to when an ambulance should be called

<http://www.ambulance.qld.gov.au/info/request.asp#emergency>

There is also a link to the recent media article that was printed in the Courier Mail on 15 September 2008:

<http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,23739,24345139-3102,00.html>

## Sun Safety Initiative - Stage 2

The Sun Safety initiative has now entered phase 2 of the program. In accordance with the State Government's Certified Agreement 2006, a funding allocation was provided to schools in 2008 for the provision of sun smart shirts for schools officers, agriculture assistants and unit officers.

Phase 2 of this initiative involves the targeted allocation of funding for schools/centres to provide sun smart pants; a sun smart hat and a pair of safety boots. Funding for the purchase of this clothing was provided in the October GAPS payments.

A fact sheet "Specification for the Purchase of Sun Smart Clothing" has been prepared to assist schools/centres implement this strategy. This fact sheet was communicated via the Schools Update (week starting 13 October 2008) and is also available on the Creating Healthier Workplaces website.

<http://education.qld.gov.au/health/pdfs/healthsafety/sunsmart-clothes-factsheet.pdf>

## Gas Ovens

A recent incident was investigated revealing some issues associated with the lighting of gas ovens in schools. To reduce risks to stove users, there has been a review of the safety requirements for the installation and use of upright gas stoves in schools.

The following information is available on the INTRA-NET (i.e. you will have to be logged into the department's Edinfo site in order to access these documents). This information will assist school implement safe procedures for lighting gas stoves. Please refer to [www.qed.qld.gov.au/facilities/strategic/sam-procedures.html](http://www.qed.qld.gov.au/facilities/strategic/sam-procedures.html) for the following documents:

- Safety Warning Notice
- Start Up Procedure No Gauge
- Gas Stove lighting Procedure
- Start Up Procedure Gauge Installed

Schools should report any safety concerns relating to gas ovens to your Regional Facilities Manager.



# Don't let these slip through the Net

## Welcome to Tony Weaire - Principal Health and Safety Consultant

Tony Weaire joins the Department as the Principal Health and Safety Consultant within the Central Office Organisational Health Unit.

Tony comes to us from WorkCover Queensland, having performed a number of roles, which included managing the premium compliance team and the team responsible for the management of workers' compensation claims for both Education Queensland and TAFE. Prior to WorkCover Queensland Tony managed claims interstate for a number of large private insurers including QBE Insurance and GIO Insurance. Tony is currently studying the Graduate Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety through Central Queensland University. A warm welcome to Tony and best wishes for an enjoyable and productive time in this new role.



## School Based Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator Fact Sheet

Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinators (RRTWCs) play an important role in coordinating the support provided by the department to employees during their recovery from injury or illness. The RRTWC can assist principals to meet their responsibilities under legislation and departmental procedures to take all reasonable steps to provide workplace rehabilitation. The ability of a RRTWC to perform their responsibilities will depend upon the level of support they are offered at their school.

The legislative requirements pertaining to RRTWCs are detailed in the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003. The functions of the RRTWC is summarised in the fact sheet that has been developed by the Organisational Health Unit. This fact sheet can be found at:

<http://education.qld.gov.au/health/pdfs/rehab/rrtwc-principal-checklist.pdf>

**Injury Management**  
School Based Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator  
Information for principals and RRTWCs

Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinators (RRTWCs) play an important role in coordinating the support provided by the Department to employees during their recovery from injury or illness. The RRTWC can assist principals to meet their responsibilities under the legislative and departmental procedures to take all reasonable steps to provide workplace rehabilitation. The ability of a RRTWC to perform their responsibilities will depend upon the level of support they are offered at their school.

**Legislative Requirements**

- The Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 requires that a RRTWC be appointed to a workplace.
- In order to become a RRTWC, an accredited RRTWC course must be completed every three years. Please refer to the [Qualifications, Standards and Accreditation](#) website for information about RRTWC training courses.
- The RRTWC has functions mandated by legislation, as summarised below.
- The principal has a range of responsibilities to ensure that the RRTWC can fulfil their functions.

