

SafeNet Thought for the Day

12th of May 2017

“Toolbox Talk” – Employees duty 4

We often think that health and safety in the workplace is solely the responsibility of the employer. Section 14 and 15 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 do however impose certain duties on employees. Failure to comply with these duties could result in an employee being held liable or even be prosecuted by the Department of Labour. In this Safety Thought we will discuss one of these duties.

EMPLOYEE DUTY 4

Section 14(c) states - *“Every employee shall at work if any situation which is unsafe or unhealthy comes to his attention, as soon as practicable report such situation to his employer or to the health and safety representative for his workplace or section thereof, as the case may be, who shall report it to the employer”*.

It is commonly believed that it is only the responsibility of the employer and appointed Health and Safety Representative’s to identify, report and address unsafe act and conditions in the workplace. It is clear from the above mentioned legal requirement that this is not the case. The Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 and Regulations require of all employees to assist the employer in providing a safe and healthy workplace. As an employee you are therefore required to inform your supervisor or employer of any unsafe acts or conditions.

Reporting unsafe acts may sometimes be difficult as it may be your friend that contravenes the company rule and by doing so putting him at risk of being injured. At least do the right thing and tell him to stop putting himself at risk. Speaking to your friend about the issue may be much easier than facing his family after the incident knowing that you could have prevented the incident and subsequent hardship the family will suffer.

Enjoy your weekend

The team at SafeNet