



Workers' Memorial Day, 28 April

HEALTH & SAFETY CONVERSATION STARTER PACK



MOURN THE DEAD, FIGHT LIKE HELL FOR THE LIVING

Mother Jones, 1902

WHAT IS WORKERS' MEMORIAL DAY?

On 28 April, we stop work to take a moment to remember workers killed and injured because of their work.

Everyone expects to come home safe at the end of the day, but:

- On average, **50-70** workers are killed on the job, and a further 750—900 die because of work-related diseases every year.
- That equates to **18** workers being killed every week because of their work.
- Every 15 minutes a worker suffers an injury that requires more than week away from work.

Taking a moment's silence commemorates those workers.

It's also an opportunity to reflect on our workplace health and safety.

- Are there any live workplace health and safety issues? What action could we take collectively to resolve it?
- Work through the checklist provided (below) to see if we can get some quick wins for better health and safety in the workplace:
 - **Do we have enough Health and Safety Reps?**
Now is a great time to elect them if we don't.
 - **Are Reps properly trained?**
Elected Reps are entitled to training. To make sure they get work-focused training visit Worksafe Reps (worksafereps.co.nz)
 - **Does our workplace have a health and safety committee?**
Are workers on them? Do we hear from them?
 - **Do we have bargaining coming up?**
How about negotiating a worker participation agreement?

Things to consider

18

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Why it's important to be aware of **good** health and safety.

- **Don't let anyone tell you that health and safety is just unnecessary red tape, or too confusing/unworkable.**
 - Health and safety done right means workers have a real say on how work is designed and how it functions to keep us safe and healthy.
 - **Workers know the best and safest ways of doing your job.** Workers should have a say in how to do it.
 - **Good health and safety empowers workers.**
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 is made to be used by workers and unions in the workplace. It provides enforceable rights and powers to protect from the risks of workplace harms.
- **We have strong rights under these laws, such as:**
 - The right to a safe and healthy work environment.
 - The right to cease unsafe work without getting in trouble.
 - The right to be involved in decisions that impact our health and safety at work.
- **These legislative rights are designed to ensure that we feel empowered to speak up.**
 - Health and safety should never just be about being told what to do, it's about having a voice in the operation of work.
- **Ask if anyone has any health and safety stories to share?**
 - The impact that poor health and safety has on people's lives shows us how important it is to keep fighting for improvements.

** You need to assess if there are any ongoing health and safety issues in the workplace.*

Good health and safety practices empower workers and give a voice in shaping work environments.

| Health and Safety Quick Checklist | | Yes/No |
|--|--|--------|
| Does your workplace have the following structures for engaging on health and safety? | | |
| Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) | | |
| Do workers know who their HSRs are? | | |
| Are HSRs elected by the workers? Have they received training (incl. Unit Standard 29315) | | |
| Are elected HSRs included in all matters that involve worker health and safety? | | |
| Are HSRs able to raise and discuss health and safety matters with PCBU decision makers? | | |
| Health and Safety Committees (HSCs) | | |
| Are workers (and unions) included on HSCs? Is there a balance of worker and employer voices? | | |
| Are HSCs given all information needed? | | |
| Is there proper communication between the HSC and the workers? | | |
| Agreed Procedures – were these created in agreement with the workers and their union? | | |
| Any other agreed engagement processes? | | |
| Do the engagement structures involve all workers at the workplace (including contractors) who are a part of the PCBU's workforce? | | |
| Does the PCBU use the engagement structures when it: | | |
| Identifies hazards and assesses risks? | | |
| Makes decisions to implement controls for risks? | | |
| Proposes to make changes to how work is done? | | |
| Develops, implements, and reviews safety policies and procedures | | |
| When the PCBU does engage workers on any matter that impacts worker health and safety, does it: | | |
| Include workers and their union to fully understand the issues? | | |
| Inform workers of what they intend to do? | | |
| Share all relevant information including all information the workers and union asks for? | | |
| Provide reasonable opportunity for workers to respond? | | |
| Consider the expressed views of workers and their union? | | |
| Advise workers of the decision and provide the reasoning for that decision | | |
| Are Health and Safety Representatives: | | |
| Included in all engagement that involves worker health and safety? | | |
| Able to raise and discuss health and safety matters with PCBU decision makers? | | |