

The importance of health & safety toolbox meetings and their frequency

Regardless of which jurisdiction you reside in all WHS & OHS Acts nationally provide a 'Consultation with Workers' division which is a requirement for your business operations.

For this example, in the WHS Act 2011, this is Division 2.

Section 47 – Duty to consult workers.

Section 48 – Nature of consultation, and

Section 49 – When consultation is required.

In short, as a PCBU (person conducting a business or undertaking) you have a requirement to consult your employees on all safety issues which affect them. Toolbox meetings are a perfect example of when and how to consult, communicate and engage workers by encouraging them to express their views and raise concerns.

The frequency of Toolbox meetings should be monthly (best practice) and can be an informal pre-start meeting or a more formal scheduled discussion, however, you do need to document the topics discussed and the people in attendance.

The Toolbox Meeting Agenda & Record supplied by Golf Australia is a simple document which records the topics, issues, action required, and date which issues will be resolved by. The action date can be immediate for practices which have been identified and workers are advised to stop immediately or over a period of time for issues which require more change.

Have all attendees sign as their understanding of your discussions and file as a record of Toolbox Meeting.

Toolbox Meetings should be relevant to your club, e.g., this could be regarding an issue which has recently become evident or a follow up on your policies, procedures, or SOP's.

Some great Toolbox Meeting subjects to start you off could be:

First Aid,

who to advise of an injury, where the kits are located, who is responsible to restock kits, which team members are trained first aiders.

Hazardous Chemicals

Exposure to chemicals in clubs is common discuss how to handle them, what PPE is required and where the safety data sheets are located. (note safety data sheets should be updated every 5 years contact your supplier for these).

Manual Handling

Hazardous manual handling is one of the biggest causes of injuries in Australian workplaces, partly because they happen so easily. An object doesn't need to be that heavy to cause serious damage if it's not handled properly. Try getting your team to think about the positions their jobs demand of them. What do they need to lift, carry, or move to get the work done? Try practising lifting techniques, asking them to think about the improvements that could be made to their workspace, or demonstrating how to secure a load correctly.

PPE

PPE is one of those things we can get complacent about and think of as uniform instead of protective clothing. It literally has our backs, so we need to give it the attention it deserves.

When was the last time you checked yours for holes or asked a professional if your earplugs fit properly?

Hint: if your ears are swallowing your earplugs or spitting them out, they're the wrong size.

A toolbox talk is the perfect opportunity to set time aside to inspect your PPE to make sure it's in good working order and the correct fit.

Hand Tool Inspections

While hand tools make our tasks easier, they can also cause injuries if they are not looked after or used correctly. Your toolbox meeting could include pre-start checks on hand tools, leads or any machinery either in the maintenance shed or clubhouse. Having a quarantine station, tag out and lock out procedures for faulty equipment could prevent a severe injury.

Other subjects could include: Working in Hot Weather, Test & Tag & Electrical Safety, Accident Prevention, Accident Reporting, Alcohol at the club, Drugs, Fire Action & Fire Extinguishers, Good Housekeeping, Lone Working, Outdoor Working, Personal Hygiene.

Information regarding your jurisdictions WHS ACT or OH&S ACT can be found on your states SafeWork or WorkSafe website.

Your Toolbox Meeting Agenda & Records form can be found at:

<https://www.golf.org.au/planninggovernance>

If you require any additional information regarding Toolbox Meetings, please contact your Club & Facilities Support Manager.

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