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QRMC NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the first edition of *Insight* for 2014. We hope that the monthly e-newsletter continues to provide valuable information to our readers.

Insight aims to provide useful information, links and tips in the areas of Risk Management, Occupational Health and Safety, Business Continuity Management, and other areas relating to management systems and corporate governance.

This issue:
- How organisational leaders can improve WHS
- Prepare for Privacy Reforms
- SNG Report
- Update to WHS and Electrical Safety Codes of Practice in Qld
- RABQSA name change takes force

How organisational leaders can improve WHS

The critical role played by organisational leaders in the success of any management system was addressed by QRMC in our article "The Importance of Leadership" in *Insight* issue 12.

When considering the same relationship between leadership and positive Work Health and Safety behaviour and outcomes, there are some particular characteristics which typify successful organisations and differentiate them from mediocre ones.

Some of these characteristics are:

- Demonstrated commitment

  While the Board and Executive Management Team clearly have a range of (sometimes competing) goals in the administration of their organisation, workers can and do get a sense of how safety is prioritised in the organisation by the actions of the Senior Managers. If the actions of organisational leaders put safety towards the bottom of the list, so will workers.

- Consistency

  The same safety messages and policy requirements must be agreed, communicated and exhibited by all levels of leadership, from the Board and CEO down to the shop floor supervisor. This is especially true if a change in safety management or culture is being implemented.

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■ Openness

Actively fostering communication about safety in all directions – top-down, bottom-up, and horizontally – develops trust, makes identification of problems more timely and accurate, and cultivates a positive safety climate.

■ Care for workers

Workers who feel well treated and genuinely valued by their safety leaders will have greater morale and substantially more likelihood of being committed to both the organisation and to behaving safely.

■ Worker participation

Involving workers in decision-making (including during audits and safety risk assessments) not only means that critical information is less likely to be inadvertently missed, but also that workers are more likely to take "ownership" of the outcomes. Legislation specifies that consultation is required, especially in relation to risk assessments.

■ Proactivity

Being proactive safety leaders includes recognising and commending good safety behaviours and performance, encouraging reporting of near misses and incidents, undertaking prompt investigation, visibly taking action to prevent their recurrence and reviewing the effectiveness of these actions.

Consistent efforts to improve safety leadership through attention to all of the above should facilitate safer behaviours in the organisation's workers. This enhances the capacity of your organisation's safety management system to produce good safety results, improved safety culture, and above all, safer workers.

Please contact QRMC for more information.

Prepare for Privacy Reforms

Many organisations are familiar with and have been complying with the requirements of the Commonwealth *Privacy Act* since it was introduced in 1988.

However the *Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act* 2012 amended the *Privacy Act* and introduced a set of Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) to replace the previously used National Privacy Principles. The new APPs take effect on 12 March 2014.

The new APPs impose obligations on a range of organisations, including all Commonwealth Government agencies and all businesses with annual turnovers exceeding $3 million.

If your organisation has not checked the requirements of the APPs and how they impact on your organisation's policies and processes for managing privacy and personal information, the time to act is now. A good starting point is the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) *Privacy fact sheet 17: Australian Privacy Principles* downloadable here. The OAIC has also just released the final *Australian Privacy Principles guidelines* here.

Please contact QRMC for more information.

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SNG Report

At the February meeting of the SNG, the Manager of Workers Compensation Policy Unit provided an overview of recent legislative changes.

These include:

- the restricting of access to common law claims
- the amendment to the definition in relation to psychiatric or psychological injuries (employment must be 'the major' significant factor)
- the processes associated with the employer accessing the workers' compensation claims history of prospective workers.

The attendees appreciated the opportunity to explore in detail some of the implications of these changes with the Manager.

The next SNG meeting is earmarked for May.

ABOUT THE SNG:

In 2005 QRMC founded the Safety Networking Group for senior safety professionals working in the greater Brisbane metropolitan area. QRMC continues to coordinate and arrange for speakers to present at quarterly meetings and discuss information on contemporary WHS issues. Group members also share information from their workplaces or industries, which other members frequently find interesting and useful.

More information on the Safety Networking Group can be found on our website. Senior safety professionals contemplating attending meetings in Brisbane can contact QRMC to express an interest.

Update to WHS and Electrical Safety Codes of Practice in Qld

Codes of Practice under the harmonised *Work Health and Safety Act* and *Regulations* are admissible in court proceedings. Courts may regard a Code of Practice as evidence of what should be known about a hazard, risk or control and may rely on the Code in determining what is reasonably practicable in the circumstances to which the Code relates.

In this context, it is important for all organisations to stay abreast of the status of the WHS Codes of Practice as various jurisdictions across Australia adopt or adapt Safe Work Australia's Model Codes.

In Queensland, eight new national Codes of Practice were adopted through the national harmonisation process and took effect from 1 December 2013. These were:

- Abrasive Blasting Code of Practice 2013
- Demolition Work Code of Practice 2013
- Excavation Work Code of Practice 2013
- Managing Risks of Hazardous Chemicals in the Workplace Code of Practice 2013
- Managing Risks of Plant in the Workplace Code of Practice 2013
- Safe Design of Structures Code of Practice 2013
- Spray Painting and Powder Coating Code of Practice 2013
- Welding Processes Code of Practice 2013.

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As a result of these adoptions, four codes of practice were repealed from 30 November 2013:

- Abrasive Blasting Code of Practice 2004
- Hazardous Chemicals Code of Practice 2003
- Plant Code of Practice 2005.

Also repealed was the Tunnelling Code of Practice 2007, which was replaced by the Guide for Tunnelling Work (published by Safe Work Australia).

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland has indicated that further amendments to the WHS legislation are expected throughout 2014.

Other changes to the safety legislation landscape in Queensland include the introduction of the following electrical safety Codes of Practice from 1 January 2014:

- Electrical Safety Code of Practice 2013 *Managing electrical risks in the workplace* (replaces Electrical Safety Code of Practice 2010)
- Electrical Safety Code of Practice 2010 *Working Near Overhead and Underground Electric Lines* (replaces Electrical Safety Code of Practice 2010 Working Near Exposed Live Parts)
- Electrical Safety Code of Practice 2010 *Works* has been retain and updated
- Electrical Safety Code of Practice 2010 *Electrical Equipment Rural industry* has been retain and updated.

In addition, from 1 January 2014 the Electrical Safety Code of Practice 2010 *Risk management* was repealed, and duty holders should instead refer to the *How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice*

2011. (Section 11 of the *Electrical Safety Regulation 2013* now requires duty holders to manage risks in accordance with the general risk management principles of Part 3.1 of the *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011*.)

Please contact QRMC for more information.

RABQSA name change takes force
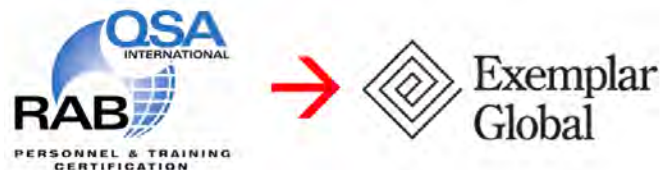
As organisations employing or working with auditors and other systems professionals may be aware, the international certification body RABQSA International has rebranded themselves as Exemplar Global. All existing certifications and accreditations under RABQSA remain valid, and will be progressively transferred over to the new name as renewals become due.

The accreditations of QRMC's auditing staff are therefore still effective and will be renamed in due course.

Please contact QRMC for more information.

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