

POLICY STATEMENT – RETURN to WORK PROGRAM

POLICY NO: 25/08

OBJECTIVE: TO DEVELOP A RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM FOR WORKERS INJURED AT WORK, COMPLYING WITH OUR INSURANCE COMPANY'S INJURY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

OUTLINE

STE has, through consultation and agreement with worker representatives, developed this RTW Program for the management of workers who are injured at work. This Program forms part of the operating procedures of the organisation, is consistent with our insurance company's Injury Management Program and will be reviewed every two years. This program complies with the WorkCover Guide to Employers' Return-to-Work Programs.

1. Return to Work Commitments

STE is committed to the return to work of injured workers.

- We will prevent injury and illness by providing a safe and healthy working environment.
- We will ensure that injury management activities commence as soon as possible after a worker is injured.
- We will provide the injured worker with support to minimise the effects of the injury and to ensure an early return to work is a normal practice and expectation.
- We will provide suitable duties/employment for an injured worker as soon as is safely possible, where reasonably practicable and after seeking appropriate medical advice.
- We will consult with our workers and any union representing them to ensure that they are regularly informed of their rights and responsibilities and of company policies on return to work.
- We will ensure that participation in the RTW process will not, of itself, disadvantage an injured worker. All efforts will be made to resolve disagreements about the company RTW Program, or its components, through discussions and in the spirit of cooperation.

2. Procedure When Injury Occurs

Notification of an injury.

- The injured worker must report the injury to the Supervisor and field officer immediately. The O H & S Manager/RTW Coordinator will investigate and report on the incident/accident.
- The Payroll Officer must enter a notification of injury in the Incident Report Book.
- The Payroll Officer **MUST NOTIFY CGU for NSW Claims and Allianz for ACT claims within 24 hours of being notified of an injury by facsimile.**

- Where the Incident is deemed to be serious, O H&S Manager must report this serious incident to WorkCover immediately using the online form at www.workcover.nsw.gov.au or phoning 13 10 50.

3. Provision of First Aid and Medical Treatment:

Once an injury has been reported, we will ensure that the injured person receives appropriate first aid and if required the OH&S Manager or a person authorised by the OH&S Manager will accompany the injured employee to a nominated medical facility. In the event of an emergency, the host employer will call for an Ambulance.

- Where an injured worker receives treatment, they **MUST** nominate a treating doctor who will be responsible for medical management of the injury and who will co-operate with injury management.
- Provision for nominating the treating doctor is made on the approved WorkCover medical certificate.
- The recovery period away from the worksite should be as short as is safely possible.

4. Making a Claim:

An employee who wishes to seek compensation for an injury or illness must complete a workers compensation claim form and submit the form to the Payroll Officer.

- The Payroll Officer completes the employer's report of injury
- The Payroll Officer forwards this form together with the employee's claim form, certificates, accounts and other documentation, as a matter of urgency, to ensure that a proper claim on behalf of the injured worker has been lodged with the nominated insurance provider within 7 days.

5. Role of the Return to Work Coordinator (RTW):

An employee who wishes to seek compensation for an injury or illness must complete a workers compensation claim form and submit the form to the Payroll Officer.

- Our RTW Coordinator will be responsible for coordinating all efforts aimed at assisting the injured worker to recover and return to work as quickly and as safely as possible
- This includes early contact with the worker and treating health services
- For all lost time injuries, our RTW Coordinator will contact the injured worker to ensure:
 - 5.1 That the injured worker understands the procedures of our RTW Program;
 - 5.2 That the process of lodging a workers compensation claim is explained and;

5.3 To prepare the injured worker for a safe and timely return-to-work consistent with medical advice.

- Our RTW Coordinator will gain written consent from the injured worker to obtain, use and disclose injury management information.
- The Return to Work Plan will be faxed to the Host Employer.
- The RTW Coordinator will distribute copies of the Return to Work plan to the injured worker and the supervisor and ensure they understand the plan.
- Our RTW Coordinator will establish, maintain and store a confidential RTW file on each injured worker. Access to the worker's own file will be granted, if requested.
- Our RTW Coordinator will provide assistance to workers who speak languages other than English.

