



WorkCover SA

Access and equity in South Australia's occupational health, safety, welfare and injury management system

Historical record: July 1997- June 2007

Disclaimer

The information produced by WorkCover Corporation of South Australia in this publication is correct at the time of printing and is provided as general information only. In utilising general information about workplace health and safety and injury management, the specific issues relevant to your workplace should always be considered. This publication is not intended as a substitute for the requirements of the *Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1986* or the *Occupational Health Safety and Welfare Act 1986*.

Contents

Disclaimer	2
Introduction	5
Access and equity (A&E)	5
A&E strategy	6
Consultancy services	6
A&E accountability	6
Highlights of the A&E Unit's achievements from July 1997-2001	8
Business planning – strategic management framework	8
Human resource policies	8
Accessible venues	9
Interpreting and translating policy	9
Bilingual staff services policy	9
Tender and contract documentation	9
Grants program	9
Data collection	9
A&E action plan developed with a claims agent	10
Working with industry	10
Development of access and equity resources	10
Promotional campaigns	12
Training	13
Consultative partnerships – focus groups	13
Highlights of the A&E Unit's activities from 2001- 2002	16
Integration of access and equity throughout WorkCover	16
Grants program	16
Information sessions for claims agents and WorkCover staff	16
Working with claims agents	16
National comparison	16
Safe Work Week	17
Resources developed	18
Consultative partnerships – focus groups	18
External review of the strategy	21
Presentations on the A&E strategy	21

Highlights of the A&E Unit's activities for 2002-2003	22
A&E internal network	22
Resources for employers, agents and providers	22
Information sessions	23
Customer satisfaction survey	24
Employee advocate unit information session for community workers	24
Consultative partnerships – focus groups	24
Highlights of the A&E Unit's achievements from July 2003-2004	28
Resources for employers, employees, agents and providers	28
Safe Work Week	29
Grants projects	30
A&E business plan framework – audit tool	31
A&E Strategy – international presentation	31
A&E internal network	31
Consultative partnerships – focus groups	31
Highlights of the A&E Unit's achievements from January 2005 -December 2006	37
Grant-funded projects	37
Stakeholder committees	37
Safe Work 2005	37
Policy and advice	38
Products	38
Promoting A&E activities	38
Information sessions	38
Highlights of the A&E Unit's achievements from January 2007 - June 2007	39
Strategic partnerships and networks	39
SafeWork SA	40
Policy and advice	40
Information sessions	40

Introduction

This booklet provides an overview of WorkCover SA's access and equity (A&E) strategy from 1997-2007. It summarises the breadth and scope of the strategy and presents some examples of its implementation throughout South Australia's occupational health, safety, welfare (OHSW) and injury management system (the system).

The A&E strategy is recognised as an integral component of WorkCover SA's focus on customer service and is managed and implemented via WorkCover's Stakeholder Relations Unit.

Updates on the A&E strategy from July 2004 onwards, can be found on www.workcover.com

Access and equity (A&E)

Successive research has shown that there are a number of groups within Australian society that consistently experience barriers in obtaining services and who consequently receive less than an equitable level of service outcomes. Prior to 1997, WorkCover focused on addressing barriers experienced by people of non-English speaking backgrounds, but in July 1997, we recognised the need to expand the existing program to address the needs of the following groups:

- Women
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
- People with disabilities
- People of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

An A&E Unit with two full-time staff was then created at WorkCover. Since then, the unit's focus has been to work in an organisationally systemic way, that is, not limited to WorkCover, but to work across the occupational health, safety and injury management system ('the system'). This system includes:

- WorkCover
- employers/their representatives
- employees/their representatives
- claims agents
- service providers, such as rehabilitation providers, allied health professionals and doctors.

A&E strategy

The strategy was developed to provide a framework for the implementation of access and equity principles and practices throughout the system. The strategy's focus is on eliminating barriers to services, and poor service (inequitable) outcomes that result from inappropriate service delivery.

The A&E strategy is based on the following objectives:

- 1) Provide consultancy services to promote, develop and implement a focus on accessible and equitable customer service throughout the system.
- 2) Establish and manage collaborative, partnership relationships between the access and equity sectors and WorkCover.
- 3) Ensure that WorkCover took a leadership role in compliance with commonwealth and state government legislation and policies for delivering accessible and equitable services.

Consultancy services

To work towards integrating principles and practices addressing culture, gender, disability and language diversity within all aspects of the OHSW and injury management system, the A&E Unit offers expert advice and consultancy services on:

- developing policies and procedures so that WorkCover complies with federal and state government access and equity legislation and policy
- strategies for identifying and addressing barriers
- marketing and communication strategies tailored for diverse customer segments
- skills required for delivering quality services to customers
- developing and delivering relevant products and services.

A&E accountability

The access and equity strategy is based on the Principles of the Charter for Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society and other relevant Commonwealth and state government legislation and policies, as well as relevant sections from the:

- *WorkCover Corporation Act 1994*
- *Occupational Health, Safety & Welfare Act 1986* (updated to the *SafeWork SA Amendment Act 2005*)
- *Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1986*

The A&E unit is responsible for preparing and responding to access and equity accountability requirements to government, as well reports for WorkCover.

This internal and external accountability resulted in the following reporting formats:

- Annual parliamentary reports on services to women
- Annual report to government on the Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society
- WorkCover budget allowances for addressing access and equity issues
- Report of access and equity-relevant achievements by internal divisions to the General Management Team of WorkCover
- In 2000 the A&E Unit underwent an evaluation by the Centre for Workplace Communication and Culture

Highlights of the A&E Unit's achievements from July 1997-2001

Business planning – strategic management framework

WorkCover undertakes its business planning using a strategic management framework, supported by various corporate systems/programs. A&E was included in the strategic management framework, which must be addressed during divisional business planning. Each division within WorkCover was responsible for its own A&E budget. To assist managers, the unit prepared a checklist that covered five broad areas: service/program planning; communication; training; accountability/reporting; and budgeting.

Progress reports on implementation of these strategies were provided to the A&E Unit annually by WorkCover's divisions, and on the basis of these, the unit presented a report to the General Management Team.

Human resource policies

WorkCover's human resources department worked collaboratively with us to ensure there was link between access and equity (customer service) and human resources (staffing concerns). Collaborative outcomes included:

- Access and equity policy for the *Workplace and employment policy manual*

An internal policy was written outlining the expectations of staff in relation to access and equity. All employees of WorkCover were expected to deliver services in the spirit of the principles of access and equity.

- Performance development

Advice was provided on how to include access and equity responsibilities in WorkCover's performance development program. Through the key expectations and the performance development and review system employees are accountable for delivering high-quality customer service in all dealings with customers.

"In practice, this means treating people with respect, using non-discriminatory language, avoiding stereotypes, and recognising that every individual has an intrinsic worth, dignity and importance and must be treated with respect, regardless of origin, disability, race, age, ethnicity, culture, language, gender, religion, economic status, sexuality and any other difference."

