

Talk It and Walk It

Est. 1996

SOS – Switched Onto Safety

March 2019

Autumn Newsletter

What Have We Been Doing?

2019, what a start to the year. Christmas and celebrating bring in the New Year has come and gone.

This year is all about planning for us at SOS-Switched Onto Safety. We have got some big ideas and big plans and have been keen to get it underway.

One of the first things we did was look at updating our logo. Let us know what you think of our new located on this newsletter. We are very excited about it.

We started out with our first, of many we hope, SOS videos. If you haven't already seen it, check it out on our web page – www.switchedontosafety.com. Let us know what you think and even send through some ideas of what we could put in our videos.

We have been busy from the start of the year, all over the state, north, south and east, with:

- Inspections,
- OSH and Quality Suitability Audits
- OSH and Quality Compliance Audits
- Chemwatch Training
- Risk Management services
- Coaching / Mentoring

We have a high focus this year on increasing the number of Heart Safe environments across Australia with our Mindray Defibrillators. As you know, we here at SOS, are passionate about saving lives.

Current Topics of Interest

The Western Australian Commission for Occupational Safety and Health has released the minutes of their meeting held on the 6th of February 2019. It gives an insight into the discussions undertaken and items reviewed. In this meeting they discussed in detail;

- the low SH Rep numbers in the industries at present and what to do about it,
- a Diving Working Group (DWG)
- Impact of FIFO working arrangements on the mental health and wellbeing of FIFO workers
- Draft DMIRS Safety Regulation Enforcement and Prosecution Policies
- Plus, several other resourcing issues, reports and working groups

Of note was a discussion held around the upcoming Western Australian WHS Regulations Consultation Package (General Industry, Mining and Petroleum). The committee are reviewing three sets of draft consultative documents, drawn up by DMIRS for public comment. They will be considered by the Commission over the next two months on the useability of the documents for a later release. We'll be looking out for *"a summary of differences between the model Work Health and Safety Regulations and the Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996"*

We'll keep you posted!

Spill Management

In March 2019 staff at the Lucas Heights nuclear facility in NSW had to be decontaminated after being exposed to a chemical spill. Several workers were exposed to sodium hydroxide when the chemical splashed onto the arms and faces of two men and a woman.

So, are you prepared for a chemical spill in your organisation?

Requiring spill management products or dangerous goods storage solutions, contact us.



Our Team



[Megan LeNoir](#) – Business Manager

[Guy LeNoir](#) – Company Director / Principal

[Stuart Platt](#) – OSHQE Consultant/Auditor/Trainer

[Peter Liron](#) – Senior Consultant/Auditor

Find us on



Advice – Tips and Hints

'Winter is Coming' (apologies for the pun 😊)

With the advent of cooler weather (winter) comes a host of safety and health issues that employers need to address before the weather worsens and temperatures drop. Colder weather offers its own challenges when it comes to worker safety. This is especially so when it comes to those employees who work outside. Prolonged exposure to freezing or cold temperatures can create serious health problems (including Mental i.e. delayed response times). Some items that need looking at are; clothing, working areas and health items like flu vaccinations or heating. There can sometimes be a lag time between purchasing winter clothing and when it arrives. Also, Vaccination programs can also be booked out months in advance.

So, some questions your organisation needs to be asking;

- Does your workforce work outside or in?
- In the open or under cover?
- Do your staff have access to the right types of clothing for the coming winter?
- Do they need vaccinations? (do many workers work in close proximity to each other?)

Don't leave it to the last minute to get prepared!



Statistics

Concise Health, Safety and Environmental (HSE) statistics

can assist an organisation in providing it with relevant, robust and timely information to be able to measure their performance.

Good statistics also assist with decision making practices that can influence ongoing organisations performance (including reducing costs like insurance premiums etc). Due diligence enables organisational decisions that will ensure HSE considerations are integrated seamlessly into the organisation's business model. This requires an understanding of HSE performance data, what it looks like, where it comes from and importantly, how HSE key performance indicators (KPIs) should be calculated and interpreted.

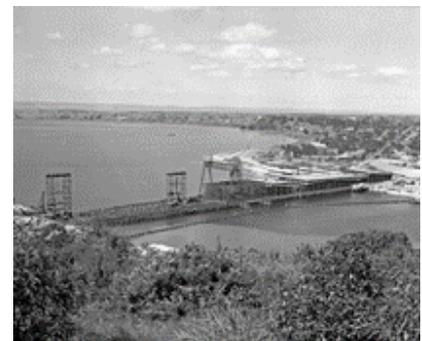
Poor HSE statistics could identify outcomes that could, can have a detrimental impact on an organisation, individuals and their families, on the financial, interpersonal and reputational health of a business and potentially, on the wider community (not to mention insurance cost increases and bad media/publicity). We are also seeing a constant change in client requirements. They are starting to identify that they only want to deal with an organisation that statistics indicate have a healthy HSE culture. Statistics that should be collected and collated could be, but not limited to;

- Injury/illness: the number of actual injury cases
- Near misses and incidents
- Risk elimination or minimisation efforts
- Indicators of safety inspections/audits
- Financial indicators

Contact us if you would like an honest / objective review of your HSE system to see if your statistics (and culture) are telling you the truth about your organisations health and whether you are utilising this information effectively.

Throwback History (Quality)

The Narrows Bridge of Perth WA (three bridges in one)



The original bridge was officially opened in November of 1959, with an extension opened in 2001 and a rail component opened in 2007.

