

'It's No Accident' is the OHS newsletter of the AMWU.
Feedback and story ideas to amwu@amwu.org.au

AMWU Contacts

National Coordinator

Dave Henry 0419 403 389

Victoria

State Office (03) 9230 5700
Sarah Ross 0425 784 817

New South Wales

State Office (02) 9897 4200
Alan Mansfield 0418 638 425

Queensland & Northern Territory

State Office (07) 3236 2550
Brian Devlin 0418 714 251

South Australia

State Office (08) 8366 5800

Western Australia

State Office (08) 9223 0800
Glenn McLaren 0409 663 637

Tasmania

State Office (03) 6228 7099

Support



AMWU Care
A counselling service for members and their families
1800 206 316

Join Us

AMWU closed Facebook group for AMWU HSRs:
www.amwu.org.au/hsrsgroup

Made in Australia by AMWU Members.

Authorised by Steve Murphy,
AMWU National Secretary 12/20.
Proudly printed by AMWU members at
Minuteman Press Abbotsford;
7 Reeves Street, Clifton Hill Victoria 3068.



Precedent-watch

All too often dodgy bosses who try to sack HSRs for doing their duty roll over and settle out of court once a union steps up to take them on, making public precedents hard to come by.

Melbourne Precast (MPC) were an exception to the rule, sacking CFMMEU HSR Paul Hes for alleged poor performance after he held worker meetings to discuss the hazard posed by working in a low air quality environment during the bushfires earlier this year.

According to OHS Alert, Federal Court Justice David O'Callaghan ruled that MPC's actions, "breached the adverse action provisions of the Commonwealth Fair Work Act in sacking the worker for making complaints and enquiries to WorkSafe Victoria".

The company was fined \$50 000, and the director fined \$10 000. The company was also ordered to pay the worker \$10 000 for distress caused, in addition to the Federal Court issuing an order that the worker be reinstated and paid more than \$27 000 in lost wages and superannuation.

This is a really important case that shows dodgy bosses can't get away with sacking HSRs for performing their duties.

If you're worried about speaking out at work, contact the AMWU.

We have your back on speaking out for workers' safety, and the law is on our side. ●

IT'S NO ACCIDENT

AMWU Health and Safety News



AMWU

December 2020

Are you feeling stressed at work?

Job stress has serious implications for workers' mental and physical health as well as impacting motivation, commitment and job satisfaction.

It has also been linked to the development of cardiovascular disease and increasing the likelihood of stroke. Job stress is a serious problem for workers but all too often the psychosocial hazards that contribute to job stress are ignored, discounted, or accepted as "just part of the job".

Psychosocial hazards are anything in the design or management of work that increases the risk of job stress. A stress response is the physical, mental and emotional reactions that occur when a worker perceives the demands of their work exceed their ability or resources to cope. Job stress if prolonged and/or severe can cause both psychological and physical harm. For these reasons psychosocial hazards need to be treated with the same seriousness as physical hazards in the workplace.

Common psychosocial hazards include high job demands and pressures that are not matched to workers' knowledge and abilities,



where there is little opportunity to exercise any choice or control, and where there is little support from others. Poor workplace relationships also constitute a psychosocial hazard where there is work-related bullying, aggression, harassment, or discrimination. Poor environmental conditions are also of concern where workers are exposed to hazardous manual tasks, poor air quality, high noise levels, extreme temperatures or working near unsafe machinery.

Workers are likely to be exposed to a combination of psychosocial hazards in the workplace, some may always be present, while others only occasionally.

It is imperative that HSR's and

Delegates are able to identify and assess psychosocial hazards in the work environment. A good first step is to ensure that your workplace OHS Policy adequately addresses psychosocial hazards. Safe Work Australia provides guidance on identifying psychosocial hazards and preventing psychological injury under work health and safety laws.

If psychosocial hazards cannot be eliminated, your workplace must take steps to minimise and control those risks so far as is reasonably practicable. You can obtain further information to assist with the identification, mitigation and control of psychosocial hazards through your workplace health and safety regulator. ●

SPEAK UP



IF SOMETHING IS WRONG IN YOUR WORKPLACE



WORKPLACE, SPEAK OUT. TALK TO YOUR HSR.