

09 August 2003

TAN/86/40/1

# Newsletter

A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF THE NEW ZEALAND TANNERS ASSOCIATION (Inc)

## MEMBERS

This is a trial newsletter. The intent is to keep members informed on issues with specific interest to our industry group and will probably be bi-monthly. We would like input for a notice board section. You may have made a senior staff appointment you would like the membership to know about. Chemicals no longer required could be advertised to others. H&S training courses that have been particularly effective? Send it through to Rex and let's see how things go, nothing ventured nothing gained.

Rhys Flack  
President

## Wooden Export Pallets

By now all members should have been contacted by AgriQuality regarding wooden packing material specifications for exports to EU or US. The specification takes effect from 1 January 2004 and requires heat treated timber as a minimum standard. Any export plant will require a minimum of two trained Site Inspectors and an auditable system which includes a verification mark on each pallet. AgriQuality have been running training courses in various areas for Site Inspectors. If you have not been approached, we suggest you contact your local AgriQuality division.

## Glutaraldehyde

Members should be aware of recent publicity on the hazards of glutaraldehyde in the workplace. This is related to health care workers, but the chemical is in common use in the tanning industry. OSH and ACC both offer advice on safe handling procedures for glutaraldehyde on their respective websites

## Fellmongery Accident Costs.

As part of our recent discussions with ACC on levy increases, we obtained accident cost data for both sectors that make up our grouping LRG280. Members may be interested in the Fellmongery and Tanning split.

	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03 (10 mths)
CU22611 (Tanners)	\$213k	\$417k	\$325k

CU22612 (Fellmongers)      \$110k              \$206k              \$216k

These figures indicate both sectors have issues to address. We are compiling a survey of members to see if we can highlight any specific areas where we can assist each other.

### **Drug and Alcohol Policies.**

Thanks to those who sent in their policies/rules. We will ask if we can distribute these to the membership to help each company formulate a policy that will work in their plants. A generic policy for the industry may not be practical. A separate note

### **MAF export certification and OMAR 03/064.**

This should now be operational and we would welcome notification of any difficulties members may have experienced with the new MAF requirements.

### **Employee Representation – Health and Safety**

Under the Health and Safety in Employment Act Amendments if you have less than 30 employees, and one of them requests an employee participation system (HS Committee or similar) then a system must be developed. If you have more than 30 employees, a system needs to be put in place. In each case a representation system must be agreed to by employees, the union and the employer.

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Interesting to read recently that it appears “stress” is flavour of the month according to many employers attending EMA Northern’s Conference recently. Conference delegates reported rising numbers of employees claiming stress when faced with disciplinary proceedings or as part of a personal grievance claim.

It is important to remember that an employer is liable under the Health & Safety in Employment Act only if:

- the stress is work related
- the employer knows or should reasonably know about it
- it results in a medically diagnosable condition.

Work related stress alone is not grounds for action against an employer – it would be necessary for that stress to have caused some medically diagnosable condition (e.g heart disease)

### **Hazard Registers**

A timely reminder that you need to keep your hazard registers current. An annual review of the whole register or scheduled reviews during the year of part of the register are ways of achieving this.

Rex Baynes  
Executive Director

Rhys Flack  
President