



Easy HR™

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**Easy HR™ Newsletter
April 2007**

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Easy HR™ - Did You Know ...

Easy HR offers **Accident Investigation** courses. The Easy HR Accident Investigation training course is designed specifically for Workplace Health and Safety Officers who may be required to investigate workplace accidents. This course gives Accident Investigators the basic investigation skills needed to carry out workplace accident and incident investigations. Courses run from 9am to approximately 1pm.

We also offer **Manual Handling** and **Safety Committee Chairperson** courses. The manual handling course runs for around 1 ½ hours, and the chairperson course is around 3 hours.

Special Offer: Book a participant into one of the above April 2007 courses and **get two participants trained for the price of one.** When using our online booking system, please add the second participants name in the notes field.

Accident Investigation

Course Info: http://www.easyhr.com.au/training/ohs_accident_investigation.htm

Enrolments: <http://www.easyhr.com.au/training/bookings/selectSeats.php?course=8>

Manual Handling

Course Info: http://www.easyhr.com.au/training/ohs_manual_handling_short.htm

Enrolments: <http://www.easyhr.com.au/training/bookings/selectSeats.php?course=5>

Chairperson Course

Information: http://www.easyhr.com.au/training/ohs_committee_chairperson.htm

Enrolments: <http://www.easyhr.com.au/training/bookings/selectSeats.php?course=4>

Famous Last words

- *Don't worry, I've done this before.*
- *They do this on TV all the time.*
- *Hold my beer, I'm gonna try somethin.*
- *Just press that button.*
- *Anybody can do that.*
- *They're not poisonous.*
- *Don't worry, I'll take care of it.*
- *That's odd.*
- *Well we've made it this far.*
- *I can do that with my eyes closed.*

Record Keeping

From 27 March 2007, all businesses covered by the Workplace Relations Act 1996 are obliged to keep accurate employment records after expiry of the 12 month grace period.

The Office of Workplace Services (OWS) is reminding all employers that amendments to the Workplace Relations Regulations 2006 (the Regulations) come into full effect on 27 March 2007.

All businesses covered by WorkChoices as well as all businesses operating in Victoria and the Territories are legally required to keep accurate and complete time and wages records, and to issue pay slips to each worker.

OWS Director Nicholas Wilson says time and wage records are a crucial part of ensuring employees receive their correct entitlements.

"Most employers make every effort to do the right thing and meet their obligations, and won't have to take more steps to comply."

"It's important, however, that the employers who intentionally flout workplace law understand they will be caught and penalised."

"If any business is in doubt about the right things to do, I encourage them to contact OWS which has a range of tools and information available designed to help employers meet their responsibilities."

Fact sheets, frequently asked questions and helpful templates for record-keeping requirements are available at <http://www.ows.gov.au> > for employers > fact sheets.

"Cases of employers failing to keep any employment records or to issue employees with pay slips will be taken very seriously by the office, particularly where evidence suggests the intention was to avoid paying employee entitlements," said Mr Wilson.

"OWS makes every effort to ensure employers are aware of their obligations and have the opportunity to comply voluntarily with our findings."

"First-time or minor errors in meeting the requirements will be unlikely to attract a penalty," said Mr Wilson.

After 27 March 2007, OWS Workplace Inspectors are empowered to issue infringement notices for identified breaches of the time and wage record and payslip requirements.

Infringement notice penalties are currently \$55 for an individual and \$275 for a body corporate.

A Court can impose 10 times these amounts (\$550 for an individual and \$2750 for a body corporate) for proven breaches of the record keeping obligations within the Regulations.

From 27 March 2007, infringement notice penalties will be increased to \$110 for an individual and \$550 for a body corporate (or \$1100 for an individual and \$5500 for a body corporate if court imposed).

"If we find that an employer is acting outside the law, we do have the responsibility and the power to protect workers' rights.

Lateral thinker

A motorist was unknowingly caught in an automated speed trap that measured his speed using radar and photographed his car.

