



OCCUPATIONAL HYGIENE MATTERS

Welcome to the November 2020 edition of
Occupational Hygiene Matters.

A quarterly newsletter from

The Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists,
Inc. (AIOH)

Australia's premier professional association representing the interests of occupational hygienists and allied professionals.

Our mission is to promote and preserve the health and wellbeing of Australian workers through application of the knowledge, practice and standing of occupational health and occupational hygiene.

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT



Andrew Orfanos - AIOH President 2020

It feels like we have been living under the impact and restrictions of the SARS-CoV-02 Pandemic for eternity yet here we are, already in the final quarter of 2020!

To say that my tenure as President wasn't quite what I anticipated would most certainly be an understatement, however, I am deeply grateful that I have been able to represent the AIOH during this incredibly challenging time. As they say, when life gives you lemons, make lemonade, and to that effect, 2020 has been a deeply rewarding and productive year for both myself and the AIOH.

As we speak, metropolitan Melbourne is finally coming out of lockdown, with the easing of COVID-19 restrictions. Throughout this period the AIOH has been working very hard to advocate for and support our frontline health care workers.

On behalf of the AIOH I wrote to both the Acting Chief Medical Officer, Professor Paul Kelly and the Minister for Health, Hon Greg Hunt raising our concerns around the airborne transmission of SARS-CoV-02 and the impact it is having in our front line health care workers. A further letter to the ACMO was also sent outlining our concerns around the composition of ICEG and their refusal to take a precautionary approach to managing the risk of this transmission pathway in our Health Care workers.

As a result, the AIOH was invited to nominate a representative to join the National Clinical Taskforce to help review the National Safety and Quality Health Service Preventing and Controlling Healthcare-Associated Infection Standard. As such I am happy to announce that Kate Cole will be our representative on this working group. I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the incredible amount of time and effort that both Kate and Jane Whitelaw have spent advocating and providing expert advice on this issue to many stakeholders.

After helping develop and endorsing a Poster and Guidance Document around respiratory protection that was distributed across hospitals Nationally, we continued our support of the Australian Society of Anaesthetists (ASA) by hosting an AIOH Virtual Chapter Meeting Titled Respiratory Protection for Health Care Workers: Meet the Experts, which was successfully run in late October, with over 511 people registering for this event, including 203 members of ASA!

I am also happy to inform you that the AIOH now sit on the Asbestos Eradication Agency's Management and Removal Committee. This committee is currently working on a number of common projects that the AIOH can provide professional advice and support on. Projects include, exploring regulatory issues around the 10m² rule, unlicensed asbestos removal, and the development & promotion of revised guidance material for homeowners and tradespeople (electricians and plumbers). This forum will allow the AIOH to further promote Breathe Freely Australia and RESP-FIT to those stakeholders contributing to this committee and their network of stakeholders.

ASEA are also interested in improving the competency of asbestos consultants and ensuring greater consistency around information contained within asbestos registers and clearance certificates. To this end, I am happy to say that Julia Collins, the Director of the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency has accepted to be part of a working group formed by the AIOH that will look at the competency of individuals working as consultants in the management of Asbestos and Hazardous Materials in the demolition industry. This new working group will also have representatives from AHCA ((Nigel Johnson, AHCA President) and the various State Regulators. The engagement of these key stakeholders will be crucial in ensuring that any training courses or competency programs we develop meet the needs of all stakeholders involved and most importantly, valued, supported and endorsed.

Thank you all to those that provided feedback to our annual membership survey. We had a great response rate. If you would like to look at the results of this annual member survey in more detail please take a look at Ross Di Corleto's summary. [Click here to read.](#)

I would also like to take this opportunity to let our membership know that Martin Jennings has chosen to step down as Chair of the External Affairs Committee. On behalf of the AIOH Council and all of our members I would like thank Martin for the important role that he has played in turning our Institute into a more outwardly facing organisation, getting this committee up and running and the work he has personally spent on advocating on behalf of the AIOH on a range of topical issues such as the recent bushfires, and the emergence of accelerated silicosis in the manufactured stone industry.

I would also like to welcome Katie Page, our new Membership Coordinator, welcome aboard! Katie has already shown her value with the work she has been doing with the M&Q Committee, particularly with the new online process for processing both new and existing membership upgrades.

Please reach out to Katie and have a friendly chat should you have any questions or issues with respect to membership.

I cannot begin to thank enough the incredible work and personal sacrifice that Mark Reggers, his Board and team of volunteers have undertaken to develop the first class RESP-FIT accreditation program. RESP-FIT will be proudly launched at our 40th Anniversary Virtual Symposium later this year.

Finally, I would like to thank Kelly Johnstone, along with her organising Committee of Linda Apthorpe, Dino Pisaniello, Peter Aspinall, Daniel Cronje and Samira Wadhavkar for their incredible effort, enthusiasm and professionalism in putting together what will be an incredible 40th Year Virtual Symposium.

I look forward to 'seeing' you all online for what will be an excellent event!

Andrew Orfanos

President, AIOH

Back to the beginning of OH Matters

NATIONAL UPDATE



AIOH Virtual Symposium 30 Nov - 3 Dec 2020

Join us for the first ever virtual symposium of the Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists (AIOH). The event will be live streamed from 30 November to 3 December 2020, 2:30pm to 5:00pm AEDT.

The symposium will celebrate the 40th year anniversary of the AIOH and will bring our community together to reflect on our achievements past and present and recognise the contributions and stewardship of our ongoing mission of creating healthy workplaces. With 40+ national and international speakers and keynotes, the symposium will provide attendees with an exciting and engaging program across the spectrum of current and emerging occupational health and hygiene topics. In the mix will be some of the memorable moments of the past 40 years - in true Aussie style.

WHY ATTEND

Hear from world leading subject matter experts and specialists in their field and learn best practice from industry peers. Keep up to date with new and emerging technology and hear from our sponsors. Log on to join in live chats, listen to presentations in real time, ask questions of speakers directly and be part of our celebrations.

SYMPOSIUM FORMAT

Each afternoon will include opening and closing keynote speakers, and themed short information sessions on a range of topics. Symposium attendees have the opportunity to purchase access to the whole event or individual afternoons. Each attendee will also be provided with access to recordings of the sessions they have registered for so they can watch them again at a later date.

REGISTRATION FEES

AIOH Member - Full event	\$150
Non - Member - Full event	\$225
Individual Day - Member	\$50
Individual Day - Non-Member	\$75
Student - Full event	\$75
Corporate registration - Full event*	\$1,970

All fees listed are excluding GST.

* Corporate registrations include unlimited registration tickets for all company representatives to attend all four days of the symposium.

[Click here for more information \(https://www.aioh.org.au/virtual-symposium-1/virtual-symposium\)](https://www.aioh.org.au/virtual-symposium-1/virtual-symposium)

Member Survey Results and Summary

As you would all be aware, this year we introduced what is hoped will be the first of an annual short membership survey of five questions, seeking input from our members. It is important for Council and our office to understand what the membership believes we as an Institute are doing well and where we can continue to improve. It is intended to run this survey each year and to track our progress.

