

Compliance audit report

Hairdressing in South East Queensland

November 2009

Compliance audit report: Hairdressing in South East Queensland – November 2009

Why have an audit?

Concerns have been directed to Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ) about persons in hairdressing workplaces being exposed to risks associated with chemicals, manual tasks and inadequate amenities. To assist in determining compliance levels in the hairdressing industry, WHSQ committed to conduct 20 workplace compliance audits.

What was audited?

Inspectors from the Brisbane North Sunshine Coast and Brisbane South Gold Coast regions randomly selected a total of 20 workplaces for assessment between March and May 2009.

An audit tool was developed to assess compliance in the following hazard areas:

- hazardous substances
- electrical
- workplace amenities
- fatigue
- manual tasks.

Inspectors also provided a qualitative assessment of risk management practice for each workplace using the audit criteria as a benchmark. The workplaces were rated as below average, average or above average. A rating of average was used to indicate that in general, workplace risks were being managed appropriately.

How was the audit conducted?

The audit consisted of observations of work procedures, discussions with staff and management and checking of documentation. A survey was also conducted at each workplace with respect to the length of shifts employers were requiring staff to undertake.

Audit results

A total of 32 improvement notices were issued addressing the following non-compliances:

Issue	Number of improvement notices
Assessing the risks associated with hazardous substances	14
Maintaining a register for hazardous substances	7
Induction training about hazardous substances	6
Obtaining a material safety data sheet for hazardous substances	2
Labelling of containers	2
Electrical	1

Figures 1 to 4 show the audit results for each audited hazard area.

