

Media release: 8 April 2014



Pause for Safety on 28 April. **Prevent an accident waiting to happen.**

Thousands of Australians are injured at work every year; for many the injury is serious and changes their life forever. Two of Australia's peak bodies for spinal cord injury, the Spinal Cord Injury Network and the Spinal Research Institute have joined forces to launch an initiative that they hope will dramatically reduce workplace accidents called **Pause for Safety**.

Spinal Research Institute Chief Operating Officer Robbie Franco said **Pause for Safety** was all about encouraging workplaces to hold short accident prevention sessions on 28 April – World Day for Safety and Health at Work.

“We have produced a short, compelling video that tells the story of someone who was injured at work – someone who will never forget the day his life changed forever. All organisations who take part in **Pause for Safety** will get a copy of this video, and we hope they will get their staff together for a viewing, and then talk about safety in their workplaces,” Mr Franco said.

Spinal Cord Injury Network CEO Dr Stephanie Williams said she hoped **Pause for Safety** would make significant impact on reducing workplace accidents.

“By taking just a few moments out of the working day to literally pause, and reflect on safety, organisations are playing a part in changing the future – they are preventing future accidents and doing their bit to keep staff safe.”

Two organisations that will be holding **Pause for Safety** sessions are LogiCamms and Computershare. Damian Raspe, LogiCamms' Group Health and Safety Manager, said “it just makes sense to support research that could potentially make irreversible spinal cord injuries a thing of the past. Employee wellbeing is paramount at LogiCamms, and anything we can do to increase awareness and keep the focus on safety is a worthwhile initiative.”

“We will be taking part in the Pause for Safety campaign to discuss accident prevention and highlight the importance of this much needed research.”

Mr Franco said the aim of the **Pause for Safety** initiative was not only to reduce workplace accidents, but to raise awareness and much needed funds for spinal cord injury research to improve the quality of life for people living with spinal cord injury. Participation does not cost anything, but organisations are invited to make a donation to spinal cord injury research.

Safe Work Australia has calculated that the total cost of workplace injury and illness to the Australian economy for the 2008-2009 financial year was \$60.6 billion. In 2010-11, 228 workers died due to an injury at work. One in five claims for compensation involved an injury to the back.¹

Organisations interested in finding out more about the campaign can visit www.spinalnetwork.org.au/news-and-events/pause-for-safety

Media inquiries: Jane Castles, SRI, on 0412 392 577, or Liz Sullivan, Bossman Media, on 0417 010 769.

1. Key Work Health and Safety Statistics, Australia, Safe Work Australia, 2014.