

'It's no accident' is the OHS newsletter of the AMWU. Feedback and story ideas to [amwu@amwu.asn.au](mailto:amwu@amwu.asn.au)

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MADE IN AUSTRALIA BY  
AMWU MEMBERS

## Alarming levels of stress in FIFO workers

Stigma about mental health issues is causing significant distress in 40% of FIFO workers in Western and South Australia. The results published in the Medical Journal of Australia back up the campaigning by the AMWU for changes in accommodation, hours of work and reliable and fast ways to connect to home for these workers.

The 1,124 workers at remote construction and mining sites completed the survey.

**"The researchers found 28% of workers had scores indicating high or very high psychological distress, compared with 10.8% for Australians overall."**



The researchers found 28% of workers had scores indicating high or very high psychological distress, compared with 10.8% for Australians overall. Disturbingly, those under 35 years old were three times more likely to report high levels of psychological distress than older workers.

The most stressful things were:

- Missing special events (86%)
- Relationship problems with partners (68%)
- Financial stress (62%)
- Shift rosters (62%)
- Social isolation (60%).

Workers who reported a fear of the stigma of mental health problems were 20 times as likely to have high or very high levels of distress values.

### JOIN US:

AMWU closed Facebook group for AMWU HSRs –  
[www.amwu.org.au/hsrgroup](http://www.amwu.org.au/hsrgroup)



# IT'S NO ACCIDENT

HEALTH AND SAFETY NEWS

MAY 2018

## HSRS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

**Thanks to all of you who completed our survey – your responses were used in the AMWU's submission to the 2018 WHS Act Review. Special thanks to Victorian HSRs. The Vic OHS Act is not being reviewed but your answers were very useful.**

Thirteen AMWU HSRs met with Ms. Marie Boland, the independent reviewer, in Sydney on May 2, 2018. The HSRs from across the country clearly sent the message –

- HSRs save lives
- HSRs make a difference
- HSRs must have access to the training provider of their choosing.

The HSRs represented a number of key industries, such as shipbuilding, rail, print, mining services, metal manufacture and defence. Unfortunately our food representative was unable to attend.

Their presentations included examples of workplaces:

- Where H&S and consultation is done well – showing that it is possible
- Where very little is done by management – e.g. casual or labour hire workers are so worried about keeping a job, injuries are not reported
- The importance of mental health [see back page].

The HSRs provided examples of where the health and safety inspectorate had used the "hug and pat approach" during their visits to unsafe workplaces. HSRs urged that where employers do the wrong thing, strong disincentives for bad practice are necessary, e.g. large fines, industrial manslaughter.

HSRs reported that it was great to be able to meet with someone like Ms. Boland who took notes and asked lots of questions.



PLEASE PLACE ON NOTICEBOARD





**BAD  
DESIGN**

**When investigating  
injuries/near  
misses...**

**NEAR  
MISS**

**...follow the  
chain of events  
to find the cause**