He later received in the mail a ticket for \$40 and a photo of his car. Instead of payment, he sent the police department a photograph of \$40. Several days later, he received a letter from the police that contained another picture, this time of handcuffs.

He immediately mailed in his \$40.

When I was 8, I burned a hole in my Pyjamas

Candidates for British universities have been caught red-handed copying their applications from the Internet, after hundreds mentioned "burning a hole in pyjamas at age eight" on their online entrance forms.

The phrase, taken from a Web site which provides examples of personal statements used by successful candidates, describes an early encounter with a chemistry set.

Medical course applications from 370 others contained statements beginning with "a fascination for how the human body works" and 175 included anecdotes which involved "an elderly or infirm grandfather."

NSW OHS Act under review

The NSW Government has referred the NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act to an Inquiry headed by the Hon Paul Stein AM, QC for advice and review.

The Inquiry is to:

1. To review the proposals arising from the Report on the Review of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000*, tabled in the NSW Parliament on the 2 May 2006 and consider whether these, or any changes, are required to the occupational health and safety legislation to better secure the health, safety and welfare of people at work.
2. Consider the impacts of the above proposals, having regard to best practice solutions that will remove unnecessary regulatory burdens on business, without compromising safety.

Public submissions to the Inquiry were invited from industry, employer and employee representatives and other interested parties. The closing date for public submissions was 15 December 2006.

The Hon Paul Stein AM, QC will be analysing the issues raised through the public consultation process and will be providing a report on the outcome of the inquiry to the Minister on 30 April 2007.

Source: Workcover NSW

NSW takes a stand on Alcohol & Drugs

WorkCover NSW Chief Executive Officer, Jon Blackwell, recently announced the launch of revised guidelines to tackle alcohol and other drug use in the workplace.

“Intoxicated workers not only jeopardise their own safety, they place their colleagues and others in the workplace at risk,” said Mr Blackwell.

“The misuse of alcohol and drugs at work is a significant concern for workers and employers, and can contribute to productivity losses; absenteeism and lateness; anti-social behaviour, and unlawful conduct.

“Changes to the regulation also protect workers by ensuring they are consulted as part of the development of a workplace drug and alcohol program,” said Mr Blackwell.

The revised guide, *Alcohol and Other Drugs in the Workplace*, outlines procedures that employers can follow to identify and manage the risks posed by the misuse of alcohol and other drugs.

Mr Blackwell said the guide provides practical and workable solutions, and encourages employers to manage risks associated with drug and alcohol use by adopting a preventative approach.

“Employers are encouraged to provide education, and to use counselling and support programs as appropriate risk-management tools for controlling alcohol and drugs in the workplace.

“Workers need to be aware of the issues associated with the misuse of drugs and alcohol, and how it can have serious consequences for workplace health and safety,” said Mr Blackwell.

The document can be downloaded from the Workcover website:

http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/Publications/OHS/RiskManagement/drugs_alcohol_workplace.htm

Source: Workcover NSW

When your doctors certificate is your proof of identity

With the rising use of radioisotopes in medicine and the growing use of radiation detectors in a security-conscious nation, patients are triggering alarms in places where they may not even realise they're being scanned, doctors and security officials say.

Nearly 60,000 people a day in the United States undergo treatment or tests that leave tiny amounts of radioactive material in their bodies, according to the Society of Nuclear Medicine. It is not enough to hurt them or anyone else, but it is enough to trigger radiation alarms for up to three months.

Did you Know

The requirements for consultation between employers and employees in NSW are introduced by object (d) of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 (OHS Act 2000)*:

- 'to provide for consultation and cooperation between employers and employees in achieving the objects of this Act.'

The Act provides three options for consultation. Workplaces may choose to establish one or more of the following:

- Occupational health and safety (OHS) committee
- OHS representative
- Other agreed arrangements.

These options allow workplaces to develop systems and procedures tailored to their individual needs.

Consultation training is mandatory for Safety Committee members and safety Representatives. OHS *Regulation 2001 - Clause 31(1)*

Easy HR is able to conduct accredited consultation training at one of our public courses, or within your workplace.