This report summarises the responses received for the AIOH Members Baseline Survey circulated to members on 30 June 2020. There was a 32% response rate and given that the industry standard for survey responses is between 10%-15% this was pleasing to see. It is hoped that we will increase the participation rate each year as we move forward.

The responses received ranged from both ends of the spectrum and varied in opinion from pleased with performance through to unhappy with member value. Whilst the general feedback was positive, there were some key areas for improvement identified. Following is a summary of the results.

	Members	% of Membership	Responses Received	% of Grade that Responded	% of F
Student	24	3%	3	13%	
Associate	415	45%	69	17%	2
Provisional	114	12%	44	39%	1
Full	289	31%	145	50%	4
Fellow	41	4%	31	76%	1
Retired	45	5%	11	24%	
Total	928		303		

OBSERVATION

Although Associates account for a majority of the AIOH membership, only 17% of responses were collected from that group. More needs to be done to engage and encourage Associates to participate.

We will be utilising the Net Promoter Score on the question: "Would you recommend membership of the AIOH?"

So, what is a Net Promoter Score (NPS)?

The Net Promoter Score is a metric that helps measure and predict customer loyalty. Our members are effectively our customers so we should be a customer focused organisation.

"NPS is one of the most accurate ways to determine the future actions of your customers because it's based on the likelihood of referrals. Recommending a company to a friend means that you're putting your reputation on the line. If you're fiercely loyal to a brand, you're much more likely to risk your reputation with a friend by recommending them." (Barametrics 2020)

The responses from the survey are taken and are classified into three groups, Detractors, Passive and Promoters.



The final NPS is calculated by determined by a simple formula:

Net Promoter Score = % Promoters – % Detractors

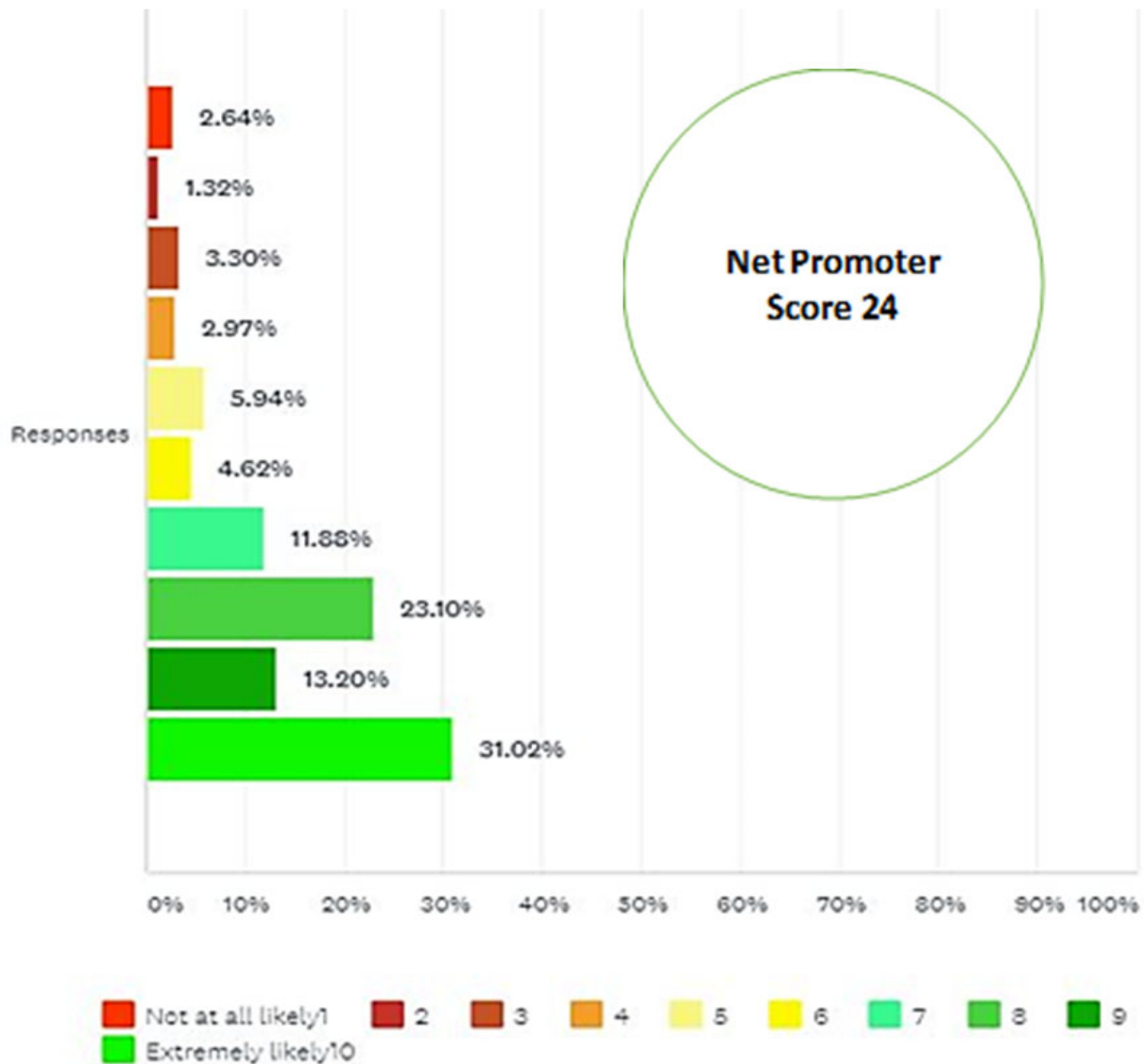
- 0 – 20 is good
- 20 – 50 is favourable
- 50 – 80 is excellent
- >80 is world class

