

SAFETY, REHABILITATION AND COMPENSATION COMMISSION

2005 SAFETY AWARDS

The Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission introduced its annual Safety Awards in 2001 to further the objective of achieving continuous improvement in injury prevention. Since then award categories have been broadened to also recognise the importance of injury management.

The three award categories for 2005 are

- **Workplace Safety Innovative Solutions Award**
- **Leadership Award for Injury Prevention and Management**
- **Rehabilitation and Return to Work Award.**

Nominations for the 2005 awards were invited from all agencies covered by the *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991* and/or the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988*.

The application process was promoted by sending brochures to all heads of agencies, heads of corporate management, rehabilitation and OHS officers as well as through the Comcare web-site and agency forums. The judging criteria specific to each award category were listed in the brochure.

This year, nine applications were considered for the Workplace Safety Innovative Solutions category, seven applications for the Leadership Award for Injury Prevention and Management and three applications for the Rehabilitation and Return to Work Award.

This booklet contains case studies of the finalists in each category with contact details for enquiries. The approaches taken may be useful in other organisations or contexts.

The Commission is also interested in following-up on previous winners and progress of a winning initiative from the first year of the awards is also showcased.

AWARDS
July 05

FINALISTS IN THE
WORKPLACE SAFETY
INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS
CATEGORY

AUSTRALIAN QUARANTINE AND INSPECTION SERVICE

'ON VESSEL INSPECTIONS' – INSPECTION MINIMISATION STRATEGIES

About the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS)



AQIS provides quarantine inspection services for international passengers, cargo, mail, animals and plants or their products coming into Australia, and quarantine inspection and certification for a range of export animal and plant products and bulk cargoes.

The problem

Ship inspection regimes within AQIS involve entering holds and inspecting internal structures and cargoes for quarantine risk contaminants. Inspections cover bulk commodities such as fertilisers, stock-feeds, imported grains and empty holds before grain and other products are exported. Empty holds have often carried a range of cargoes that would be prohibited entry into Australia because of strict quarantine requirements relating to residues left behind. The hazards AQIS officers can encounter include full or partially full holds that

expose them to falls from heights, toxic gases, environmental exposure, oxygen depletion and engulfment. Empty or dry holds expose officers to falls from heights of up to 25 metres.

The approach

AQIS acknowledged that personal protective equipment and training were low on the hierarchy of controls and began to examine higher order controls as a longer-term solution. A joint AQIS and industry review into inspection regimes led to the introduction of a three-tier system for managing the assessment and regulation of bulk fertiliser importation. This approach required significant industry investment internationally to support AQIS requirements that would allow auditing, sampling, inspection and certification to be done by accredited third parties in the country of departure. If the cargo and vessel meet the highest tier standards, cargo could be offloaded in Australia without the need for quarantine inspection. The approach has been embraced by industry.

The outcome

The implementation of the Bulk Fertiliser Importation and Inspection Protocols have maintained quarantine integrity at the border while significantly reducing the frequency of ship hold inspections for ships carrying bulk fertilisers.

By the end of 2004, almost 95% of the annual import tonnage could be imported under arrangements permitted by the protocols, reducing the need for quarantine inspection to practically zero.

Ongoing

AQIS is taking the best features of this approach and expanding it for use with other bulk cargoes such as protein meal – using deep core sampling to remove the need for in hold inspections.

Contact for further information: Mr Jim Webster, Manager, Health and Safety, Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, Ph: (02) 6272 3933.

CENTRELINK (AREA WEST, VICTORIA)

PRISON SERVICING OHS MODEL

About Centrelink

Centrelink has about 27,000 staff nationally providing a range of social services to its client groups. One such service involves Centrelink staff interviewing prisoners prior to their release to arrange payments and assist their transition back into the community.

The problem

Centrelink provides this service nationally through a memorandum of understanding with each state correctional agency. Pre-release servicing had expanded substantially over the past two years and there was considerable evidence in rehabilitation literature and anecdotal experience from staff working in correctional facilities of high levels of stress related illnesses. The nature of the environment, where people who have previously committed violent or anti-social acts are housed, will always present a higher than normal risk for staff working there.

