



How to Run Toolbox Talks/Safety Meetings

Toolbox meetings are a great conduit for information and provide workers with the opportunity to provide meaningful input into the development, implementation and maintenance of risk controls, corrective actions arising from incidents, work processes and company procedures.

Toolbox meetings should be run on a regular basis; the frequency of meetings will depend on the size, nature and location of the site. Some hazardous activities could require daily meetings, while often a weekly or fortnightly meeting will suffice.

For those that may not have run these types of meetings before, below are some hints and tips that may assist in getting this activity up and running.

Structure of Meetings

Toolbox talks/safety meetings for workers should be short and to the point. Meeting on a regular basis and running for 10-15 minutes is an ideal way to involve workers and make the most effective impact. Monday morning is an ideal time to run the meeting as workers can be briefed on the weeks programme and review the previous weeks' activities. Depending on the nature of the business it is may be helpful to conduct an inspection of the work area prior to a meeting to help identify any problems and to assist with topical items for discussion. Other topics to discuss could include current or upcoming activities in the workplace, any recent incidents, or changes to plant, work environment or work processes.

Details of meetings should be recorded and kept on file. It is important to record meeting dates, attendees and discussion items, as well as follow up items from hazards, accidents and incidents.

Managers and supervisors will normally run the safety meeting but workers can also assist in the process. It is a good idea to use trainees or young workers to conduct inspections and run meetings as they are the future managers, they are not biased by entrenched behaviours and it gives them a good grounding in the hazard management process. Another advantage to letting workers run these meetings is to provide them with a sense of ownership over the topic/issue at hand.

Questions and Answers

At the end of each Toolbox Talk, it is a good idea to go over what has been learned. End the session with 'questions and answers' to make sure your team understand the key items of the discussion, particularly any agreed actions.