



Australian Government

Comcare

Media Release

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COMCARE SECURES INCREASED WORKER PROTECTION AT ABORIGINAL HOSTELS LTD WORKPLACES

Australia's federal safety regulator, Comcare, has required a federal Government-owned company that supplies temporary accommodation to indigenous people to improve its work safety after an employee was injured using a goods lift.

The court-enforceable undertaking between Aboriginal Hostels Ltd and Comcare was announced today.

It is the result of an investigation by Comcare, instigated after a worker was injured using a goods service lift at the Iris Clay Hostel in Townsville in 2007.

The Comcare investigation found that AHL had not protected the health and safety of its employees, by failing to conduct risk assessments, inspections or maintenance of the service lift, or implement adequate work systems for the lift's operation.

The investigation also found that AHL failed to provide information, instruction, training and supervision to employees on how to safely use the lift.

Comcare CEO Paul O'Connor said the enforceable undertaking was an important example to all federal employers that providing safe equipment and adequate training was a fundamental responsibility of an employer to a worker.

"Safety incidents caused by lack of training and information are one hundred percent avoidable. Employers must ensure that plant and machinery is safe and used only by trained employees."

Mr O'Connor said that AHL had now committed to implementing a new safety and maintenance regime, and improving training and supervision of workers.

Comcare will monitor AHL to ensure it complies with the undertaking.

A copy of the undertaking is available at www.comcare.gov.au.

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