

# Konektions

## WHS for MOP(S) Act employees

### Welcome

Welcome to the third edition of the Konekt quarterly Work Health and Safety (WHS) newsletter. The Department of Finance (Finance) is committed to supporting Senators and Members to provide a safe and healthy work environment for all *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (MOP(S) Act) employees. We want this newsletter to be a useful resource for all Senators and Members and MOP(S) Act employees, so to help us in achieving this objective we welcome your feedback. Please submit any comments or suggestions to: [OHSassistance@konekt.com.au](mailto:OHSassistance@konekt.com.au)

### Work Health and Safety Update

#### Setting Up Safely for Events

No matter the size or nature of the event, MOP(S) Act employees are often involved in setting up a variety of equipment including (but not limited to) marquees, banners, folding tables and chairs, A-frames, folding umbrellas and even signage such as corflutes. Some of this equipment can be awkward to handle due to its size and shape, and a variety of hazards can present if the equipment is not handled correctly. Finance provides education and resources to assist employees to set-up events in a safe manner. The following guidance should be considered prior to setting up equipment at an event:

- **Complete a visual inspection of equipment prior to use** - A-frames, large umbrellas, folding tables and chairs could potentially have damaged hinges and/or spring systems that can cause the equipment to close prematurely onto hands/fingers during the set-up phase and/or collapse during use. Similarly, marquee poles, pegs and ropes which are in poor condition can also cause the structure to collapse during use. Visually inspecting this equipment prior to use to ensure that all parts are in working order will assist in preventing such incidents.
- **Familiarise yourself with equipment to be used** – manufacturer's instructions should always be followed when assembling equipment. It is particularly important to take caution when handling equipment with closing parts and sharp edges i.e. wear gloves (where available) when handling equipment and/or ensure hands are positioned on the opposite side to any hinges/closing parts.

- **Consider the environment prior to setting up** – Some equipment such as (but not limited to) A-frame corflutes, marquees and tables and chairs can become unstable in windy environments, and can collapse or even become a projectile. Marquees can be particularly hazardous if set up on uneven ground. It is important to consider whether it is safe to erect equipment in the first instance and/or whether equipment requires dismantling in the case of changing environmental conditions such as developing strong winds.
- **Utilise safe handling techniques** - Whether you are unloading equipment from a car, or erecting a marquee, correct handling techniques should always be adhered to. Remember to maintain a straight spine, bend the knees and ensure you are as close as possible to the load to be handled. Ensure that you are always facing the load and the direction in which your equipment is being carried, to avoid twisting of the spine. When pushing or pulling equipment (i.e. unloading/loading equipment into a car), consider lunging with the legs to get as close as possible to the load during handling. Ensure that vehicles are also parked as close as possible to equipment drop off areas to minimize handling requirements.
- **Consider if assistance is required** - Equipment which is large, heavy, bulky or awkwardly shaped can be difficult to handle on your own. Setting up equipment such as marquees and tables should therefore typically be completed with assistance. Be aware of your own limits and request assistance with handling items in any instance where you are concerned. In addition, if equipment needs to be transported over a distance, utilise tools such as a trolley to minimize physical handling.
- **Ensure the area housing equipment is safe** - It is important to ensure that marquees and temporary structures are not impeding on thoroughfares, and do not pose a trip hazard to the public. Consider using high visibility pegs and/or witches hats to highlight areas on the ground which could pose a trip hazard.

Please contact [OHSassistance@konekt.com.au](mailto:OHSassistance@konekt.com.au) if you require further assistance with determining the most appropriate solution to your scenario.

## What's New?

**WHS Legislation** and **Inappropriate Workplace Conduct** training will again be offered as part of the 2015 Professional Development Program (PDP). Both courses have been tailored for MOP(S) Act employees and provide valuable advice on how you can keep your office safer for everyone.

The 2015 PDP Calendar will be advertised in the New Year, so don't miss out on your opportunity to attend!

## Upcoming Training

A reminder that risk management teleconference training for newly nominated WHS site officers has been scheduled for:

- **14<sup>th</sup> January at 1pm** (Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra time)

If you haven't already, please provide an RSVP to Konekt via: [OHSassistance@konekt.com.au](mailto:OHSassistance@konekt.com.au)

## Reminder

WHS site officers are advised that their final workplace inspection checklist for 2014 is due by **31<sup>st</sup> December 2014** at the very latest. Please submit checklist reports to [OHSassistance@konekt.com.au](mailto:OHSassistance@konekt.com.au) and feel free to also contact Konekt on the same email address with any workplace inspection enquiries.

Please ensure that all work-related incidents are reported to [Konekt Response](#) either on **1300 880 777** or by emailing [response@konekt.com.au](mailto:response@konekt.com.au).

It may also be appropriate to report an incident that occurred outside work if the incident is likely to affect your capacity to perform work.

Remember that incidents could include:

- injuries requiring first aid treatment or medical treatment;
- near misses (incidents that may have resulted in injury, if a mitigating effect, action or system had not been in place);
- time lost (incidents requiring time off work);
- psychological injury (a form of mental injury generally associated with work-related stress); and
- decreased capacity (unable to perform part of, or all of your normal duties, including where the initial cause was not connected with work).