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| **Notes from:** | **Manawatu Health and Safety Forum – Lone or Remote Workers** | | |
|  |  | **Venue:** | UCOL |
| **Date:** | 20th Nov 2019 | **Time:** | 4.00pm – 5.30pm |
| **Facilitator:** | Tony Greeve | **Host:** | Site Safe NZ – WorkSafe NZ-B&M Security |

**Attendees:**

|  | **Name:** | | **Company:** | **Name:** | | **Company** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Andre | Holme | Absolute Safety | Colin | de Thierry | Metalcraft Roofing |
| 2 | Josh | Hill | Acrow | Michael | Bradley | MGB Compliance |
| 3 | Dave | Herdman | Acrow | Kaye | Allardice-Green | Mid Central DHB |
| 4 | Kerry | Sebire | Alexander Construction Central | Lesley | Batten | Mid Central DHB |
| 5 | Kellie | Vincent | B&M Security | Jodi | Starr | Mt Ruapehu |
| 6 | Daniel | Trott | B&M Security | Emma | Orchard | Orchard Joinery |
| 7 | Rob | Feassy | BRS | Bruce | Bycroft | Plant and Food Research |
| 8 | Brian | Sami | Central Demolition | Todd | Karipa | Private Contractor |
| 9 | Stuart | Lind | Colspec | Tania | Whale | Rangitikei District Council |
| 10 | Andrew | Hamilton | Edifice Structures | Mike | Spekreijse | Site Safe NZ |
| 11 | Elizabeth | Edens | Enable NZ | Jeff | Strampel | Site Safe NZ |
| 12 | Jo | Brew | Enable NZ | Tony | Greeve | Site Safe NZ |
| 13 | Gill | Clarkson | Enable NZ | Stuart | Parkes | Stuart Parkes Electrical |
| 14 | Tracey | Lett | Fonterra | Sandy | Lowe | Tararua District Council |
| 15 | Evan | Lloyd | Horizons Regional Council | Klayne | Kayne | The Grey Army Ltd |
| 16 | Tanya | Glavas | Horowhenua District Council | Donna | Leitch | The Grey Army Ltd |
| 17 | Sarah | Downes | Jungle Tamers | Chris | Forrest | Tui Brewery (DB Breweries) |
| 18 | Peter | Croad | Jungle Tamers | Shannon | Scully | UCOL |
| 19 | Anna | Croad | Jungle Tamers | Jim | Moffat | UCOL |
| 20 | Cushla | Fitzwater | Jungle Tamers | Jen | Trow | UCOL |
| 21 | Josh | bell | Kordia | Vanessa | McAdam | WorkSafe |
| 22 | Rob | Symes | Kordia | Adrian | Velich | WorkSafe |
| 23 | Rose | Boddy | Mana Whaika | Carl | Baker | WorkSafe |
| 24 | Cheryl | Wright | Manawatu District Council | Lynda | West | WorkSafe NZ |
| 25 | Gary | Sparrow | Mech Agriculture |  |  |  |
| 26 |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Apologies:**

|  | **Name:** | **Company:** | **Name** | **Company** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

The forum was attended by 49 representatives of industry from the wider Manawatu Region.

**Welcome:**

Tony welcomed everyone and asked Jen Trow from UCOL to give a short emergency briefing prior to the presentation.

Tony went on explain the origin of this particular forum and explained that it was decided in discussion with Work Safe that this was a topical area that a number of organizations may be grappling with. He explained that currently there was not a lot of information available the New Zealand in regard to managing remote or isolated workers but that there was information available from overseas in particular the Health and Safety Executive from the UK. Attached is a copy of the presentation on the day, the presentation is based primarily on the information from the Health and Safety Executive which can be found at the following link. <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.htm>

Please double click on the icon below and it will open up the presentation as a PDF document on your computer .



