



Media release
Friday, 28 October

WHS issues packed them in

Concern about how to address workplace health and safety under the new harmonisation laws helped lift attendances to The Safety Show Sydney that had its final day yesterday.

Free seminars and workshops focusing on the new workplace safety setting and its impacts attracted big crowds, some with standing room only.

At the same time exhibitors were kept busy with visitors keen to check out technology that will make compliance easier and improve workplace safety, and performance.

Co-located and held concurrently with The Safety Show were two other trade shows, Sydney Materials Handling and Bulkex (bulk materials and powder handling).

Interest level 'high'

Exhibitors reported the level of interest generally as 'high', with some taking orders directly, others recording more than 100 serious inquiries per day for follow up, and still others using their presence at the show as a vital branding exercise. Over 9,500 people visited the three shows.

On the one hand were first-time exhibitors like Walter Vertriest, owner of B-Safe Safety Signs. He was elated by his stand's success.

"It outweighed our expectations," he said. "A mining customer who found out we were exhibiting in Sydney took the trouble to fly here from Perth to see us and take an order."

"As a result we've decided to exhibit at the WA Safety Show in Perth as we see a big market in the mining industry."

"Given that we only commenced the business this year we could not be happier with the response."

Another first-timer was Work Options, which markets injury management, OHS compliance and return to work services. Doreen Linehan, national services manager said the stand had been busy with enquiries from both government and industry. "We'd like to come back next year," she said.

On the other hand were exhibitors like Erik Larsen whose lockout and tagout products firm Cirlock have been exhibiting continuously for 15 years. "It's been as busy as ever," he said.

"We use the show as an opportunity to hand out information and advice – to show the flag – and also to get feedback from users. We'll be back."

Steel Blue (industrial footwear) and Ugly Fish (eye wear) made good use of celebrities to engender interest.

Dennis Lillee and Jeff Thomson, arguably the most devastating bowling pair in Australian test cricket, engaged with visitors to the Steel Blue stand while Angry Anderson, former vocalist with the rock band Rose Tattoo demonstrated Ugly Fish safety eyewear.

Ugly Fish took it a step further with Steve Turner, Canterbury-Bankstown Rugby League winger, who turned his hand to demonstrating the use of a lens testing machine.

Growth industry

Jonathan Small, 3M exhibitor at the Blackwoods stand said: "It's been very busy from day one."

Troy Harris of drug detection firm PathTech agreed. "There's been a lot of interest, mainly been in mining, construction and transport. This is a growth industry, especially in relation to OHS programs."

Some firms launched new products. Beaver Technology Services attracted interest with a new mobile height safety trailer and a new mobile free-standing stair system, which provides access to overhead structures that otherwise can't be reached.

"We'll definitely be back," said Robin Ford, business development manager for Industry Search, which provides an online directory service for spare parts and a daily newswire tailored to individual industries.

"We've had a high level of enquiries and look at The Safety Show Sydney as an opportunity to build relationships. "

The focus will move to the Melbourne Exhibition Centre on 17-19 April 2012 for Safety in Action and Melbourne Materials Handling, to be held concurrently.

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