insight

QRMC NEWSLETTER

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:

- Impact of approachable managers on worker health and safety
- Managing for climate change resilience
- SNG Report

Impact of approachable managers on worker health and safety

Stress at work is recognised as a key determinant of the health and wellbeing of workers.

There are a range of work-related risks which can impact on worker stress levels, such as poor work-life balance, unreasonably demanding work, lack of clarity or autonomy in the work role, workplace 'politics', bullying or sexual harassment, inability to instigate changes in the workplace, etc.

These risk factors are fairly common in workplaces of all types, and it is important for managers to recognise and manage them. Poorly managed stressors not only impact on worker health and safety, but can result in poor productivity, increased absenteeism and presenteeism, increased turnover, as well as higher accident and injury rates, with the resultant potential legislative exposures.

One critical element for the effective identification and management of stress risk factors is the development of an open and sensitive work culture, so that workers feel able to raise issues and concerns. Having the issues out in the open provides the opportunity to address them before harm comes to affected workers.

Another key element is for managers to be able to demonstrate that an issue raised has been considered fully – even if in the end nothing changes. This can be facilitated by the person raising the issue being the final "sign off" on the change request/incident form.

An open and sensitive work culture is driven from the top down, and must be demonstrated by the highest management level all the way to supervisor level to be effective across the organisation.
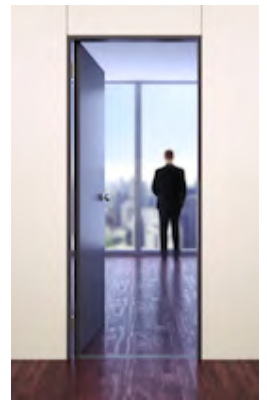
Please contact QRMC for more information.

Managing for climate change resilience

Many businesses, business associations, and financial institutions such as the World Bank, have in recent years recognised the impact on profitability resulting from the practical implications of climate change.

Climate change related risks are increasing in urgency, likelihood and frequency, with business continuity and

RISK MANAGEMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS SAFETY MANAGEMENT BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT

insurance implications. Economic losses from natural disasters are accelerating, for example in the USA, Hurricane Andrew in 1992 resulted in USA$25 billion of insurance claims, compared to Hurricane Katrina in 2005 with more than USA$45 billion claims.

As a result of the experienced natural disasters of recent years and the current worldwide inadequacy of response to the underlying causes of climate change, adaptation has increasingly become the focus for action. "*Climate Change 2014:*
Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability", the contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released earlier this year, highlighted the adaptation issues.

At the organisational level, impacts can include damage to facilities, disrupted supply chains, dramatically increased or reduced product/service demand depending on the industry, lost productivity and loss or absence of key personnel.

Planning to maximise organisational resilience in the face of business interruptions due to natural disaster has therefore become more important than ever. It is especially timely to consider these potential interruptions now ahead of the weather impacts that come with the warmer months across Australia.

A critical part of organisational resilience is effective Business Continuity Management (BCM). In summary, the steps for readying an organisation for business disruption using BCM include:

- Conduct a Business Impact Analysis in accordance with ISO 22301:2012 *Societal security – Business continuity management systems*
- Develop crisis management and business recovery strategies
- Develop a user-friendly and organisation-specific Business Continuity Plan
- Properly plan for the implementation of the developed Business Continuity Plan then roll it out to all staff
- Deliver staff training in the use of the Plan and their responsibilities under it
- Test the Business Continuity Plan and incorporate outcomes as part of the Plan review process
- Undertake regular monitoring and review of the Plan, including regular training and testing to ensure that personnel are ready should an event occur which disrupts key business operations.

Also refer to issue 35 of *Insight*, "Tips for Business Continuity Management" for a discussion on critical considerations during this process.

Please contact QRMC for more information.

SNG Report

The third quarter Safety Networking Group meeting was held on 22 August, hosted by the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS).

Mick Davis (Former WHS Advisor with QAS) presented an interesting presentation in the history of QAS with Paul Coffey (Corporate Manager – Health and Safety QAS) giving an update on current WHS initiatives within QAS.

Damian Hegarty (Senior Associate, Kaden Boriss Brisbane) updated the Group on the latest WHS legislative changes including the prosecution of officers under the WHS Act as well as the implications of the introduction of a threshold of greater than 5% degree of permanent impairment to access common law damages with reference to labour hire provisions.

The next SNG meeting is earmarked for November 2014.

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.

A reminder of the importance of monitoring Safety Management Systems

As a follow up to our article in issue 46 of *Insight*, the "The Risks of a Neglected WHS System", a recent case involving injury to an occupational diver found that the employer had failed to implement and maintain safe systems of work and made particular comment on the fact that safety systems are only effective if they are actually followed.

The presiding Magistrate stated that "There is no point in having a multi-layered complex safety system if it simply can be ignored, and for that reason the breaches are serious."

This case is another reminder that PCBUs must regularly check that their workers *understand and use* the developed safety systems.

Please contact QRMC for more information.