



# Konektions

## WHS for MOP(S) Act employees

### Welcome

Welcome to the fifth 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

#### BENEFITS OF A HEALTHY WORKPLACE

According to the Heart Foundation, over ten million Australians spend on average eight hours per day in the workplace. Practicing good health habits whilst at work is therefore important in leading a healthy lifestyle. Finance is committed to supporting the health and wellbeing of (MOP(S) Act) employees. The following principles therefore aim to increase awareness and knowledge on practical actions that can be implemented to improve your health whilst at work:

#### Utilise Postural Breaks

Ensure you have regular breaks during the day by getting up out of your chair to have a stretch or walk around to keep the blood circulating and mind alert. Micro-pause breaks and postural reversal (e.g. stretching to the opposite posture of what you have been doing) every 30 minutes can help you stay fresher and more energised for longer. With Spring in the air and the weather warming up, it can be a good idea to get outside in the sunshine. Perhaps take your lunch outdoors, go for a walk during your breaks, or get a coffee. Consider incorporating postural breaks into your work day by doing the following:

- Use a headset whilst on the phone to allow you to stand during phone calls
- Stand to greet a visitor to your workspace
- Walk to your colleagues desk instead of phoning or emailing



- Take breaks in sitting time in long meetings and/or have standing or walking meetings
- Move your bin away from your desk so you have to get up to put something in it
- Eat your lunch away from your desk. **Remember, lunchtime is an opportunity to give yourself a mental break from work**
- Stand at the back of the room during presentations
- When travelling to work on public transport, stand and offer your seat to a person who really needs it

## Keep Hydrated

Discs in our spine and joint capsules throughout the body deflate when we are dehydrated, especially at temperatures of 27 degrees or above. Drinking water throughout the day will therefore minimise this effect and will also break up sitting time through increasing toilet breaks. Try drinking at least 2 litres of water a day (or 8 glasses) to improve hydration.

## Exercise

A healthy body is better able to cope with stress. Incorporating periods of physical exercise into your daily work routine will therefore help to improve muscle control, make you feel happier, healthier and increase self-esteem. Try incorporating mild exercise into your work day by doing the following:

- Use the stairs rather than the lifts
- Go for a walk or run during your lunch break
- Leave your car at home and take public transport to work so you walk to and from stops/stations. Also consider getting on/off public transport one stop/station earlier.
- Park your car further away from your destination and walk the rest of the way
- Walk or cycle at least part way to work

## Consider a Healthy Snack

In addition to lunch, a mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack can help keep your mind sharp and boost energy levels. Snacking throughout the day can also keep your appetite satisfied so you don't overeat at lunch or dinner. Try a piece of fruit in the morning or a handful of almonds. A low-sugar granola bar or a small piece of dark chocolate can also assist with any afternoon sugar cravings.

## Seek Support from Others

If you have any issues, don't try to cope alone. If you begin to feel stressed, discuss this with your immediate manager to make sure they're aware. In this way, you can work together to develop strategies to manage any stressful situations as they may arise. If you do not feel comfortable discussing issues with your manager, consider accessing EAP services. The [Employee Assistance Program](#) (EAP) is an independent professional counselling service that can provide assistance in dealing with work and life issues.



## Online Training Modules

Training programs for all employees are currently available on the Konekt E Academy. Modules include:

- Manual Handling and Ergonomics
- Bullying Harassment and Workplace Violence
- Safe Travel
- Slips, Trips and Falls
- Safety When Working Alone and Out of Office

All MOP(S) Act employees are encouraged to undertake the online training available through the Konekt E Academy which can be accessed by following the prompts in the following link:

[http://maps.finance.gov.au/employee\\_pages/ohs/OHS\\_Online\\_Training.htm](http://maps.finance.gov.au/employee_pages/ohs/OHS_Online_Training.htm)

In addition, the '**Bullying, Harassment and Anti-Discrimination Awareness**' module is also available for completion by Senators and Members.

Further training modules will be released over the next quarter including the "Dealing with Challenging or Difficult Behaviour" and "WHS online induction" training modules. All WHS site officers will be notified once these modules become available.

## Upcoming Training

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

- **1<sup>st</sup> October 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 next workplace inspection checklist for 2015 is due by **30 September 2015** 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).

**Konekt - the leader in workplace health solutions**

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