Accessible venues

The accessible venues policy was written in recognition of WorkCover's commitment to providing a workplace and facilities that support open access for all staff, stakeholder groups, visitors and guests to corporate events. This policy includes practical guidelines for ensuring that access issues and requirements of individuals are considered when organising events.

Interpreting and translating policy

Communication is often a significant barrier for customers to access services and reach equity in outcomes. The interpreting and translating policy was designed to overcome these barriers and details practical strategies for the use of interpreters, translation of information into community and Aboriginal languages, and the production of information in various formats. It was also an essential element of WorkCover's service strategy and was included in the complaint handling guidelines.

The policy was issued to all claims agents and rehabilitation providers.

Bilingual staff services policy

A register of bilingual staff was developed to enhance customer service and in recognition of the language and cultural diversity of our customer base. Bilingual staff members were then able to use their linguistic and cultural skills to assist with customer enquiries. The register of bilingual staff was accessible by all WorkCover staff via the internal staff phone list. Bilingual staff did not replace the use of professional interpreters.

Tender and contract documentation

Access and equity criteria and clauses were developed and included in tender briefs and outsourcing contracts.

Grants program

Access and equity criteria were established as mandatory for grants applicants to address and we provided advice to applicants about this process.

Data collection

Advice was provided relating to the data that WorkCover collects in order to make informed decisions about service planning and provision for the access and equity customer segments.

A&E action plan developed with a claims agent

The A&E Unit worked with one of the claims agents to develop an audit of their practices, policies and procedures in relation to A&E issues. In collaboration with senior agency staff, an action plan was developed with strategies to address service delivery and enhance outcomes for the equity groups.

Working with industry

We provided specialist knowledge and expertise to industry through existing WorkCover programs such as SAfer Industries and the small business program. Examples included advice about the most appropriate language groups to target for particular service information, promotional strategies, the cost of language translations and more appropriate presentation and distribution of material.

We also worked with the hospitality industry's OHSW committee to hold a small business training session and present an information booklet for Chinese cafés and restaurants. The information sessions and information booklets were tailored to the languages and cultural needs of this customer segment within the industry.

Development of access and equity resources

Bilingual providers register

In addition to the development of a bilingual staff register, after noting customer enquiries for bilingual rehabilitation and allied health professionals, we developed a bilingual providers' register. This register listed rehabilitation providers who informed us of their ability to communicate in at least one language other than English. These professionals are not interpreters and do not replace accredited interpreters, but are able to deliver services to injured workers in their preferred language, with an understanding of cultural issues.

This information is now only available via our intranet database, which is accessible by Employers Mutual and State Government case managers.

If you are seeking a bilingual provider, please contact the [Access and Equity Unit](#)

Workplace health and safety training resource kit

A workplace health and safety training resource kit was developed through a partnership between the A&E Unit and WorkCover occupational health and safety staff, with TAFE's Workplace Education Service, Bridgestone Australia and the Department of Employment, Education, Training & Youth Affairs (DEETYA). The kit provides a much-needed resource for trainers and consultants working with people with limited English language or literacy skills.

The training resource materials developed for the kit were based on accredited curriculum modules and OHSW Generic Fundamentals A level. Material was approved by WorkCover. It provides a commonsense, practical and pictorially-driven resource that develops language and literacy confidence and ensures participants receive a good understanding of key issues in occupational health and safety. The kit is available from SafeWork SA's website.

Information for claimants in diverse languages

The initial response to a workers compensation claim is a crucial point in our service delivery system. If there are any language barriers, they need to be addressed as early as possible. Translating information into appropriate languages is one way of overcoming language barriers. Another strategy is to provide information over the phone using an interpreter.

To address these issues, we worked closely with a claims agent to develop a communication phrase in both English and identified community languages. This phrase was then attached to all correspondence where the claimant requested an interpreter and specified that English was not their first language.

The phrase (below) was translated into 28 community languages and was produced onto an A4 page with both English and the community language (which the claims agents are able to print onto their respective letterheads). The claims manager inserted their details in the spaces provided. Guidelines on how to use the phrase were also developed.

Communication phrase: "This is important information about your claim for workers compensation. If you are not able to read this information because it is in English and you would like to have it explained to you in (language) please ring the Interpreting and Translating Centre on 8226 1990 and ask them to contact on phone number and this information will be explained to you through an interpreter. This interpreting service is available at no cost to you."

Health and safety handbook

We contributed to WorkCover's Health and Safety Handbook by authoring a section on workplace diversity in the chapter on managing health and safety in the workplace. It provides practical strategies for addressing OHSW issues for the equity groups within the workforce.

Information products

Information available in community languages and alternative formats is an important strategy for disseminating information about the health, safety and injury management system.

The A&E Unit provided advice about the development and targeting of WorkCover information products. We did this by:

- advocating for multilingual information/information in alternative formats as an important part of WorkCover's communication strategy
- providing expertise about the suitability of the information for translation, (which must be in a form that will provide a clear and unambiguous message)
- providing expertise about appropriate languages to translate
- arranging the translation and liaising with WorkCover's graphic design staff to ensure that the product was designed appropriately. (For example, titles are shown in both English and the community language.)
- ensuring that all other aspects of the product such as the information content, format, presentation, style and distribution were culturally appropriate.

Information pamphlets are available in various community languages in written format, voice files and for download from WorkCover's website.

WorkCover library

WorkCover's library carries a significant amount of information relevant to the equity groups. We advised them about acquiring these resources.

TTY service and Interpreting and Translating Centre information shown on all WorkCover products

The TTY phone number (for people who are deaf or have a hearing/speech impairment) and information on how to contact WorkCover through the Interpreting and Translating Centre was included in each WorkCover information product. In addition, staff mouse pads included both numbers.

Promotional campaigns

'Work to live' campaign

We worked with WorkCover's marketing department and an external advertising agency to tailor the 'Work to Live' campaign to meet the needs of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CLDB) in a culturally appropriate manner.

Four scripts were developed for ethnic radio. These covered: information for outworkers (as suggested by the Women's Focus group); information about employer registration; information on workers' rights and responsibilities; and information for employers starting a new business.

The four scripts in 15 community languages were produced for broadcasting on radio 5EBI-FM over a 12-month period. A multilingual CD of the scripts was produced for use in workplaces, training sessions or by ethnic community organisations. The multilingual scripts were also available as voice files that can be printed from WorkCover's website.

Ethnic community festivals

WorkCover provided information at several ethnic community festivals. The A&E Unit provided appropriate advice to WorkCover's marketing department, which coordinated the displays.

Training

Case management training

As part of claims management training delivered by WorkCover, we provided training in access and equity issues. The course covered the legislative requirements of WorkCover and claims agents with respect to equity groups, general legislative requirements, the WorkCover claims management agreement, practical applications, and strategies and resources to assist in delivering accessible case management services.

Training for staff

We organised training for staff about relevant access and equity initiatives such as:

- working with interpreters
- preparing information for translation
- cross-cultural awareness
- the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

Consultative partnerships – focus groups

In August 1998, we initiated a collaborative partnership with representatives of each of the four equity groups. Forty peak, state government, federal government, and community organisations are represented across these four groups. The groups are known as 'focus groups' and meet regularly throughout the year.

