



Please circulate this newsletter to all General Assistants and PSA members

CHANGES TO THE WORKING ALONE PROCEDURES FOR GENERAL ASSISTANTS

The PSA's General Assistant Advisory Group has held concerns for some time in relation to Work Health & Safety issues, particularly working alone or in isolation.

The Association raised these concerns with the Department, unfortunately negotiations broke down and the PSA had no choice but to proceed to the NSW Industrial Relations Commission. The Commission strongly supported the PSA and recommended that the Department circulate the **Safety Alert No 45 Bulletin** to all Principals and GA's prior to the September holidays.

The PSA received several negative comments from members concerned that some Principals weren't adhering to the circulated Safety Alert Bulletin. The Association immediately scheduled further meetings with the Department, continuing the consultation process, developing the Risk Management Plan and Working Alone Procedure *draft* documents.

Further consultation will take place in mid February 2014 to discuss enhancements and recommendations to the *draft* documents.

The Association would like to encourage members to provide feedback, particularly in the following areas:

- Did your Principal or Deputy meet with you to discuss the Working Alone Procedure and Risk Management Plan?
- Did the Risk Management Plan cover all the jobs allocated?
- Did you receive a school mobile phone with the Principal or Deputy Principal's contact numbers?
- Was there a need to contact your Principal whilst working alone, and if so were you able to make contact?
- Do you have any recommendations that you would like to put forward?

Ahead of the school holiday period, the PSA would like to remind Principals and GA's of the need to work together to implement the Working Alone Procedure, which the PSA fought hard to negotiate.

To access the documents:

- Log onto the DEC Intranet (using your user name and password)
- Click on A-Z of directories
- Click on Work Health & Safety
- Click on Safety Alerts
- Working alone arrangements for GA's (Safety Alert 45)

If you are having any difficulties accessing these documents, please contact the PSA Schools Team on 9220 0900.

WORKING WITH CONTRACTORS

School Principals are to ensure that arrangements are made with the School Executive and the Asset Management Unit for the supervision and management of any contractors working on site in the vacation period.

During the school holiday period the Principal or the Deputy Principal should always be on-call.

Contractors should call the Principal or Deputy Principal and organise to meet them on site for allocation of work and to have the work signed off.

GA's are not responsible for the supervision or management of contractors and must not sign off on the work of contractors.

GA's should ask the Principal who it is that will be on call during the holidays and ask for relevant contact details. This information can then be provided to any contractors who present on site.

HOURS OF WORK

The ordinary hours of work for full time GA's shall be 38 per week and shall be worked between the hours of 6.00am and 6.00pm Monday to Friday for eight hours per day on 19 days of each 20 day cycle. A GA shall be credited with 0.4 of one hour for each day worked with such time accruing as an entitlement to take one day off duty, with pay, in each four weekly cycle of 20 working days. The rostered day off duty shall be determined by mutual agreement between a GA and the principal. It may be taken on a rostered basis or accumulated and taken in the school vacation next occurring or such other method as may be agreed upon.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY PERIOD

The Christmas closedown period for 2013-14 is from Wednesday 25 December 2013 to Friday 3 January 2014 inclusive. During this period (excluding public holidays Christmas Day, Boxing Day, Public Service Holiday, New Year's Day) staff will be required to take the necessary leave for the other days.

For further information www.dpc.nsw.gov.au reference M2013-10.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Principal (or their nominated delegate on the Executive or teaching staff) is responsible for supervision of GA's. Responsibility to supervise any staff apart from School Administrative Officers cannot be delegated to School Administrative Managers.

OUTDOOR WORK

Generally, workers involved in outdoor work are at greater risk from adverse climatic conditions. The trigger temperature for remedial action for outdoor work recommended is 30 degrees Celsius. If temperatures reach, and are sustained at this level for 2 hours or more, the following procedures are recommended to be followed:

- 30 - 32 degrees Celsius: 10 minute break per hour from outside work.
- 32 - 35 degrees Celsius: 15 minute break per hour from outside work.
- 35 - 36 degrees Celsius: 30 minute break per hour from outside work.
- 37 degrees Celsius, plus: cease outside work until a sustained temperature decrease.

The above temperature/ rest formula applies to light, or very moderate physical activity. If the work involves any type of heavy work and/or rapid physical activity, the rest ratio in the formula must be increased by a minimum of 50% for each temperature range.

HEALTH & SAFETY REPRESENTATIVE (HSR) COURSES

The PSA has become an Accredited Training Provider (ATP) to deliver these WorkCover Approved Courses which are open to union and non-union workers.

Under the Work Health and Safety Act, Section 72, HSRs can choose their training provider following consultation with the employer (PCBU).

If you would like further information on these courses please contact Greg Adnum gadnum@psa.asn.au

SASS REFERENCE GROUPS (SRG)

The PSA anticipates that 'Expression of Interest' nominations will be advertised in Schoolbiz shortly. PSA members are encouraged to nominate ensuring a variety of professional learning opportunities continue to be available for all SAS Staff.

Douglas Ashton	Cambridge Park High School	douglas.ashton2@det.nsw.edu.au
Errol Bennett	Taree West Public School	errol.bennett@det.nsw.edu.au
Philip Crowe	Freshwater Senior Campus	philip.crowe@det.nsw.edu.au
Brett Hammond	Kirrawee High School	brett.hammond@det.nsw.edu.au
John Hunter	Lake Munmorah High School	John.hunter@det.nsw.edu.au
Michael Jedniuk	Hinchinbrook Public School	michael.jedniuk@det.nsw.edu.au
Boyd Kelner	Byron Bay Public School	boyd.kellner@det.nsw.edu.au
Mitchell Neal	Budgewoi Public School	mitchell.neal@det.nsw.edu.au
Michael North	Whitebridge High School	Michael.north@det.nsw.edu.au
Stephen Smith	Cobar High School	stephen.smith130@det.nsw.edu.au

**ON BEHALF OF THE PSA SCHOOLS TEAM WE WISH ALL MEMBERS
A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR**



PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

GA's have raised concerns regarding replacement or issue of PPE. Our advice to members is if you are having issues with PPE you should firstly discuss this with the principal. If you can't get replacement PPE please call the PSA for advice. At no time should you do any work activity that requires PPE if the PPE is faulty or doesn't exist.

MINOR MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT

(not covered by contract or requiring a qualified tradesperson)

Minor maintenance is just that - minor. Even if a GA has been a plumber they should not re-plumb the whole school – while they are doing that task they are not taking care of their other responsibilities. Also, if something has been removed from a wall in a classroom the GA can be expected to plaster the holes left behind and paint over that section of the wall. The GA should not be expected to paint the whole classroom – this is not 'minor' and takes the GA away from other important tasks.

GENERAL ASSISTANT ADVISORY GROUP

Greg Adnum has been working closely with the PSA's General Assistant Advisory Group. The group discusses issues that affect you such as:

- Safe Operating Procedures for GAs
- Working alone
- Local Schools, Local Decisions
- GA training requirements
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Need for risk assessments

Listed below are your representatives on the advisory group. Please feel free to contact them with items you would like discussed at the meetings.