Course Information: http://www.easyhr.com.au/training/ohs_consultation.htm

Course Enrolments: <http://www.easyhr.com.au/training/bookings/selectSeats.php?course=1>

I Needed To Know That

A best man at a South Carolina wedding ran out onto the runway to moon the newlyweds as they departed the ceremony in a small private plane. But he misjudged distance, keeping his pants down too long, and was killed as the couple's getaway plane taxied to take off.

Source: Reuters

It Must Be True

An Australian man nursing a broken leg has become a millionaire by picking lottery-winning numbers from his hospital identification bracelet.

The Melbourne man split a A\$3.0 million (\$1.5 million) prize pool with two other winners from New South Wales and Queensland states.

The unidentified man in his 50s said he wrote the numbers on his lottery ticket after looking at the registration number written on his hospital bracelet.

A source at the hospital confirmed the agency's report but declined to give further details.

Source: Reuters

Adecco guilty of not helping injured worker return to work

Labour hire company, Adecco Industrial Pty Ltd, pleaded guilty in the Melbourne Magistrates Court on Wednesday 28 March to failing to prepare a return to work plan for an injured worker.

The Court heard that after a casual process worker at a Knoxfield clothing wholesaler suffered a back injury in November 2005, Adecco failed to prepare a return to work plan. Three months later a plan had still not been completed.

Adecco was charged with not complying with the workers' compensation laws and was fined \$3,000 and ordered to pay costs of \$1,000 to the Victorian WorkCover Authority (VWA).

VWA Executive Director, Len Boehm, said helping an injured worker return to work is good for the worker, their families, workmates and for business.

"This not only assists in the early recovery and rehabilitation of the worker, it reduces productivity losses and minimises the impact on an employer's workplace injury insurance costs.

"Followed by simply staying in touch with an injured worker, the preparation of a return to work plan is a critical step in the process of assisting injured workers back into the workplace."

Mr Boehm said that identifying and prosecuting cases like this helps to build awareness among employers about their legal obligations to support injured workers and the importance of helping an injured worker return to work.

"The VWA is committed to doing everything it can to ensure injured workers receive the care and support they need to re-enter the workplace.

"Employers who ignore their responsibilities will be penalised."

Source: Workcover Vic

New Chemical Discovered

The heaviest element known to science was recently discovered by investigators at a major US research university. The element, tentatively, named administratium, has no protons or electrons and thus has an atomic number of 0. However, it does have one neutron, 125 assistant neutrons, 75 vice neutrons and 111 assistant vice neutrons, which gives it an atomic mass of 312.

These 312 particles are held together by a force that involves the continuous exchange of meson-like particles called morons. It is also surrounded by vast quantities of lepton-like particles called peons.

Since it has no electrons, administratium is inert. However, it can be detected chemically as it impedes every reaction it comes in contact with. According to the discoverers, a minute amount of administratium causes one reaction to take over four days to complete when it would have normally occurred in less than a second.

Administratium has a normal half-life of approximately three years, at which time it does not decay, but instead undergoes a reorganization in which assistant neutrons, vice neutrons and assistant vice neutrons exchange places. Some studies have shown that the atomic mass actually increases after each reorganization.

Research at other laboratories indicates that administratium occurs naturally in the atmosphere. It tends to concentrate at certain points such as government agencies, large corporations, and universities. It can usually be found in the newest, best appointed, and best maintained buildings.

Scientists point out that administratium is known to be toxic at any level of concentration and can easily destroy any productive reaction where it is allowed to accumulate. Attempts are being made to determine how administratium can be controlled to prevent irreversible damage, but results to date are not promising

Workcover NSW gets tough on Bullying

Public comment is sought on WorkCover's draft guide. *Preventing and dealing with workplace bullying.* Given that bullying can happen in any workplace, the guide highlights the importance of preventative measures.

More info: http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/AboutUs/PublicComment/public_comment_bullying.htm

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