Figure 1 – Results of hazardous substances audit elements

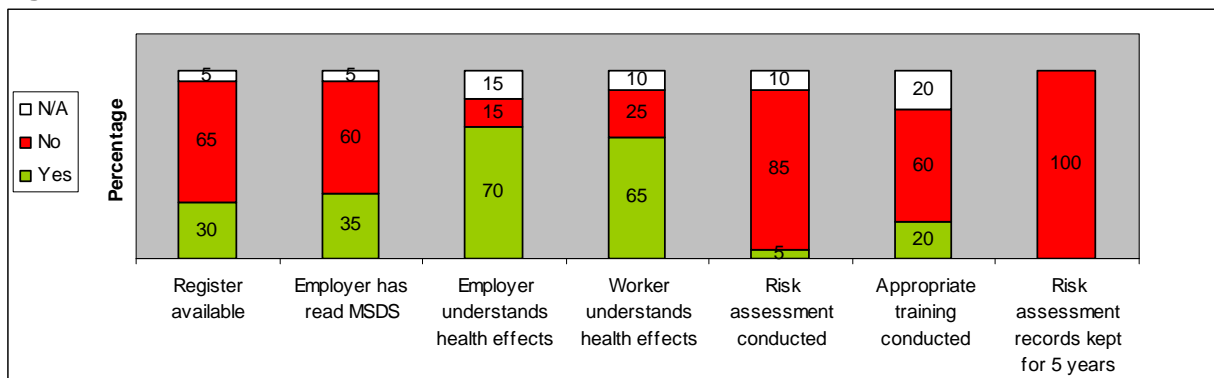


Figure 2 – Results of amenities audit elements

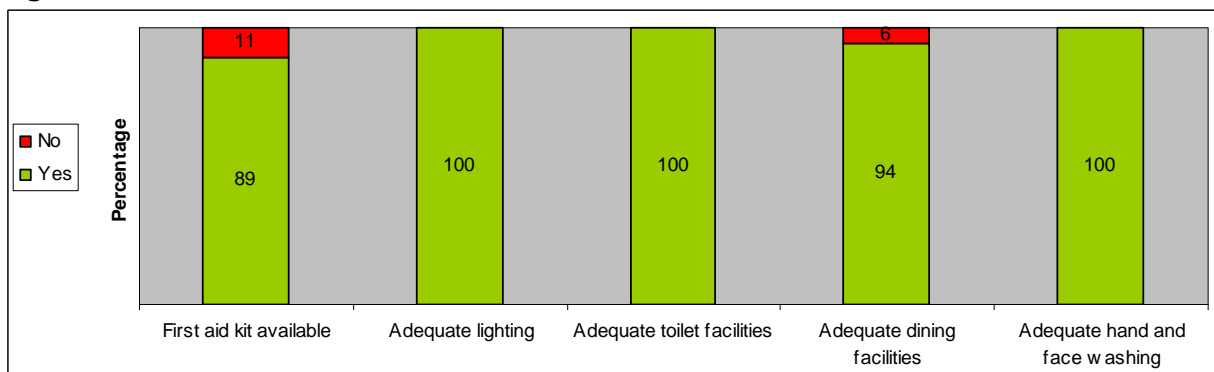


Figure 3 – Results of electrical audit elements

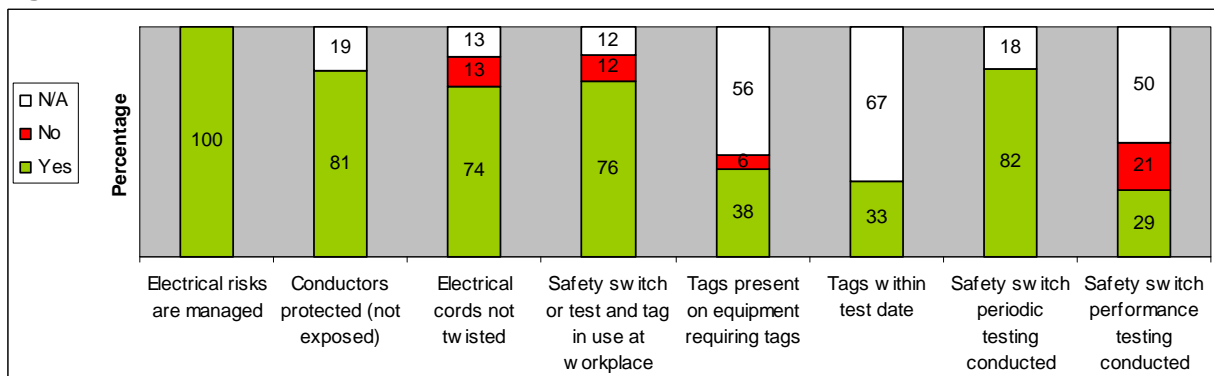
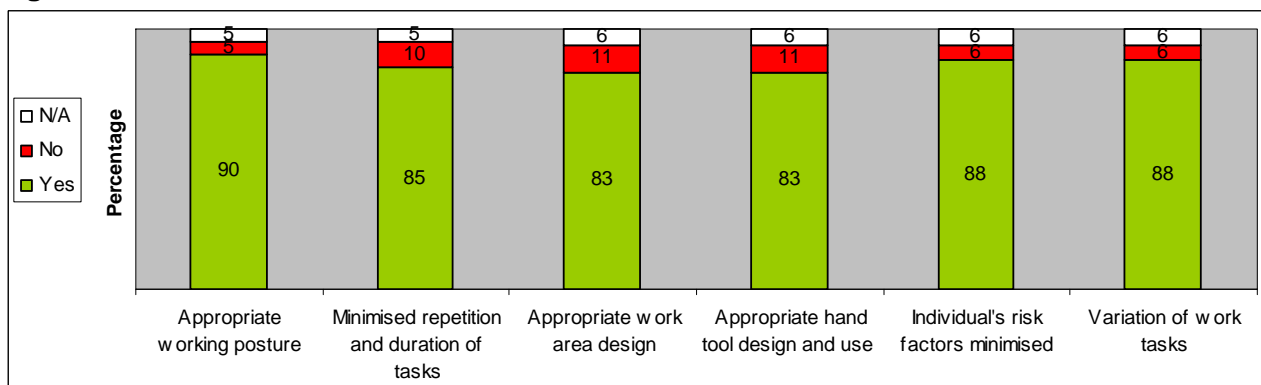


Figure 4 – Results of manual tasks audit elements



Note: N/A means the issue was not assessed or did not apply at the workplace

The survey found that shift lengths in the industry ranged from 7.5 hours to 9.5 hours, with two workplaces having 12 hour shifts. Eighteen of the workplaces reported that workers have regular meal breaks.

The inspector assessment of risk management practice resulted in 46 per cent of workplaces being given a rating of average or higher, whilst 54 per cent were rated as requiring improved risk management practices. Improvement notices were issued to 75 per cent of workplaces audited.

Discussion

The audit sample suggests that generally this industry manages risks associated with amenities, manual tasks, fatigue and electrical hazards in an acceptable manner but requires improvement in the management of hazardous substances. With respect to the management of hazardous substances, identifying substances in the workplace that may cause harm and conducting the associated risk assessment is highlighted.

Analysis of the improvement notices suggests that this industry's management of hazardous substances is not adequate to meet the requirements of Part 16 of the *Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 2008* (the Regulation).

Where to from here?

The compliance audits highlight that obligation holders in the hairdressing industry need to ensure that:

- risk assessments are conducted for hazardous substances
- staff are inducted in the safe use of hazardous substances, and
- a register is established and maintained for hazardous substances used at the workplace.

This report will be provided to the Workplace Health and Safety Board's Retail, Wholesale, Hospitality, Recreation and Other Services Industry Sector Standing Committee to inform committee members and relevant industry stakeholders. The report will also be published on the Department's website and links to the report will be forwarded to subscribers of the e-Safe newsletter.

Workplace Health and Safety inspectors will continue to monitor obligation holder compliance with health and safety laws each time hairdressing workplaces are visited as part of compliance activities.

Further information

Division four of Part 16 of the [Regulation](#) identifies the requirements of obligation holders for managing risks from hazardous substances.

Further information, including a sample hazardous substances risk assessment is available in the WHSQ [Guide for the hairdressing, nail and beauty industry](#).

As with any research, these findings are based on what was found at the time of the visits at the targeted workplaces.

For further information visit www.worksafe.qld.gov.au or call the Workplace Health and Safety Infoline on 1300 369 915.

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