

'It's no accident' is the OHS newsletter of the AMWU. Feedback and story ideas to amwu@amwu.asn.au

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 **AMWU Care**
A counselling service for members
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MADE IN AUSTRALIA BY
AMWU MEMBERS

WORKING TOGETHER



Tracey Jamison, AMWU Health and Safety Representative

Tracey Jamison has been an AMWU Health and Safety Representative at Ramset Melbourne, for about five years. The company manufactures mechanical and chemical anchors for the building and construction industry.

Tracey said, "In the past, consultation and communication hasn't been the best. Sometimes things weren't done properly and it would all have to be done again as all the risks hadn't been looked at."

"But a change of management has meant a big focus on H&S. Over 3-6 months the machine guarding across the site has been improved – many old machines had inadequate or non-existent guarding – it was just luck we didn't have injuries."

"We have had a team including a manager, a HSR, operators and where appropriate maintenance personnel to look at all the machines – everyone was involved. Now we are looking at manual handling and prioritising the most important hazards. There are three HSRs on site – each with an area but they all work together."

Tracey says that initially there were mixed reactions as sometimes people aren't used to change – but now we have more involvement from everyone – people are speaking up and feel they can come forward without retribution. People are encouraged to report hazards.

JOIN US:

AMWU closed Facebook group for AMWU HSRs –
www.amwu.org.au/hsrgroup



IT'S NO ACCIDENT

HEALTH AND SAFETY NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2017

BE SAVVY – USE WORKERS' COMP AND INCOME PROTECTION CORRECTLY

SEE CENTRE PAGE

Methyl Bromide ALERT

If your workplace handles shipments from overseas make sure that workers are not inadvertently being exposed to fumigants. At KSB pumps at Dinmore Queensland wooden containers were contaminated with an insecticide containing neurotoxic Methyl Bromide gas. The use of Methyl Bromide is largely prohibited in Australia due to its hazardous nature, but it's still used overseas.

It affects the central nervous system and can cause headaches, vomiting, nausea, and irritation to the eyes, respiratory system and skin. It wasn't until the intervention of the AMWU that a safe working procedure was adopted – minimum ventilation timeframes, personal protective equipment, a medical check up and blood testing to all exposed workers.



TALKING TOGETHER – IT GETS RESULTS

It's a good idea to have a record of consultation between management and HSRs. Unions have written a Record of Consultation form – the forms can be found on the health and safety section of the AMWU web page.

ACT, NT, Queensland, SA, Tasmania and Comcare – WHS Act. NSW WHS Act. Victoria OHS Act. WA S&H Act.

PLEASE PLACE ON NOTICEBOARD

BENEFITS YOU COULD LOSE

Many workplaces offer income protection insurance – which is usually paid out of the workers' wages. Sometimes workers claim on their income protection insurance instead of putting in a workers' compensation claim. This often feels like the easy thing to do – but easy doesn't mean sensible. If the injury/illness is work related the worker is losing out by claiming income protection alone. Income protection insurance does not cover medical and like expenses, entitlements to lump sum payments [if inapplicable], and hospital cover. On income protection alone, the employer is not obliged to provide a worker with a return to work plan, which is required under workers' compensation.

BUT THERE IS GOOD NEWS

If you are on workers' compensation benefits, most income protection policies will top up your salary, up to **100%** of your gross weekly wage. This is of course better than being on income protection alone which covers a percentage of your wage. There can be a waiting period for income protection – an accepted workers' compensation claim covers all days off work.



☎ AMWU Care: 1800 206 316

☎ AMWU Helpdesk: 1300 732 698

BE SAVVY – USE WORKERS' COMP & INCOME PROTECTION CORRECTLY & GET THE BEST PROTECTION YOU CAN

Injured at work –

✓ **Report the injury – this is essential**

✓ **Get medical advice/treatment – from your own Doctor** [see 10 Golden Rules in January 2017 newsletter]

✓ **Fill out the forms and keep copies**

✓ **Claim workers' compensation before income protection**

✓ **Any problems call the AMWU Helpdesk 1300 732 698**

www.amwu.org.au/health_and_safety