



COURTENELL

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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.



Workplace Bullying

In NSW, all businesses and other employers have a duty under Section 19 of the WHS Act to provide a safe and healthy workplace. Bullying in the workplace is recognised as a hazard by SafeWork NSW, Safe Work Australia, and the Fair Work Commission.

Its risks must be managed just like any other hazard in the workplace. It is a risk to health and safety because it may affect the mental and physical health of workers. Risk control measures must be in place to prevent it from occurring and then if bullying does occur it needs to be handled without delay.

As shown on Safe Work Australia's website:

- 9.4% of Australian workers indicated that they had experienced workplace bullying in the previous 6 months (2014–15)
- 37% of Australian workers reported being sworn or yelled at in their workplace

HSRs, Health & Safety Committee members and others, can make a valuable contribution in preventing bullying by identifying potential risks and reporting bullying in accordance with workplace procedures.

An important step in Management's program to 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 behaviours 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.

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