Inquest into the death of Glenn Richard Newport

Mr Newport died on 13 January 2013 as a result of cardiac arrest precipitated by dilutional hyponatraemia whilst working as a fly-in-fly-out worker creating infrastructure for a future liquefied natural gas project. The coroner found Mr Newport’s principal cause of death was his physiological reaction to the exposure to heat in his work environment.

Coroner John Hutton delivered his findings of inquest on 20 April 2016.

The Queensland Government responds to recommendations directed to government agencies at inquests by informing the community if a recommendation will be implemented or the reason why a recommendation is not supported.

The departments named in this response will provide implementation updates until the recommendation is delivered. Further information relating the implementation of recommendations can be obtained from the responsible minister named in the response.

**Recommendation 1**

The heavy construction industry should devise and implement an industry-wide code of practice in relation to the prevention and management of heat injury in the course of work. This code of practice should become the baseline against which operations can be assessed in terms of safety.

Response and action: implementation of the recommendation is in progress.

Responsible agency: Department of Education supported by the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy.

On 6 April 2017 the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs and the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines responded:

The Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) and the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (DNRM) are awaiting a response to a submission to Safe Work Australia to lead a national approach to the coroner’s recommendation to implement a code of practice in relation to the prevention and management of heat injury.

If a national approach is not supported, the OIR in collaboration with DNRM will consider how to implement the recommendation at a state level.

**On 23 January 2018 the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations (lead minister) and on 25 October 2017 the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (supporting minister) responded:**

Safe Work Australia endorsed the development of national guidance material to manage the risk of heat related illness. As climatic conditions and heat related issues vary throughout Australia each of the state and territory regulators will be able to modify the national guidance to ensure it is relevant to their jurisdiction.

OIR will continue to work collaboratively with DNRM to develop the guidance material to address this recommendation. A final decision is yet to be made as to whether the material will be guidance or a model code of practice.
It should also be noted, in November 2016 OIR published a Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ) web script on managing the risks of heat related illness which includes many resources including a heat stress (basic) calculator.

Furthermore, in 2016 WHSQ Inspectors underwent training by Dr Ross De Corletto on heat stress risk assessment, control and enforcement.

**Recommendation 2**
Any future industry-wide code of practice should be based on a quantitative assessment of climate, including an ultimate cut-off temperature at which work must cease. Qualitative measures may be implemented in support of such quantitative measures, but quantitative measures should be in place. It follows that work sites should have appropriate equipment and personnel to measure temperature and humidity.

Response and action: implementation of the recommendation is in progress.

Responsible agency: Department of Education supported by the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy.

On 6 April 2017 the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs and the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines responded:

The Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) and the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (DNRM) are awaiting a response to a submission to Safe Work Australia to lead a national approach to the coroner’s recommendation to implement a code of practice in relation to the prevention and management of heat injury.

If a national approach is not supported, the OIR in collaboration with DNRM will consider how to implement the recommendation at a state level.

**On 23 January 2018 the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations (lead minister) and on 25 October 2017 the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (supporting minister) responded:**

Safe Work Australia (SWA) endorsed the development of national guidance material to manage the risk of heat related illness. As climatic conditions and heat related issues vary throughout Australia each of the state and territory regulators will be able to modify the national guidance to ensure it is relevant to their jurisdiction.

OIR will continue to work collaboratively with the DNRM to develop the guidance material to address this recommendation. A final decision is yet to be made as to whether the material will be guidance or a model code of practice.

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**Recommendation 3**
Any future industry-wide code of practice should include provisions for night-based work in times when the heat of the day is expected to be dangerous.

Response and action: implementation of the recommendation is in progress.

Responsible agency: Department of Education supported by the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy.

On 6 April 2017 the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs and the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines responded:

The Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) and the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (DNRM) are awaiting a response to a submission to Safe Work Australia to lead a national approach to the coroner’s recommendation to implement a code of practice in relation to the prevention and management of heat injury.

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Furthermore, in 2016 WHSQ Inspectors underwent training by Dr Ross De Corletto on heat stress risk assessment, control and enforcement.

**Recommendation 4**
Any future industry-wide code of practice should include measurable, objective criteria which would require a casualty to be evacuated to a hospital, and further, measurable objective criteria which would require a casualty to be immediately evacuated to a hospital.

Response and action: implementation of the recommendation is in progress.

Responsible agency: Department of Education supported by the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy.
On 6 April 2017 the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs and the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines responded:

The Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) and the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (DNRM) are awaiting a response to a submission to Safe Work Australia to lead a national approach to the coroner’s recommendation to implement a code of practice in relation to the prevention and management of heat injury.

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