

EMERGENCY PLANNING

RUOK? Day
5 Signs of
Distress



Fire Safety
Month

Safety
Benchmarking
Survey

Machine
Scalping
Conviction

What's new in September?

As September is National Fire Protection Month we discuss what to consider when planning for potential fires and emergencies.

Also this month:

- World Suicide Prevention Day and R U OK? Day is also this month. With these in mind, we've identified signs of distress.
- A reminder to check your machinery is properly protected after company conviction following the scalping of a young worker.
- EWP Crush Hazards and how to prevent them.



Andrea Rowe

Stay Safe!



On 29th September we remember the Police officers who have died serving their community or through illness.

Safety Webinar – 8th September 2023

We invite you to join us at **10am on Friday 8th September** for our free monthly webinar to keep you up to date on workplace health and safety. Gary and the team present short informal sessions of only 20 to 30 minutes on topical issues and answer your questions.

[*Register here*](#) [*Missed our last webinar? View them here*](#)



Gary Rowe



Stephen Weber



Katie Weber



Sarah Oliver



Sue'Ellen Bennett



Vivek Ravi



Nick Bennett



Theodore

Get Serious About Emergency Planning

by Andrea Rowe

To ensure protection or safe escape of persons in an emergency, your business should have an emergency management program which:

1. Assesses likely emergency threats to the site, business, and staff.
2. Outlines controls to reduce the likelihood of those threats arising.
3. Outlines response procedure in the event the threat does occur.
4. Is periodically tested to ensure staff can implement the response procedures when required.

Here we explain the steps and items to consider in preparing an emergency plan.

Who needs an emergency plan?

Under the Work Health and Safety laws, all workplaces must have an emergency plan in place to inform workers and visitors of what to do in an emergency. Your plan should be easy to access and reviewed, updated and tested regularly.

Dangerous Goods Sites

Licensed dangerous goods (DG) sites must have an emergency plan, meeting requirements of the DG Regulations/WHs Regulations. Businesses must request advice on the emergency plan from the Fire Authority. The Fire Authorities have specific items to be included in Emergency Plans for DG sites.

How to implement real Emergency Plans



Traditionally, emergency planning focussed on fire, natural disasters or accidental events, but today we also need to consider external events (such as external chemical spill or fire) and deliberate actions intended to cause harm (including protests, violent customer or terrorist).

Some pointers which might help plan and invigorate your emergency response include;

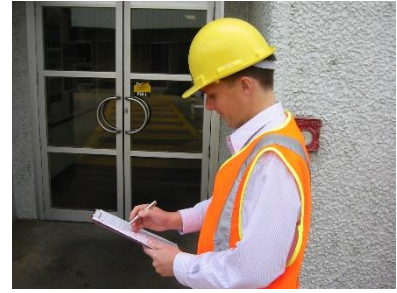
1. Identify emergency scenarios

To identify relevant emergency scenarios that need to be included in the emergency plan, conduct an emergency risk assessment or your premises and activities of neighbouring businesses. Consider an independent review of emergency and security risks.

Consider recent changes to your business activities

New equipment or activities may introduce new risks, potential emergency situations or changes to how you respond. Consider new items including:

- Electrical vehicle charging stations;
- Dangerous Goods
- Changes to work arrangements.



Eliminate Opportunities for fires, deliberate or malicious events

- Conduct regular site inspections of housekeeping.
- Confirm exit paths are clear and fire fighting equipment is accessible.
- Reduce waste accumulation.

You can't change malicious motives, but you can minimise the opportunity for those intending to do harm to your personnel or facility.

- Increase personal awareness.
- Report any suspicious or unusual circumstances.

2. Prepare the Emergency Plan

Include clear emergency response procedures for the emergencies that you have identified.

3. Emergency response team

Elect and train your emergency response team in each response procedure. I find it is common for the wardens to be trained in fire evacuation and emergency communication, but not all businesses train the emergency team in each response procedure.

Provide proper resources e.g. two-way radios and megaphones for communication and crowd control, torches for night operation, hats and vests for easy identification of your wardens.



4. Evacuation Drills

Ensure all personnel understand the details and importance of the evacuation plan. Include this in all staff inductions and conduct annual refresher training.

Encourage everyone to:

- Familiarise themselves with the floor plan and location of exits.
- Treat every "alarm" as real (not just as a practice drill).

Remember to practice all of your emergency procedures (external emergencies, chemical spills etc) not just fire evacuations.

5. Emergency Alarm

Familiarise personnel with the evacuation alarm sounds *e.g. montly announced checks.*

The main guidance on this topic is *Australian Standard AS 3745; 2010 Planning for Emergencies in Facillites. Some states have specific obligations.*



Ensuring everyone can safely evacuate from a workplace in an emergency is one of the fundamental elements of due diligence.

Call Safety Action on 03 8544 4300 or [email](#) if you need help with:

- Emergency risk assessment to comply with AS3745 Planning for emergencies in facilities.
- Preparing or reviewing your emergency plans.
- Preparing emergency plan to meet Dangerous Goods obligations.
- Preparing emergency isolation procedures.

In next month's newsletter Stephen discusses the difference between Emergency Management and Crisis Management.

2023 Safety Benchmarking Survey

You are invited to participate in our 2023 safety performance survey. All information is kept confidential and participant organisations receive a free copy of the full report.

PARTICIPATE NOW

Click here to complete the survey now.

**As always, all information provided is confidential and only used for this benchmarking.*

5 Signs of Distress in Workers

September 10th is World Suicide Prevention Day and September 14th is R U OK? Day. Workers are encouraged to check-in on their co-workers mental wellness.



Managers always have an obligation to monitor the psychological health of their workers and prevent work causing harm to their health.