These partnerships embrace a consultative process that allows for the development of initiatives which are planned to enhance access to the OHSW and injury management system and service outcomes for the equity groups.

The focus groups are considered to be key WorkCover stakeholders.

The terms of reference for each of these groups are:

- to provide focused feedback to us on matters related to WorkCover products and services, from the groups' perspective; and
- to provide an opportunity for consultation and communication with each sector on occupational health, safety, welfare, rehabilitation and compensation services, access barriers and appropriate outcomes.

Some examples of the work of each focus group are:

Disability focus group

Strategic plan

This group successfully applied for a grant from WorkCover to undertake a needs analysis of people with a disability in relation to workplace health and safety and injury management. On the basis of this research, the group developed a strategic plan for 2001-2003. The plan outlines strategies that focus on advocating for services and service enhancement.

Employer and employee of the year awards

The group recommended that WorkCover participate in these awards, which are held on the International Day of Disability and presented by Disability Action Inc.

WorkCover has been a sponsor of the event for three years and in 1999, Disability Action agreed to introduce employer and employee of the year awards in the category of 'return to work following a work injury'.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus group

Strategic plan

This group received a grant from WorkCover to undertake a needs analysis of worker and employer populations and their experiences in relation to workplace health and safety, and injury management. A strategic plan (1999-2001) was developed from this research.

The group worked consistently to ensure that the various strategies in the plan were implemented by the end of 2001.

Women's focus group

Strategic plan

A strategic plan to guide this group was developed. Some examples of their projects are:

- Forum for advocates

In 1999, the group organised a forum for advocates. Representatives from WorkCover, the Industrial Relations Commission and the Equal Opportunity Commission provided an overview of their jurisdictions. Each panel member discussed case scenarios by outlining the procedure that would be used in their jurisdiction.

One recommendation to come out of this forum was to develop a resource for advocates and workers, which would contain information about the three jurisdictions' processes and where to go for enquiries about work-related harassment, discrimination, injuries, illness or unfair dismissal.

The brochure 'Have you got a problem at work?' was subsequently developed collaboratively by the three jurisdictions.

A second forum for advocates was held in June 2000, discussing the topic of workplace bullying and harassment. A WorkCover staff member presented information on what safety representatives can do if they are experiencing bullying and harassment as a result of their role as representatives.

- **Workplace bullying**

In 1999, the group launched an additional module on workplace bullying and harassment for the Workplace Health and Safety Training Resource Kit (see page 8).

The focus group successfully applied for a WorkCover grant to pilot a practical project with two employers and a group training scheme to develop, implement and evaluate policies, procedures and workplace systems that appropriately address the issues of bullying and harassment.

Multicultural focus group

Consultative forum

This group operates as a consultative forum for relevant major projects within WorkCover. They meet formally as a group as required for particular strategies such as the development of the Work to Live ethnic media strategy.

Information session for ethnic community workers

In 1999, the group organised an information session for ethnic community workers, ethnic chambers of commerce and business councils. The information session was an opportunity to make contact with these key community representatives and to introduce and update them on the various services offered by WorkCover, as well as information about the system.

Highlights of the A&E Unit's activities from 2001- 2002

Integration of access and equity throughout WorkCover

Information in checklist format was developed to assist our staff in business planning and also when applying for marketing funding.

An internal access and equity network was established with a staff representative from each business portfolio (previously known as divisions). The purpose of the network is to:

- enhance awareness of access and equity across the business
- provide a contact point for assessing A&E input into key projects
- assist with reporting requirements.

We continued to provide consultancy services to WorkCover staff on various projects and activities.

Grants program

Our Grants program continued to include access and equity as mandatory criteria for applications. We provided consultancy to the applicants and 2001, we developed an information sheet to assist applicants in addressing access and equity criteria in the application form.

Information sessions for claims agents and WorkCover staff

Information sessions were held for claims agents, Workers Compensation Tribunal and our staff on 'management of claims for injured workers with complex refugee/migration histories', access and equity principles and practices and 'working with interpreters'.

Working with claims agents

We negotiated with WorkCover's claims agents to incorporate a strategy for including A&E issues in each of their business plans.

Information sessions were held for claims agents on 'management of claims for injured workers with complex refugee/migration histories' and 'working with interpreters'.

National comparison

We distributed a questionnaire to all Australian workers compensation authorities as a way of gathering information on access and equity initiatives undertaken nationally. The purpose was to share ideas and strategies across the jurisdictions and to benchmark our performance with others.

Safe Work Week

Forum for advocates

During Safe Work Week 2001, over 100 people attended the workshop 'Pre-employment medical checks: Landmines or mine detectors?' organised by our women's focus group in partnership with the Equal Opportunity Commission, Industrial Relations Commission and WorkCover.

During Safe Work Week 2002, a forum 'Old hands: what works' was held about the issue of age and impairment in the workplace. Panel members from the Industrial Relations and Equal Opportunity Commissions and WorkCover provided an overview of the three jurisdiction's procedures and processes in relation to a hypothetical scenario. Copies of videos/DVDs of the forum are available for loan from the SafeWork SA library.

Information session for the disability sector

In 2001, an information session was held to raise awareness in the disability employment sector about WorkCover, occupational health, safety and welfare and workers rehabilitation and compensation.

In 2002, a workshop was held covering health and safety information for support workers who assist people with disabilities in employment. Information was tailored to the business service (formerly supported employment) and open employment service models.

Information sessions for ethnic communities

Through WorkCover's 'Work to live' campaign, WorkCover provided a small grant to ten ethnic community organisations as part of our strategy to design and deliver appropriate information sessions during Safe Work Week 2001. Community workers promoted and coordinated the sessions and our staff delivered the sessions through interpreters. Over 250 employers, workers and job seekers participated in these sessions. The questions raised at the sessions and the evaluations received confirmed the value of face-to-face information sessions. It also highlighted the importance of working in partnership with key community organisations.

In 2002, three workshops were held for employers, workers and job seekers from CLDB. Information was delivered in English, Arabic, Kurdish and Persian (Farsi).

'Work to live makes sense in any language' ethnic radio campaign

The 'Work to live makes sense in any language' ethnic radio campaign continued to provide information for employers and workers. Initially (see page 10) four scripts were translated into fifteen community languages and broadcast over a twelve-month period on radio 5EBI-FM.

Scripts were then translated into an additional six languages targeting new arrival communities.

Commencing August 2001, WorkCover continued to broadcast the 21 languages for another six months on radio 5EBI and 5UV. Multilingual CDs of the new scripts also were produced for use in workplaces, training sessions or by ethnic community organisations.

Information translated into community languages

In addition to the WorkCover brochures currently available in community languages, the following information was translated and is available on our website:

- information and review services
- stop fraud information for employers and workers
- sections of the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act in relation to workers compensation claims, including information on the dispute resolution processes
- employer rights and responsibilities.

