

'It's No Accident' is the WHS newsletter of the AMWU. Feedback and story ideas to amwu@amwu.org.au

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Support



AMWU Care
A counselling service for members and their families **1800 206 316**

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AMWU closed Facebook group for AMWU HSRs:
www.amwu.org.au/hsrsgroup

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Mates in Manufacturing launches in Sydney

At the end of last year, the AMWU joined with other unions to launch a suicide prevention program across manufacturing worksites.

AMWU National Secretary Steve Murphy told workers gathered at UGL in Sydney that in 2019, our union suffered a number of high profile suicides across industries.

"That year's AMWU National Conference decided to work with other unions and industry to establish a program that would support workers considering suicide or suffering mental health challenges. It's not only to honour those that we've lost, but to support workers who need it now."

The program focuses on removing the stigma of seeking, accessing, and providing help.

Mark Pearce, a boilermaker at UGL, knows firsthand how hard it is to lose a workmate.

Mark's workmate had been in a car accident and had become vulnerable while dealing with his recovery. He'd said he wanted to end his life.

"I remember going to the funeral and then afterwards wondering whether there was anything more we could have done. Maybe if this sort of program existed at the time it would have made a difference."

"Suicide doesn't just impact the individual - it has a major impact on families, friends, and work colleagues."



The pilot will be rolled out across 12 workplaces this year.

AMWU President Andrew Dettmer says workplaces were well-placed to support mental health initiatives to help save lives.

"Suicide doesn't just impact the individual - it has a major impact on families, friends, and work colleagues. Nobody wants to lose a mate to suicide."

The Mates in Manufacturing pilot program will see volunteers in manufacturing worksites like UGL comprehensively trained onsite to keep at-risk workers safe until clinical assistance can be organised. Volunteers will be supported by qualified professionals, while at-risk workers will be referred to appropriate services, including medical intervention, assistance programs, or counselling. ●

IT'S NO ACCIDENT

AMWU Health and Safety News



AMWU

February 2022

Remember the dead - fight for the living

A loved one not coming home from work is something we all dread. Yet, it's a tragedy that was felt by nearly 200 families across Australia last year.

Every day, workers are exposed to workplace hazards that result in serious illness, injury, and death.

International Workers' Memorial Day is a day that we remember the dead and fight for the living.

April 28 is our chance to join with those who have lost loved ones at work and reaffirm our commitment to work health and safety.

Every person should come home safe from work.

Your local AMWU branch or Trades and Labour Council will be able to tell you what public events are happening in your state or territory. Some of this year's events will be online due to COVID-19 though many will still happen in person.

In Australia

Workplace deaths increased for a third consecutive year in 2020, according to the most recent data published by Safe Work Australia (SWA), after a decade of declining numbers. However, Australia's work-related fatality rate has decreased by 50 per cent since its peak in 2007.

The data shows 194 workers died at work in 2020, not accounting for the number of workers who died as an indirect result of work injury or because of chemical exposure. Occupational cancers alone equate to about 5,000 cancers a year (SWA, 2006).

There were 120,355 serious claims (accepted workers' compensation claims with a week or more off work) in the same period. This was also the first year that recorded COVID-19 related claims, with a major spike during Victoria's second wave, particularly for workplace transmission.

Internationally

Global figures from the International Labour Organization (ILO) show the very real cost of poor working conditions.

Every year:

- more than 2.3 million people die from work-related accidents or disease
- workers suffer from 317 million work-related injuries
- 160 million workers experience non-fatal occupational diseases

Every day:

- 6,300 workers die
- workers suffer from 870,000 work-related injuries

- workers suffer from 440,000 non-fatal occupational diseases

Every 15 seconds:

- one worker dies
- 151 work-related injuries are reported
- 76 non-fatal occupational diseases are reported

Marking the day

Each year around Australia there are public events including multi-faith religious services, secular memorial events, laying wreaths, planting trees, unveiling monuments, and laying out shoes, boots or tools as a symbol for those who have died at work.

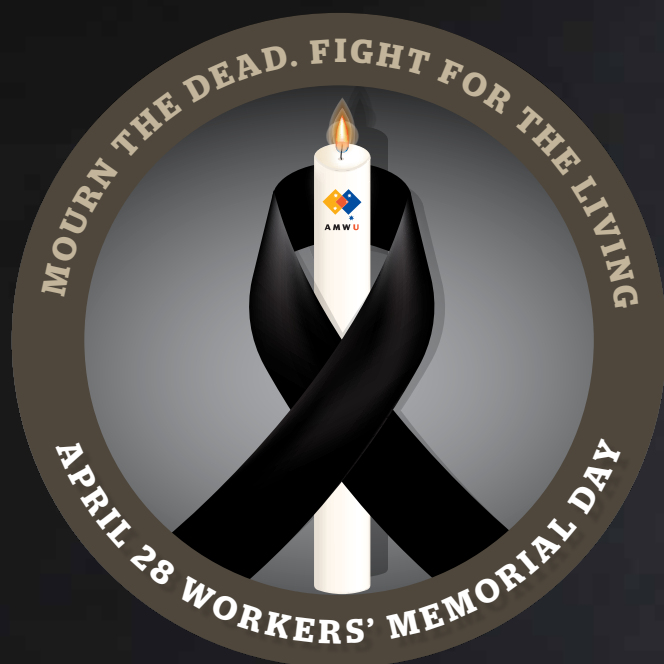
Some people also hold private events in homes and workplaces that include the lighting of candles, a minute silence at 11am, and safety focused activities.

These are deeply moving events and attendance is encouraged.

Delegates and HSRs should seek support from their employer to pay for those wanting to attend these events. Alternatively, you may want to organise an event in your workplace, even if it's just a minute silence.

If this is a difficult time for you, support is always available from AMWU Care Line on 1800 206 316. ●

FOR WORKPLACE NOTICEBOARD



Mourn the dead, fight for the living.

April 28 – International Workers' Memorial Day, the day we mourn the dead and fight for the living.

