

ATTACHMENT 1 – HOW TO EXAMINE AND INTERROGATE WORKPLACE DATA

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Workplace data may be examined or analysed to determine trends and indicators of a stress problem in the workplace. Determine if you have these sources of information in the workplace, and seek aggregate or summary information.

Records of sick leave with or without certificates	Look at the rate of sick leave for a workgroup compared to the average across a unit, region or department and compared to the whole organisation. Look for types of illness in summary information – tension headaches or migraine, recurrent general ill-health such as colds or flu, digestive system ulcers, musculoskeletal disorders such as tendon or muscular soreness, etc. Examine data frequencies and trends for each workplace/workgroup.
Recreation leave	Look at the pattern of use. Taking small amounts of time off is commonly associated with unpleasant working conditions and employee work-related stress.
Absenteeism records	Look at trends particularly related to the work-related stress factors or hazards listed in Step 1 of the Stresswise OHS work-related stress prevention worksheet.
Workers' compensation claims	Examine data re workers' compensation claims for work-related stress, post-traumatic disorder, anxiety and depression. Record the factors associated with work-related stress claims, and the actions undertaken in the workplace to prevent further injury/illness. Patterns and trends of workers' compensation claims can provide insights and information about stress hazards and risks in a workplace.
Grievance information	Workplace grievance information can also indicate issues that may give rise to stress in the workplace such as harassment, discrimination, occupational violence and bullying.
Incident and injury records	Look at dates and times that coincide with other events, trends, etc. The pattern of small and large incidents can provide insights into the sources of stress in a workplace.
Employee assistance programs	Summary data from, e.g. number of reports, types of issues managed, etc.

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Industrial relations records	This can provide insights into the level of job dissatisfaction in the workplace. Industrial relations disputes are frequently associated with stress in the workplace.
Minutes of meetings	OHS meetings, tool box meetings, staff meetings – look for issues that remain unresolved and reappear over time such as workload, changes in work roles, etc.
Issue resolution records	Look for OHS issues with changes to work systems, practices, management, responsibilities, etc.
Work schedules	Examine records of work schedules and how they were designed, records of long hours of work, planned and unplanned, and overtime usage.
Employee opinion survey information	Look for employee satisfaction with such things as leadership, pay, the management of workplace conflict, reward and recognition of effort, career opportunities, job security, working conditions, workplace consultation, communication and involvement in decision-making, control over workload, work schedules, work culture issues such as levels of support, social or physical isolation, management style, etc.
Questionnaire results re work-related stress	Use specific questions to identify and/or measure the degree of psychological distress and physical symptoms and exposure to particular work-related stress factors experienced by individuals and work groups.
Organisation's policies and procedures	Knowledge of – and compliance with – the organisation's policies and procedures for workplace consultation and issue resolution, and the prevention of work-related: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • harassment or bullying; • occupational violence; • unfair treatment; • discrimination; • interpersonal conflict; • fatigue; • stress.
Physiological or biochemical testing records	Some organisations participate in health-related research. Biochemical measures including tests for catecholamines and corticosteroids (stress hormones) may provide useful information about a workgroup's exposure to stress in the workplace. Some organisations also monitor the health of employees who may be exposed to particular health and safety hazards such as lead. Look at summary health records data for a workgroup such as heart rate, blood pressure and muscle tension which may indicate work-related stress.

Note: Privacy and confidentiality of personal information must be protected. Personal information is information or opinion, whether true or not about an identifiable individual. It should not be possible to identify an individual from workplace records, survey data or workplace consultation, therefore grouped or aggregate information is recommended to protect the identity of individuals.

Only persons authorised to handle personal information should summarise, aggregate or de-identify personal information.