Since the information was not printed but only made available on the website (www.workcover.com - click on rolling languages), a communication strategy was implemented in order to advise workers and employers of CLDB that the information is available.

The following message was translated into 22 community languages including Pitjantjatjara and is displayed in the WorkCover's reception area.

***“Welcome to WorkCover, if you would like to speak to us in (language) please ask the staff at the front counter for an interpreter. An interpreter will be arranged at no cost to you.*”**

Information is available in various community languages. Please ask the staff for information in (language).”

Resources developed

Safe use chemicals on farms

We produced information in Khmer so that an existing video 'Safe use of chemicals on farms' could be used for Cambodian workers and employers.

Safety signs poster

In consultation with the WorkCover's SAfer Industries consultants and marketing team, we developed a multilingual poster of mandatory safety signs in 15 community languages: English, Amharic, Arabic, Bosnian, Chinese, Croatian, Greek, Italian, Khmer, Persian (Farsi), Polish, Russian, Somali, Spanish and Vietnamese.

The poster is now available from SafeWork SA's website or bookshop.

Consultative partnerships – focus groups

We continued to manage consultative partnerships with 40 peak, state government, federal government, and community organisations that represent access and equity groups. These groups are known as focus groups and each group meets on a bimonthly basis.

These partnerships continued to provide forums for the discussion and development of initiatives that will enhance access to the OHSW and injury management system and service outcomes for the equity groups. WorkCover considers the members as key stakeholders and an integral part of our A&E strategy.

The outcome of a review of the focus groups in April 2002 by members was very positive in terms of the function of the groups and outcomes being achieved.

The Employee Advocate Unit is a service provided by WorkCover to give independent free advice and representation to injured workers who are involved in legal disputation with their claims agent or registered employer. The WorkCover Board appoints representative members of the committee biennially. The A&E Unit focus groups nominate the community sector representative in rotation.

The focus groups, as key stakeholders, continued to be invited to WorkCover activities and sponsored community events such as annual Safe Work Awards, International Women's Day lunch, Annual Women's Trust Patron's Dinner and the South Australian Council for Reconciliation dinner.

Addressing the workplace health safety and injury management needs of people with a disability

Disability Action Plan (DAP)

We developed and released our Disability Action Plan, which articulates WorkCover's commitment to:

- promoting and responding to diversity in all its facets in our business
- achieving the outcomes of South Australia's 'Promoting Independence' policy
- ensuring our business is accessible and equitable for South Australians with disabilities
- addressing any policies and practices that may directly or indirectly discriminate against customers and our staff with disabilities. The DAP is available in alternate formats including Braille, large print, audio, e-text and plain English versions.

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and disability awareness information sessions were held for our staff and our claims agents.

In July 2002, the DAP was internally implemented and business portfolios reported on their progress quarterly. Future annual reports will contain information on progress of the plan's implementation.

Safe work checklist: a tool to promote workplace safety for people with a disability

Through a WorkCover grant, the disability focus group managed a project that produced a safe work checklist for people with a disability. The checklist appears in the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services draft version of the Continuous Improvement handbook, which provides information and practical ideas on continuous improvement activities related to the new quality assurance system for disability employment services.

Information in alternative formats

Where possible, we produce material in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, e-text, audio and plain English.

Sponsorship

Once again, we were a major sponsor of Disability Action's 'Employer and Employee of the Year Awards'. The awards were presented by the Minister for Social Justice and included an award for 'Return to work after a work-related injury'.

Addressing the workplace health, safety and injury management needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Culturally relevant information sessions about safe work and rights and responsibilities of employers were developed and piloted with four Aboriginal employment organisations. As a result of the pilot project, the sessions for boards and managers were followed up by relevant WorkCover staff who provided a consultancy service to four organisations over six-months. The anticipated outcomes of the consultancy service included the development of a system/framework including policies and processes to address OHSW issues in the organisations.

This pilot project to assist Community Development Employment Programs (CDEPs) address and manage their safe work issues was completed in December 2002. Project outcomes included engagement of the CDEPs in safe work actions and the development of a model approach that can be extended to CDEPs statewide. The project brought together the key service providers – WorkCover, Workplace Services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission and Business SA – ensuring an integrated and coordinated approach. The project recommendations will be addressed in 2003.

T-shirts and posters were developed and distributed to promote the 'Work to live' message to this customer segment.

Cross-cultural awareness training was held for key WorkCover staff and our claims agents.

Addressing the workplace health safety and injury management needs of women

Workplace bullying project

The Working Women's Centre on behalf of the women's focus group undertook a practical project with employers to develop, implement and evaluate policies, procedures and workplace systems to appropriately address bullying and harassment in the workplace.

A resource document was produced that draws on the experiences of the organisations that participated in the project and provides:

- steps to address bullying in these organisations. These steps have broader application for other organisations
- a process that can be used in the workplace to address workplace bullying
- information on the issues, problems and resource implications
- reference to useful resources.

'Workplace bullying: Making a difference' is the outcome of a project undertaken in two organisations: an aged care facility and a group training scheme for trainees and apprentices in South Australia. The project was managed by the Working Women's Centre on behalf of the women's focus group. The report was available from the Working Women's Centre in May 2003.

Addressing the workplace health, safety and injury management needs of people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

A needs analysis of employers and workers of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CLDB).

A project was undertaken to investigate the needs of rural and metropolitan South Australian employers and employees of CLBD's in relation to workplace health and safety rehabilitation and compensation. The multicultural focus group will develop a strategic plan, which will include strategies for implementing the recommendations of the report.

External review of the strategy

In May 2002 an external consultant undertook a review of the A&E strategy. In undertaking this appraisal, WorkCover has demonstrated a willingness to engage in critical self-examination in relation to the way in which it has, and is currently, delivering programs, products and services to its diverse client groups in an effort to ensure continuous quality improvement.

The appraisal identified the significant strengths of the Unit in relation to aspects such as the creation of long-term and effective stakeholder partnerships, model consultative processes with client groups, and overall expert advice to WorkCover customers. Over the next 12 months the Unit put in place strategies for addressing outcomes of the review which highlighted some areas for improvement.

Presentations on the A&E strategy

WorkCover Corporation was invited to present its access and equity strategy:

- at WorkCongress5 - the fifth international congress on work injuries, prevention, rehabilitation and compensation held in Adelaide March 2001
- to the Senior Management Council November 2001
- to Promoting Diversity Think Tank December 2001
- at the Round Table on Information Access for people with Print Disabilities National Conference April 2002.

As a result of the above public speaking engagements, the work of the A&E Unit, and therefore the importance of access and equity principles and practices in safe work and injury management, has become more widely known throughout South Australia, Australia and internationally.

Highlights of the A&E Unit's activities for 2002-2003

A&E internal network

In 2003 an internal A&E network of staff from each portfolio was established. The purpose of the network has been to enhance staff's awareness of access and equity across the business, provide a contact point for assessing access and equity input into key projects, and assist with reporting requirements.