**Checklist for Principals**

- Discuss with your RRTWC their role and the support that you will provide to them.
- Inform and support the RRTWC, both with the school community, eg. ensure the RRTWC's name on school domain staff lists and provide rehabilitation information in newsletters for new staff.
- Invite the RRTWC to meetings about health, safety and wellbeing issues, eg. health & safety committee.
- Encourage regular meetings with your RRTWC to discuss programs with current rehabilitation programs, plan for future programs and identify workplace injury trends.
- Identify and provide appropriate subtle (costs and resource) adjustments where possible, and ensure employees to ensure that they comply with these arrangements.
- Have an workplace staff member in particular, ensure that they are used in accordance with the approved plan to work back.
- Provide resources to the RRTWC to allow them to perform full their functions, including:
  - Regular, dedicated time to respond and resolve cases to new plans.
  - Time to liaise with (internal) employees, doctors, WorkCover, QCR, regional office and payroll.
  - Staff time secured through coordinated email/distribution lists, eg. school/ing calendar or diaries, and
  - Access to continued training and professional development, eg. regional RRTWC network meetings.
- Obtain a medical certificate from all employees who are absent from work for more than 3 days.
- Complete leave schedules in accordance with approved time out and promptly forward to regional office.
- Notify the RRTWC as soon as you become aware of a staff member who has sustained a workplace injury who is likely to be absent for 3 or more work days (eg. broken/lingered or absent, and
- Ensure all workplace injuries are reported, recorded in SMS and investigated.
- Complete a WorkCover Employer's Report for all workers' compensation claims lodged by staff and ensure that it promptly sent with all relevant support to regional office.

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**Health & Safety Fact Sheet**  
Safety Glass in Schools

Serious injury can result from glass breakage in the school environment. The most common cause of injury to both staff and students are window breakage and the use of glass panels in doors as a result of slamming or human impact.

**What is the issue?**  
Glass windows, glass doors and glass panels in wooden doors are commonplace in Queensland schools. The glass windows, glass doors and glass panels in wooden doors are commonplace in Queensland schools. The glass windows, glass doors and glass panels in wooden doors are commonplace in Queensland schools. The glass windows, glass doors and glass panels in wooden doors are commonplace in Queensland schools.

**What is the hazard?**  
Investigation revealed that injury was sustained when impact occurred with safety glass. Further evidence showed that broken shards occurred in large numbers, which led to the need for medical care. Most typically, safety glass windows and glass panels were punctured or hit with an object such as a ball. Other areas of concern include glass panels installed for security, glass panels in fire exits, glass in buildings where specialised activities (eg. gymnastics) are undertaken as well as towers, terraces and display cabinets.

**What are the risks?**  
Glass related incidents generally cause lacerations which can be severe and cause significant long term injury (eg. infection or scarring of the hand and wrist are common). Further, glass shattering can lead to exposure of others to shattered glass and potentially the blood of a wounded person. Refer to HSLR-0051 First Aid.

**What are the controls?**  
Schools should refer to the Department Design Requirements for Education Queensland School Facilities for guidelines on the use of Part 3.3 Windows and Glazing for all Queensland schools.

Laminated safety glass is to be used in accordance with relevant statutory requirements AS1288 Glass in Buildings and in all identified risk situations as detailed in the Standard, including the following situations:

- All glazing above:
- Glass to windows,
- Glazing where a window is present,
- For internal glass doors, and glazing up to 2 metres from ground level,
- Up to 1 metre above height of machinery, seating, and
- Other areas where high likelihood of human impact, including any existing glazing up to 1 metre from ground level.

Where glass doors or windows are broken in schools, and these are repaired by QCR, laminated safety glass is to be used in accordance with the Design Requirements 3.3.3 Where broken glass doors or windows are not repaired by QCR, the area with the damage to ensure repairs are completed in accordance the Design Requirements 3.3.3.3 Broken glass.

Repairs are required to be made to existing glass (particularly in situations outlined above) and a design and replacement strategy if necessary is required.

Safety glass should be used in the following circumstances:

Further information:  
Relevant standards which describe health and safety requirements for schools can be found at:  
Design Guidelines: <http://www.education.qld.gov.au/health/pdfs/healthsafety/AS1288-080708.pdf>  
Relevant Standard: AS1288 Glass in Buildings

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October 2008

## Safety Glass Fact Sheet

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### What is the Issue?

