



Te Korowai Whakaruruhau

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service



February 2025

Kia ora Koutou,

Happy New Year 🎉 and welcome to the first edition of the [Te Korowai Whakaruruhau](#) newsletter for 2025. We hope you all had some time to rest and recharge over the holidays. As we kick off the year, this is the perfect time to refresh our commitment to a safe and healthy work environment.

This edition provides valuable insights and knowledge to help you smoothly transition back to work and your work environment as safely as possible.

In this issue we look at:

- Have a safe start to your work year
- Re-inducting yourself after the holiday break
- Welcome Paavan to the HSW Team
- Damstra reporting
- HSW Rep Community of Interest Group (CoI)
- Damstra: What does good evidence look like?
- Heart health awareness month
- Whakatauki

Angus Clark
Associate Director – HSW



Have a safe start to your work year

Did you know there's a notable rise in accidents immediately after employees return from the holiday break? The reasons for this vary and include:

- ✚ Our minds may be on the wonderful holiday we had, not on the task at hand
- ✚ Not all of our coworkers may back at work at the same time. This may leave us short-handed and put pressure on those who are back at work.
- ✚ If the work we do during the year is quite physical or requires concentration, we may find that we have lost a little strength or focus over the time we were on holiday, affecting safety.
- ✚ We may find that we are a little out of practice in the work we do, not always remembering the steps we take to stay safe.
- ✚ Trying to work at the same rate we did before our holiday – we overextend our abilities.

When all (or most) employees experience this in the same period, the risks increase for all. All these factors contribute in same way to an increase in safety risk.

(variation taken from Transpower public docs 2024)



Re-inducting yourself after the holiday break is a smart move!

Returning to work after a well-deserved break can sometimes feel like jumping into the deep end of a pool. To ensure a smooth transition, taking a moment to re-induct yourself to your workplace is not only helpful but essential. Here's why:

1. Safety Refresher

Workplaces, especially those with hazards, rely on everyone staying safety conscious. Re-inducting yourself helps you re-familiarise with safety protocols, equipment, and emergency procedures that might not be front of mind after time away.

2. Catch Up on Changes

Processes, team structures, or even workplace layouts may have shifted during your break. A quick re-induction ensures you're up to speed on any updates, reducing the risk of errors and/or confusion.

3. Boost Confidence

A brief refresher helps you shake off any post-holiday fog and approach your tasks with confidence. It can clarify expectations and make it easier to dive back into your responsibilities.

4. Foster a Positive Mindset

Re-induction provides an opportunity to reset and re-engage. Revisiting your role and workplace can help rekindle your connection to your team and goals, setting the stage for a safe and productive return.

5. Demonstrate Professionalism

Taking the initiative to re-induct yourself shows your commitment to safety, efficiency, and teamwork. It sets a great example and reinforces a culture of mindfulness in the workplace.

Final Thoughts

A few minutes spent re-inducting yourself can save time, reduce risks, and make your return to work far more seamless. It's a proactive approach that benefits not just you but everyone around you.



Remember, safety isn't just a policy—it's a mindset. Whether you're at work or home, always be aware of your surroundings and take proactive steps to prevent accidents. Wear appropriate protective gear, follow safety protocols, and never hesitate to report hazards. A little caution today can prevent a big accident tomorrow!

Let's all have a safe return to work and a great year in 2025!

Welcome Paavan to the HSW team

We are thrilled to announce that Paavan Kumar has joined our team as Hazardous Substances Advisor in November 2024.



Paavan is a home-grown talent who completed his B.Sc. Hons at the University of Auckland. He brings extensive experience in chemical safety, having worked in a Chemical Store and gained deep knowledge of Dangerous Goods stores and related regulations. Paavan's operational experience is invaluable for health and safety, and he has further strengthened his expertise with NEBOSH training.

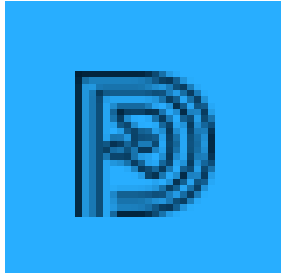
In his new role, Paavan will be responsible for overseeing the safe storage, handling, and disposal of hazardous substances. He will advise on compliance with relevant regulations and standards, conduct risk assessments, and provide training and guidance to staff on chemical safety practices. Paavan will also be involved in maintaining and updating SciTrack, managing emergency response procedures, and liaising with regulatory bodies. His portfolio also includes controlled drugs and psychoactive drugs licenses.

Paavan has been a reliable and professional colleague, and many of us in the Hazard and Containment team have had the pleasure of working with him. Paavan will work closely with Emily Boyd to provide business continuity as they are both working part time. The team is internally organized to respond promptly to queries. Please help us get back to you as quickly as possible by directing your enquiries to ChemicalSafety@auckland.ac.nz.

