Psychosocial influences on workplace behaviours in Forestry

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Meaning of Psychosocial
Interrelation of social factors and an individuals’ thoughts & emotions

Stress, fatigue, burnout, musculoskeletal injuries, & suicide

Workplace behaviour

Mental health & Injury
Unsafe and safe behaviours
Recent H&S Development Trends

Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992

**hazard**— (a) means an activity, arrangement, circumstance, event, occurrence, phenomenon, process, situation, or substance (whether arising or caused within or outside a place of work) that is an actual or potential cause or source of harm; and (b) includes— (i) a situation where a person’s behaviour may be an actual or potential cause or source of harm to the person or another person; and (ii) without limitation, a situation described in subparagraph (i) resulting from physical or mental fatigue, drugs, alcohol, traumatic shock, or another temporary condition that affects a person’s behaviour.

Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

**hazard** includes a person’s behaviour where that behaviour has the potential to cause death, injury, or illness to a person (whether or not that behaviour results from physical or mental fatigue, drugs, alcohol, traumatic shock, or another temporary condition that affects a person’s behaviour).

**health** means physical and mental health.

Clear Tripartite responsibilities for a person’s behaviour

Psychosocial factors can affect people’s behaviours
Tree Felling

Risk Homeostasis Theory
Risk Compensation Theory
Interaction Model: How social influences are carried into the workplace

Outside Work Environment
- Cultural
- Economic
- Home & Family
- Parental influences
- Social
- Personal Experiences Past and Present

The Workplace Environment
- Control
- Job Content
- Working conditions
- Career development
- Work Schedule
- Relationships
- Org culture
- Job Role

The Emotional Memory
- Safe Behaviours
  - Deliberate
  - Non-conscious
- Unsafe Behaviours
Hierarchy of Controls HSW Act Regulations

PCBU Responsibilities
Hierarchy of Control Measures
(Where elimination is not possible)

Increasing significance of psycho-social factors on workplace behaviours

- Substitution
- Isolation
- Engineering controls
- Administrative controls such as safety rules; leadership; training
- PPE

“Does this intervention allow for variability in human behaviour and is it critical?”
Psychosocial Influences impact on mechanisation as well

Rule:
Stay 6m+ front or behind or in cab

Sensory overload, concern over load weight or stability, loss of control, other thoughts

Approach digger operator
Research

Review actual workplace accidents looking for psychosocial causes

Test a proposed accident investigation technique to uncover when psychosocial factors are an issue

Apply barrier theory

Possible interventions

“psycho-social issues are a significant factor for forestry workers and represent one of the biggest risks to health and safety at work in this sector”