**THE FOLLOWING IS THE GUIDANCE THAT IS CURRENTLY ON THE WORKSITE WEBSITE IN REGARD TO REMOTE OR ISOLATED WORKERS .**

**3.1 Remote or isolated work**

The following regulation is relevant to this section:

* [Regulation 21: Managing risks associated with remote or isolated work](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2016/0013/latest/DLM6727393.html)

Work can be remote or isolated from the assistance of other persons because of location, time, or the nature of the work. Work can be isolated without being remote, and be remote without being isolated.

Remote or isolated work includes:

* working alone or separated from colleagues
* working in a geographically isolated or inaccessible area –where the nearest emergency help (eg fire service or hospital) is some distance away
* working outside normal business hours or shift/night work
* working in locations where communication is difficult.

**Examples of remote or isolated work**

* Jim and his apprentice working late at a building site. Apart from them, everyone else had left for the day.
* Bob carrying out an urgent repair in a workshop on a day the business is normally closed.
* Ken and his team working in the basement of a large office building. Occupants of the building do not have access to the basement.
* Dick mowing the grass verge beside a quiet country road where there is limited to no mobile coverage.
* Members of a forestry gang working in hard-to-get-to locations.
* A carer undertaking solo home visits to members of the public.
* Petrol station attendants on night shift.

PCBUs should first consider whether the remote or isolated work is necessary.

For lone workers, consider:

* is the work suitable to be carried out by a lone worker or if the worker proposed to carry out the work has the competence to work alone and be unsupervised?
* can the work be done using a buddy system?
* what support systems (such as radio telephones, man-down alarms, emergency procedures and first aid kits, and safety checks) may help to reduce the risk?

If remote or isolated work is to take place, PCBUs must follow the prescribed risk management process described in Section 2 of these guidelines to manage risks to the health and safety of a worker who performs remote or isolated work.

In addition, the PCBU must provide a system of work that includes effective communication with workers. What constitutes an effective communication system will also depend on the sorts of risks faced by the worker (and may need to include panic systems). A communication system that has gaps in coverage or cannot be used in an emergency is unlikely to be effective.

**Examples of control measures for remote or isolated workers include to:**

* have a buddy system or to work together with others
* be trained in emergency procedures including what to do during natural  disasters
* carry appropriate supplies including suitable first aid equipment
* have access to adequate facilities (water, eating facilities, toilets, accommodation) at the remote location
* carry communication devices that work at the remote location (eg radio, satellite or cell phones, pagers or distress beacons) and another means to raise the alarm
* contact home to check-in at specified times (or are contacted by another worker at specific times) with failure to check-in triggering the emergency response plan
* be remotely monitored (eg using CCTV).

Remember: PCBUs must first try to eliminate a risk if this is reasonably practicable. If it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate, the risk must be minimised so far as is reasonably practicable.

Tony then introduced Lynda West from WorkSafe NZ and asked if she would explain how WorkSafe look at the area of Remote or Isolated workers and what strategies they have for managing their own staff who fit into this category.

Lynda explained that their approach is based on a P.P.E. basis. The first P being the person, the second being the Plant and the 3rd being the Environment

She said in regard to the person, one of the important aspects is training staff to identify risks in a dynamic workplace, giving staff training and skills around communication and how to deal with aggressive and or emotional people

Lynda said that training for people working in this environment is the very important and then following that up with assessment and observation on how people work, how well they work and how well they react to various different situations.

She said that for remote workers one of the keys is as having good processes in place, processes to identify the risks involved with the situations that they go into, processes for checking in prior to going into these situations, the use of devices for tracking movement, consideration as to is the work required to be done straight away or can it be put off.

In the local office one of their key processes is a check in before and after the activity through the use of a daily whiteboard board which indicates when people leave the office with their expected time to be back etc.

After hours they have appointed on call inspectors and on call managers who are required to monitor this type of activity.

Lynda said that they will also consider any environmental concerns and that part of the management process is to consider whether and some of the work would be weather dependent, also understanding that workers go into different situations where there may be excessive heat or low temperatures so making sure that people well equipped for these conditions is imperative. She said it was important to ensure they staff are able to properly hydrate during the activity and have the correct food and sustenance available.