OBSERVATION

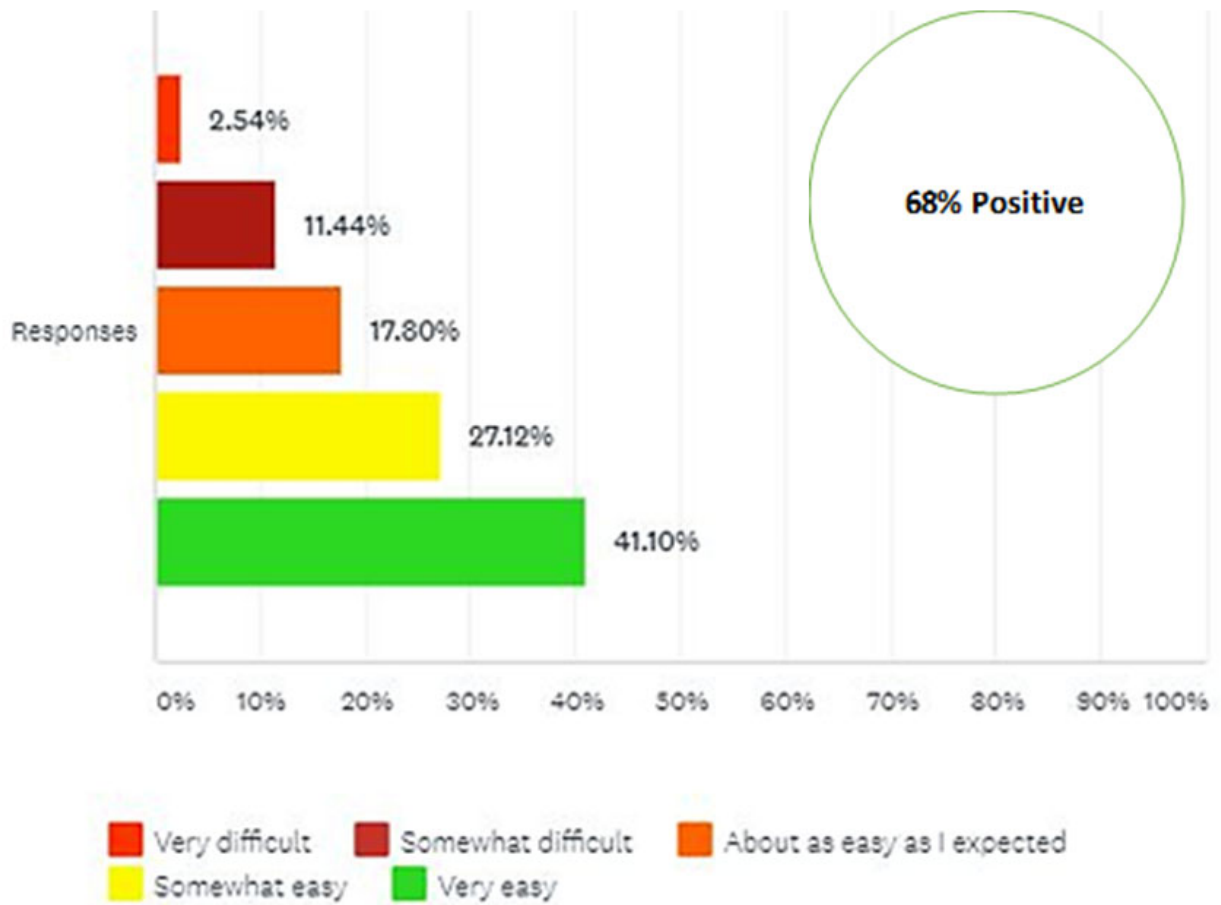
Our Net Promoter Score is **24**. Not brilliant but it is positive and there is lots of room for improvement.

Below is a breakdown of all the responses.

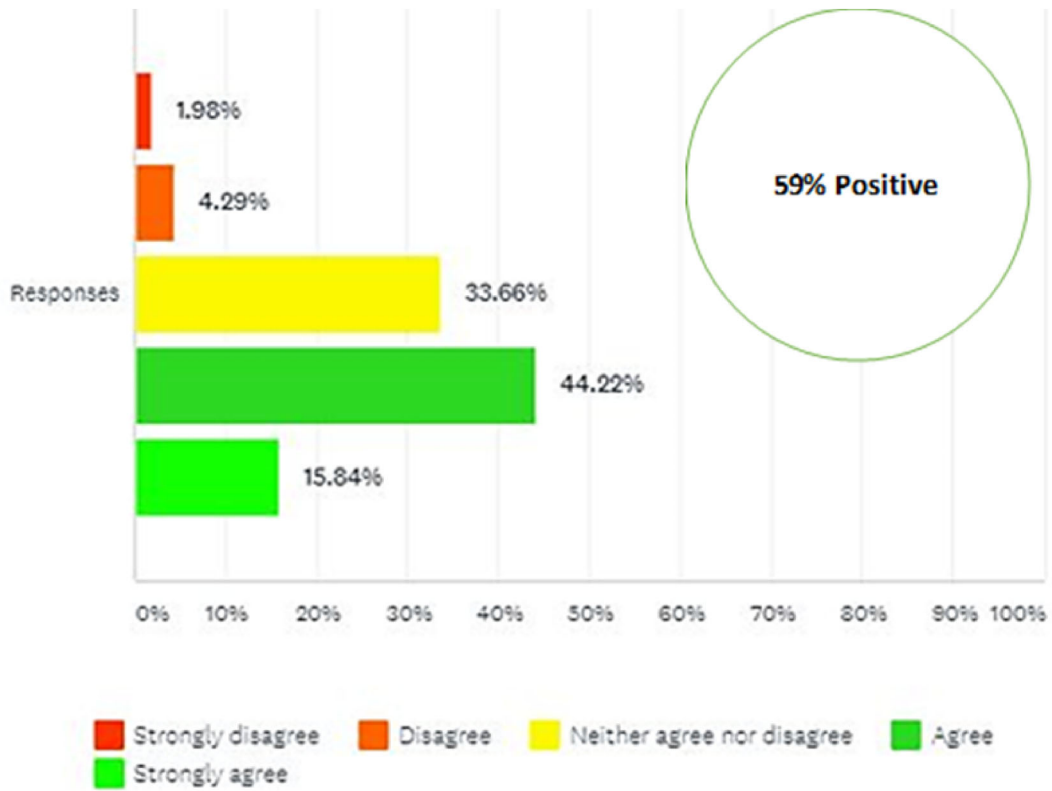
WOULD YOU RECOMMEND MEMBERSHIP OF THE AIOH?



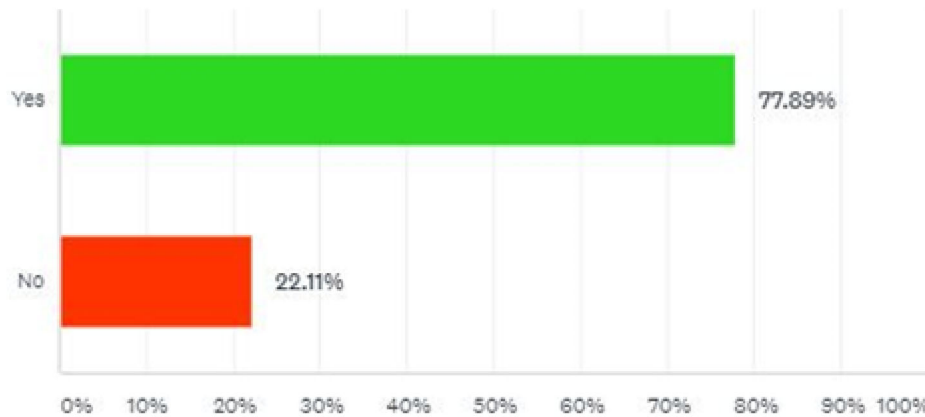
RATE YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH THE AIOH ADMINISTRATION PROCESS?



I HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE CURRENT AIOH COUNCIL



DOES YOUR MEMBERSHIP DELIVER WHAT YOU EXPECT?



HOW CAN WE IMPROVE YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPERIENCE?

Key themes that appeared in the comments section (size indicates frequency of appearance).



OBSERVATION

- 193 comments were received, read, and recorded for this question
- Membership was by far the most commented on area
- Whilst there were many positive comments noted, there were some common areas identified for improvement such as:
 - unprofessional behaviour,
 - lacking in member value,
 - request for more webinars
 - inconsistent membership process,
 - slow application process, and
 - lack of inclusivity.

WE ARE LISTENING.

Council has taken on board the comments and you will have already noted some changes in how we operate.

1. AIOH documentation such as, guidelines and position papers which previously had to be paid for, are now available free to the membership.
2. The office has purchased access to software to enable higher quality webinars. This has allowed us to now make chapter meetings from all states accessible nationally (and internationally) to all our members.
3. The introduction of the “Master Classes” which will be presented by experts in the particular topics via our online service will continue into the future.
4. An updated Code of Conduct which each member is now required to formally acknowledge.
5. Our membership process is currently being standardised and upgraded to enable the use of online tools to make the process faster and more efficient.
6. Introduction of a COH (retired) status.

These are the first of our changes which we hope will provide more value for our membership going forward. There are a number of other projects in the pipeline that we believe will continue on the theme of improving our services into the future.

It is hoped that these small improvements will help us build on our past successes and make AIOH a more progressive and adaptive organisation.

Work Health and Safety Amendment (Information Exchange) Bill 2020

In August the AIOH were invited by the Standing Committee on Law and Justice to provide evidence regarding its enquiry into the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Information Exchange) Bill 2020.

This Bill would make silicosis a scheduled medical condition, notifiable to NSW Health. The goal of creating the information-sharing power in this bill is to enable NSW Health to assist work health and safety regulators to target their ongoing efforts in education, enforcement, and compliance at the workplaces where they are most needed, that is, at workplaces where workers have contracted silicosis.

In providing evidence to the Standing Committee the AIOH commended the NSW Government on the introduction of this bill, however made it clear that if one of the primary goals of this Bill is to prevent the onset of silicosis and to alert work health and safety regulators in a timely manner that will protect workers potentially at risk, this bill would not prevent the onset of silicosis.

The AIOH stated that a proactive metric needed to be adopted that would identify the potential risk of silicosis, rather than the end point of silicosis.

As such the AIOH requested that the NSW Government include in this bill the mandatory reporting of workplace breaches of the exposure standard.

A full transcript of what Andrew Orfanos communicated on behalf of the AIOH to the Standing Committee can be read [HERE](https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/transcripts/2431/Transcript%20-%202020%20August%202020%20-%20Corrected.pdf) (https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/transcripts/2431/Transcript%20-%202020%20August%202020%20-%20Corrected.pdf)

Unfortunately the Report ([https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2609/Final%20Report%20-%20Work%20Health%20and%20Safety%20Amendment%20\(Information%20Exchange\)%20Bill%202020%20-%20Report%2074.pdf](https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2609/Final%20Report%20-%20Work%20Health%20and%20Safety%20Amendment%20(Information%20Exchange)%20Bill%202020%20-%20Report%2074.pdf)) did not mention or document our concerns around meeting the “intent” of the Bill, nor our suggestion of the mandatory reporting of RCS exposure exceedances.

As a result, the AIOH formally responded to the Chair of the Standing Committee to communicate our disappointment that the Final Report did not contain a record of our concerns around the Bill meeting its objectives. While recorded on Hansard, it was disappointing that the concerns regarding the Bill not meeting its stated objectives were silent in the final report.

It was important for the report to state that authorising NSW Health to provide information on reported cases of silicosis to work health and safety regulators, SafeWork NSW and the NSW Resources Regulator, does not support these agencies to use this information to proactively prevent silicosis in the workplace, and that other sources of information such as the reporting of exposure exceedances to the regulator would allow timely workplace inspections prior to workers developing silicosis.

The vision of the AIOH is one for a healthy workplace, and part of that is to influence government and industry to create healthy workplaces. As such, we will continue to advocate for the mandatory reporting of workplace respirable silica exposure standard exceedances.

P2 Buying Guideline – 2nd Edition

[Click here to read](https://www.aioh.org.au/static/uploads/files/p2-respiratory-protection-in-anz-2nd-edition-wfl) (https://www.aioh.org.au/static/uploads/files/p2-respiratory-protection-in-anz-2nd-edition-wfl)

Thank you to Kate Cole and Jane Whitelaw for their ongoing efforts in ensuring this document is current.

Weld Australia Webinar: Welding and Health

The present pandemic has changed many things. Apart from the well-publicised negative impacts, it has introduced a few opportunities.

Earlier in the year, Weld Australia was planning to hold a seminar in Perth dealing with health aspects of welding. The advent of COVID-19 meant plans changed to a webinar format, the consequence of this being access to a much wider national audience of welding practitioners. The event was held in May.

Barry Chesson represented the Institute in presenting on the topic Welding and Health: Risk Assessment and Control Measures. The elements covered were designed for a lay audience:

- Occupational Hygiene and the AIOH
- Principal health hazards with welding
- Risk assessment techniques
- The Hierarchy of Controls for welding

- The Breathe Freely Australia initiative
- BFA resource materials to support welders and welding

So, here was an opportunity to connect with another important group and to unpack a little of what occupational hygiene has to offer to those who work with significant risks.

Dr Barry Chesson

ANZSOM Annual Scientific Meeting (Virtual ASM)



The Australian and New Zealand Society of Occupational Medicine (ANZSOM) invites you to their 2020 Annual Scientific Meeting, 'Exploring the new normal in workplace health' to be held virtually from 19-22 November 2020.

Reflecting the current priorities in workplace health, the program will feature three sessions devoted to COVID-19 risks and management, with a Keynote Address from Professor Brett Sutton, Victoria's Chief Health Officer.

We will also offer virtual site visits for the first time, an online Journal Club and a range of topical presentations, all designed to get you involved.

For more information and to register:

Visit the ANZSOM website (<http://https://www.anzsom.org.au/annual-scientific-meeting/asm-2020>)

Update on the 2020 YTD Council Minutes & Activities

Since March the Council has continued to meet each month virtually with the following activities discussed:

1. Awards

The Council has reviewed the Council Awards for outstanding service & contribution to the AIOH. Rather than have two awards available only for long term members, the decision was made to have one available for all members, the Celebration of Achievement Award. The Outstanding Service Award remains the same for members with over 10 years' service.

The Council decided not to offer any Council Awards this year at the virtual conference because it was considered better for the winner to celebrate success at the 2021 Adelaide Conference with friends.

2. Certification and Certified Occupational Hygienists

New COH Members - Congratulations to the following members who have achieved their COH through the new virtual COH oral examinations:

- Jon Newton
- Justine Bromley
- Micheal Lewis.