The approach

The MOUs and protocols provided a framework for the prison service. Support was needed for the Prison Liaison Officers (PLOs) and the Centrelink Victoria Prison Servicing Working Group was established to look specifically at OHS issues. This group drew on best practice within Centrelink in looking at situations PLOs were likely to face and also consulted with appropriate experts. The working group developed the Prison Servicing Model which is a holistic approach addressing training, protocols and access to appropriate health services.

The outcome

The Prison Servicing Model includes

- OHS considerations for the recruitment of staff to prison servicing positions
- an in house OHS training program that provides an awareness of risk and its avoidance
- access to appropriate state based local prison security training
- protocols for the emotional and psychological wellbeing of staff, including debriefing, regular team review discussions, and maintaining professional boundaries
- protocols to reduce the risk of communicable disease transmission including access to vaccinations and
- OHS inclusions within Program Protocol Agreements between Centrelink and correctional agencies to ensure prisons provide safe and supervised access for Centrelink staff.

Benefits include

- increased security within prisons for Centrelink staff interviewing inmates
- improved interview techniques so conflict is avoided and incidents do not escalate
- improved psychological, emotional and physical wellbeing
- a reduced risk of psychological injury
- improved interviews for inmates and
- improved continuity of services.

Ongoing

The Victorian model has been identified as being applicable to other states and is being progressed as a national model within Centrelink.

Contact for further information: Ms Claire Seppings, Customer & Community Manager, Area West, Victoria, Centrelink, Ph: (03) 5430 5893.

AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE (AFP)

INNOVATIONS IN FORENSIC AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

About the AFP Forensic and Technical Services

The AFP enforces Commonwealth criminal law and protects Commonwealth and national interests from crime in Australia and overseas. AFP's Forensic and Technical (F&T) area provides a range of forensic and technical services in support of the AFP's national and ACT policing outcomes. An important and major element of the support offered by the team is the examination of evidence in relation to the importation of illicit drugs into Australia.



The problem

Outdated fixed height equipment used for the examination and heat sealing of evidence posed a high manual handling risk for the Physical Evidence Team members within the F&T area. Many exhibits are awkwardly shaped, large and heavy and require lifting by staff.

The approach

After determining that there was no suitable industry standard equipment available commercially to meet the requirements of F&T area, design and development work was undertaken in consultation with subject matter experts to develop specifications that suited their needs. In doing so, the F&T area

were mindful that their laboratories were accredited to ensure that international quality assurance requirements were met.

The outcome

The outcome was the manufacture of height adjustable forensic examination tables and mechanical heat sealers that blended with existing manual handling procedures.

Benefits include

- minimised risk of back, contusion and crushing injuries to Physical Evidence Teams nationally
- increased efficiency and reduced time spent conducting examinations through better functionality of equipment
- examination surface that is suitable for vigorous decontamination practices
- removal of harmful dust particles during examination by a local exhaust ventilation system
- ownership of problems and solutions by staff in work areas
- enhanced OHS culture in the workplace
- demonstrated management commitment to OHS.

Ongoing

These innovative design solutions have been picked up by AFP forensic laboratories nationally.

Contact for further information: Mr Paul Wong, National Coordinator, Health, Safety and Rehabilitation, AFP, Ph: (02) 6275 7666.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

'ROLL-ON ROLL-OFF SYSTEM'

About the Attorney-General's Department

The Attorney-General's Department provides essential expert support to the Government in the maintenance and improvement of Australia's system of law and justice. This innovative solution was put forward by the Assets Team within the Information and Knowledge Services Group who are responsible for the control and transportation of computers, telecommunications equipment, photocopiers, records and files and audio visual equipment between the various buildings that house the Attorney-General's Department.

The problem

Historically, the department was based around two buildings approximately 400 metres apart. Computers were generally moved between buildings by carrying them or pushing them on a trolley along concrete paths and across roads. With the growth of the department the Assets Team workload increased significantly and the department spread across five sites. While all of these buildings had loading zones, none had loading docks. Concerns were raised regarding the increased risk of manual handling injuries to staff.

