



Integrity Sampling

DRUG & ALCOHOL MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

Welcome to our latest newsletter. We aim to update our valued partners and the workplace (generally) about issues that face our industry; drugs and alcohol in the workplace. We highlight the latest trends, what concerns are filtering through to the shop floor, and help to educate those who strive for a safer and harm free workplace.

Integrity Sampling P/L is Australia wide, with 130 staff and technicians. We are Australia's leading drug and alcohol testing company. We service the transport, warehousing, manufacturing, building, construction, logistics, aviation, marine, mining, forestry, automotive and allied industries, performing in excess of 50,000 tests annually.

JANUARY 2018 NEWSLETTER

Handing drug and alcohol concerns fairly

If you are a Manager or Supervisor and you suspect that an employee may be under the effects of drugs or alcohol, you should take the necessary steps to ensure that bias, a dislike of an employee, religious or cultural beliefs or other contributing factors are not influencing the request to conduct a test.

Before contacting Integrity Sampling it is recommended that you do the following:

- Having another supervisor present is recommended when talking to the employee
- Document all observations, ensuring that the decision to test is based on fact
- Remove the employee to a private location away from other workers to discuss confidential matters
- Explain the reason for the investigation/questioning in simple terms, reiterating the concern for the employee's health and safety
- Ask the employee about his/her health and any medications that they may be taking that may be affecting their attitude/behaviour
- Establish whether something on a personal level, such as family crisis, may be causing his/her current attitude/behaviour
- Discussions with the employee should remain focused on his/her behaviour and appearance
- If no apparent contributing factors are identified:
 - Inform the employee that they will need to undergo a drug and alcohol test
 - Emphasise that **this test will serve to rule out alcohol or drug use** as a possible reason for their present behaviour, appearance or incident
 - Fully explain the consequences of the employee's refusal to comply

When conducting the interview:

- Focus on performance
- Focus on concern for safety
- Remain logical – stick to the facts
- Ask appropriate questions
- Document performance issues
- Remember - problems often worsen without assistance
- Contact your Manager, they are there to assist you

NEVER :

- Make accusations or comparisons to others
- Be judgemental
- Be swayed by emotive tactics – excuses, apologies, sympathy, tears, anger
- Become personal – stick to the behaviours and the facts



Can an employee refuse a drug test?

Have you ever wondered what would happen if one of your employees refused a drug or alcohol test? Hopefully the answer is yes and you've covered this potential scenario in your drug and alcohol management plan.

Employees can most certainly refuse drug and alcohol testing – you can't force them to undertake testing – and that's why it's important to provide details in your plan. These details will include the steps taken when someone refuses testing and the consequences for the employee.

See <https://integritysamplingaust.com.au/2017/12/can-i-refuse-a-drug-or-alcohol-test> for full details.



Drug deaths in Australia rising

It's a sobering thought for business owners and managers who are concerned about the affect that alcohol and drugs can have on their workplace – drug deaths in Australia are on the rise.

In an Australian Bureau of Statistics report on the leading cause of death, it was highlighted that in 2016 Australia recorded its highest number of drug-induced deaths since the late 1990s. The death rate from drugs has been steadily increasing over the last 10 years and now sits at 7.5 deaths per 100,000 Australians. That adds up to just over 1800 drug induced deaths in 2016.

It's yet another indicator that shows that Australians are continuing to take risks with drugs. This includes short-term risks, such as taking drugs and then going to work or driving, and long-term risk, such as taking illicit drugs or becoming addicted to prescribed medicines.

See <https://integritysamplingaust.com.au/2017/10/drug-deaths-on-the-rise> for more.

Alcohol issues not confined to land

A recent edition of HIS Maritime & Trade's Fairplay magazine has highlighted an incident that occurred in 2015, that was partly blamed on alcohol. It involved the grounding of a cargo ship on the Scottish coast.

The investigation found that the Russian chief officer, who was alone on the bridge during the incident, was found to have consumed approximately half a litre of rum leading up to the grounding. He was fired the next day, but it was too late to avert the damage to the ship (it was declared a total loss), the environment and the ship owner's reputation.

As you can read at <https://integritysamplingaust.com.au/2017/11/alcohol-testing-all-at-sea>, this is not an isolated incident, with many more ship groundings and other incidents in recent years at least partly blamed on alcohol.

Heavy vehicle drivers put to the test



If you're a truck driver, bus driver or other heavy vehicle operator, Operation Austrans has you in their sights.

Operation Austrans is an initiative held regularly across the nation that targets heavy vehicle road safety issues. Drug and alcohol use are just two of the road safety issues that police target. Other issues include speed, fatigue and driver work hours.

The second phase of Operation Austrans for 2017 wound up in Queensland in early December. During the period that the operation ran, thousands of drug and alcohol tests were conducted, and other checks on heavy vehicles run.

On one day alone, Queensland Police conducted 469 tests at weigh pads beside the Pacific Motorway at Coomera. Of the 469 tests, seven drivers returned a positive test for drugs.

Go to <https://integritysamplingaust.com.au/2017/12/drug-and-alcohol-testing-queensland-heavy> to read the full article.

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