6. Role of the Workers Compensation Insurance Company:

- Within 3 days of being notified by us that we have an injured worker, the insurance company will develop an Injury Management Plan (IMP) for the worker.
- We will cooperate with the Insurance Company in developing and complying with an Injury Management Plan for that injured worker.
- Within 7 days of being notified by us that we have an injured worker, the Insurance Company will give approval for us to make provisional payments to that worker.
- We expect the Insurance Company to maintain contact with our RTW Coordinator and the injured worker regarding progress of the workers compensation claim.

7. Involving a Rehabilitation Provider:

- We will consider referral to an accredited Rehabilitation Provider when it becomes evident that an injured worker is not likely to resume his/her pre-injury duties or cannot do so without changes to the workplace.
- Our RTW Coordinator will consult the worker, the Insurance Company and the worker's treating doctor to discuss the need to involve an accredited Rehabilitation Provider.
- The role of the Rehabilitation Provider is to assist, develop and monitor the Return to Work Plan.
- We acknowledge that the injured worker has the right to choose his/her treating doctor and Rehabilitation Provider. Should a worker wish to change doctor or Provider, he/she must contact the insurer.

8. Finding and Providing Suitable Duties:

- When the injured worker is, according to medical advice, capable of returning to work, an individual RTW Plan will be developed by our RTW Coordinator, offering suitable duties.
- Our RTW Coordinator will consult with the Supervisor, the injured worker, the Insurance Company and treating doctor to develop a written RTW Plan.
- We undertake to ensure that the duties offered to injured workers as part of his/her RTW Plan will always be meaningful, productive, a safe match with the worker's physical and psychological capabilities and consistent with medical advice.
- Suitable duties may be provided in many different ways – at the same or different worksite, or the same job with different hours and/or modified duties, or a different job altogether.
- Suitable duties may be full-time or part-time, depending on the availability and requirements of the individual injured worker's circumstances.
- All offers of suitable duties will be in writing, clearly listing the duties to be performed, working hours, physical/medical and physiotherapy treatments and review.
- Treatment should be obtained by workers out of working hours whenever practicable.
- Suitable duties will be time limited, monitored closely by our RTW Coordinator and regularly upgraded.
- Where an injured worker cannot return to his/her pre-injury duties, every assistance will be made to assist that worker to find alternative employment, either within or external to our organisation. This includes our RTW Coordinator referring to an accredited Rehabilitation Provider for advice about WorkCover training and re-employment.
- No injured workers will be dismissed within six months of becoming unfit for employment as a result of a work related injury.

9. Arrangements for Dispute Resolution:

- If there are disagreements about suitable duties or some aspect of the RTW Program, we will work with the injured worker and anyone representing them to try to resolve the disagreements.
- Failing this, we will attempt to resolve the disagreements by consulting with the Rehabilitation Provider, the treating doctor or an Injury Management Consultant.
- Assistance may be sought from our workers compensation insurance company or the Workcover Assistance Service.
- In the case of formal disputes about suitable duties, or medical fitness, we may refer the matter to the Workers Compensation Commission.

10. Compliance Responsibilities:

The OH&S Manager/ RTW Coordinator is to ensure that the Summary of the Legislation and Rehabilitation Policy are visibly displayed and the Incident/Visit Report Book and the STE Return to Work Program are kept in a place accessible to employees at all times. The Payroll Officer completes the employer's report of injury.

- STE RTW Coordinator as at 18 June, 2008 is Darren Gibson Ph: 02 9715 7344 Fax: 02 9745 2900 Email: d.gibson@1300apprentice.com.au.
- Our nominated rehabilitation provider(s) are: (subject to accreditation) Creative Injury Management Services – phone (02) 9498 3472
- Our NSW insurer is:
CGU Workers' Compensation
GPO Box 9960
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Phone: 1300 666 506 Fax: 02 9088 9707
- Our ACT insurer is:
Allianz Australia Insurance Ltd
PO Box 262
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601

Phone: 1300 666 506 Fax: 02 9088 9707

11. Endorsement:

These policies and procedures will come into effect as of the 18th June 2008 and may be reviewed and amended by the agreement of the undersigned or their representatives:

Signed: _____
Employer Representative

Signed: _____
Employee Representative

Date: _____

Date: _____