The approach

The Assets Team were aware of the OHS issues associated with repetitive lifting and were keen to find a workable solution. They looked at the problems and similarities associated with each building location and the equipment being moved. A number of brainstorming sessions to solve transportation and loading zone issues were held with the concept of a "Roll-on Roll-off" approach seen as the best solution.

The outcome

The first issue was to find a safer way of moving computers within buildings. The solution was considered to be a trolley that carried the computer equipment elevated close to desk height. A lightweight folding trolley was sourced and has been very successful in this role. It has eliminated close to 50% of all ankle-to-waist lifts of personal computers.

The second issue of moving equipment between buildings took a big step forward with the purchase of a "Razorback" van. The back of the van lowers completely to ground level and is large enough for two pallets to be wheeled straight onto it. Whilst the van was bought commercially, specific modifications have been made to better suit the purpose of the Information and Knowledge Services Group. Modifications have included lining the van with thick foam to prevent IT equipment from being damaged in transit, the design and fixing of safety stickers to the rear inside of the van, installation of a camera on the rear of the van as well as a reversing warning system. Specific training has been provided to staff using the van and associated equipment.

Benefits include

- team ownership of the solutions and pride in their achievements
- roughly halving the number of lifts required since the introduction of the system. Many of the more dangerous lifts including extended arm lifts into station wagons have been eliminated
- no injuries since the implementation of the system.

Ongoing

The solutions are now being applied to applications outside the Information and Knowledge Services Group and have also attracted interest from other agencies.

Contact for further information: Mr Graham Fry, General Manager, Information and Knowledge Services, Attorney-General's Department, Ph: (02) 6250 5711.

AUSTRALIAN AIR EXPRESS

'SOLID SIDES'

About Australian air Express

Australian air Express (AaE) is jointly owned by Qantas and Australia Post and holds a significant share of the domestic airfreight business. AaE employs around 1500 staff with a smaller number of subcontractors.

The problem

Air cargo is transported from AaE depots to aircraft on trailers which have no sides to assist in loading and unloading. Some kind of temporary restraint is required during transport to aircraft to ensure that none of the cargo falls off these trailers. In the past this restraint has been shrinkwrap which is then cut off before unloading the trailers. The risks to staff from the shrinkwrapping process have been friction burns to fingers, trip hazards and cuts. Trailing or loose shrinkwrap is also an ingestion hazard for aircraft engines and can and does get caught in other equipment.

The approach

The approach taken at the Mascot depot means the cargo is contained on the trailers by a length of heavy upholstery-type material along each side of the trailer, held in place with strong Velcro fasteners. Cost is minimal compared to the monthly shrinkwrap bill and the 'solid sides' are reusable. A staff member did the development work in his own time, going through several prototypes and making a DVD of the outcome to present to his OHS committee who enthusiastically supported his idea.

The outcome

The strength of the approach is that it is a simple yet innovative idea that solves several OHS issues as well as environmental ones. The 'solid sides' negate the need for staff to carry knives to cut through shrinkwrap and substantially reduce the OHS risks and costs to the organisation.

Ongoing

Trials of the 'solid sides' are continuing at the Mascot depot prior to putting the idea to a national AaE committee with a view to it being adopted nationally.

Contact for further information: Ms Kelly Ryan, OHS Consultant, AaE Mascot,
Ph: (02) 9582 1455



FINALISTS IN THE
LEADERSHIP IN INJURY
PREVENTION AND
MANAGEMENT CATEGORY

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE (DEFENCE HEALTH SERVICE)

DEFENCE INJURY PREVENTION PROGRAM

About the Department of Defence (Defence Health Service)

Defence Health Service (DHS) has overall responsibility for the provision of health care to members of the Australian Defence Force. This includes health aspects of preparing ADF personnel and supporting DHS members for operational activities. To do this the DHS Branch develops strategic health policy, provides strategic level health advice and exercises technical and financial control of ADF health units.

The problem

DHS recognised a gap in preventive health systems and processes within the ADF – analysis of injuries from various forms of physical activity including sport. As a result prevention activities were not being targeted at priority areas.