Resources for employers, agents and providers

Interpreter declaration guidelines

An interpreter declaration form was translated into over 21 languages. Guidelines on how to use the declaration were also written and promoted to agents, providers and employers.

Claims management checklist

This checklist is a guide for managing claims for people from CLDB, and aims to encourage case managers to tailor the claims management practices to meet the specific needs of injured workers.

Interpreting and translating policy

A revised copy of WorkCover's interpreting and translating policy was distributed to WorkCover staff, claims agents, providers and other relevant organisations.

Employer resource

An information pack was developed for self-insured employers. The information pack provides relevant management tools and organisational strategies to address safe work and access and equity issues. In particular, the tools were used to review self-insured employer's performance of access and equity in relation to the performance standards for these employers.

Information sessions

The following information sessions were held for staff from WorkCover, claims agents, providers and the Workers Compensation Tribunal. The opportunity to participate in these sessions enhances our customer service and therefore case management practices. Feedback for each session was positive.

Islam and addressing the needs of Muslim clients

Topics included an introduction to the beliefs and practices of Muslims, demographics of Muslims in South Australia, clarification of misconceptions about Muslims and the principles of dealing with Muslim clients.

Working in partnership

Speakers included staff from the Equal Opportunity Commission and the Office of the Employee Ombudsman. The information session provided updated information to WorkCover staff, which is important to ensure smooth referral of customers to these agencies when appropriate.

Vietnamese culture

The session was on Vietnamese culture and injured workers with complex refugee/migration histories. The session was tailored to issues related to workers rehabilitation and compensation.

Indigenous culture

Topics included: history, cultural difference and workplace issues.

Grants projects

The A&E Unit continued to review grant applications for compliance with access and equity mandatory criteria.

In addition, the A&E Unit participated on the steering committees of the following project

- **Rehabilitation and return-to-work resource**

The Workplace Education Service, Adelaide Institute of TAFE received a grant from WorkCover and from the Department of Education Science and Training [DEST] to produce a rehabilitation and return-to-work resource. This project aims to enable workers with language and literacy needs to:

- increase participation in the rehabilitation and safe return-to-work process
- facilitate communication between employers, employees, claims agents and rehabilitation providers on rehabilitation and return to work
- improve understanding of the rehabilitation and return-to-work process.

Customer satisfaction survey

WorkCover's annual customer satisfaction and expectation survey conducted in November 2002 also sought feedback from workers of non-English speaking backgrounds on the service we provide. The Interpreting and Translating Centre (ITC) conducted telephone interviews with NESB injured employees. Two hundred NESB segment interviews were conducted.

Employee advocate unit information session for community workers

An information session on the Employee Advocate Unit (EAU) was organised by the A&E Unit and delivered by EAU to advocates within the ethnic community and disability employment sector. The session was well received and raised participants' awareness about the important role of employee advocates.

Consultative partnerships – focus groups

The access and equity focus groups continued to meet bi-monthly and be consulted on relevant key policies and issues. In addition, the A&E Unit hosted a meeting for members of the four focus groups. The session was well attended by over 75 people including focus group members, members of the injured workers focus group, WorkCover senior management and staff, and staff of the claims agents. The meeting provided an opportunity to:

- share information among the four access and equity focus groups
- report on access and equity projects and what we have achieved internally
- hear and generate ideas for future activity
- identify common issues
- create synergies through expanding networking across the focus groups.

Addressing the OHSW and injury management needs of aboriginal and torres strait islanders

Training gap analysis

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus group received a WorkCover grant to map out current OHSW and injury management training provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employers and workers from both Community Development Employment Programs (CDEPs) and indigenous community organisations. Results of the survey are available.

Addressing the OHSW and injury management needs of people with a disability

Training products

The disability focus group received a WorkCover grant to develop OHSW training products for workers with a disability working in both supported and open employment arrangements, and for support workers who provide services to workers with a disability.

Disability communication strategy

WorkCover has produced the following resources in consultation and collaboration with its disability focus group, for the disability employment sector:

- Posters on hazards in the workplace specifically targeted at people with an intellectual disability.
- An information card for workers with a disability and their families.
- A pamphlet on working safely tailored for support workers working in the disability employment sector.
- A testimonial brochure for employers to encourage them to employ people with a disability and workers who have been injured.

Disability Action Plan

Implementation of the DAP since its release July 2002 was well underway:

- Information on disability recruitment services are now included as a resource for internal recruitment and selection processes.
- Several alterations to WorkCover's website were made to enhance access to information. The website continues to be tested against World Wide Web Consortium's accessibility guidelines.
- A safe design team participated in the review of the Australian building code to ensure that all workplace construction includes provisions for workers with disabilities throughout the building, rather than simply exits and entrances. We also secured formal membership on the technical working group for the review of the Australian building code.
- WorkCover staff with disabilities participated in an audit of the workplace and some 'quick fixes' were identified. Other issues were factored into project of works (building) plans.
- WorkCover was once again a major sponsor of Disability Action's 'Employer and Employee of the Year Awards'. Awards presented included an award for 'Return to work after a work-related injury'.
- The following phrase is now added to all new products and WorkCover's website: "If you would like this information in an alternative format (Braille, audio or e-text) or community language please ring WorkCover on 13 18 55 and we will endeavour to meet your request."
- There is an increasing amount of information available in alternative formats.
- Information sessions on how to use WorkCover's TTY (Tele-type writer) to communicate with customers who are deaf or have a hearing/speech impairment were organised for service centre staff.

Addressing the OHSW and injury management needs of people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

Business plan

The multicultural focus group developed a business plan based on recommendations from the needs analysis survey. The research was undertaken to investigate the needs of rural and metropolitan South Australian employers and employees of CLDB in relation to OHSW, rehabilitation and compensation.

Information sessions on OHSW and injury management were held for:

- Muslim women's group - Wesley Uniting Mission
- Multicultural Workers Forum
- Humanitarian Agencies Network meeting
- Community Settlement Service (CSS) workers forum
- interpreting and translating students
- women of CLDB in leadership course organised by South Australian Multicultural Ethnic Affairs commission
- Cambodian workers network meeting.

Working safely on farms project

The Virginia Horticultural Centre received a WorkCover grant to conduct a project aimed at raising awareness and improving safe work practices for Vietnamese and Cambodian market gardeners in the northern region of Adelaide. The project was managed by VHC on behalf of the multicultural focus group. The project aimed to:

- identify issues and collect data/stories on the current knowledge of WorkCover and OHSW
- consult on the most effective strategies to raise awareness and communicate messages to Vietnamese and Cambodian market gardeners and workers
- develop, implement and disseminate culturally appropriate strategies and information.

HSR questionnaire

A questionnaire was sent to a sample of HSRs to learn more about how WorkCover can best meet the needs of HSRs of non-English speaking backgrounds, or HSRs representing workers of non-English speaking backgrounds. The results of the survey have been collated and a series of recommendations are available.

