

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:

- TNA, ROPS, HRO, WBV, DPM ... WTF?
- Reputational risk from supply chains
- WHS on trial – a Mock Court

TNA, ROPS, HRO, WBV, DPM ... WTF?

FYI acronyms have become such a part of everyday language that sometimes complete sentences can be spoken or typed just by using acronyms (LOL).

'Acronymitis' is defined in contemporary dictionaries as the excessive use of acronyms.

In considering the benefits, there is no doubt that the use of the TLA or FLA (aka the 'three-letter acronym' or 'four-letter acronym') saves time especially in written communications. This is particularly evident for standard risk and safety industry jargon such as BCP, HAZOP, PPE, etc. etc.

Acronyms can also aid clarity and help form a culture or sub-culture within an organisation or specific work-group, underpinned by a specific language or 'coding'. They have also been proven to improve memorability – when the acronym is catchy, it resonates with the users. The 'catchy' acronym also helps with marketing a new system or process – such as the very memorable acronym for the Electrical Low Voltage Infrastructure System or ELVIS (... for reasons unknown the end-users remember this).

While these benefits are real, the use and over-use of acronyms is fraught with danger, especially when organisations tacitly endorse the promulgation of more



acronyms specific to their organisation or industry. This is compounded by the issue of the same acronym meaning different things across different industries.

The point of concern comes when the communication process becomes distorted; when people aren't even aware of their acronym usage; and when they haven't considered whether the means by which they are communicating is appropriate for the receiver (e.g. a colleague, an external contractor or a member of the public). This hinders an understanding (or a full understanding) being gained. (And naturally there are inevitable instances where the recipients do not ask for clarification worried they'll be perceived for not knowing the requisite jargon.)

'Acronymitis' has also led to the emergence of the 'acronym guides' to aid the understanding of what the organisation is talking about ... *but how efficient is the use of acronyms if a worker needs to check what is being spoken about via a page defining them?*

With the potential disconnect between the delivered information and the received / interpreted information, there is the obvious potential for mistakes or disagreements based on false interpretations.

The critical issue is for the 'deliverer' of the information to ensure that the 'receiver' clearly understands the meaning of the acronym; and the key test for an acronym is whether it positively or negatively impacts the communication processes, internally and externally, for the organisation.

Please [contact QRMC](#) for more information.

Reputational risk from supply chains

How many times have we heard Apple come under fire because of terrible employee health and safety practices at supplier factories in China? Or clothing brands held responsible for awful working conditions in India and Bangladesh, or sporting goods manufacturers accused of fostering child labour?

Ignorance of poor practices in the supply chain is never held to be an excuse. The organisation utilising the poorly behaving supplier is expected to have done their homework and weeded out suppliers whose practices are not in line with current best practice or regulatory requirements.

Failure to effectively manage the supply chain can be a major source of corporate embarrassment and a risk to the reputation of an organisation.

Organisations that manufacture or distribute goods are the most obviously vulnerable to this risk. However, in reality the problem can affect any organisation from manufacturers to banks to governments; and the advent of global communications, social media and citizen journalism means that customers and the general public will soon know all about it.

So, does your organisation have a register of all suppliers? Has any effort been made to check the operations of key suppliers, and whether they are compliant with modern work practices and regulatory requirements? Do you know the country of origin of any key components or services?

If not, it may be time to give consideration to this often neglected area of risk management.

Please [contact QRMC](#) for more information, or for assistance to assess the risks inherent in your supply chain.



WHS on trial – a Mock Court

Early in the month QRMC had the pleasure of supporting a Mock Trial exercise to open the 2018 Safety Institute of Australia Visions Conference on the Gold Coast. The Mock Trial was facilitated by Aaron Anderson and his team from Norton Rose Fulbright.

The scenario was based on a serious hospitalisation injury resulting from a fall through a void on a construction site.

Norton Rose Fulbright provided legal expertise to fulfil the roles of defence, prosecutor and magistrate and with some role-playing by a supporting cast the conference attendees were able to see the different approaches taken by the defence and the prosecution cases. In contextualising the presentation Aaron explored the legal proceedings and processes in setting the scene, and to aid the learning process he interrupted the legal proceedings with 'time-outs' to explain the legal process and the line of questioning.

The defence and the prosecution's examination of the 'WHSQ Inspector', the Injured worker and 2 witnesses presented the details of the scenario from a different perspective, and interwoven within this was the analysis of some example management system components typically relied on within construction workplace, the Site Induction process and the SWMS.

While the exercise only presented a snap-shot of full court proceedings, the formalised legal processes were evident as was the detailed and thought-out strategies of both the defence and prosecution.

The ensuing discussion raised good points in relation to the use of subcontractors, the overarching Principal Contractor's responsibility and the need for clear and effective communication

We thank Aaron and the team for all their efforts in bringing the event together and providing key insights into the legal process.

Please [contact QRMC](#) for more information.



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