The approach

The Defence Injury Prevention Program (DIPP) has been progressively developed by the DHS over the last 5 years. The DIPP has been developed primarily to reduce the rates of injury to ADF personnel arising from various forms of physical activity, including sport, and by design reflects international best practice. Two key components of the program have been the development of a new, broad-based information system for injury surveillance (which clearly identifies key causes of injury) and strategic development of management structures and systems for injury prevention, which ensure that it is well managed at all levels of the organisation. The primary aim of the DIPP is to provide information and tools to ADF commanders that will enable them to identify priority injury problems, make properly informed decisions and implement effective prevention measures.

Outcomes

The introduction of this approach has seen a significant change in culture across the parts of the ADF that have so far embraced it. The program was piloted, evaluated and refined at several pilot sites from Army, Navy and Air Force. Results at the pilot sites were excellent with reductions in the rates of injury at some sites in the order of 20-70% within 1-2 years of program implementation. The program is being progressively introduced across other ADF sites.

Contact for further information: Mr James Savage, Communications Officer, Defence Health Service, Ph: (02) 6266 3878.

AUSTRALIAN QUARANTINE AND INSPECTION SERVICE

IMPROVING EMPLOYEE SAFETY AT NON-COMMONWEALTH PREMISES WITH THE USE OF A SITE REGISTER TO MINIMISE THE RISK OF INJURY

About the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS)

AQIS provides quarantine inspection services for international passengers, cargo, mail, animals and plants or their products coming into Australia, and quarantine inspection and certification for a range of export animal and plant products and bulk cargoes.

The problem

AQIS South Australia (AQIS-SA) employs around 140 staff, largely involved in work at various import/export establishments and related sites across the state. Most of these sites are not owned or controlled by the Commonwealth but AQIS staff are required to visit and work there. Each site has its own possible hazards and risks and AQIS-SA wanted an induction system for staff prior to their arriving at the site.

The approach

When staff visit sites they conduct an OHS audit based on a common checklist template. A database system was developed that enabled the information contained on these templates to be amalgamated into an online Site Register. Short video clips are progressively being added to the register linked to each site. The register now contains comprehensive information on some 190 sites and provides staff with access to this information prior to their arriving at the site.

Outcomes

The site register is available to all AQIS-SA staff through their local IT network. The primary benefit of the register is that it assists AQIS-SA employees to minimise the risk of injury at a non-Commonwealth worksite by providing them with advance information when preparing to visit a new site. Such information includes personal protective equipment that may be required as well as what potential hazards exist. The video clips are filmed by AQIS staff and provide the added enhancement of a "bird's eye view" of hazards or risks identified by their colleagues at that site. Management also benefit from an additional tool which allows them to examine potential worksites that may be a risk to operations. Further enhancements to the system are being investigated along with the introduction of new technology to further assist staff to access and update the register in the field.

Contact for further information: Mr Claude Garnelli, Corporate Manager, AQIS-SA, Ph: (08) 8305 9705.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND AGEING

BETTER PRACTICE FOR BETTER PREMIUMS

About the Department of Health and Ageing

The Department of Health and Ageing has approximately 3250 staff. Of these, some 2500 work in Central Office in Canberra and a further 750 or so in State/Territory offices in the capital cities. The portfolio of Health and Ageing has a diverse set of responsibilities, but throughout there is a common purpose, which is reflected in the mission statement: 'To lead the development of Australia's Health and Ageing system.'

The problem

A fragmented approach to OHS in 2000 led to poor results in a SafetyMap audit in late 2000 and a significant workers' compensation premium increase in 2001-2002.

The approach

As a result, the Department embraced a Whole of Agency Project in conjunction with Comcare, and in so doing, embarked on a more systematic and 'better practice' approach to injury prevention and management through the implementation of annual Workplace Injury Prevention and Management Projects as the vehicle for reform.

A range of strategies were implemented to engage managers and make business units more accountable and responsible for people management including absenteeism, OHS, workers' compensation and return to work outcomes. The Department's Injury Prevention and Management activity has clear financial, 'people culture' and exemplar obligations via the People Strategy 2004-2007 goal of "Ensuring that our workplace environment encourages optimal staff health and wellbeing in line with our leadership role in the health and ageing sector". Managers are encouraged to have awareness of and exemplify the importance of health and wellbeing, and safety, at all levels in their workplaces and encourage a supportive culture.

