

SAFETY BULLETIN

DATE: DECEMBER 2021

Be safe this festive season

This safety bulletin provides safety advice for the NSW mining industry.

Background

2021 has left many of us looking forward to Christmas and the opportunity to start a new year. Nonetheless, it is a reminder that we must take the time to consider the safety and health risks associated with our work so we can celebrate the holidays with our families and friends. Rushing and being distracted, coupled with fatigue, increases the chances of mistakes occurring which can lead to serious incidents.

Considerations

Heading into the festive season, workers are reminded of the need to be vigilant of their own safety and the safety of their colleagues. Consideration should also be given to our mental health and the mental well-being of our work colleagues. The COVID-19 pandemic has had polarising mental health impacts and with continuing travel restrictions and conflicting work rosters, negative effects may be felt. Workers may have feelings of separation, loneliness or loss during this holiday season.

Additionally, the festive season can often be a time of indulgence, socialising and overcommitting. This can affect a worker's fitness for work through excessive alcohol consumption, lack of sleep, interruption of routine and distraction.

As travel resumes and leave demand surges, mines are reminded to ensure adequate supervision is available to meet the needs of their site. Workload and task demand must be monitored to avoid worker overload during times of increased leave.

Recommendations

Workers

- Take all reasonable steps to understand and comply with the requirements of fitness for work and fatigue management plans
- Understand your duties under [Section 28 of the Work Health and Safety Act \(2011\)](#) to take reasonable care of your own safety and to ensure your actions do not adversely impact on the health and safety of others.

Mine Operators

- Reinforce to workers and supervisors their obligations under the mine's health control plan including the fitness for work and fatigue management plans
- Verify that all controls identified in these plans are in place and operating as intended and that all resources intended to support these plans are readily available to those who need them
- Remind workers of the availability of Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) and other relevant resources and communicate to workers on how to access these services
- Monitor workload and supervision arrangements during periods of elevated leave
- Ensure when backfilling supervisory positions and operator positions that the person filling the position is trained and competent to undertake the role
- Ensure that all resources are made available to complete work safely and as planned.

NOTE: Please ensure all relevant people in your organisation receive a copy of this safety bulletin and are informed of its content and recommendations. This safety bulletin should be processed in a systematic manner through the mine's information and communication process. It should also be placed on the mine's common area, such as your notice board where appropriate.

Visit our [website](#) to:

- find more safety alerts and bulletins
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DOCUMENT CONTROL

CM9 reference	DOC21/1036752
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Mine safety reference	SB21-12
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Date published	7 December 2021
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Authorised by	Chief Inspector Office of the Chief Inspector
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