Common work-related causes of skin cancer include\(^1\)\(^-\)\(^3\):

- **Solar ultraviolet radiation** (outdoor work)
- **Artificial ultraviolet radiation** (welding)

Researchers estimate that:

- **34,000** non-melanoma skin cancers are caused by work-related exposure each year.\(^4\)
- **22%** of workers are exposed to UV radiation from the sun.\(^4\)
- **200** Each year it is estimated that approximately 200 melanoma skin cancers are caused by occupational exposure.\(^5\)

Common heat related disorders

**Extreme heat** or work in hot environments can result in minor conditions such as heat cramps, heat syncope, and heat exhaustion as well as the more severe condition known as heat stroke. Australia’s climate is changing and the number of hot days and the frequency, intensity and duration of heatwaves has increased over time. Impacts of climate change are likely to increase in the future. Extreme heat and heat waves must be managed in work-related settings.\(^6\)

Priority disorder action plan: 2016-2018

Ultraviolet radiation (UV) and heat related disorders

Exposure routes

Solar radiation penetrates into the skin and eye.

Welding produces artificial ultraviolet radiation.

Some work increases risk of heat related illness.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What outcomes will be achieved</th>
<th>What will we deliver in 2016-2018</th>
<th>Action areas’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Short term**                | • Work related events likely to cause exposure are responded to by Workplace Health and Safety Queensland.  
• Relevant education, training and mentoring programs are provided to inspectors and advisors.  
• Partnerships are formed with external stakeholders to identify and promote effective control strategies.  
• Responsive regulations, policy and guidance are provided to industry and the community.  
  — A film that case studies an actual heat-related illness event  
  — An on-line basic heat stress calculator.  
• Industry engagement is undertaken to promote use of exposure control strategies. | Hazard areas are eliminated or minimised by design.  
Improved work health and safety through supply chains and networks.  
Improved work health and safety capabilities.  
Leaders in communities and organisations promote a positive culture for health and safety.  
Evidence-informed policy, programs and practice.  
Government improves work health and safety.  
The regulatory framework improves effectiveness by responding and adapting to changing circumstances. |
| **Medium term**               | People use controls that eliminate or minimise hazards and risks to prevent exposure to UV radiation and thermal stressors. | |
| **Long term**                | Exposure to UV radiation and thermal stressors is minimised.  
Reduced incidence of skin cancer and thermal strain associated with work. | |

References:

6. The Australian Climate Commission 2013 *Off The Charts: Extreme Australian Summer Heat*

**Note:** Illnesses arising from work-related exposure are significantly under reported in workers’ compensation data for a range of reasons including: lack of awareness of work-related risk factors amongst workers and health professionals; inherent difficulties in assigning a specific case to a work-related cause. Therefore, in order to prioritise work health and safety interventions, other sources of data such as those referenced above, are useful to estimate the extent of exposures.