Outcomes

The Department has seen an impressive turnaround in performance with a reduction in injuries and a corresponding reduction in premium and related costs. The Department's claim frequency is significantly below the average for all Australian Government agencies. Its premium rate was above the overall rate for Australian Government agencies in 2001-2002 but has been consistently below the overall rate since 2003-2004.

Contact for further information: Mr Geoff McKinnon, Manager, Injury Prevention and Management, People Branch, Department of Health and Ageing, Ph: (02) 6289 5963.

COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION (CSIRO)

THE ROAD TO A COLLABORATIVE AND CAPABLE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT NETWORK AT CSIRO

About CSIRO

CSIRO is Australia's national science agency with over 6500 staff at 57 locations throughout Australia and overseas. Its business structure comprises 21 Divisions supported by Corporate groups, each with a particular research focus. The nature of their work means that staff face diverse OHS risks and hazards when compared to other Commonwealth agencies.

The problem

In 2001 the Executive and Senior Management of CSIRO approved an external review of CSIRO's safety culture and service delivery. The review highlighted the need for strategies to address OHS&E cultural changes focussing on integrating health, safety and environment with business planning and effective management; leadership and accountability and staff participation and empowerment.

The approach

To enable CSIRO to meet its OHS&E priorities in an effective manner an OHS&E structure was implemented in 2002. The OHS&E network structure gave Divisions direct responsibility and accountability for OHS&E matters. The establishment of an Australia-wide network comprising Divisional OHS&E managers and other OHS&E staff allows for strategic policy development and procedural reviews to be conducted on a project management basis. An OHS&E Strategic Plan was also developed and aligned with the CSIRO Strategic Plan.

Outcomes

The network has been and continues to be a driving force to achieving significant outcomes and benefits in OHS&E for CSIRO. It provides the conduit for knowledge sharing and transfer, the arena at which current and future organisational OHS&E needs are identified and develops proactive strategies to respond to and resolve OHS&E issues. The network promotes high standards, consistency in approach and a strong safety culture.

Contact for further information: Mr Colin Macdonald, OHS&E Manager, CSIRO, Ph: (02) 6276 6540.



ACT DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

AMAROO SCHOOL

About the ACT Department of Education and Training

The ACT Department of Education and Training delivers high quality education services through government schools, registers non government schools, and administers vocational education and training in the ACT.



The problem

Teaching is widely regarded as a stressful occupation and the teaching environment can have a positive or negative impact on the wellbeing of staff, students and visitors. The building of a new school was seen as an opportunity to move away from what was considered the traditional school model to something that would lead the way into the future.

The approach

The strength of this approach was the leadership shown in the concept, design and construction of Amaroo school. The school was purposely designed to address OHS, environmental and energy management issues. There was extensive consultation by the design team with teachers and the Department of Education and Training with

features of best practice in the approach to design. The school principal was involved from the concept stage with designers, architects and planners ensuring that the desired outcome was achieved for both staff and students.

The outcome

The process has resulted in a high tech modern school that has in effect designed out many of the inherent risks associated with a school environment. The school design and structure has attracted a lot of interest for the features that it provides – thermal comfort, open spaces, sound softening, flat outdoor surfaces, positive use of textures and colours and many other features.

All of these features together have provided a state of the art educational environment that factored prevention in from the ground up. Indications are that this approach has an impact on reducing absenteeism and reducing the incidence and cost of workplace injuries and illnesses.

Ongoing

This award winning design (Best Health and Safety Design Solution, ACT WorkCover, 2004 Safety Awards) will no doubt be the benchmark for other schools in the future.

Contact for further information: Ms Anne Huard, Principal, Amaroo School, Burdekin Street, Gungahlin, Ph: (02) 6205 0304.