Environmental Spot

Dangerous mercury has skyrocketed since coal plants built'

Experts say mercury levels near two coal-fired power stations in Victoria and NSW have skyrocketed since the facilities opened despite assurances from their operators. The National Pollutant Inventory, published by the Australia's Department of Environment and Energy has identified that the Latrobe Valley's Loy Yang A, Loy Yang B and Yallourn power stations (all in Victoria) collectively emitted 1007.5 kilograms of mercury into the atmosphere in 2017-18.



The report also revealed Loy Yang A was the biggest emitter among the nation's power plants of sulphur dioxide, which can cause wheezing and anxiety in the short-term and lung damage under long-term exposure. The United Nations (UN) says global mercury emissions into the atmosphere rose by around 20 per cent between 2010 and 2015.

University researchers say Australia should follow 107 countries including China, the United States and those in the European Union that have ratified a global agreement to limit mercury and sulphur dioxide pollution. Mercury is a naturally occurring element that can be dangerous if released into the environment. It can be found in cosmetics, fluorescent light bulbs and emissions from industrial activity among other sources. Mercury does exist naturally in the environment but is harmful and potentially deadly at high volumes, damaging the nervous, immune and digestive systems. Experts agree that there is no safe level of mercury consumption.

<http://www.npi.gov.au/>

So, is this another reason we should be pushing for renewables?

Lessons Learned.

Fine over Construction Deaths.

(Knowledge Sharing)

A Perth Rigger has been fined \$4000 over lack of safety controls leading to the deaths of two construction workers. The court found that the Rigger did not ensure that the footpath was set up as an exclusion zone and did not ensure that the order of removing the panels from the trailer was such that the weight distribution of the panels did not

compromise the stability of the load.

WorkSafe WA Commissioner Darren Kavanagh said the case should provide a reminder that safety on a building site is not the sole responsibility of the employer. A simple delineation (hard or soft barricading) could have prevented this tragedy from occurring. We think lesson learned here are: whenever any high-risk activities are occurring, everyone not involved with the task should be kept well away from the activity. These lessons could and should be shared amongst organisations, so that people learn by it in order to prevent it occurring again.

Megan's Affirmation

I can Learn Anything!
I can Know Anything!
I can Be Anything!

Quality

State-wide Cladding Audit Update (Western Australia)

At the end of March 2019, the WA Building Commission completed an audit on composite panels (ACPs) in a state-wide cladding audit that included all high-risk, high-rise buildings with aluminium composite panels (ACPs). The audit report now released has identified at least 20 buildings to date (4 private and 16 public) in WA that had potentially highly combustible cladding materials. However, several buildings/ structures cannot be identified because of "privacy obligations".

The report also identified that there was no formal reporting requirement for when a building had had remedial works completed, because responsibility got handed to the local government to inspect and ensure compliance. A disconnect appears in the communication process the report noted.

Similar audits have been commenced or undertaken in other states including South Australia, Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria.



Safety and Health

2019 World Day for Safety and Health at Work and Workers Memorial Day

Save the Date! Sunday the 28th of April. Every year more people are killed at work than in wars. This is an opportunity to highlight the preventable nature of most workplace incidents and ill health.

Every day, world wide, 6,300 people die as a result of occupational accidents or work-related diseases – more than 2.3 million deaths per year. 317 million accidents occur on the job annually, many of these resulting in extended absences from work. The human cost of this daily adversity is vast and the economic burden of poor occupational safety and health practices is estimated at 4 per cent of global Gross Domestic Product each year.

SOS-Switched onto Safety is looking at donating our time on Monday 29th of April (as our way of supporting this important day) and conducting free workplace hazard inspections (walk around). Pre-organised sites will be visited and we will provide a 'fresh eyes' look at your site with a basic completed inspection checklist provided at the end. We believe our broad range of experiences and knowledge may provide information that organisations may not be aware of.. Keep an eye on our website for further information closer to the date.

Safety Saying of the Day



Health and Exercise

Getting yourself (and your workforce) ready for winter

- Get immunised and protect yourself from flu.
- Acquire winter clothing i.e. long trousers, long sleeve shirt, head wear (beanies?) gloves, parker/jumpers etc.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Throw tissues in the bin after you use them.
- Look at moving the work/tasks inside (indoors) or sheltered from the environment
- Acquire heating devices.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze.



Corner

CHEMWATCH

UPDATING SDS – A REVOLUTIONARY NEW APPROACH

You may or may not have read about Chemwatch's revolutionary new approach to updating SDS's. Now each SDS:

- Is automatically subject to up to 4 visits yearly
- Chemwatch's automated Crawlers visit up to 250,000 URLs daily (80 million+ YEARLY)
- Chemwatch identify updates automatically, using our own proprietary software
- Updates are compared with previous versions and a line by line comparison report is created

These processes have been in development for over 3 years and, after extensive testing, have now become part of the standard Chemwatch offering.

Other strategies the Chemwatch utilise to update SDS's include:

- Where SDS are not available on the Web, we contact your suppliers on a regular basis.
- We send you monthly reports after the initial contact.
- Proforma requests are created in your name where a supplier fails to provide a response.

Holiday's in this coming Quarter

- 19 April Good Friday
- 22 April Easter Monday
- 25 April ANZAC Day
- 3rd June WA Day

Contact



If we can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us direct on **(08) 9295 0311** or for further details on what SOS can provide, refer to our website www.switchedontosafety.com.au

MINDRAY DEFIBRILLATORS



Dust and water protection, IP 55

Pre-connected pads – Adult / Paediatric auto identification.

Clear audio AND visual guidance

Colour visual animations easily guiding you through a crisis

Adheres to ANZCOR guidelines (ANZCOR recommendation: Default initial energy of 200J / Escalating energy to maximum available for subsequent shocks)