



# INTRODUCING WORKSAFE'S WORKWELL TOOLKIT

Civil construction routinely ranks among Australia’s top five most high-risk industries for poor mental health. For those working in the industry, this comes as no surprise; long working hours, high job demands, unrealistic deadlines and frequent risk of unemployment due to cyclical nature of projects, distinguishes our industry and unfortunately, this inevitably leads to poor mental health in the workplace.



With one in five Victorian workers experiencing mental ill health this year (Department of Health & Human Services, 2018) and two in five Australians leaving their job because of a poor mental health environment (Beyond Blue, 2017), it’s becoming abundantly clear that the burden of poor mental health, doesn’t just affect the individual – it’s incredibly costly to the business. Last year in Australia, mental illness cost the Australian economy \$60 billion in lost wages, absenteeism, reduced productivity and even workers compensations claims, eating into company bottom lines (ABC, 2019).

Given, adults spend approximately a third of their lives at work – and even more for those putting in long hours in civil construction – the workplace has an important role to play in creating an environment that is protective of staff’s mental health. There are a number of factors within an employer’s control that can impact the mental health and safety of their team – known as ‘work-related factors’. For example, these include the level of control someone has over their job, clarity of their role, the level of support they receive, workplace relationships and more. In total, there are 11 work-related factors that influence the workplace mental health:

- 1. job control
- 2. job demands
- 3. support
- 4. organisational change management
- 5. organisational justice
- 6. recognition and reward
- 7. role clarity
- 8. workplace relationships
- 9. environmental conditions, such as: hazardous manual tasks, poor air quality, high noise levels, extreme temperatures, working near unsafe machinery
- 10. remote and isolated work
- 11. violent or traumatic events



## ABOUT CIVIL CONTRACTORS FEDERATION (CCF)

Civil Contractors Federation (CCF) is the peak industry body representing Australia’s civil construction industry with more than 1700 contractor and associate Members nationally.

CCF Members are responsible for the construction and maintenance of Australia’s infrastructure, including roads, bridges, pipelines, drainage, ports and utilities. Our Members also play a vital role in the residential and commercial building industry by providing earthmoving and land development services including the provision of power, water, communications and gas.

When systems are in place to control and manage these factors, and appropriate resources are available to support, there are real benefits to business. In workplaces

that employees consider mentally healthy, self-reported absenteeism as a result of experiencing mental ill-health almost halves (Beyond Blue, 2017).



While the benefits of a mentally healthy workplace are easy to quantify, knowing where to start and/or what steps to take isn’t easy – especially from a health and safety perspective. To equip employers to prevent mental injury and promote a safe and mentally healthy workplace, WorkSafe have created a free online tool, called the WorkWell Toolkit. The WorkWell Toolkit provides step-by-step advice and practical tools and resources, including policy examples, videos, tip sheets and more, tailored to your business size and industry type. For the construction industry, you can get specific advice for managing new and young workers, managing contractors and sub-contractors, work design, and more. And the best bit? It’s free.

The WorkWell program aims to make mental health and wellbeing a priority in Victorian workplaces through access to resources, funding and knowledge sharing. WorkWell is about workplaces proactively creating safe and mentally healthy environments so employees thrive and the risk of work-related psychological harm or mental injury is reduced.

If you feel like your workplace could benefit from improved mental health, make a change today by registering with the WorkWell Toolkit today at <https://www.workwell.vic.gov.au/workwell-toolkit-construction>. *IEE*

Aligning with the WorkWell Toolkit, The Positive Plans – Positive Futures project is a Victorian-wide initiative led by the Civil Contractors Federation Victoria (CCFV) that aims to use Mental Health Action plans to reduce work-related stress and burnout and improve mental health outcomes for young workers and senior professionals in the civil construction industry.

The CCFV and their project partners, will apply a “strengths-based approach” to develop a series of templates, tools, plans and capacity building interventions to positively influence the way business owners and workers think about workplace mental health.



To find out more about the Positive Plans – Positive Futures project and how it can help your business, contact Adrian Panozzo, Project Manager on 1300 DIAL CCF or email: [adrian.panozzo@ccfvic.com.au](mailto:adrian.panozzo@ccfvic.com.au)