Addressing the OHSW and injury management needs of women

Gender research project

The women's focus group received a WorkCover grant to research gender differences in relation to OHSW and injury management. Anecdotal evidence suggests there are differences in experience and outcomes between men and women in relation to these issues. The differences are in the nature and experience of work for many women including the fact that there are more women in part-time or casual employment.

The aim of the project is to explore if these differences actually exist, and if they do, what they are and how to address them to ensure equity in service delivery and outcomes. The A&E Unit and the women's focus group developed a strategic plan for implementing the recommendations. The project was managed by the Working Women's Centre

Forum

Over 70 people attended a forum organised by the women's focus group. The forum was on the very topical issue of 'Temporary overseas workers: Legal or illegal: a cause for sour grapes?' The director of the Working Women's Centre facilitated the forum. Through a hypothetical scenario the forum highlighted issues relating to temporary overseas workers working without a legal visa and the rights and impact of workplace injury both for employers and workers.

Panel representatives from the following organisations provided an overview of their jurisdiction's processes and procedures in relation to the hypothetical scenario:

- South Australian Equal Opportunity Commission.
- Industrial Relations Commission.
- Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs.
- Australian Taxation Office.
- WorkCover.
- Labour hire industry.

A video of the forum is available from SafeWork SA's library.

Highlights of the A&E Unit's achievements from July 2003-2004

Resources for employers, employees, agents and providers

Information translated into community languages

During 2003 and 2004, information for health and safety representatives (HSRs) was translated into the following languages: Arabic, Bosnian, Chinese, French, Greek, Italian, Khmer, Persian, Polish, Serbian, Spanish, Somali, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

Updated rights and responsibilities brochures were translated into a range of languages, including: Amaharic, Dari, Kurdish, Persian (Farsi), Somali and Tigrinia.

Several individual Mandatory Safety Signs were translated into 17 languages including Punjabi, Turkish and Vietnamese. The signs were used in various high-risk industries such as meat and horticulture.

Information and training sessions

The following information sessions were held for staff from WorkCover, claims agents, providers and the Workers Compensation Tribunal. A feedback evaluation form was collected at the end of each session.

Islam

The session included an introduction to the beliefs and practices of Muslims, demographics of the Muslim population in South Australia, clarification of misconceptions about Muslims and the principles of dealing with Muslim clients. Participants also had an opportunity to discuss the information provided and ask questions.

Positive feedback was provided about both the presenter and the session.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness

Introduction to the history, impacts of various legislations, cultural differences and workplace issues were presented and discussed as part of this information session. Feedback received was very positive and participants stated that the information presented was useful to them.

How to work with interpreters

The participants received information about how to work effectively with interpreters and translators. Information was also presented about the A&E Strategy and how to identify and address issues for people of non-English speaking backgrounds.

How to make organisations deaf and hearing impaired friendly

This session began with background information about the nature and prevalence of hearing loss in Australia and more specifically, the South Australian community. A range of strategies and products were demonstrated and explained in order to make an organisation deaf and hearing impaired friendly with a view to improving customer service to this client group.

Vietnamese culture

Historical background of Vietnamese culture, health care, beliefs and practices, working with the Vietnamese clients, and work injury were among the topics covered in this workshop. Participants reported that they found the information valuable and said that, as a result of attending the training, they had gained a better understanding of the impact of work injury on the lives of Vietnamese workers.

Mental health awareness

Due to a large number of requests, a session on mental health awareness was presented. Background information on the more common mental illnesses was provided as well as strategies to assist and work with people who have a mental health issue. The importance of the psychosocial needs of injured workers in the workers rehabilitation and compensation system was also explored by WorkCover's consultant.

Claims management training

The A&E Unit has continued to present to trainee claims managers over the course of 2003-2004. In the presentation, we outline the role of the A&E consultants and services available through the unit that can assist in the management of injured worker's claims.

Safe Work Week

During Safe Work Week 2004 we presented a number of workshops. During the Working Together Conference an overview of the gender, workplace injury and return to work research project was presented. The workshop was well attended and those who participated rated the workshop well.

Two sessions were organised to cater for members of new and emerging communities in South Australia - the African community and the Middle Eastern community. These presentations were the result of a partnership between WorkCover and the Migrant Resource Centre and aimed to inform the communities about what WorkCover does, workers compensation claims, OHSW, the A&E strategy and available resources. To encourage wider participation, presentations were delivered in both English and specific community languages including Persian (Farsi) and Arabic. Promotional material was also translated into Arabic and Persian (Farsi) and advertisements were played on Persian and Arabic radio programs.

The responses indicated that by the end of the workshops, most participants had a good understanding of the areas covered and said the information was very relevant to them. Overall the workshops were successful in getting the message of safe work and workers rehabilitation and compensation system across to new workers, business migrants, students and job seekers from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Grants projects

The A&E Unit continued to review grant applications for compliance with access and equity mandatory criteria.

In addition the A&E Unit participated on the steering committees of the following projects:

OHSW hazards in the hair and beauty industry

The project will produce a kit with up-to-date information to assist people employed in the hairdressing, nail and beauty industry to identify hazards and provide a safe working environment for the apprentices, current staff and, clients as well as suppliers. The kit also includes and a section on injury management with information on how to make a claim for workers compensation, rehabilitation and return-to-work procedures. A training package was developed to complement the kit.

Meat industry videos

The aim of this project was to produce an easy to understand, industry-specific video highlighting the hazards for both new and experienced workers in the meat processing industry. Characteristic of the industry in South Australia are the high numbers of workers of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and workers with limited English. The videos are available in four languages including English, Arabic, Chinese and Khmer. The video was accompanied by a booklet.

Hospitality virtual hotel

This is an online safety induction program with the aim of educating employees (especially younger employees and those in small business) about managing hazards, in the workplace. The program encourages industry to identify its hazards and employers to find solutions. The program was launched in 2004 and is available in both English and Chinese from the SafeWork SA website.

Let's work together to get back to work kit – A guide to making a claim for workers compensations and returning to work

As its title suggests, this kit is a guide to making a claim for workers compensation and returning to work, primarily for employees with language and literacy needs. The aim of this resource is to provide an easy to follow, step-by-step guide for the targeted audience to understand the system of making a claim and returning to work. The implementation guide offers explanations and strategies to assist employees with language and literacy needs. The resource was launched in 2004.

A&E business plan framework – audit tool

The audit tool is an easy to use device to encourage business units to consider the needs of A&E customers when they are business planning. It is a list of prompts designed to encourage business units to think of how and when they may need to cater for the needs of all customers. For example, it asks if they have financial resources to have products translated if this is an identified need.

A&E Strategy – international presentation

The A&E Strategy was presented at Workcongress6, the sixth International Congress on work injuries prevention, rehabilitation and compensation in Rome in late 2004. The workshop was called 'Responding to Diversity' and feedback indicated that the presentation was well received.

A&E internal network

The purpose of the A&E internal network is to enhance staff awareness of access and equity across the business, provide a point of contact and assist with reporting requirements. The A&E Internal Network has continued to meet and support the work of the unit.

