



## TROUBLESHOOTERS AVAILABLE

### “Shooting the Breeze!”

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Over the past few weeks I have been speaking to and catching up with many building industry representatives. I am pleased that our clients, colleagues, and friends of Troubleshooters Available (TSA) have survived the Xmas madness, re-charged their batteries during the new year and have returned safely to work to start all over again!

By all accounts the industry finished 2006 on a positive note and is off to a good start for 2007. We have enjoyed an extended period of growth with minimal productivity losses due to industrial disputes and unnecessary union intervention. Much of the culture change we have witnessed I feel is due to the introduction of the ABCC. You may feel that I harp on this a tad, but this independent body has continued to grow into an effective watchdog to ensure that unlawful activity by all parties involved in the industry is policed and acted upon. *(more on page 2)*

Looking down the track the only stumbling block I can see is the forthcoming election. The spin doctors on both sides are already hard at work. My ears do prick up and I tend to shudder when I hear talk of abolishing workplace agreements and turning back the clock. Do we really want to go backwards? The model we are working with now is giving results. Like anything it needs a little fine tuning to eliminate some anomalies but it has shown promise.

Looking forward to being of assistance to you in 2007!

Chris Mazzotta  
Director

### ARE YOU FRUSTRATED BY?

- Not being able to fully staff your projects;
- Budget blowouts;
- Not meeting deadlines;
- R.D.O.s hampering your progress;
- Compulsory shutdowns.



CALL  
TROUBLESHOOTERS AVAILABLE  
FOR ALL YOUR CONSTRUCTION  
PERSONNEL  
24 HOURS - 7 DAYS

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## Industrial Relations Update

Since the introduction of the ABCC in 2005, and through its predecessors the Building Industry Taskforce and the Interim Building Industry Taskforce there has been substantial reform in the building and construction industry. Days lost to industrial action in the construction industry have fallen from 263 per 1,000 workers in the 1996 September quarter to just 1.6 in the September quarter 2006. Productivity has improved, and in 2005/2006, the second highest level of industrial capacity in use in ten years was recorded.

The National Code of Practice reflects the government's commitment to best industry practices and greater flexibility and productivity in the industry, and has ensured that any contractor wishing to deal with the government operates to the highest standards.

With a federal election later this year there is some conjecture as to what would happen to the ABCC should a Labor Government win office. The first point I would make is that the ABCC was set up subject to the BCII Act. If the Labor party intended to abolish the ABCC then they can only do so after repealing the legislation. The Labor party cannot do this until they control the Senate which is not possible before the 2010 federal election.

Secondly, and most importantly, it would be a **very brave government** to rid itself of an organisation largely responsible for the considerable reform that has been achieved. It is only through industry-wide commitment to these reforms that a future Labor government can be prevented from rolling back progress in favour of a return to union dominance.

In order to maintain the impressive results created by these reforms, the industry should continue to support the ABCC's efforts and continue to strive for compliance with the principles of the National Code

## Independent Contractors Act 2006

**More than a million Australians work as independent contractors.**

In the 2004 Federal election campaign, the government committed itself to introduce legislation specifically to protect independent contractors' status.

*The Workplace Relations Act 1996* gave employers and employees the freedom to tailor their workplace arrangements to meet their particular circumstances. This approach has contributed to higher economic growth and higher productivity.

As a result of the ever-increasing contribution that independent contractors make to our growing economy, separate legislation was needed to enshrine and protect the status of independent contractors.

In December 06 the Federal Parliament passed the historic *Independent Contractors Act 2006* and it commenced on 1 March 2007. The main area of reform protects independent contracting arrangements as commercial arrangements, not employment at common law. TSA welcomes the new Act and will continue to support such reform.

**Independent contractors epitomise the spirit of entrepreneurship that is fundamental to Australia's prosperity!**

## “SAFETY IS NO ACCIDENT”

### YOU’VE GOT TO SEE IT TO BELIEVE IT!



Renderer working on a 2 storey domestic project.

