



H&S Insights

September 2022



5

Hazards reported

9

Incidents reported

6

Injuries reported

Injuries	Observations
Slips, trips & falls	• Falls in and around Units – a fall from a bike when leaving the Unit and a fall on steps while carrying equipment.
Muscle strain(s)	• Manual Handling – a couple of reports, both from RCR activities where members were left in discomfort from handling of vehicle parts and being squashed by fellow member and from manoeuvring vehicles for training.
Cuts	• Lacerations – to hand when coming into contact with angle grinder and a cut to fingers most likely as a result of grasping a glass vessel too tightly.

Key Learnings

- Slips, trips & falls – Working in and around the Unit can present all types of issues, especially in the colder/freezing weather. Appropriate levels of lighting in and around the Unit area can also assist in identifying any hazardous areas.
- Muscle strains – there have been a few instances of members getting injured as a result of preparing vehicles for RCR, where possible members should use appropriate equipment / aids to assist.

Incidents	Observations
Vehicles	• Driving – collision(s) with stationary objects (x2) including both forward driving and reversing; a near miss collision with 3 rd party at marked driveway.
Equipment	• Equipment – electrical issues – interference from lights on boat communications system; use of driving lights on vehicle resulted in vehicle shutting down and trailer came off tow ball

Key Learnings

- Vehicles** Any driving of vehicles should include carrying out at least visual checks, of the immediate surroundings. Consideration could be given to use of convex traffic mirrors in and around units and other buildings?
- Equipment** **Electrical issues** – difficult to predict but opportunity for failure may be minimised with regular testing/checks.

Hazards	Observations
Vehicles	• Vehicle damage – found on Heavy Rescue vehicles as a direct result of maintenance checks. Other issues found transmission oil leak, bolts missing from light fitting and the recent Holden advice on Commodore ZB vehicles.
Equipment	• Numerous examples of equipment issues ranging from damage to polesaw shaft, frayed winch cables; unattached ignition cord in rescue boat; gas strut failure on lighting trailer affecting access to equipment; broken fuel cap; light mast air leak; red & blue side lights turning off.

Key Learnings

- Again, the hazards identified have been as a result of regular checks. These checks can be visual or involve mechanical inspections, but this month has provided further evidence of the importance of maintaining good practice in Unit and equipment inspections.

Country Road Driving (National Road Safety Partnership Program)

The Issue

- Some roads may be covered by sand or mud and depending on the weather or wildlife some routes may be closed.
- Unsealed roads, poor shoulders and corrugations on single lane bitumen roads demand additional attention from drivers to navigate carefully and drive to conditions.
- Rural and remote areas account for 65% of all road fatalities in Australia.
- Trips in areas with sparse populations encounter different road conditions from those in urban areas.

Contact : health&safety@ses.vic.gov.au

Planning the trip

- Plan route carefully.
- Check for phone coverage
- Check current conditions (weather, wildlife, agricultural activities, events, road closures.

On the Road

- Drive to the road conditions.
- Pay attention to corrugations or rough road edges which can be dangerous at high speeds.
- Look out for wildlife road signs and prepare to encounter the animals.
- The weather will determine the type of road you will find. Dry weather can create dusty conditions and limit visibility, while wet weather can make roads muddy, slippery and boggy.