

Drugs and Alcohol in the Workplace



- Health and Safety Issue
- Significant Hazard



Hazard is the Behaviour of the Worker resulting from;

- Physical or Mental Fatigue
- Drugs
- Alcohol
- Traumatic Shock or Temporary Condition
- Also Callouts, Overwork, Shift Work, Overtime, Sleep Deprivation and Illness



Impairment is the Issue:

Assessment;

- Know your Staff
- Peer and Personal Responsibility
- Impairment Indicators

Control through;

- Eliminate
- Isolate
- Minimise



Management Options:



- Requires the worker to work in an area where there is no risk of serious harm
- Send the worker home
- Rehabilitation for the worker
- Dismissal of the worker



Impairment Policy Principles:

- Impaired workers need to be removed and managed where there is no risk of significant harm.
- Employer needs to provide strong leadership, supported by the Union.
- Employer, Workers and Union need to develop policy, procedures and processes.
- No testing.



What are the problems with D&A testing?

- Intrusive and Backward Looking
- Alienating to Workforce
- Closes off Constructive Options for H&S
- Doesn't Relate to Impairment
- False Positive/Negative
- Expensive



A testing policy is not a substitute for managing the hazard.

It will drive the issue underground where some people will try to beat the system and play the odds.

It doesn't help in creating a positive Health and Safety culture.



- May only provide information about chemicals in the body not how it affects the individual.
- Shifts focus from Health and Safety to legal.
- Not necessary.



Managing a Shared Problem:

- Through a Joint Approach
- Employer
- Workers
- Union(s)



Not on the Job, Mate!

- Education and Rehabilitation Focused
- Peer Intervention Model
- Employer and Union give the SAME message
- Building Constructive Relationships around a Shared Problem





Key messages:

- If you choose to use alcohol or other drugs *that's your business.*
- If you are affected by alcohol or other drugs at work, *that's our business.*
- If you have a problem caused by drinking or using, *maybe we can help.*

Implementation Steps:

- Create a Supportive Environment
- Identify a Problem
- Intervention
- Support Worker to Change Behaviour
- If Necessary - Referral for Treatment
- Worker Rehabilitated or Disciplinary Options Apply



What do we need to make this work?



- Employers willingness to look for *shared solutions*.
- Workforce to *act collectively*.
- Worker Representatives *taking responsibility*.
- Workforce *appreciation* of the problem.
- A&D Specialist to set up a *programme* and *provide training*.

Key points:

- A hazard is a Health & Safety Issue.
- Impairment *IS* the *Issue*.
- Testing often doesn't offer *effective solutions*.
- Can be managed with the Workforce not against them.





Questions ???

