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Your Safety Matters

This information letter is distributed to those people who are ensuring that their workplace is safe and healthy. This includes members of WHS Committees, WHS Representatives, Safety Officers, Supervisors, Managers and Directors. "Your Safety Matters" (formerly "Committee Member") is a free information letter which has been distributed since 1996.

Bullying in the Workplace



Bullying in the workplace is recognised as a hazard by WorkCover NSW, Safe Work Australia, and the Fair Work Commission.

Its risks must be managed just like any other hazard in the workplace.

In NSW, all businesses have a duty under section 19 of the WHS Act to provide a safe and healthy workplace. And from the 1st of January 2014 the Fair Work Commission has powers to become involved in resolving bullying in the workplace.

The Productivity Commission estimates that bullying costs Australia between \$6 billion and \$36 billion per annum. A study referenced by Safe Work Australia found that 6.8% of those surveyed considered they had been bullied in the workplace within the 6 months prior to the survey.

HSRs and H&S Committee members can make a valuable contribution in preventing bullying by consulting with Management and identifying potential risks and reporting bullying in accordance with workplace procedures.

An important Management step in preventing bullying would be to create an agreed-upon Code of Conduct that sets out what conduct is expected and acceptable in your workplace.

A workplace that values dignity and respect for others will be a much happier and more productive place to work than one that tolerates the humiliating and degrading behaviors that constitute bullying.



This publication provides general information about WHS. It is not a legal opinion and does not represent a comprehensive statement of the law to be applied to a particular problem.