- Overlapped timber planks supported by incorrectly pitched scaffold ladder which is leaning against wall.
- The span on the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier of timber planks is approximately 4m.
- Timber planks are overhanging on trestles by only 100mm which creates immediate risk of collapse as soon as worker stands on single plank with a working height of approximately 4m with no form of protection in place.
- The obvious solution would be to implement the use of either scaffold or scissor lift/EWP.



Roof plumbers installing clip lock sheets on canopy of newly built petrol station.

- Workers are wearing harness fall protection but they haven't secured the harness to an anchor point.
- Maybe they think that a harness doubles as a parachute and therefore an anchor point is not required.
- Workers were also observed climbing to and from an elevated scissor lift at height.
- Rooftop guardrail system and stair access scaffold should have been erected to eliminate all non-compliance issues which are obvious in this example.

## Occupational Health & Safety

### More Fatalities in Victoria



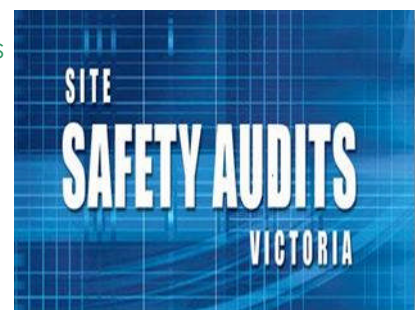
In the sixth fatality for 2007, a 44yr-old man was loading a boom lift on to a trailer at an equipment hire yard in Dandenong South on February 2, when he was struck by the machine and died. The VWA is investigating the circumstances of the tragedy.

WorkSafe's Executive Director John Merritt said the state's work-related death toll was now double that of the same time last year. 'To have six deaths in a little over four weeks is a major concern because we know the overwhelming number of workplace deaths and injuries can be prevented.'

It is expected that WorkSafe will step up its compliance and prosecution activities in the light of the appalling start to 2007

Regular auditing of you sites can improve the level of awareness of OH&S amongst your workers as well as providing peace of mind that you are complying with OH&S requirements. Site Safety Audits Victoria provide comprehensive audits at very competitive prices. Call Dan O'Leary 0431 694 878 for further info.

**MARCH SPECIAL! - First audit free to new clients.**



## TSA Footy Tipping Comp 2007

Break out your footy beanies and scarves because the 2007 AFL season is just around the corner! The Mighty Dees and the Sainters are kicking off round one on Friday March 30.

Invitations to participate in the TSA Footy Tipping Comp have been sent to our clients. Entry is free and only one entry per client is allowed. Last year Peter Jacobs from Behmer & Wright showed sensational form all season to take out first prize which included:

- ⇒ a scrumptious Grand Final breakfast,
- ⇒ 2 tickets to the big game,
- ⇒ dinner for two at valued at \$300



This years prizes will be just as good if not better, with weekly prizes for the best tipper of the round. In keeping with our counterparts at the AFL Rules Committee, and in the interests of all our tipsters, we have made some positive changes to our competition.

If you are interested call Carlo or Clive on 9568 4877. (Bribes accepted!!!!)

So get on board! In the meantime keep your eye on the NAB Cup to check out the pre season form.

## Medallion Club



The Medallion Club boasts the best seats at Telstra Dome and is surrounded by the finest facilities.

TSA will be offering tickets to our clients throughout the 2007 AFL season to acknowledge your continued support and loyalty.

Numerous clients enjoyed our hospitality last season and we ask that you drop us an email if you are interested in catching a game in 2007. [info@troubleshooters.com.au](mailto:info@troubleshooters.com.au)

## Master Builders Association of Victoria - Golf Dates for 2007

TSA continues to be proud sponsors of the monthly MBAV golf days. These days provide great opportunities to network with other industry participants in a social atmosphere. Call Ken Williams at the office if you'd like a round with the TSA boys.

### Forthcoming Venues:

Kingswood  
Cranbourne  
Kingston Heath  
Southern



Maslock Pty Ltd  
A.B.N 88 050 032 570  
33a Chester St  
PO Box 2191  
Oakleigh Vic 3166

Phone: 03 9568 4877  
Fax: 03 9563 1763  
Email: [info@troubleshooters.com.au](mailto:info@troubleshooters.com.au)  
[www.troubleshooters.com.au](http://www.troubleshooters.com.au)