Glass windows, glass doors and glass panels in wooden doors are commonplace in Queensland schools. The presence of glass in combination with the busy school environment lends itself to the possibility of human impact with glass and the potential for injury. The applicable Australian Standard for this purpose is *AS1288 Glass in Buildings*. This applies for all new glazing, either through new construction or glass replacement and is not retrospective, however schools should consider the risks of existing glazing. Glazing suppliers and installers can provide assistance to schools to identify and prioritise the risks in accordance with AS1288.

The fact sheet can be found at: <http://education.qld.gov.au/health/pdfs/healthsafety/safety-glass-fact-sheet.pdf>

## Whole of Department - Safer Workplaces - External Audit

The department is required to engage an external auditor to assess DETA's workplace health and safety performance against the Cabinet approved DEIR *Safer and Healthier Workplaces Strategy 2007-2012*.

The Corporate Workplace Health and Safety Standing Committee has chosen *Noel Arnold and Associates* to conduct this audit. The audit will commence this term and many schools and other DETA work locations have already been contacted to participate.

It is expected that the findings of the external report will be provided to the department's Executive Management Group (EMG). The recommendations from this report will guide the department's Organisational Health strategic plan and future operational plans.



# What's on the Safety Net?

## Principal's Health and Safety Briefing - a huge success in Brisbane

Greater Brisbane's Senior Health and Safety Consultants (Leanne Bowen, Lisa Newbold and Neil Rogers) recently held their first Principal's Health and Safety Briefing during October 2008. Approximately 150 people attended the presentation representing over 50% of the schools in the area with high demand for a repeat performance for those Principals who could not attend.

The agenda included legal information provided by Stephen Hughes and health and safety strategies presented by David Sutton (one of our DETA school principals). The audience was also addressed by A/RED Tom Robertson.

Thank you to Leanne, Lisa and Neil for a great information session. Thanks also to the presenters for providing this valuable professional development forum for our school principals in the Greater Brisbane Region.

## Parvovirus and Other Diseases Relevant to Pregnancy


Parvovirus (also known as 5th disease) has come to the attention of a number of schools following an advertising campaign by a private provider promoting parvovirus vaccine.

The Infection Control Guideline (link: [http://education.qld.gov.au/health/pdfs/healthsafety/infection\\_control\\_guideline.pdf](http://education.qld.gov.au/health/pdfs/healthsafety/infection_control_guideline.pdf)) states that information should be provided to all staff about diseases relevant to pregnancy, including parvovirus. All staff should ensure that standard precautions are implemented to ensure good hygiene practices are in place for effective infection control. This includes the simple practice of hand-washing with soap and water by both staff and students.

Other diseases relevant to pregnancy may include Chicken pox (Varicella), Cytomegalovirus (CMV) and Rubella (German Measles). It is important that staff discuss their pregnancy, their immunity status, their role in the school environment and methods for infection control with their medical practitioner.

For more information, Queensland Health has fact sheets available at: <http://access.health.qld.gov.au/hid/>

Any concerns regarding relocation or accessing maternity leave should be discussed with your Principal or you may contact your Regional Senior Health and Safety Consultant for more information.



### Hand washing - one of the most important factors for infection control

Recent media attention has targeted schools with inadequate hand-washing facilities for students. Parents, Queensland Health and our own departmental health and safety committees have raised the issue of inadequate hand-washing facilities for students.

Schools are reminded that all students and staff should have ready access to soap at hand-basins (particularly those located near toilets) to enable adequate hand washing.

## Australian Standards Online - Available for FREE via the library website

The Organisational Health Unit has funded a one year subscription to the Australian Standards database.

The database is accessible via the Library Services website: <http://education.qld.gov.au/library/services/register-borrow.html>

Select: "Databases" from the right hand side of the page then open the *Australian Standards Database* and use the user id. and password provided by library services within the table.

Please note that the license arrangement is for two Concurrent users only— so please log out as soon as possible. You may wish to download the document rather than keeping the database open. Contact your Regional Senior Health and Safety Consultant for more information: <http://educationqld.gov.au/health/contacts/hscontacts.html>