FINALISTS IN THE REHABILITATION AND RETURN TO WORK CATEGORY

CENTRELINK – AREA WEST, NSW

POSITIVE ATTENDANCE STRATEGY

About Centrelink Area West, NSW

Centrelink delivers services on behalf of over 20 client departments. Area West NSW is one of 15 Centrelink areas across the nation. Area West NSW has approximately 750 staff and covers the geographic region from Auburn in Sydney to Mudgee.

The approach to rehabilitation

Centrelink has developed a National Prevention and Injury Management Strategy as part of its commitment to ensuring a safe and healthy working environment for all staff. The Strategy is designed to facilitate early identification and management of injury or illness that affects an employee's work performance or attendance. To address the issue of high absenteeism and to provide staff with support in times of injury and illness Area West, NSW has taken the Prevention and Injury Management Strategy one step further and developed a local Positive Attendance Strategy. This addresses each staff member's role in regard to absences from the workplace.

Outcomes

The implementation of this strategy provides for effective management of injuries or illnesses for all employees and is considered to be part of everyday management practice. The development of a supportive culture was the key to the success of the program. By providing staff with quality training – customer aggression training and support, debriefing sessions and having a full time staff counsellor - staff know there is always someone they can talk to. Staff are encouraged to identify any injury or illness that affects their ability to undertake their normal daily duties. Since the introduction of the Strategy in 2003 the average time off work for compensable injuries has reduced by around 25%. In addition, since 2003 Area West, NSW has achieved a 100% return to work rate and now has the lowest absenteeism figure of all Centrelink regions nationally.

Ongoing

Area West NSW is committed to ensuring staff members receive the appropriate support when they are not able to undertake their normal daily duties due to injury/illness and will continue to seek feedback from staff regarding appropriate assistance. Area West NSW will maintain current early intervention preventative measures, review the Positive Attendance Strategy and continue to research best practice in return to work assistance.

Contact for further information: Mr Riley Brown, HR Manager, Centrelink Area West, NSW, Ph: (02) 9865 3729.



AUSTRALIAN SECURITIES AND INVESTMENTS COMMISSION (ASIC)

IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR EMPLOYEES

About ASIC

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission enforces and regulates company and financial services laws to protect consumers, investors and creditors. In 2003-2004 ASIC employed on average 1530 full-time equivalent employees in 17 offices nationally.

The approach to rehabilitation

ASIC made a strategic decision in 2003 to place a greater focus on OHS and rehabilitation. To meet this need ASIC incorporated into the duties of a senior HR Consultant a new role as National OHS & Rehabilitation Manager. In September 2004, ASIC consolidated its commitment by developing a national rehabilitation strategy and action plan. Statements of Commitment are on ASIC's intranet and are included in the OHS policy and agreement signed by the ASIC Chairman. Design and implementation of new OHS and workers' compensation reporting systems enabled better analysis of incidents and claims management.

These changes mean that there is an immediate reporting of injuries, and employees begin their return to work activity as soon as possible. The National Manager liaises with the HR Consultants' Network. HR consultants are located in each of ASIC's main offices and are responsible for the management of local cases. This has been an evolutionary process with HR Strategy and Policy monitoring rehabilitation case management and developing tools and policies to support the HR consultants. The program is integrated into ASIC's case management system.

Outcomes

By building up skills and knowledge quickly, ASIC now has a network of experienced people who share knowledge and information across the organisation. This has meant a core strategic approach with systems in place to collect, analyse and report on data. Corporate support is very high and managers have been brought on board by involving them in all processes and making them accountable for outcomes. The program's focus on rehabilitation case management and achieving outcomes for employees has resulted in a number of key achievements including reductions in the number of claims and claim duration, as well as achievement of durable return to work outcomes. There has been a consequential decrease in total claims costs.

Ongoing

The program continues to evolve and further strategies and enhancements are planned for implementation during 2005 and beyond.

Contact for further information: Ms Monika Lacey, HR Consultant, ASIC, Ph: (02) 9911 2836.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE (1 HEALTH SUPPORT BATTALION)

INJURY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR ARMY TRAINING COMMAND –INITIAL EMPLOYMENT TRAINEES

About the Department of Defence 1 Health Support Battalion

The 1 Health Support Battalion (1 HSB) Injury Management Program for Initial Employment Trainees began in 2003 in response to a lack of suitable rehabilitation and specialist medical services at most Army Training Command establishments. Prior to this program, someone injured as an Initial Employment Trainee could expect to be discharged if the injury was moderate to severe.