Retired COH Members – The Certification Board and Council have agreed conditions for COH members to retire and use the postnominal COH@(Ret), for more information please scroll down the page, <https://www.aioh.org.au/membership/aioh-membership>
(<https://www.aioh.org.au/membership/aioh-membership>)

Recognition of Certification of other NAR Associations - From the 1 August 2020 , the AIOH Council and Certification Committee will formally recognise certification of other occupational hygiene associations under the NAR program and their equivalency but for those specifically requiring an Australian COH certification with the formal AIOH seal they will be required to sit the oral component of the program.

3. Member Matters

Retired Members – Past Presidents, Charles Steer and David Grantham have requested Retired Member status and we thank for their important contributions over the years. Peter Green has also achieved Retired Member status.

ACGIH – Congratulations to Dr Ross Di Corleto and Dr Jen Hines selected by ACGIH to produce a webinar on Heat Stress and Diesel Particulate respectively for the ACGIH Summer Selection of Webinars.

4. Projects – Breathe Freely Australia

- A working party has been established with CCAA (Cement, Concrete and Aggregate Australia) to develop a new section for Quarrying.
- The BFA website was cloned and made available to the NZ Occupational Hygiene Society to develop their own site for NZ workers.

Weld Australia – Technical Doc 7 Health & Safety - Thank you to Ian Firth and Shelley Rowett for their valuable contributions to the review.

5. Policies and Guidelines

Grievance and Disputes Resolution Policy and Procedure – The Grievance and Dispute Resolution Policy & Procedure has been reviewed by the Ethics Committee and updated to achieve one document. This document will be posted soon in the Governance Documents section in the Members area on the AIOH website.

The Travel Policy and Travel Conditions have been updated and posted on the website.

Membership Guidelines - The Council agreed the M&Q guideline for qualifications for membership to the AIOH. These will be incorporated into a membership Guideline Publication to be posted on the AIOH website.

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INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

IOHA GEM Sep-Oct 2020

[Click here to read \(/static/uploads/files/ioha-gem-sept-oct-2020-wfayxkkfrwzz.pdf\)](/static/uploads/files/ioha-gem-sept-oct-2020-wfayxkkfrwzz.pdf)

BOHS responds to the latest HSE statistics calling for a “Sustainable Workplace Health Strategies” (<https://www.bohs.org/media-resources/press-releases/detail/bohs-responds-on-the-latest-hse-statistics/>)

[Click here to read \(https://www.bohs.org/media-resources/press-releases/detail/bohs-responds-on-the-latest-h](https://www.bohs.org/media-resources/press-releases/detail/bohs-responds-on-the-latest-h)

Success Amidst Adversity for AIHA in 2020

The year 2020 has been difficult worldwide, but nonetheless, AIHA has produced remarkable successes and achievements as well—in large part through the organization's unique role in national pandemic response.

In March, as COVID-19 cases spiked and the country braced for the coming pandemic, occupational and environmental health and safety (OEHS) experts convened virtually to draft practical, science-based guidelines which businesses, schools, and other organizations could use to prevent the spread of the virus among their employees, students, or members. The guidelines and other resources were made available for free download on a new website titled Back to Work Safely (<https://www.backtoworksafely.org/>). At the same time, the AIHA Media Outreach Center (<https://www.aiha.org/about-aiha/communication-center/aiha-media-outreach-regarding-covid19-pandemic>) also became a hub for COVID-19 resources intended for the media and the general public.

The Back to Work Safely initiative is designed to educate employers and consumers about the hazards associated with re-entry into the workplace and correct widespread misinformation on PPE, ventilation, disinfection, and other pandemic-related topics. The Back to Work Safely library is now comprised of guidelines recommending pandemic response practices for 26 classes of organization or business, including higher education, K-12 education, dental offices, bars, amateur sports, and more. Many of the guidelines are available in Spanish as well as English.

At AIHce EXP, AIHA's annual conference—which this year was entirely virtual—AIHA revealed its brand evolution (<https://www.aiha.org/about-aiha/aiha-brand-evolution>), the organization's vision for its future. The OEHS profession is advancing, and AIHA's reimagined brand is necessary to reflect the profession's development, serve members more completely, recruit the next generation of professionals, and remain relevant to all industry stakeholders. The organization's new tagline reflects AIHA's positioning statement and vision amid an evolving profession by simply summarizing what AIHA strives for as an organization: "Healthier Workplaces. A Healthier World."

Legally, AIHA is still titled the "American Industrial Hygiene Association." However, in order to better explain the services and activities provided by the organization and its members to stakeholders outside the profession, who may be unfamiliar with IH/OEHS, the organization will now be referred to as "AIHA" in marketing and public education materials. Regardless, the new brand is not a radical departure from the original one.

The heart of the brand evolution is a multi-faceted public awareness campaign entailing proactive outreach to media, businesses, and the general public, to inform them about the national association of occupational health and safety science professionals who safeguard workplaces worldwide, known as

AIHA. This campaign included the creation and launch of AIHA's two new micro-websites, Worker Health Safety.org (<http://www.workerhealthsafety.org/>) and OEHS Science Careers (<http://www.oehscareers.org/>).

The former, launched in July, is dedicated to highlighting the importance of worker health and safety and to educating non-OEHS/IH professionals and stakeholders about the business value of OEHS/IH's in the workplace. This website aims to encourage businesses to make their employees' health and safety a top priority, beyond simply complying with OSHA requirements. The first three business subsectors targeted in this initial phase of the campaign are chemical manufacturing (<https://www.workerhealthsafety.org/chemical-manufacturing>), construction (<https://www.workerhealthsafety.org/construction>), and emergency services (<https://www.workerhealthsafety.org/first-responders>).

The COVID-19 pandemic has thrown the OEHS/IH profession into the nationwide spotlight, providing potential exposure to students considering professional careers. The job market is strong, and overall, OEHS/IH provides young adults with a rewarding, worthwhile vocation—especially considering that the average early-career OEHS/IH professional makes \$58,300 per year, above the average starting salary for all graduates, \$50,044. Seeing an opportunity to recruit for the profession, AIHA launched the OEHS Science Careers micro-website, aiming to encourage student awareness and interest in OEHS careers.

The new microsite offers free resources for students, teachers, and counselors interested in learning more about the dynamic OEHS/IH profession. Featuring videos of young professionals discussing their jobs and a list of universities offering a degree in OEHS/IH, it also refers to AIHA's IH Professional Pathway (<https://www.aiha.org/ih-careers/ih-professional-pathway>) program, an innovative resource to guide young professionals through the various stages of an OEHS/IH career. As for the younger students, AIHA's IH Heroes (<https://www.aiha.org/ih-careers/discover-industrial-hygiene/meet-the-ih-heroes>) is a comic book style program that includes a web-based "smart" game and introduces the profession to students in a fun, educational manner. This new microsite also serves as a comprehensive resource for STEM teachers and career or guidance counselors, who may not be familiar with the OEHS/IH career path.