We've identified the top five signs of distress in workers to look out for:

1. Changes in their physical appearance:

- ✓ Are they displaying signs of fatigue?
- ✓ Do they seem more nervous than usual?
- ✓ Do they appear to be breathing quickly or have shortness of breath?
- ✓ Are they complaining of headaches?

2. Changes in their behaviour:

- ✓ Do they seem withdrawn and are avoiding being in social situations?
- ✓ Are they disinterested?
- ✓ Are they having difficulty concentrating?
- ✓ Are eating much more or much less than usual?

3. Changes in their mood:

- ✓ Do they seem anxious?
- ✓ Do they seem irritable or easily angered?
- ✓ Are they quick to react more emotionally?

4. Changes in how their thoughts are expressed:

- ✓ Are they saying things that sound more confused or negative?
- ✓ Are they suspicious of other people and personalise situations? eg "They've got it in for me".

5. Changes in their work:

- ✓ Do they complain that they have difficulty switching off?
- ✓ Has there been a drop in their work performance?
- ✓ Are they overwhelmed by tasks that they had previously found manageable?



If you've noticed a staff member displaying these symptoms, they may need some extra support. Consider if the worker can safely perform their duties or further support is required.

Visit [Beyond Blue](https://www.beyondblue.org.au) for information about public resources.

Juice Company Convicted over Scalping Injury

In November 2020, an 18-year-old worker had her entire scalp torn from her head in a horrific incident at a packing shed.

The woman was instructed to clear a blockage from a conveyor belt. The machinery was left on when she reached down to retrieve fallen fruit and her hair was pulled into an unguarded sprocket and drive-chain system.



The worker has undergone multiple surgical procedures and suffers psychologically from her ongoing disability and disfigurement.

The Magistrate said "the risk of harm was not only foreseeable, but it had also been foreseen", citing an assessment undertaken by the company in 2013 which identified a risk of possible injury to "hands and hair" from unguarded moving parts, and recommended more guards to be installed around equipment.

The South Australian company pleaded guilty and received a criminal conviction for failing to comply with its health and safety duty and was fined \$120,000.

It is a timely reminder to check the machine guarding of equipment in your workplace.

Contact Safety Action on 03 8544 4300 or [email](#) for an assessment of your machinery or to ask how we can train your staff to conduct these assessments.

Safety Leadership Workshop

Foundation Course: 13th & 14th September 2023

8 am to 4 pm each day at Safety Action, Clayton.

Includes catering, training materials and comprehensive manual.

[Email](#) us for more information.

SAFETY LEADERSHIP TRAINING

DO YOU WISH YOU COULD BUILD A CULTURE WHERE PEOPLE FOLLOW YOUR SAFETY RULES?

OUR 2-DAY SAFETY LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP WILL GIVE YOU THE CONFIDENCE TO SPOT UNSAFE BEHAVIOUR AND CHANGE IT QUICKER AND EASIER THAN YOU EVER THOUGHT POSSIBLE.

[LEARN MORE](#)



SAFETY ACTION

Elevated Work Platform Crush Hazards

A contractor died after he was crushed between a steel roof beam and the basket of a platform boom elevating work platform (EWP) at a Victorian shopping centre in August this year. It's understood he was operating a platform boom lift from the basket when it lifted to roof level, crushing him.



EWP near overhead steel beam

To prevent crush hazards between EWP and overhead obstructions, check that you have the following safety measures in place:

- **Safe EWP:** Guarding to protect the operator, pressure sensor at the operator controls, height sensing devices and/or a physical barrier around the operator or sides of the bucket.



Physical Barrier



Pressure Sensing Device

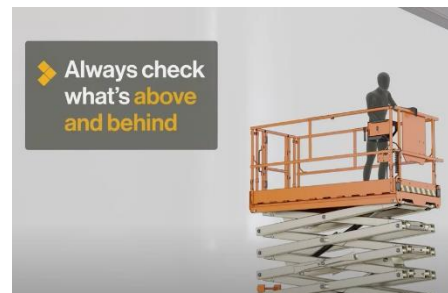
- **Safe Practice:** EWP operators should not work alone. Have a trained Safety Observer on the ground near the EWP Emergency Stop, who is trained in EWP ground controls and rescue.
- **Operator:** Check surroundings before starting work and before slewing. Include the hazard and controls in the Safe Work Method Statement and pre-start toolbox.

Watch the WorkSafe Victoria videos below which highlight the hazards and control measures that can be adopted when using EWPs:

[EWP – Boom Lift](#)



[EWP – Scissor Lift](#)



Events and Training



World Congress for Safety and Health, Sydney 27th – 30th November 2023

Connect with global leaders in safety and harm prevention from over 120 countries.

Across the week, you can network and participate in workshops, forums, technical sessions, roundtable conversations and more. You'll learn about emerging trends, develop skills to mitigate new risks and gain knowledge of work health and safety best practices.

Safety Action's Andrea Rowe will be presenting in the symposium "Digital transformation and the Human Factor in Machine and System Safety: Opportunities and Risks"

For more information and to register click [here](#).



DON'T LEARN ABOUT SAFETY BY ACCIDENT

Southern Safety Group (not for profit) exists to provide members with quality, relevant and practical advice on workplace OH&S issues.

Monthly Meetings at Springers Leisure Centre, Cheltenham Rd Keysborough, Vic.

Held on the last Monday of the month from 3pm to 5pm.

Providing monthly meetings to offer assistance and advice to members and to provide a forum for discussion of health and safety ideas, issues, problems and solutions.

More information and contact SSG [here](#).

FCW  Lawyers **Legal Solutions. Found.**

Online Friday Workplace Briefing straight to you with critical news and developments that affect your workplace. **Friday's 10.30am.**

[Register here.](#)