

# The true cost of health and safety in the workplace

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The brainchild of - and organised by - Top Conferences, the AFROX Annual Top Safety in the Workplace Conference promises to spark some new thinking in the safety and health industry.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act 1993 states that employers must maintain a safe work environment, one that has no risk to the health of the workers. The Department of Labour states that it is also incumbent upon the worker to be aware of his/her rights and, of course, not to abuse them. Herein lies a murky area because when workers abuse the system and bunk off work when they are not unwell, how does the employer verify this one way or another and how does the organization combat this behaviour in future?

According to a survey conducted last year by Corporate Absenteeism Management Solutions (CAMS) and as reported widely in the press at the time, employee bunking could be costing South Africa as much as R20 billion every year.

How can South African business prevent this cost escalating while maintaining a healthy and safe workplace? How can business learn from implementing best practices and help benefit not only from a healthier work environment but also a healthier workforce? The AFROX Annual Top Safety in the Workplace Conference is geared to answer all these questions and more

A line up of expert speakers - from attorneys to behaviour management consultants, from the Department of Labour to the Department of Minerals and Energy - will tackle everything from the potential hazards associated with pregnancy, drugs and computer related stress at work to the root causes of workplace safety and health issues. Debating what a safety culture within a business really means, the two-day conference will highlight how certain types and frequency of accidents and other health-related injuries or stresses can be reduced. It will provide practical tools to address the most urgent of safety and health issues in the workplace and how to safeguard profitability in the face of these issues too.

Rick Hogben, AFROX Managing Director, said: "We have a responsibility to keep ourselves, our co-workers, customers, suppliers and contractors safe, and to avoid harm to all those who come into contact with us in the course of our business. Every incident is an incident too many. We all want a safe place to work. That is why AFROX is pleased to be sponsoring this conference."

The AFROX Annual Top Safety in the Workplace Conference takes place at Mintek, Randburg, Johannesburg on 7th and 8th March 2007.

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