Vehicles were another key issue to consider, ensuring that the vehicles available for the staff were appropriate for the type of work that was being done and that the people who are driving them have been trained appropriately. Lynda said that Worksafe inspectors do undertake advanced driver training and that the vehicles are well equipped to manage and situations they get into and are carrying supplies of food, the right clothing, blankets, first aid kit etc .

Lynda then went on to discuss the concept of mental fatigue. She said that it was important to take into account that the risk is not the same for all workers, we need to take into account factors such as age and gender plus any health issues that may be involved and consider if alternatives such as a buddy system might be appropriate, especially in the early days of the role .

A question was asked as to what is competency and how is this defined. Lynda said that this was a frequently asked question and that when they are asked this question, they responded by saying it includes a number of things beginning with education and training but importantly ongoing observation and supervision is a key part of maintaining anyone’s level of competence.

What Google says about Competency:

Although the concept of competency is widely used it is a complex topic to define. At an individual level competency can be thought of as the combination of knowledge skills and experience and has developed and been maintained through training and personal development. While formal qualifications may be a pre-requisite for many posts, competency can diminish and fluctuate so ensuring ongoing refresher training and supervision should be considered a part of competency assessment.

Organisational competency can be thought of as the ability to identify and maintain the required competency of individuals and effectively manage those individuals to collectively achieve the organisations business objectives

Following Lynda's presentation, Tony asked Jeff Strampel to talk to the group in regard to what Site Safe has been doing in this area. Jeff explained that this had been an activity that Site Safe had been engaged in for possibly the last 2 years. The organisation has a number of policies and procedures in place around driving and vehicles, around fatigue and other areas

There has been an ongoing discussion in regard to a number of the Site Safe staff who operate independently or operate remote from other workers and often travel in the areas where there is limited or no cell Phone coverage.

He said that over the last 18 months Site Safe have developed a remote or isolated worker policy that has been heavily consulted with staff, particularly the staff operating in those areas. He said that there has also been consideration given to staff at the main centers who may at times may work through after hours and could be alone in a building well after everyone else is left.

He said the process has been an interesting one to work through and while some solutions have been put into place this is an area that is seen as an active or live discussion. More recently Site safe have had a vehicle tracking system installed and all of the company vehicles. He said that while the systems had been primarily been designed as a fleet management system and in a lot of cases are used to monitor driver behavior, that that was not the intent with the selection of the particular package in this case.

He reiterated that it is an ongoing process so the remote or isolated workers or drivers of the vehicles are working through training in the use of the system, establishing areas of operation, establishing geofences around those areas of operation so that when a safety adviser for instance might travel some distance to deliver training or to conduct some sort of auditing or consultancy activity, the workers manager is notified when they enter the geofence at the destination .

Likewise, when they leave and return to their home base the entry into the home geofence notifies the manager that this has occurred. In this way we believe there is more proactive management of this travel by the organisation, something that had in the past been managed by individuals often with members of their own family

One of the issues at the moment is the lack of coverage in some areas where the GPS is not connected so effectively the process is governed by the cellular coverage in that area. One of the additional items that is being considered is satellite phones for selected staff who would travel outside of normal GPS or cellular coverage, this is yet to be confirmed.

Following Jeff’s discussion Tony introduced Kellie and Daniel from B & M Security who provided a presentation on some of the equipment that is available for use in the in this area.

A copy of the presentation from B & M Security is attached, again double click on the icon and the presentation will open as a PDF document



This Welfare Solution is a software driven system using an Android or iOS App or specific Welfare and Panic buttons using 4G or Bluetooth to report to a Welfare Portal. Software based solution are cost effective as there is no hardware required to roll the system out.

A GPS location is tracked for every check in or panic alert has been sent. This can also be used to ensure staff at the end of their shift get home safely by a simply check in.

A solution for both small and large businesses to protect their alone field workers or workers in a high risk area, this gives them some security knowing they are being monitored and not completely alone out there.