Consultative partnerships – focus groups

We continue to manage consultative partnerships with 40 peak, state government, federal government and community organisations that represent access and equity groups. In May 2004, members of all four focus groups met to share information, report on the progress and achievements of access and equity projects, identify common issues and network with each other. Over fifty people, including members of the focus groups, Injured Workers Focus Group, the A&E internal network, WorkCover's new CEO and WorkCover staff attended the meeting.

Focus group meetings provided valuable forums for the discussion and development of initiatives that will enhance access to the OHSW and injury management system and service outcomes for equity groups.

The focus groups, as key stakeholders, continued to be invited to WorkCover activities and sponsored community events. Events attended by focus group members in 2003 and 2004 included the annual Safe Work Week Awards and International Women's Day lunch.

Addressing the OHSW and injury management needs of women

Strategic plan

The women's focus group revised their strategic plan and based on the emerging priorities and issues, developed a new strategic plan for 2005-2007.

Forum

This year's forum was called 'The trouble with training – exploring the complexities of traineeships, equal opportunity and workplace injury.'

The Director of the Working Women's Centre facilitated the forum and there were representatives of WorkCover, Equal Opportunities Commission, Young Worker's Legal Service and Trainee and Apprenticeship Management on the panel. Through a hypothetical scenario, the forum highlighted issues relating to a pregnant trainee who is injured at work. Members of the women's focus group played the roles of the trainee and employer in the hypothetical scenario. Representatives of a large number of government departments and businesses attended the forum.

Gender, workplace injury and return to work research project

The Gender, Workplace Injury and Return to Work Research Project was undertaken in SA from August 2003-July 2004. The project was funded by a WorkCover grant, under the auspice of the Working Women's Centre on behalf of the Women's Focus Group. The project team was guided by a steering committee with a membership of key stakeholders in the area of workplace injury and return to work.

The project aimed to explore the following issues:

- People's experiences of workplace injury and rehabilitation
- Whether the issues are the same for men and women
- What helps and hinders people during rehabilitation and return to work — both in the workplace and in the worker's rehabilitation and compensation system
- Whether available statistics and research adequately consider gender and broader psychosocial issues
- Strategies that represent best practice for assisting workers' rehabilitation and return to work

As a result of this research, a number of recommendations have been made about how the system can better respond to injured workers and to work towards equity in service delivery outcomes regardless of gender differences.

Implementation of the recommendations has been included in the Women's Focus Group's strategic plan for 2005-2007.

Addressing the OHSW and injury management needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Strategic plan

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus group revised its strategic plan and based on the emerging priorities and issues, developed a new strategic plan for 2005-2007.

Addressing racism in the workplace

A pamphlet on racism was produced. Targeted at employers, it aims to raise awareness of employers and workers about equal opportunity and the potential impact of racism in the workplace in relation to OHSW, morale of staff and productivity. The resource is available on the WorkCover website.

<http://www.workcover.com/Home/Aboutus/Stakeholdergroups/AboriginalandTorresStraitIslanders/Racismintheworkplace.aspx>

Resource for community development employment programs (CDEP)

A workplace hazard management system was developed to assist CDEP's management and staff in improving OHSW in the workplace. The resource includes a sample OHSW policy, risk assessment tool, safety action plan, incident and hazard report, and training checklist.

CDEP pilot project

The CDEP pilot project that was initiated in 2002 led to the development of a collaborative project between Workplace Services, Business SA and WorkCover. Workplace Services developed a two year project to audit and inspect all CDEPs in SA. The A&E Unit worked with the project officer and provided a link with the focus group and relevant resources such as the OHS Handbook. From the findings of the project it was obvious that there was a lack of understanding of how to develop an OHSW system. WorkCover devised a simple resource for use by CDEPs.

Addressing the OHSW and injury management needs of people with a disability

Strategic plan

The Disability Focus Group revised its strategic plan and based on the emerging priorities and issues, developed a new strategic plan for 2005-2007.

Training products

Training products for workers with a disability working in both supported and open employment were developed. The resource is easy to use and invaluable for providing workers with a disability with an induction to the workplace, specifically around OHSW. The training package was incredibly well received, with requests made for it to be sent to organisations interstate. The resource is available on the WorkCover's website.

Disability Action Plan

The DAP continues to be reported against by stakeholders every quarter. Work began on revising the current DAP so that it reflects recent achievements and the new strategic direction for WorkCover.

Communication strategy

The disability communication strategy was developed and information was distributed widely throughout the state. Information that formed part of the strategy targeted workers with a disability and their carers, information for support workers, a testimonial pamphlet encouraging employers to employ workers with a disability and a series of ten posters on the most common hazards found in the workplace. These products have been in high demand, with some being reprinted.

Session for advocates in the disability sector

A session about the Employee Advocate Unit was presented to advocates representing/assisting workers with a disability in relation to workers compensation claims.

Addressing the OHSW and injury management needs of people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

Business plan

The group developed a business plan in 2002-03. An update on the work in the business plan is reported to the focus group at their meetings.

Training products

The Multicultural Focus Group received a grant to produce a training video about working with interpreters in the worker's compensation system. Production of the video began. The video will be used by case managers and others in the system to educate them on the benefits of and protocols for working with interpreters. There was interest from interstate about the video.

Working safely on farms project

The Virginia Horticultural Centre received a grant to raise awareness and improve safe work practices for Vietnamese and Cambodian market gardeners in the North Adelaide Plains region. Two to three-day training courses were held, with half a day dedicated to OHSW training. Posters and stickers were produced to promote the message of farm safety. The project was launched in April 2004. The project report was completed and contains the findings of the research and related recommendations.

Northern Adelaide plains (nap) hazardous substances awareness project

Following on from the above project, a project was begun to develop hazardous substance use and safety information appropriate to the needs of Vietnamese and Cambodian communities in the NAP that comply with workplace English language and literacy guidelines.

The project was designed to encourage active learning by providing useful resources to enable participants to develop a basic understanding of safe and responsible chemical use and give them more confidence when using hazardous substances.

Cambodian and Vietnamese translations were provided that simplify technical terms related to OHSW and chemical use. Information sessions were presented using bilingual liaison officers and accredited ChemCert presenters.

The limited English language and literacy proficiency of the audience was addressed by developing clear and simple fact sheets, pamphlets and information packs in English, Cambodian and Vietnamese.

Health and safety representatives (HSRs) project

The aim of the project is to ensure that the needs of NESB HSRs and HSRs who represent NESB workers are known and catered for. A survey was sent to in excess of 700 HSRs of NESB or those representing NESB workers. There was a survey response rate of more than 25 per cent. Findings from the survey were collated and a summary report and recommendations prepared.

One of the recommendations involved the development of an information strategy. Subsequently, a pamphlet about HSRs and HSR committees was developed in plain English and translated into 15 languages (Persian, Italian, Greek, Chinese, Polish, Vietnamese, Farsi, Arabic, Khmer, Tagalog, Serbian, Bosnian, Somali and Spanish). Available from the SafeWork SA website.

