

7 September 2015



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Parliamentary Officer (Committees),
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Dear Mr Driscoll,

RE: Inquiry into access to Australian Standards adopted in delegated legislation - further information from UnionsWA

At our appearance before the above Standing Committee inquiry on Friday 21 August 2015, UnionsWA was asked to provide the Committee with information about the use of Australian standards in Occupational Health and Safety matters. Please see below for our responses.

We have also identified two typographical or transcription errors on page one within the first paragraph of the statement by Meredith Hammat (lines 8 and 9 of the paragraph). We have attached the transcript with the hand written corrections.

Does UnionsWA need to purchase Australian Standards for use by our RTO, Unity Training?

As UnionsWA is the Western Australian Branch of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), we are able to benefit from an agreement between Standards Australia and SAI Global. The ACTU provides, when requested by an affiliate, one hardcopy of an Australian Standard free of charge. When making a request for Standards, we fill out the attached form which is provided for the Committee's information (attachment 1).

Are Australian Standards useful for, and easily understood by, Union representatives?

Yes they are useful for Union representatives. As part of Unity training courses for OHS representatives, we have previously included a visit to the WorkSafe Library so that participants know how to locate important documents such as Australian Standards. When the WorkSafe Library was moved to Cannington such visits became much more difficult, and if the Library is closed a valuable source of information for Health and Safety Representatives will disappear altogether. Participants in Unity Training Courses also need to do a presentation on their last day. Many topics for such presentations have needed access to relevant Australian Standards, however they will now have to complete them without these documents.

Denise Mercer, the Manager of Unity Training Services, informs us that, while she has not heard from Health and Safety Representatives who have had problems understanding the Standards, it is important to emphasise that proper training of representatives is necessary to ensure they can comprehend all the legislation, regulations and associated requirements in Work Health and Safety.

Please find attached a copy of the relevant section of our course outline (attachment 2).

Do coroner's reports reference Australian Standards?

We are unable to determine if the state coroner references standards in any consistent way, however it is possible that they would need to should a finding involve the proper use of dangerous machinery by reference to a manual.

Do WorkSafe investigations reference Australian Standards?

Steve McCann, the Health and Safety Officer of our affiliate the CFMEU Construction and General Division, was previously employed for four years as a WorkSafe Inspector. He informs us that, as all inspectors need to understand the relevant OHS regulations, and Australian Standards are heavily referenced within those regulations, access to and knowledge of the standards was crucial for his work. This was particularly the case if he needed to issue a Provisional Improvement Notice (PIN) about a health and safety issue. For example, safety guidelines for scaffolds make reference to various Australian and New Zealand Standards (see attachment 3). In order to comply with the PIN, a business would need to look up the relevant standards.

I would like to thank the Standing Committee for the opportunity to make a further contribution to the Inquiry. Should you wish to discuss these matters further, please contact me on (08) 9328 7877 or MHammat@unionswa.com.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Meredith Hammat', with a large, stylized loop at the top.

Meredith Hammat

Secretary

REQUEST FORM FOR AN AUSTRALIAN STANDARD

Go to the Australian Standards website maintained by SAI Global for the AS title and AS number: www.standards.com.au

STANDARD TITLE: (E.G. <i>Health and safety at work – Principles and practices</i>)	
AS NUMBER: (E.G. AS 1470-1986)	
CONTACT NAME:	
EMAIL:	PHONE:
UNION:	BRANCH/ DIVISION:
POSTAL ADDRESS:	
DATE NEEDED BY:	

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Signed

Dated

Please email completed form to: standards@actu.org.au

Day Four

Session 12 0900 – 1015	Negotiation skills	See Trainers notes, Activity 6 Participants workbook and power point presentation
Morning Tea 1015 - 1030		
Session 13 1030 – 1200	Safety and Health Meeting	See Trainers note, participants to hold safety and health meeting
Session 14	Contributing to implementing emergency prevention and response	Participants workbook and power point presentation
Lunch Break 1200 - 1230		
Session 15 1230 – 1600	Visit to WorkSafe or if at another site Work safe Role	WorkSafe presentation, the participants work on group presentation for 5 th day, Activity 7. Participants workbook and power point presentation

State Intro Session Plan Version 1

Dec 2012

D.Mercer

Mobile Scaffold Safe Work Practice

A mobile scaffold is an independent scaffold that is free standing and mounted on castors (AS/NZS 1576.1: 1995).

General Guidelines for Dismantling & Assembling of a Mobile Scaffold

Under the national certification requirements in force, certification applies where a person or object could fall more than four (4) metres from a scaffold or from an adjacent open floor.

A Basic Scaffolding Certificate must be acquired to dismantle or assemble a prefabricated mobile scaffold greater than 4m. People without a scaffolding certificate can dismantle/assemble a mobile scaffold only while under supervision by a certified scaffolder. A scaffolding certificate is not required to use a mobile scaffold.

General Guidelines for the Safe Use of a Mobile Scaffold

- Post a sign indicating that only authorised staff are allowed to use mobile scaffold.
- Mobile scaffold must be used only on a hard level surface and must not be located closer than 1 m to any slab edge, penetration or other stepdown, unless a fixed fence, rail or suitably high upturn is in place.
- Check for physical defects before every use, including the access ladder. (Refer to manufacturer's manual if available).
- Ensure the scaffold is level.
- Ensure all sections are pinned or appropriately secured.
- Keep scaffold loads to a minimum (including tools and other equipment) and remove when the scaffold is not in use. DO NOT exceed the scaffold's working load (refer to manufacturer's manual).
- Heavy tools, equipment, and supplies must be hoisted up (rather than carried up by hand).
- Leave all castors locked or chocked against any possible movement. Castors shall comply with AS 1576.2 and shall be capable of being locked when work is being performed from the scaffold.
- Where the castors incorporate adjustable legs, the gradient of the surface shall not exceed 5 degrees, unless provision is made to take the load off the castors during use of the scaffold.
- Where practicable, portable barriers and lights should be placed around the scaffold while in use.
- Ensure guardrails and toeboards are in place on all open sides.
- Never move the scaffold while someone is on it.
- Secure materials before moving the mobile scaffold
- Remove the loads including tools after using the scaffold

References

AS/NZS 1576.1:1995 Scaffolding Part 1: General Requirements

AS/NZS 1576.3:1995 Scaffolding Part 3: Prefabricated and tube-and-coupler scaffolding

AS/NZS 4576:1995 Guidelines for Scaffolding

Disclaimer: These notes are published as an information service and without assuming a duty of care. They contain general information only and should not be relied upon as a substitute for professional or legal advice.