

Greetings all. Today's topic is about Suicide Prevention.

I spend a lot of time focussing these bulletins on HRW safety and the external risks we in this industry face every day. While we can always try harder to make our worksites safer, so we can get home to be with our families, it's easy to forget that many of us are fighting silent battles within ourselves. Battles that you can't see, battles that sometimes even loved ones are not aware of, let alone mates at work. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Last year 3128 people died in Australia officially from "intentional Self harm" rising 9.1% from the year before. Of these, 75% were male and 25% were female.

Talking about these issues does not come naturally for men. We are not built that way. Instead we are built to be unwavering, strong, reliable, dependable providers to those that need us no matter what. Now more than ever it is recognised that this phenomenon is taking its toll on husbands, fathers and mates across all walks of life not just our community.

Depression and mental illness are among the most misunderstood and undetected problems we face in today's world. Fortunately, there are many organisations and campaigns around tackling the problem.

One of these is Incolink, the people trusted by construction workers for 30 years to look after the health, wellbeing and entitlements of their members. their latest initiative is [Bluehats](#), a new suicide awareness and prevention program to provide support to construction workers in Victoria.



Incolink's Suicide Prevention Initiative

This is a tough industry and sometimes we can find things getting really tough. That is why Bluehats has been co-designed with the construction industry to help when you're down or just need someone to talk to. Incolink's Bluehats Suicide Prevention Initiative will help workers who are doing it tough by providing someone to talk to onsite.

The motto is a good one. "Let's Talk." that is what we don't do enough of anymore it's as simple as checking in on your mates now and then and making sure they're doing ok. Many other initiatives like R.U.OK? also focus on initiating conversation with colleagues but the real focus of the Bluehats program is to train and coach volunteers to help them help their mates and be a qualified person that can be approached by anyone when needed. It's possible to have a bluehat in every yard or on every site which means if someone is struggling and wants to talk outside of smoko or in confidence away from the lunch room, they now have that opportunity.



How to get involved

1. Incolink employer members sign up to have the Bluehats program rolled out on their work site/s. Expressions of interest can be submitted [here](#).
2. 1 hour mental health and suicide General Awareness Sessions (G.A.S) will be provided to all workers on approved site/s. Maximum 40 workers per session to facilitate a higher level of understanding.
3. After attending the G.A.S, workers become eligible to volunteer to attend further training to become a Bluehat. Bluehat volunteers will be given a full day of training at an external training facility.
4. Incolink will continue to provide support and education around suicide prevention to all our Bluehats.

Remember Incolink's counselling service is also available 24/7 to workers and their families, simply call 1300 000 129. You can talk to us.

If you're an Incolink Employer Member and interested in accessing Bluehats training for your work site, please fill out the form [here](#).

Look Out for each other -CICA