

MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGIES WORKING GROUP

COMMUNIQUE

A summary of the
Mental Health Strategies Working Group Meeting on 4 October 2016

1. CCI – Work Integrated Learning Student Project

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry gave a presentation to the Mental Health Strategies Working Group on research into the mental health information and implementation resources available to workplaces. The research was undertaken by a work integrated learning student.

The project was divided into two phases. Phase one was a survey of 50 members to identify how employers searched for information on this topic, with Phase two being a desk-top review of the available web-based mental health resources.

The Mental Health Strategies Working Group will consider the applicability of web portals which are currently being developed by the Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance, Mental Health Commission and Healthier Workplaces, and whether these resources can be used by the resources sector or need to be adapted.

2. FIFO Mental Health Research

Some recommendations from the Education and Health Standing Committee's final report require the Mental Health Commission to commission independent research into the mental health impacts of fly-in, fly-out work arrangements on workers and their families.

A FIFO Mental Health Research Steering Committee was established to investigate recommendations, 4, 12, 18, 19 and 26 from the report. This Committee is chaired by Lifeline WA and includes: Mental Health Commission, Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH), Western Australia Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies (WANADA), Western Australian Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA), unions (Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union and Unions WA), industry (Chamber of Minerals and Energy WA and Rio Tinto); State Government (Department of Mines and Petroleum) and a family member of a FIFO worker who died by suicide.

The Steering Committee has prepared a draft research scoping document, with input from the Mental Health Strategies Working Group and this will be further refined before tenders for the research are issued.

The Mental Health Strategies Working Group is seeking more details on the governance of the FIFO Mental Health Research Steering Committee, the research stages and timeframes.

3. Government mental health programs

WorkSafe WA gave an overview of mental health programs being undertaken by other working groups in Western Australia.

Safe Work Australia

- Mental Health Reference Group is developing guidance material that gives employers standard information on prevention, early-intervention, management and return to work for psychological injury.
- Revised Workplace Bullying Guides were published on 31 August 2016.
- Safety Culture Group is developing a safety culture assessment tool for workplaces

Heads of Workplace Safety Authorities (HWSA)

- HWSA is working on the regulatory approach to management of risk, consolidating resources and guidance material that is available in each state. Standardised material and approaches will be developed for guidance and enforcement.
- The People At Work Sustainability Working Group (another HWSA initiative) is developing a risk assessment tool for psychological health. The tool is being revised, as funding has ceased and some of the survey items are owned by a university.

The Mental Health Strategies Working Group noted that there may be some overlap between Government mental health initiatives, so more information is being collated on the programs and timeframes.

4. DMP Psychosocial Harm Audits of Mining Operations – Interim Report

In February 2016, the Department of Mines and Petroleum (DMP) released a psychosocial harm audit and guide on its website, to provide Western Australian mining operators with a simple tool to raise awareness, assist in the development of a mental health plan and help assess their existing arrangements.

DMP has committed to sharing the aggregated outcomes of the psychosocial harm audits in a final report in late 2016, so the resources sector is better informed regarding expectations and opportunities for improvement.

The Mental Health Strategies Working Group agreed that if the audits are to continue after the final report is published, the audit tool would need to be amended in consultation with stakeholders.

5. FIFO Inquiry Action Plan

The Government's response to a number of the recommendations in the Standing Committee's final report was to assign them to the Mining Industry Advisory Committee (MIAC) to progress. MIAC subsequently established the Mental Health Strategies Working Group to develop strategies for industry.

The Working Group is progressing the recommendations in an Action Plan, identifying available resources, dependencies, current status and grouping related recommendations. Once finalised, the action plan will be considered by the MIAC and kept updated.

6. Rio Tinto R U OK? video

Members viewed the video, which interviews a family who lost a family member through suicide. The video can be viewed on Vimeo:

<https://vimeo.com/lushdigital/review/180996427/b435deec15>.

7. Next meeting: 22 November 2016

The focus of the next meeting will be on training and peer support programs.

Nicole Roocke

Acting Chair (Chamber of Minerals and Energy WA)