

The implementation of the new harmonisation legislation has now provided a document that is easy to disseminate across all governmental departments and corporate Australia and binds all persons conducting a business and undertaking.

The legislation provides the necessary framework and uniform laws to ensure the person conducting a business and undertaking (PCBU) and workers fully understand the risks that they are undertaking for the provision of a safe work environment.

However, as a registered training organisation (RTO) based in the Central Queensland area which has been involved in the provision of Work Safe at Heights, Confined Space, Test Gas Atmospheres and Low Voltage Training etc. to the construction of the LNG projects on Curtis Island and other major corporations based within the Central Queensland Area, we have a disturbing high percentage of the workforce are unaware of the harmonisation legislation.

In training sessions conducted since 2012 on the implementation of the harmonization laws within our training scope of delivery we have processed 3,276 SOA's for Confined Space and 3,521 for Safe Work at Heights. The question I normally put to the participants is "Do you fully understand the new safety laws incorporated in the harmonization legislation?" and the general consensus around the room is that 85% of the participants are not aware of its meaning and importance and how this pertains to the person conducting a business and undertaking and the responsibility of workers as well.

Taking into consideration the construction of the LNG projects, the background of workers was from different states and territories of Australia, so this issue is not just a Queensland issue but a nationwide issue.

My consultation with CEO's, Managers and Supervisors has also revealed a lack of understanding of these simple processes.

When the Blue Card was the requirement for the Construction Industry workforce, the face to face delivery of the WH&S requirements, had a positive impact and reinforced the legislative requirements in a more effective manner than the current, online White Card system.

I have just completed a Qld Construction Industry White Card and I found it clearly evident that the new harmonization laws are not given sufficient emphasis to ensure any person undertaking this training are fully aware of their legal requirements.

In light of all my observations and experience to date, collectively we should be investigating a more robust training program to ensure all those involved in all aspects of the Construction Industry are fully aware of their legal requirements and the implications of their failure to abide by the current workplace legislation.

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