



# Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee

**Inquiry:** Inquiry into workplace drug testing in Victoria

**Hearing Date:** 21 May 2024

**Question[s] taken on notice**

**Directed to:** WorkSafe Victoria

**Received Date:** 12 June 2024

## 1. **David ETTERS HANK, page 4**

### **Question Asked:**

Okay. As you have identified in your very succinct submission, you basically indicate that the Act is largely silent on the responsibilities of employers, unions and health and safety reps to negotiate workplace drug-testing policies. Do you have any sense of how many workplaces or what percentage of workplaces actually have agreements in place?

**Joe CALAFIORE:** I actually do not, I confess. I am not sure. I am happy to sort of investigate. I suspect in the mining industry it would be quite common. But mining aside, no, I actually would not have any knowledge on that.

**David ETTERS HANK:** Can I give that to you as a question on notice? We would be very keen to understand it better.

**Joe CALAFIORE:** Of course. We will make inquiries and see what we can do.

### **Response:**

WorkSafe Victoria does not collect data on the number of workplaces that have a drug and or alcohol testing policy in place.

## 2. **Ryan BATCHELOR, page 9**

### **Question Asked:**

In Dr Heath's questions you talked about injury and compensation claims. Do you record the extent to which alcohol and other drug use is a contributing factor to injury and compensation claims, or have you got any research that goes to that question?

**Joe CALAFIORE:** No to the first part of the question. In terms of –

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** So it is not part of your standard data collection as such?

**Joe CALAFIORE:** No. If it is okay with the committee, I can take on notice the question about what research we have got.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** I think it would be useful for us to know whether you have got any research that goes to the question of the extent to which

alcohol and other drug use is contributing, or not, to injury and compensation claims in the workforce.

**Joe CALAFIORE:** If that can be captured on notice, we are happy to look into that.

**Ryan BATCHELOR:** That would be great.

**Response:**

WorkSafe Victoria hasn't completed any research recently specifically regarding the extent to which alcohol and other drug use is a contributing factor to injury and compensation.

As a larger piece, WorkSafe Victoria has published and continues to implement various strategies related to the risk of alcohol and drugs in the workplace, including:

- WorkWell toolkit: [Alcohol and other drugs policy](#). This provides guidance on how to develop or review workplace policy and procedures for dealing with alcohol and other drugs
- [Guidance for alcohol and drugs in mines](#) – industry specific guidance
- [Evidence review of the prevalence and impact of fatigue](#), the current guidelines, potential interventions and prevention strategies to address fatigue in the Healthcare and Social Assistance industry. Key finding: Increased drug/alcohol use was commonly associated with mental and emotional fatigue; but these factors may be a cause or consequence of fatigue.

### **Additional questions**

3. **David ETTERSHANK**

**Question Asked:**

What is the extent of drug related injuries?

**Response:**

WorkSafe Victoria's data does not breakdown injuries in relation to drug or alcohol.

4. **David ETTERSHANK**

**Question Asked:**

How do we understand how WorkSafe analyses and classifies such data?

**Response:**

WorkSafe Victoria's data does not breakdown injuries and claims in relation to drug or alcohol claims. VCode is WorkSafe's system for classifying the nature of injury/disease associated with workers' compensation claims in Victoria since 1 July 2002.

Vcodes are publically available on WorkSafe's website, [VCode booklet: The nature of injury and disease classification system for Victoria | WorkSafe Victoria](#) and each code contains a list of injuries by type and place on the body, and guidelines for choosing a code where the claimant's description isn't specific enough (e.g. 'sore back').