



15 June 2010

NATIONAL FORKLIFT CAMPAIGN TO IMPROVE WORKERS' SAFETY

Improving the safety of workers near forklifts is the focus of a new national safety campaign involving Australia's federal workplace safety regulator, Comcare.

The national campaign is a result of collaboration and co-operation between members of the Heads of Workplace Safety Authorities, of which Comcare is a member.

Forklifts are a serious safety hazard in many Australian workplaces and are involved in a high number of injuries and deaths.

Comcare CEO Paul O'Connor said that on average more than 1,000 work-related injuries occurred each year involving forklifts.

"Forklifts make many jobs easier, but they should not make jobs more dangerous."

"There is a fundamental responsibility on employers and employees to make sure they are aware of the safety basics so that forklift operators and the people around them are protected from harm."

Mr O'Connor said that, aside from the injuries to workers, forklift incidents were also costly for employers.

In 2006/07 – 2007/08, workers' compensation claims from harmed workers involving forklifts cost employers in the Comcare Scheme almost \$1.4 million.

During the forklift safety campaign, Comcare investigators will visit a range of employers in the Comcare jurisdiction to assess the safety of forklift operations, provide guidance and assistance for the employer to rectify any problems, and, if necessary, enforce improvements.

Comcare will commence with site visits later this month, with results available by the end of the year.

Information about forklift safety and the national safety campaign can be found at www.comcare.gov.au.

Media inquiries: Ph: 1300 366 979 Email: media@comcare.gov.au

Ends