Sessions held for community workers

We coordinated and presented a number of sessions for community workers and leaders, including interpreters and translators about WorkCover and the workers rehabilitation and compensation system. Examples of sessions held include one for women in leadership, for interpreting and translating students at Adelaide TAFE and a session about the Employee Advocate Unit.

Highlights of the A&E Unit's achievements from January 2005 - December 2006

Grant-funded projects

A&E consultants on steering committees for:

Northern Adelaide plains (NAP) hazardous substances awareness project

This project developed information on hazardous substance use and safety information appropriate to the needs of Vietnamese and Cambodian communities in the NAP.

Communicating through interpreters video/DVD

A video/DVD on working with interpreters in the SA workers rehabilitation and compensation system was developed. Available from the SafeWork SA website.

Gender and rehabilitation and return to work project

The findings of this research were launched in July.

<http://www.workcover.com/Home/Aboutus/Stakeholdergroups/Women/Genderandreturntoworkreport.aspx>

Stakeholder committees

Stakeholder committee meetings were held bi monthly.

Highlights

- The Multicultural Focus Group developed its second plan. <
- A brochure about racism in the workplace was developed.
- Evaluation of the stakeholder committees results highlighted a high level of satisfaction by members.

Safe Work 2005

Highlights

- Sessions on the South Australian OHSW and workers compensation system were held in community languages.
- A forum on domestic violence was held.

The session highlighted the complexity of domestic violence (DV) and demonstrated how it can encroach into the workplace, affecting the health and morale of all workers as well as business productivity. The workshop 'Domestic violence and injuries: Repercussions and management' was organised on behalf of WorkCover's Access & Equity women's focus group. The Director of the Working Women's Centre facilitated the session by exploring common scenarios and advice for

employers and workers on how to manage such situations. Panel members included a Commissioner from the Industrial Relations Commission, SafeWork SA, the University of SA, Business SA, SA Unions and WorkCover.

Policy and advice

- A&E staff liaised with field officers who audit worker files, which provided useful information that assisted resources/information sessions to be delivered for case managers.
- WorkCover's second Disability Action Plan was released and lodged with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.
- WorkCover released a Statement of Reconciliation which states our commitment to improving services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.
<http://www.workcover.com/Home/Aboutus/Stakeholdergroups/AboriginalandTorresStraitIslanders/Aboriginalreconciliation.aspx>
- All externally advertised positions are sent to Disability Works and Turkindi Aboriginal employment and information network.
- The *Worker Report Form* (Notice of injury) was amended to include an identifier question for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and a question about dialect spoken by the claimant.
- Organisations tendering for the new claims management contract were required to submit information on how they would address access and equity in case management.
- Information on the access and equity strategy is provided to all new staff during the induction process.

Products

A pamphlet on rehabilitation and return to work was translated into 22 languages and alternative formats including etext, audio, large font and Easy English format.

Promoting A&E activities

Access and equity information and resources were promoted through newsletter articles, information at expos, at the WorkCover information update sessions, to groups of workers and students and to health provider networks.

Information sessions

The following sessions were delivered:

- How to work with interpreters
- Access and equity in workers rehabilitation and compensation
- Mental illness and psychiatric disability

to the following groups:

- Claims managers
- Providers

- Workers (new arrival migrants)
- Interpreting students
- Disability employment workers
- WorkCover staff
- Staff of the Workers Compensation Tribunal

Highlights of the A&E Unit's achievements from January 2007 - June 2007

Strategic partnerships and networks

WorkCover continues to convene the four A&E stakeholder committees comprising 40 peak, State Government, Federal Government and community organisations that represent access and equity groups (ATSI, Disability, Multicultural, Women) within South Australia.

Based on feedback from the committees, the groups were renamed 'stakeholder committees' and in 2006 they met quarterly instead of bimonthly. Membership of committees has been reviewed with some organisations no longer participating and others joining.

The work of the four A&E stakeholder committees is guided by strategic plans.

Highlights

- An information sheet was developed together with the Equal Opportunity Commission and our Disability Stakeholder Committee. The brochure includes information about how to handle disclosure of previous workers compensation claims when seeking work and how employers can seek relevant medical information required to carry out the job.
- In July 2006 and 2007 the four committees came together to report on the progress of their strategic plans, the achievements of their projects, and share information and network.
- WorkCover's General Management Team endorsed that appropriate Aboriginal acknowledgement statements be included in all WorkCover public events and presentations. A Kurna acknowledgement statement and a statement for outside the Adelaide region are available to all WorkCover staff and a set of guidelines on the use of the statements were developed.
- SafeWork 2006 and 2007
 - The Women's Committee held a forum on Age and Work and Responding to Pregnancy, Menopause and Work/Life Balance.
 - The Disability Committee contributed to a session on an OHSW resource kit developed in 2004-05 to promote its use and collect feedback on an update to the kit.

- Information sessions on the SA OHSW and workers rehabilitation and compensation system were held for African and Middle Eastern communities. The sessions were delivered in the relevant community languages and English.
- A session on A&E resources and practices was held.

SafeWork SA

- Consultancy services were provided to SafeWork SA on information development, translation and dissemination of OHSW and industrial relations information products.
- Training sessions were organised for frontline staff on working with interpreters.

Policy and advice

- Implementation of WorkCover's Second Disability Action Plan continued in 2006 and 2007. In 2005 WorkCover released its second Disability Action Plan and was named as a finalist in the inaugural State Government Awards to acknowledge exemplary achievements against the *Promoting Independence Strategy*. An A&E consultant continues to be a member of the Whole of Government Promoting Independence Steering Committee.
- The information on A&E in the claims management manual was updated significantly and checklist for each group included for case managers.
- All externally advertised positions continue to be sent to Disability Works and Turkindi Aboriginal employment and information network.
- A&E resources, policies and procedures were updated and re-released to enhance the management of claims.

Information sessions

The following sessions were delivered:

- How to work with interpreters
- Access and equity in the workers rehabilitation and compensation system
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness
- Managing complex cases – focus on CLDB claims
- Afghan culture
- African cultures
- Cultural competencies for human services in a multicultural society
- Disability awareness and the Disability Discrimination Act
- Brain injury awareness
- Equal Opportunity Act

to the following groups:

- Claims managers
- Rehabilitation providers
- WorkCover staff

- Staff of the Workers Compensation Tribunal
- Ethnic community workers and leaders
- Interpreters and translators

WorkCover SA

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Email: info@workcover.com

Website: www.workcover.com

TTY calls: (08) 8233 2574 for people who are deaf or have hearing/speech impairments.

If you would like this information in a language other than English, please call (08) 8226 1990 and ask for an interpreter to call WorkCover on 13 18 55. This is available at no cost to you.

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The information produced by WorkCover Corporation of South Australia in this publication is correct at the time of printing and is provided as general information only.

WorkCover is a statutory authority that manages the Scheme established under State legislation and funded by employers to compensate and rehabilitate South Australians injured at work.