B&M Security have a working system at their office that their alone guard workers will be using to replace the current hardware panic system. Kellie went on to invite people who have an interest in this area to make contact if they would like to see more in regards to the options that B & M Security provide in the local area.

A simple Google search using a phrase such as **Welfare or man down applications NZ** will return a number of options for a company to consider, however it is important to understand that every organization is different so it is crucial that as a PCBU and as directors, you carry out due diligence on what might be best or most appropriate solution for your type of situation.

Here is another website that has some interesting reading, this time from Employment New Zealand

<https://www.employment.govt.nz/starting-employment/rights-and-responsibilities/protecting-employees-who-work-alone/>

If you have any questions in regard to the presentations made please feel free to contact the individuals as noted below.

Lynda West, WorkSafe [Lynda.west@worksafe.govt.nz](mailto:Lynda.west@worksafe.govt.nz)

Jeff Strampel, Site Safe [jstrampel@sitesafe.org.nz](mailto:jstrampel@sitesafe.org.nz)

Kellie Vincent Band M Security [kellie@bandmsecurity.co.nz](mailto:kellie@bandmsecurity.co.nz)

**The meeting closed at 5.30 pm.**

The next meeting is planned for 19 Feb 2020 , and the intended subject will be a follow-on from the Mental Health and Wellbeing forum held in Feb 2019. At that time, it was agreed that the Companies who had presented on their own systems would return with an update on progress over the past 12 months. It was also agreed that we would endeavour to include some smaller to medium enterprises who have done some work in this area and had made progress. To that end we would be very pleased to hear from any organization who have carried out some work and this area and who may be prepared to just provide a 5 minute summary of their journey with Mental Health and Well-being.

We asked previous presenters to consider 3 points:

1. What drove them to go down this track ?
2. What have they done so far? and
3. What are the results to date ?

So, if you able to provide some information from a small business perspective we would ask that please make contact so we can arrange for that information to be shared.

If you have any questions about involvement with the Manawatu Health and safety Forum, please contact:

Tony Greeve, Site Safe NZ Inc. [tgreeve@sitesafe.org.nz](mailto:tgreeve@sitesafe.org.nz) 021 557 402

**PRELIMINARY NOTICE: Workers Memorial Day 2020**

**SYMPOSIUM ON THE ROLE OF WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY REPS AND THEIR SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT**

Palmerston North City Council, WorkSafe, MPower (Massey University), and Unions Manawatu are sponsoring a half day seminar on Tuesday 28 April 2020 (8am to 1.pm) which will focus on the importance of workplace health and safety reps, How they are selected, resourced, supported and empowered in their roles. There will be a presentation by a Massey University graduate student who has recently researched the subject. This will be followed by group work and discussion. This is an ideal opportunity for networking between businesses and enterprises so reps can learn from each other. At the conclusion there will be a short ceremony at the Workers' Memorial to commemorate ILO Workers' Memorial Day.

The symposium is open to workplace health and safety delegates, union delegates, representatives/managers of business and state sector enterprises, safety trainers, human resource staff, safety suppliers. Pre-registration will be required but there are no fees or charges as this is organised under the PNCC Safe Cities project under its strategic goals.

Speakers on the day are likely to include Hon. Iain Lees-Galloway, Mayor Grant Smith, Ross Wilson Chair of WorkSafe, and Richard Wagstaff President of the NZCTU. The sponsors intend that the seminar will become an annual event in our region. There will be an opportunity for companies to have displays and signage.

If you would like a registration brochure or have any questions please contact John Shennan [rebelshot@kinect.co.nz](mailto:rebelshot@kinect.co.nz)

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You will be asked to provide a little more information (name, surname and location) and then select the areas of interest you want to be kept up to date about. If you already subscribe, this is a good way to update your subscription.

The current list of information areas is as follows:

Manufacturing, Construction, General Health and Safety Updates,

News and media updates, Major Hazard Facilities, Asbestos,

Work Related Health, Agriculture, Adventure Activities,

Consultations, Energy Safety, Forestry,

Hazardous substances Extractives, including New Zealand Board of Mining Examiners.