ACGIH Call for presentations



ACGIH[®]

*Defining the Science of
Occupational and Environmental Health[®]*

Call for **PRESENTATIONS**

Come Help ACGIH[®] Advance the Careers of Occupational, Environmental, Health & Safety Professionals

Do you have knowledge and expertise to help advance the field? ACGIH[®] is currently seeking speakers to conduct webinars during our 2021 education season. ACGIH[®] webinars are normally 60-90 minutes and on a variety of subject matters related to occupational, environmental, health, and safety.

Why Present?

- Enhance your CV and your professional portfolio
- Serve as a leader in the field
- Educate and advocate for science

[Click Here to Fill Out an Interest Form](#)

RESEARCH BITES

International Standards Update

International Trends of ISO 23875 (Operator Enclosures - Air quality control systems and air quality performance testing)

ISO 23875 Ballot closes on the 26th October. Significant input from an Australian context has been provided through State Government Hygienists, Mineral Council of Australia members and Mining Companies through EMERST (Earth Moving Equipment Round Safety Table) members. The ballot will be reviewed with plan for finalisation and rollout on Q1 2021.

Worker airborne exposure to dust and gases within operator enclosures can lead to acute and chronic occupational illness. The development of ISO 23875 provides a standardized life cycle approach to enclosure design, testing, maintenance and operational integration to protect workers from exposure. The standard covers original equipment manufacturers (OEM's) and aftermarket retrofitters. The objective of the standard is to ensure that future operator enclosures are designed and existing retrofitted enclosures operate to ensure a healthy work environment in the enclosure to protect the worker and prevent related occupational illness.

Liam Wilson

THE ASBESTOS REGISTER

These images show mixed asbestos (including crocidolite) found when demolishing a wall covered by cement render. It was not associated with sprayed lagging in any obvious way. The photographs were taken at a hospital located in the Sydney metropolitan area.



Please share your photos of any important, unusual, interesting, quirky, hard-to-find, or just easy-to-miss asbestos finds

Philip Turner, COH

philipturner@optusnet.com.au (mailto:philipturner@optusnet.com.au)

CDC Scientific Brief: SARS-CoV-2 and Potential Airborne Transmission

[Click here to read \(https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-sars-cov-2.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-sars-cov-2.html)

TSANZ Position Dust Diseases

[Click here to read \(/static/uploads/files/tsanz-position-dust-diseases-wfdazznklxtc.pdf\)](/static/uploads/files/tsanz-position-dust-diseases-wfdazznklxtc.pdf)

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

News from Edith Cowan University

2020 has been a different year at ECU as it has for many around the world. Students have continued to impress us in their resilience in coping with the required changes and delays to their study, while many also needed to cope with significant impacts at their places of work and on a personal level.

It has also been great to see the continued diversity of research projects being conducted by our Master of Occupational Hygiene and Toxicology students, in particular the applied nature of projects done in collaboration with industry and government partners. Eleven projects are being completed this year and the quality of our student research will be showcased with 4 students, or graduates presenting at the AIOH 2020 Virtual Symposium.

We would also like to announce that our Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma of Occupational Hygiene will also be available as an entry point and not just an exit point. This means that if there are 3 or more units of study that you would like to undertake at ECU, without doing a whole Masters degree, you can apply and complete them. You can also use them for credit if you decide to go on and enrol in a Master of Occupational Hygiene and Toxicology.

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 we will not be holding our annual Occupational Hygiene and OHS alumni event but look forward to doing it again next year.

ECU graduates have given us a 5-star rating for teaching quality for **14 years in a row**, making ECU one of only two public universities in Australia to have achieved such a consistently high endorsement for teaching quality (Good Universities Guide 2021). ECU has also maintained its position in the top 500 in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings for 2021, placing it in the top 2.5% of universities in the world.

More information about studying occupational hygiene at ECU can be found at: www.ecu.edu.au/degrees/study-areas/medical-and-health-sciences/occupational-hygiene-and-toxicology (<http://www.ecu.edu.au/degrees/study-areas/medical-and-health-sciences/occupational-hygiene-and-toxicology>) or by contacting A/Prof Sue Reed (s.reed@ecu.edu.au) (<mailto:s.reed@ecu.edu.au>) or at 08 6304 2243.

If you are interested in studying OHS then go to: www.ecu.edu.au/degrees/study-areas/medical-and-health-sciences/occupational-health-and-safety (<http://www.ecu.edu.au/degrees/study-areas/medical-and-health-sciences/occupational-health-and-safety>) or contact Dr Marcus Cattani (m.cattani@ecu.edu.au) or at 08 6308 2346.



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The University of Wollongong

By Jane Whitelaw & Brian Davies

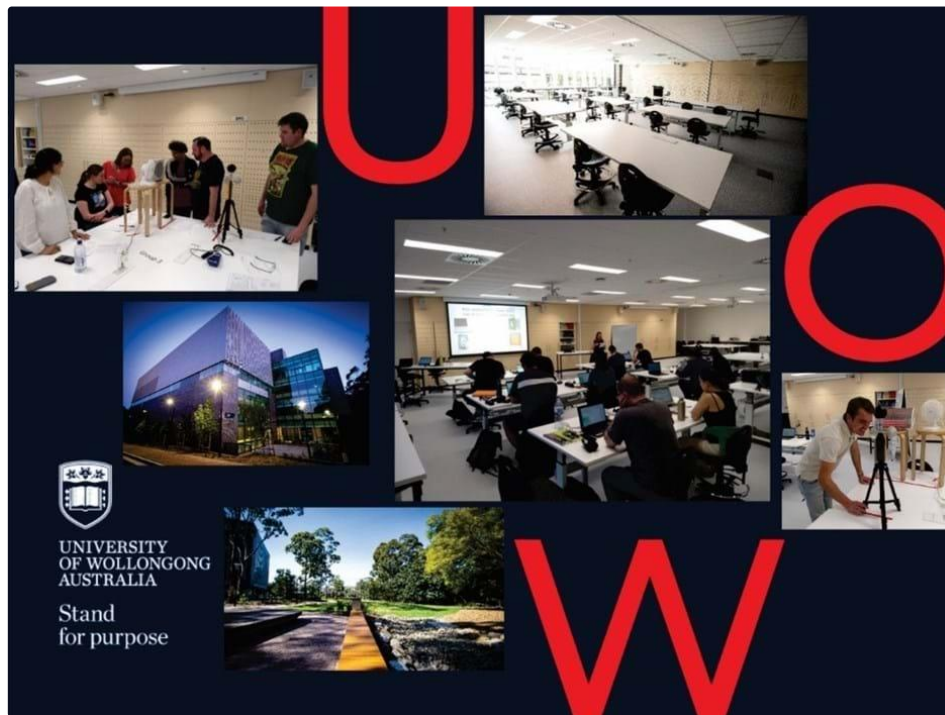
Course Update:

After a disrupted year due to COVID-19 it was great to return to face-to-face teaching in September in our new building with its spacious well-equipped Laboratory and dedicated teaching space. Our students maintained their physical distance as they immersed themselves into learning about Physical Hazards in the workplace! A key strength of the UOW Courses is that they build professional networks and enable personal mentoring as the principles are applied in a hands-on way.