Should you need to contact the University of Auckland's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team your contacts can be found [here](#)

Damstra reporting

Does everyone in your team know how to lodge an injury, incident (no injury) or observation at the University of Auckland? Here is the link to a 15-minute online course: [Damstra Safety \(Vault\) user support - The University of Auckland](#)



How to report on Damstra has changed with the intranet upgrade. Save this handy [link for reporting](#) or follow these steps to find Damstra reporting:

1. Open the Staff Intranet
2. Select work and personal
3. Report a safety injury, incident or observation

Below are some definitions to help with reporting:

[Report an injury](#)

Any injury to an employee, student, contractor or visitor during the course of work activity.

[Report an incident \(no injury\)](#)

Any unplanned event or occurrence that under slightly different circumstances could have caused harm, injury, ill-health or damage. This category includes any near miss which is defined as an event or situation that could have resulted in injury, illness damage or loss but did not do so due to chance, corrective action or timely intervention.

[Report an observation](#)

Report observed safe (positive) or unsafe (hazardous) acts or conditions.

HSW Rep Community of Interest Group (CoI)

The University of Auckland Health and Safety Rep Community of Interest Group currently has over 100 members. The members and the committee represents everyone at the University and brings a level playing field of representation from across the University at the University Leadership HSW Committee meetings.



Chair: Brody Radford
Committee: Timothy Signal and Yantao Song

The CoI will be asking for expressions of interest to join the Committee at the next meeting on 26 March from 11am to 12pm hosted by Brody Radford. Details will be on the CoI Teams Channel, Please RSVP your interest due to limited space.

Request to join the HSW Rep Community of Interest Group via
hsw@auckland.ac.nz

Damstra: What does good evidence look like?

Damstra is designed to manage and track compliance, safety, and wellbeing data. Actionable evidence enables us to create safety measures, health initiatives, and wellbeing programs that directly address identified issues. It is important that we ensure that the evidence provided is accurate, relevant, and actionable.

Here is an outline of what good evidence looks like:

1. Current and Relevant

Evidence must be current to reflect the latest knowledge, standards, and risks. If the data entered into the system is not current, decisions may be based on outdated risk assessments or health recommendations.

Evidence must be relevant to the specific context in which it is being applied. It is crucial that the data linked to individuals, equipment, and specific work environments reflects the unique risks or conditions associated with each area to ensure that its health, safety, and wellbeing protocols are appropriately tailored to mitigate the specific risks employees face.

2. Credible and Verifiable

Credibility ensures that the evidence used to drive decisions is trustworthy. Using credible data helps us maintain trust in the system and ensure that any interventions or compliance measures are based on solid information.

Verifiability ensures that evidence can be independently confirmed. Being able to cross-check information within the system ensures its reliability and prevents the potential for error or fraud.

3. Reliable and Representative

Good evidence is reliable consistently producing the same results when applied to similar situations. Reliable evidence enables organisations to identify patterns, assess risks, and monitor trends over time.

Evidence that reflects a broad spectrum of experiences ensures that it is representative. Particularly relevant to the University of Auckland as a large organisation, evidence from a diverse range of workers or environments provides a more accurate picture of the risks that are present.

4. Actionable

The ultimate goal of good evidence is that it leads to actionable insights. Evidence should not only inform decision-making but should also prompt concrete actions that improve conditions.

Dates in February



Heart Health Awareness Month

There are plenty of things we can all do to lower our risk of developing coronary heart disease, which will contribute to living a healthy life and keeping one of our most important organs safe and well.

Eating a healthy, balanced diet. Our diet can be a major factor in the health of our heart. One of the main things to watch out for is foods that are high in saturated fat, as too much of this will increase the levels of bad cholesterol in your blood. Foods high in saturated fat include meat pies, butter, cakes, and biscuits.

Keep yourself at a healthy weight. Excess weight can lead to fatty materials building up in your arteries. If the arteries that carry blood to your heart get damaged and blocked, this can potentially lead to a heart attack.

Make sure you do regular exercise. Combining a healthy diet with regular exercise is the best way of maintaining a healthy weight, which in turn lowers your chances of developing high blood pressure. The heart is a muscle like any other, and benefits from exercise. A strong, healthy heart can move blood around the body with less effort.

Quit smoking. Not smoking reduces the chances of developing coronary heart disease. This is because smoking is a major contributor to atherosclerosis, which is a thickening or hardening of the arteries. This makes it harder for blood to move through them and increases the chances of a blood clot forming, which can lead to a heart attack.

Get your heart checked. A heart check is a great way to find out your risk of a heart attack or a stroke, and you can get these done by your local GP. Your doctor can assess your risk of a stroke or heart attack and recommend things to improve if your risks are too high. The Heart Foundation also provides a free, online heart health assessment to give an indication of your heart health, which can be found here: <https://myheartcheck.org.nz/>

Use these tips to improve the health of your heart this Heart Health Awareness Month, or if your heart is healthy already, keep it happily beating for a long time to come.

(ProCare 7 February 2023)



Whakatauki



(KONO)

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter, we hope you enjoyed it.