

Wellington Branch Newsletter – February 2022

Welcome to the first branch newsletter for 2022. Who would believe that we are almost 2 months into the year already? Doesn't time fly, especially with all this COVID information to navigate through. Hopefully everyone has been staying safe in the heat, wind and rain!

Event Update - January

Last month, the CEO from WorkSafe, Phil Parkes presented a webinar to NZISM via a webinar, including a WorkSafe update and question time. We hope you all managed to watch it, if not you can check it out [here](#).

Here is a brief summary of what Phil spoke about during the webinar:

- Fatalities have improved by 33% since 2013 - higher than govt target which is 25% by 2025
- The mixed cause for fatalities only applies to acute fatalities, this does not include latency disease. The reason behind this is there is not a good system to track 'why' people get sick i.e. work related health.
- There will be an increased focus on COVID and mental wellness.
- WorkSafe has made the most gains at the low hanging fruit - compliance and improved governance.
- WorkSafe has invested heavily in HASANZ and NZISM to ensure there are enough capable and competent people to provide advice.
- Focus has been put on the WorkSafe website resulting in better guidance and good quality information.
- WorkSafe needs to move into solving big systemic issues #BetterWork Safety differently.
- Discussed changing the way work is done, by addressing the underlying causes:
 - thought about
 - designed
 - delivered, and
 - the overlapping duties down the contracting chain.

Phil identified the four areas of focus for WorkSafe moving forward:

1. Plant and machinery regulations
 2. Airborne contaminants and carcinogens make up 80% of workplace disease causes
 3. Consultation - worker engagement, participation and representation needs improvement
 4. Upstream influence - the expectations on those who have influence on the project as a whole.
-



Next Event – March

Let's get together for a coffee - virtually!

So much has been happening lately. As H&S professionals, we have been consuming so much information with the ever changing COVID guidelines, it can be rather taxing on us as individuals. The committee thought it might be nice to get together, discuss any challenges that are being faced and give each other support and guidance to get through. Fill a mug with your choice of beverage and join us for a chat. Don't worry, you don't need to turn on your video or talk if you don't want to. It's just nice to get together with other like-minded people.

Date: Tuesday 1 March

Time: 12-12.30pm

Where: Online

Register: <https://www.nzism.org/book/vU9Nrr0ua83LlxzqJa7oRwHa/>

Working at heights - changes coming.

As most of us know, currently the Working at Heights regulations are under consultation and there are changes coming. If you are interested to know more [click here](#) for the notes from the recent workshop.

Work-related factors that can affect mental health

As H&S Professionals, often people come to us asking for mental health advice or information. There are loads of resources out there, but we thought that we would focus on some material that is available from one of the regulators across the ditch - [WorkSafe Victoria](#). As part of their mental health resources they focus on [11 common work-related factors that affect a mentally healthy workplace](#), which are outlined below.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 Job Control
How much does the individual have over their role?</p> | <p>7 Role Clarity
Is it abundantly clear what is expected of them and who?</p> |
| <p>2 Job Demands
Is it too much or not enough work?</p> | <p>8 Workplace Relationships
Are their toxic relationships within the workforce that affect others?</p> |
| <p>3 Support
Do they feel supported in who they are and what they do?</p> | <p>9 Environmental Conditions
Is the workspace appropriate, safe and engaging for the workers?</p> |
| <p>4 Organisational Change Management
Do we manage change well when it directly impacts our people?</p> | <p>10 Isolated Work
How long are people by themselves or at home working?</p> |
| <p>5 Organisational Justice
Do we treat ALL employees with the same level of justice ALL the time?</p> | <p>11 Traumatic Events
Providing appropriate support and leadership through them</p> |
| <p>6 Recognition and Reward
Are our people rewarded appropriately in ways that suit them?</p> | |

It's also important that we not only look at setting up our workplaces or projects with H&S in mind, but also think about creating a mentally healthy workspace. What does that look like?

Management

A mentally healthy workplace requires leaders who:

- demonstrate commitment to mental health in the workplace
- manage workplace relationships respectfully
- treat employees with fairness and respect at all times
- demonstrate a zero-tolerance for bullying and discrimination
- are accessible and willing to listen
- communicate clearly and openly in a timely manner
- provide feedback in a constructive way
- ensure employees have safe workloads
- clarify role expectations and reporting structures
- provide reward and recognition for good work

Work design

Good work design enables employees to be engaged in work that is healthy, safe and productive.

It includes:

- consulting with employees on matters that affect their mental health at work
- designing jobs with safe workloads
- ensuring safe work schedules through:
 - providing suitable rest breaks
 - designing shifts to minimise fatigue
 - providing for appropriate fatigue recovery
 - providing sufficient notice of schedule or shift changes
- providing employees with appropriate control and flexibility over how they do their work
- implementing policies and procedures for responding to workplace bullying, stress, and occupational violence
- minimising isolated work and ensuring adequate support and communication where isolated work is necessary

[Click here for more information.](#)

Remember it's really important to always look after your own mental health too - make sure that you check in with yourself to see how you are going. Some great tools are available [here](#).

NZISM Website - Tips

Some of us might have webinar fatigue, but remember to keep an eye on what [webinars have taken place](#) and [what's coming up](#) on the NZISM website, including the Wellbeing Series with [Andy Hern](#).