*"Thank you for an interactive and fun week of face-to-face learning. Block week was a great opportunity to **collaborate and connect** with lecturers and peers. It was valuable meeting students from different industries and **gaining insight** into their experiences. Block week brought all the pieces of the puzzle together. I was able to gain **a clear understanding and clarification** on the course work completed prior to date." (Shilpa 2020)*

Enrolments in our Graduate Certificate (<https://coursefinder.uow.edu.au/information/index.html?course=graduate-certificate-occupational-hygiene>) and Master of Occupational Hygiene (<https://coursefinder.uow.edu.au/information/index.html?course=master-occupational-hygiene>) are open for 2021 and Commonwealth Supported Places are available for domestic students. Please feel free to contact me regarding your specific situation @ jane_whitelaw@uow.edu.au (mailto:jane_whitelaw@uow.edu.au) or just

Apply Now: <https://applytouow.uow.edu.au/app/welcomeUow.jsp>
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Research Update:

The Centre for Occupational, Public and Environmental Research in Safety & Health (COPERSH) (<https://www.uow.edu.au/the-arts-social-sciences-humanities/research/copersh/>) Research Centre was formally established as a research centre in the School of Health and Society at the University of Wollongong in August this year.

The vision of the Centre is to address new, emerging and complex health and safety problems in occupational, public and environmental settings through collaborative research with government, university and industry partners. Our current research partners of COPERSH share our vision of a world class research centre that builds research capacity in Occupational Health and Safety (OHS). COPERSH is based on a model that not only provides research outcomes consistent to our partners needs but embraces a global mobility programme for research students that exposes students to different cultures & regulatory environments, achieved by formalising current industry & university links.

We currently have four industry based research projects in progress, which embrace collaboration with seven industry partners from three different countries across three different continents. All projects have projected outcomes that will lead to a significant reduction in adverse health effects in workers, not only in the mining and tunnelling sector but also more diverse workplaces:

1. "Centralised management and real-time interpretation of emissions based maintenance data for diesel fleets" – the development of a complex data management system to allow transmission of diesel engine emission analysis and key engine parameters to centralised interpretative software to support emissions based maintenance programmes.
2. "3D facial modelling and recognition for automatic selection of worker respiratory protective equipment" – aiming to deliver a simple and effective means of matching the best available fit of a respirator to a worker's facial features.

3. “An in-field method for the calibration of near real-time instrumentation for Respirable Crystalline Silica (RCS)” – development of an in-field calibration procedure suitable for a near real-time sampling and analysis system that provides a visual and audible alarm to warn workers of potentially high exposures.
4. “Innovative control solutions for Respirable Crystalline Silica to protect workers against exposure to silica” – building on current maintenance technologies to provide intimate guidance material for specific activities so that a worker understands the safety measures that should be in place before commencing that work.

COPERSH is actively seeking collaboration partners and any interest should be directed to Professor Brian Davies AM at bdavies@uow.edu.au

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AIOH COMMITTEE UPDATES

Certification Board Update November 2020

COH examinations

During September and October, the COH team successfully completed 11 exams via Zoom across Brisbane and Perth. Applicants who wish to seek feedback on their performance by contacting Katie at membership@aioh.org.au (<mailto:membership@aioh.org.au>). Congratulations to all the successful applicants and we actively encourage those who missed out to seek feedback and coaching so they can be prepared for the next time.

Notably, this was also the first time we hosted exams via videoconference where the Candidate sat at a controlled venue while being assessed by a panel from around the country. We also received positive feedback from the applicants who felt less intimidated facing the panel on a screen when compared to facing a physical panel in the same room. Posting a friendly and neutral AIOH liaison at the venue enabled applicants to meet, chat and reflect on their experiences.

Future applicants who are ready to sit the exam are encouraged to apply via the AIOH website (<https://www.aioh.org.au/membership/coh-certified-occupational-hygienist-coh>) as this helps the Board to plan future sessions based on demand. The initial application process does not require payment but places you in the queue while schedules are being prepared. Once the schedule and venue have been confirmed, you will be required to pay the application fee to secure your spot.

Hardship considerations and CPD maintenance

The Board continues to recognise that each of us have been impacted differently from the pandemic. Those who feel they will not reach their goal of maintaining 40 CM points (5yr-cycle) over the next 1-2yrs are encouraged to contact Katie on membership@aioh.org.au (mailto:membership@aioh.org.au) to raise your concern. You may be asked to outline your situation in writing so the Board can consider any adjustments to your CPD requirements.

NAR

From 1 Sep 2020, the AIOH Council aligned the NAR position with other countries. In summary, any applicant that holds certification from another country would be eligible to sit the COH exam. Applicants will no longer be granted COH based on the international certification.

Retired COH

In September, Council accepted a proposal to establish a retired status for COHs. Retired COH status or COH®(Ret) refers to the Certified Occupational Hygienist who has decided to no longer operate at a level to maintain their Certification status.

2021 Audit

Members who are due for recertification at the end of this year are reminded to finalise their maintenance worksheets via an activity workbook or through their My COH portal. When compiling your information please note the following:

- **Expect to be audited through first quarter 2021** – Retain evidence of your activities and submissions. Do not wait until the audit team to approach you and then gather the information as this delays the entire process.
- **Get a COH # for each activity** – Do not assume that your activity submitted may be valid or would be worth the right amount of points. Past members assumed certain courses or activities were valid without prior verification with the COH Board. If in doubt, check. We will still review and issue COH# and points to past courses and activities from previous years.
- **Have evidence ready irrespective of your certification status from other institutions** – Submitting a single certificate showing your status from another institution (eg. CIH) will no longer be sufficient. If you are maintaining certification via another country, then maintenance activity should be already be available and must be available for audit review.

Neil Goulding

Chair - COH Board

AIOH Foundation Update

The AIOH Foundation has the singular purpose of promoting the principles of occupational hygiene in the prevention and control of occupational diseases in Australian workplaces. The focus of the AIOH Foundation this year has been the implementation of our inaugural grant process to enable us to assist

funding of research, promotion and other projects that are consistent with our Purpose. Despite some delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the grant application process was opened in June and closed at the end of August. With the assistance of the AIOH, the grant opening was communicated to the AIOH mailing list and the Foundation also announced the opening on LinkedIn. Any organisation with projects that improve the understanding, prevention and control of workplace disease was able to apply for a project grant. Eleven grant applications were received and were evaluated by the board using a detailed evaluation matrix. Any director declaring a conflict of interest for a specific grant application was excluded from the evaluation of that application. In early November we anticipate being able to announce the recipients of the inaugural grant application process.

