



Our Ref: LR0220/2008  
Enquiries: Agency Labour Relations  
Advisor

## CIRCULAR TO DEPARTMENTS AND AUTHORITIES NO. 7 OF 2009

### APPLICATION OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR FIRST AID ALLOWANCE

This Circular applies to employees under industrial instruments containing the Public Sector First Aid Allowance (see Attachment A).

This clause was introduced in the 2008 General Agreements negotiated with the CPSU/CSA. It provides an allowance for suitably qualified employees who have been appointed as the first aid officer (FAO) for their workplace. A suitably qualified employee appointed as the deputy FAO may receive the allowance when required to assume first aid responsibilities because the FAO is unavailable. However, the allowance cannot be received by both the FAO and deputy FAO at the same time.

The clause does not compel an employer to appoint FAOs, or specify how many should be appointed. Similarly, it also does not oblige an employer to make additional FAO appointments where:

- An employee under a different industrial instrument is the FAO for a workplace; or
- No FAO is necessary because the workplace already has first aid or medical resources available (e.g. the workplace is in a hospital).

Employers should continue to determine the number and location of FAOs (and deputy FAOs) necessary in accordance with their obligations under the *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984* and the Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996.

In effect since 1 October 1996, Regulation 3.12 requires all employers to have appropriate first aid facilities and, as far as practicable, people trained in first aid having regard for:

- The types of hazards to persons at the workplace and the associated risk; and
- The number of persons at the workplace.

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The WorkSafe *Code of practice for first aid facilities and services* (the Code) provides guidance on these issues. The Code highlights the need to complete a hazard identification and risk assessment to identify the type and likelihood of injuries occurring in the workplace and, therefore, the first aid facilities and number of FAOs required.

Employers should therefore refer to Regulation 3.12 and the Code to determine the first aid resources required for their organisation. The Code is available on the WorkSafe website under Publications ([www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe)). If necessary, WorkSafe should also be contacted for further information and advice on these issues.

The following points provide guidance on introducing first aid arrangements that comply with the clause and clearly identify when employees will be eligible for the allowance.

- Confirm the process to identify employees willing to undertake first aid responsibilities – the clause does not specify how FAOs (or deputy FAOs) should be selected. Given that an employee must accept undertaking first aid responsibilities, a voluntary nomination process may be appropriate. However, it should be noted that volunteering does not make an employee ineligible for the allowance.
- Ensure FAO (and deputy FAO) appointments are made in writing - the clause refers to appointment as the employee being “formally assigned” by the employer to the position of FAO. It is therefore appropriate to make appointments in writing and have the employee confirm their agreement to take on this responsibility.
- Confirm the work appointed FAOs (or deputy FAOs) are responsible for.
- Ensure that employees no longer required to undertake first aid responsibilities are informed accordingly – it would also be appropriate to do this in writing and confirm the cease date if the employee has been receiving the Public Sector First Aid Allowance.
- Maintain any lists of FAOs and deputy FAOs circulated to employees – it is important that this information is up to date so that employees know where to obtain first aid assistance. It will also assist in identifying those employees eligible for the allowance.
- Ensure that FAOs and deputy FAOs obtain and/or maintain the required qualification.
- Address when a deputy FAO may be required to assume first aid responsibilities – this should include a process for notifying the deputy FAO that they will be required to undertake first aid responsibilities, the period, and therefore the period for which they will receive the allowance.

For further assistance on the application of the Public Sector First Aid Allowance, please contact your Labour Relations Advisor.



**BOB HORSTMAN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
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## **PUBLIC SECTOR FIRST AID ALLOWANCE**

**(extract from the Public Service General Agreement 2008)**

- 30.1 For the purposes of this clause the following expressions shall have the following meanings:
- (a) 'Appointed' means the employer has formally assigned an employee, who is suitably qualified in first aid, to the position of first aid officer; and the employee has agreed to take on the responsibilities of providing first aid in the workplace, as determined by the employer;
  - (b) 'Deputy first aid officer' means an employee who has been appointed by the employer to take on first aid responsibilities in a workplace when the first aid officer is unable to do so;
  - (c) 'Suitably qualified in first aid' means holding a current statement of attainment that satisfies the national training requirement HLTFA301B – Apply First Aid. This includes, but is not limited to, the successful completion of the two Day Senior First Aid - St John Ambulance Association; or the Senior First Aid (Workplace Level 2) – Australian Red Cross Society training courses.
  - (d) 'Workplace' means the direct area in which the employee has been employed to work in the ordinary course of their employment.
- 30.2 An employee who has been appointed by the employer to be the first aid officer in a workplace shall be paid a public sector first aid allowance of 1% of the gross hourly salary of a level 1.8 general division employee.
- 30.3 An eligible part time employee is entitled to this allowance on a pro rata basis.
- 30.4 The public sector first aid allowance shall be paid to either the appointed first aid officer or the deputy first aid officer in a workplace. The deputy first aid officer shall not be paid the first aid allowance for any period in which the allowance is paid to the appointed first aid officer.
- 30.4 A deputy first aid officer is to be paid the public sector first aid allowance where the employer has agreed to them taking on the first aid responsibilities in a workplace due to the inability of the appointed first aid officer to do so. For example, where the appointed first aid officer is on annual or long service leave, or extended personal leave.