The approach to rehabilitation

The aim of 1 HSB Injury Management Program for Initial Employment Trainees is to restore trainees to full health and a military standard of fitness after illness and injury. This is done in a positive team environment actively involving the member in their case management. The program consists of a coordinated multidisciplinary health team, providing case management, return to work programs and intensive intervention packages which may include injury management education, reassurance, progressive fitness exercises, cognitive behavioural interventions, pain management and medical treatment. The program is open to all trainees with longer-term injuries who have been or will be out of training for more than four to six weeks.

Outcomes

One year into the program over 50% of all injured trainees had returned to their Army trade to complete their training. Prior to the program the majority of those injured trainees would not be declared fit for further military service. Now only around 9% of trainees undertaking the Injury Management Program will not be returned fit for military service.

Ongoing

From 1 July 2004 rehabilitation for members of the Australian Defence Force has been managed under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act*. The program will continue to evolve with the aim of improving rehabilitation outcomes and trainee satisfaction.

Contact for further information: Lieutenant Ricky Su, Officer in Charge Physio 1 HSB, Holsworthy Barracks, Ph: (02) 9600 1356.

UPDATE ON A PREVIOUS AWARD WINNER

AUSTRALIA POST NSW

LOAD SHIFTING EQUIPMENT SAFETY SYSTEM

Background

In 2001, Australia Post NSW was the winner of the Workplace Safety Innovative Solutions category at the inaugural SRC Commission Safety Awards. The submission outlined the development and achievements of the Australia Post (NSW) Load Shifting Equipment (LSE) Safety System. The LSE Safety System was developed to measure, monitor and control risks (injury/property damage) associated with the use of LSE at Australia Post facilities in NSW. The system used a LSE Safety Team as one of the key "drivers" for the implementation of LSE risk control initiatives as well as performing the important role of system monitoring, auditing and the provision of management/staff feedback.

Introduction of the LSE Safety System contributed to a reduction in LSE injuries as well as a significant reduction in the number of incidents of mail containers (called Unit Load Devices or ULDs) falling off LSE. Significant reductions in overall LSE accidents/incidents were achieved in a number of major facilities.

Australia Post NSW uses approximately 400 pieces of powered forklift equipment or LSE to handle ULDs. This LSE ranges from simple power pallet trucks to large counterbalanced forklifts and includes pedestrian power pallet trucks/stackers, ride-on power pallet trucks/stackers, reach trucks and counterbalanced forklifts

Description of Project's objectives

The project's main objective was to focus on significantly reducing the number of LSE accidents/incidents which in turn would lead to the following improvements for the organisation

- reduction in LSE injuries and associated compensation/litigation costs
- reduction in equipment damage and associated repair and maintenance costs
- improvement in staff morale and workplace relations
- improvement in OHS due diligence
- overall productivity gains

So what has happened since winning the award in 2001?

- LSE incidents and injuries are continuing to reduce throughout NSW
- The LSE Safety Team are still active and meet at selected facilities throughout NSW
- The focus continues to be on higher risk facilities
- For incident investigations, a root cause analysis tool has been very successful with most facilities now completing this type of analysis when required
- OHS Section prepares risk management profiles for Facility Managers
- LSE behavioural audit checklist is still being used by NSW OHS Section
- Shock switches are now an integral part of the system with new equipment purchased eg new Reach Trucks operate with a PIN code entry and this records the operator who used the equipment at the time of the recorded "shock".

But overall, the most significant progress to date has been the development of comprehensive national LSE Policy and Procedures which are being rolled out nationally. Most of the NSW initiatives which were included in the 2001 application have now been adopted by all states and are now national systems. The most significant of these is the introduction of LSE Floor Traffic Management Plans.

Contact for further information: Mr Sam Russo, OHS Manager, Australia Post,
Ph: (02) 9202 6444.