In 2020, we have also been pleased to enable credit card donations for the first time, making donating to the Foundation far easier moving forward. An option for AIOH members to donate at the time of membership and COH renewal was also added. These improvements were only made possible thanks to the efforts of AIOH staff with the support of the AIOH Council and we are also very grateful for our donors, most of whom are AIOH members keen to make Australian workplaces healthier. In the latter half of 2020 we also commenced a project to create a new website. In the interim, with the support of the AIOH, the Foundation's existing page was updated several times including the publication of our position paper, developed in late 2019, examining occupational disease data for Australia and internationally.

The foundation has met its governance responsibilities as a Charity registered with the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC) including audited accounts and completion of the Annual Information Statement. To ensure the board is aware of and complying with its governance responsibilities, the board sought the advice of Derek Mortimer, an expert in not-for-profit law and author of the Foundation's constitution, who delivered a governance session in October 2020 to the board.

Andrew Bennett

Chair AIOH Foundation

AIOH Mentoring Committee



Emergency – we have a shortage of Mentors – we need you!!

The Mentoring committee is on the lookout for Mentors across all industries to take part in the program in 2020 and beyond. A rewarding and fulfilling way to give back to the OH Community, mentees can also offer you a fresh and different perspective on situations (which in return increases your learning!)

We also need constructive feedback from our current Mentor and Mentee pairs. If you are contacted please take some time to reply. Thank you!

CPD points are available for Mentors, for more information please contact: MentoringChair@aioh.org.au (<mailto:MentoringChair@aioh.org.au>)

Apply to become a Mentor (<https://www.aioh.org.au/website-forms/request-to-be-an-aioh-mentor-form>)

Apply to become a Mentee (<https://www.aioh.org.au/website-forms/request-to-be-an-aioh-mentee-form>)

Jason Green

Mentoring Committee Chair

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FEATURE ARTICLE

Our quarantine OHS system is flawed...and it means we're on the brink of another outbreak in Australia.



The Covid-19 response in Australia has been one of the most effective in the world. But the system is far from perfect. We are some of the lucky Australians who managed to return home in the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Flight caps were introduced to 'manage and maintain quarantine arrangements across the jurisdictions' (Prime Minister Media Statement, July 2020 (<https://www.pm.gov.au/media/national-cabinet>)). So, on 19 September 2020 after boarding a near empty flight, you can imagine our intrigue about the quarantine controls when we finally touched down in Australia.

As the 35 passengers and 10 staff disembarked the aircraft, we were told to keep our masks and face shields on. But looking around I could see it was not going to make much of a difference. Many passengers were wearing their masks below their noses – it makes it about as useful as a chocolate teapot.

If you're required to wear a mask it must cover your nose and mouth...period! Just as we breathe and cough from our mouths, we breathe and sneeze through our noses – both are just as important to cover.

When we arrived at the Covid screening queue, tape was used on the ground to guide physical distancing with a staff member responsible for checking and reminding passengers. That part worked.

Then we encountered a nurse taking temperatures. Good idea in principle. But the nurse was only wearing a surgical mask, which protected the passengers from him, but not him from the passengers?! The nurse should have been better protected by wearing a P2 respirator. So many healthcare workers have been infected because of the wrong respirator for the Covid risk.

That's scary considering how many Covid cases actually come from overseas travellers. If that nurse got Covid from an incoming passenger, he'd go home to his family and spread it. Boom! The next outbreak is underway.

We noticed similar protective inconsistencies with the Police as we left the airport and made our way to hotel quarantine.

Respirators (did you notice I didn't say surgical masks?) need to fit the individual's face and need to be worn properly. It is not effective to hand out any masks that are available and assume it will be ok. For respirators to work, it is vital that each high-risk worker (that's the nurses, the police and the quarantine hotel staff) has access to respirators that fit their face shape. They need to shave before putting it on (if they have facial hair) and know how to wear it correctly.

It was awesome to see that the nurses who did our day 2 and day 10 Covid-19 tests were wearing P2 respirators and eye protection. Why weren't the others? Why were there inconsistencies in the way we protect frontline workers?

Why has this been overlooked?

There's a bunch of health experts in the Infection Control Expert Group (ICEG) (<https://www.health.gov.au/committees-and-groups/infection-control-expert-group-iceg>) who take and give advice on this sort of thing. Only one problem. This group is missing a key expert.

Someone who has spent years working with other airborne hazards such as asbestos, silica and welding fumes. Someone who specialises in the protection of worker health. Someone who can develop a personal protection plan to minimise the risk of an outbreak.

Who is this someone? It is an occupational hygienist (<https://www.aioh.org.au/who-we-are/what-is-occupational-hygiene>) (I know what you're thinking...and no, we're not in dentistry and hand washing is not our only expertise).

As an occupational hygienist myself, we share a passion for protecting worker health and are all too ready for the call to provide our expert knowledge to help our frontline workers.

Action is needed to fine tune controls to protect high risk workers, so we can all travel safely and prevent another outbreak.

The Federal and State Government need to get on board with Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists (AIOH) (<https://www.aioh.org.au/>) to iron out the creases in the quarantine system so we can truly say we have world leading practices. We owe it to our frontline workers, their families, and communities.

Everyone has right to return home from work healthy and safely so that together we can beat Covid-19.

Candice Dix

Certified Occupational Hygienist, Australian Citizen, Proud Mum of four

Candice Dix has worked in the occupational health field for over 11 years and is currently employed as an Occupational Hygiene Specialist within the private sector of Western Australia.

Candice holds a Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy, a Master of Science in Occupational Hygiene Practice and is a Certified Occupational Hygienist with the Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists (AIOH).

A passionate advocate for worker health protection, Candice is experienced at assessing workplaces and recommending strategies to prevent occupational diseases.

Just like the care and compassion she has for her family; Candice applies her knowledge to ensure workers can return home safely to their families every day.

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AIOH CONTACTS

AIOH President

Andrew Orfanos

president@aioh.org.au (mailto:president@aioh.org.au)

AIOH President-Elect

Ross Di Corleto

presidentelect@aioh.org.au (mailto:presidentelect@aioh.org.au)

AIOH Treasurer

Aleks Todorovic

treasurer@aioh.org.au (mailto:treasurer@aioh.org.au)

AIOH Secretary

Sharann Johnson

secretary@aioh.org.au (mailto:secretary@aioh.org.au)

AIOH Conference & Events Manager

Samira Wadhavkar

0488 733 814

conference@aioh.org.au (mailto:conference@aioh.org.au)

AIOH Bookkeeper

Craig Price

accounts@aioh.org.au (<mailto:accounts@aioh.org.au>)

AIOH Membership Coordinator

Katie Page

0498 007 975

membership@aioh.org.au (<mailto:membership@aioh.org.au>)

Breathe Freely Australia

03 9338 1635

bfa@aioh.org.au (<mailto:bfa@aioh.org.au>)

breathefreelyaustralia.org.au (<http://breathefreelyaustralia.org.au>)