



Drug and Alcohol Management Guidelines

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Version 2

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Important note on use of the Drug and Alcohol Management Guidelines

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Preface

The negative impacts of drugs and alcohol are an issue in all parts of Australian society. Work in the Australian pipeline industry often involves long hours, extended rosters and hazardous work in remote locations away from family, friends and support networks. These are all factors that may increase the likelihood of drug and alcohol use, so this is a critical issue to manage within the industry.

In April 2011, APGA conducted a survey of its members to understand current policies and practices of members in managing drugs and alcohol. More than a third of respondents believed that drug and alcohol use was a major issue for their organisations.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has reported that:

- some 10 per cent of accidents at work involve intoxicated workers;
- more than 10 per cent of on-the-job fatalities are linked to drugs and alcohol;
- absenteeism is two to three times higher for drug and alcohol abusers than for other employees; and
- employees with drug and alcohol problems claim three times as many sickness benefits and file five times as many compensation claims.

The APGA Health, Safety and Environment Committee (HS&E) has prepared this guideline to assist members, clients and contractors in managing the negative impacts of drugs and alcohol in the workplace.

1 Developing a drug and alcohol policy and program

An effective drug and alcohol policy and program needs to:

- Be developed with consultation and involvement of workers.
- Use a risk-based approach that considers the types of work conducted.
- Clarify who is covered (possibly including contractors and visitors).
- Be clear who is responsible for implementing and monitoring the program.
- Focus on prevention through education, support and assistance.
- Identify and fairly manage drug and alcohol misuse.
- Clearly communicate expectations and consequences.
- Demonstrate care for people and prevention of injuries, not just a focus on enforcement.

2 Preventing drug and alcohol misuse

With good planning, drug and alcohol problems can be minimised by:

- Providing alternate activities to drinking, such as social events and sports.
- Minimising factors that may lead to drug and alcohol use, such as high workload, tight deadlines, irregular supervision, discrimination or harassment.
- Inducting and training workers to raise awareness of the impacts of drugs and alcohol and of the company's policy and program.
- Training supervisors and managers to proactively identify and manage issues.
- Communicating the program through posters, intranet, meetings and brochures.
- Linking a drug and alcohol program to a broader 'fitness for work' or health program.
- Identifying and supporting people who may be at-risk with assistance such as a confidential Employee Assistance Program.
- Demonstrated and active leadership support for the program.

Pipeline organisations can manage the availability of drugs and alcohol in the workplace by:

- Considering 'dry camps' where alcohol is not served.
- If alcohol is served, restricting the types and amount of alcohol served.
- Restricting people from bringing drugs and alcohol into camps and worksites.
- Not rely on alcohol for social and networking activities.
- If alcohol consumption is allowed on work premises, during work hours or at company events, planning to manage the impacts of these activities.

3 Identifying people who may be under the influence

A clear procedure should be developed for identifying people who may be under the influence. This may include:

- Self-assessment and identification, facilitated by information and training or by self-test facilities.
- Designating and training specific persons, such as managers or safety advisors, to approach people in an appropriate manner.
- A peer intervention approach that encourages workers to take responsibility for their workmates in an informal and supportive way.
- Pre-employment, causal and/or random drug and alcohol testing.

4 Alcohol and drug testing

Alcohol and drug testing can be controversial, so should be introduced in consultation with and consideration of resistance and potential industrial issues.

- A rigorous testing procedure includes:
 - Who conducts testing (for example, external providers or safety advisors).
 - Split samples (so a second sample can be independently tested).
 - Chain of custody to document the time, place and people who handle samples.
 - Use of properly calibrated equipment and/or accredited laboratories.
 - Safeguards for workers affected by legal medication.
 - Confidentiality of test records.

Three Australian standards are relevant to drug and alcohol testing.

AS 3547-1997 Breath alcohol testing devices for personal use.

AS 4760-2006 Procedures for specimen collection and the detection and quantitation of drugs in oral fluid.

AS/NZS 4308:2008 Procedures for specimen collection and the detection and quantitation of drugs of abuse in urine.

A positive test is not in itself evidence of impairment of ability to perform work. Workers have a legal right to refuse to be tested, and if they refuse, it cannot be assumed they are intoxicated.

5 Supporting and treating people with drug or alcohol issues

When drug and alcohol misuse are identified, procedures should include:

- Removing people from the workplace to a safe location.
- Providing rehabilitation and support to deal with issues.
- Providing counselling and, if necessary and appropriate, disciplinary measures.
- Applying discipline in a manner that is fair and consistent.
- Supporting people to return to work following rehabilitation.

Drug- and alcohol-related problems should be treated as health problems, so employers may consider offering sick-leave or other leave.

6 Assessment and evaluation

A drugs and alcohol policy should be regularly reviewed to check and improve its effectiveness. Review should include:

- Consultation and involvement with workers, committees and representatives.
- Involvement of health and safety, human resources and industrial relations resources.

For more information contact APGA 02 6273 0577 or apga@apga.org.au

Resources

ADF - Australian Drug Foundation

The Australian Drug Foundation works with communities to reduce drug and alcohol harm through community programs, information services, and advocacy work.

Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS)

Available in each state, the Alcohol and Drug Information Service is a confidential, non-judgemental 24 hour/seven days a week helpline for anybody seeking assistance with alcohol or other drug use.

Australian Drug Information Network

The Australian Drug Information Network (ADIN) provides a central point of access to quality Internet-based alcohol and other drug information provided by prominent organisations in Australia and internationally.

Counselling Online

Counselling Online is a service where you can communicate with a professional counsellor about an alcohol or drug related concern, using text-interaction. The service is free for anyone seeking help with their own drug use or the drug use of a family member, relative or friend.

Direct Line

Direct Line is a free, anonymous and confidential phone service, providing 24-hour, 7-day counselling, information and referral. 1800 888 236 (Toll Free)

Drug Info

Drug Info is a service provided by the Australian Drug Foundation that offers information about alcohol and other drugs and the prevention of related harms.

Family Drug Help

Family Drug Help (FDH) is a service designed specifically to address the support and information needs of parents, other family members and significant others of someone with problematic alcohol or other drug use.

FDS - Family Drug Support Australia

Support for families including information & education nights, support meetings, and links to special events. FDS is largely volunteer-run, with people who have experienced first-hand the difficulties of having family members with drug dependency.

Turning Point (VIC)

Turning Point Alcohol & Drug Centre was established in 1994 to provide leadership to the drug and alcohol field in Victoria, Australia.

The University of Melbourne

Responsible Management and Use of Alcohol Policy

WorkSafe (Northern Territory)

Work Environment – Developing an Alcohol Policy and Getting Help. Information Bulletin

WorkSafe (Western Australia)

Alcohol and Other Drugs in the Workplace

WorkCover (Tasmania)

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Drugs and Alcohol: A guide for employers and workers

International:

The Amsterdam Group, the European Forum for responsible drinking.

Alcohol & the Workplace: A European Comparative Study on Preventive and Supporting Measures for Problem Drinkers in their Working Environment

Alcohol Policy Network

Workplace Alcohol Policies

Department of Labor (USA)

Workplace Substance Abuse

International Labour Organisation (ILO)

Management of alcohol- and drug-related issues in the workplace

Oil Companies International Marine Forum

Guidelines for the Control of Drugs and Alcohol Onboard Ship