



Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd

SAFETY ALERT

ARTC NSW No. 2



Fitness for work after holidays

There is an increased risk of injury to people who have returned to work after holidays particularly during the festive season. This is supported by injury statistics that see a significant increase of serious injuries in late January and February. Serious injuries are those requiring medical treatment or result in lost time.

To reduce the risk of injuries Team Managers are responsible for ensuring the following topics are reviewed with those people returning from annual leave or extended absence. Additional topics may be included where appropriate.

Topics

1. **Uneven surfaces** – risk of slips, trips and falls

People need to adjust to working on uneven surface of the ballast formation and working around the rail and tools that poses a trip hazard.

2. **Manual Handling** – risk of strains and sprains.

People need to get their bodies conditioned to lifting and carrying and performing manual work again. Warm up prior to starting, use mechanical devices, get assistance when lifting, bend your knees and don't rush the job.

3. **Heat and UV Radiation** – risk of dehydration, heat stress and sunburn

People performing physical work are at risk of fluid loss in hot conditions and must keep fluid levels up. Exposure to the sun can lead to sunburn and blistering. Cover up and apply sunscreen to exposed body parts.

4. **Distractions/Complacency** – failure to identify workplace hazards

People focus on catching up with work mates and discussing holiday events and are distracted from the task at hand.

Action: Ensure employees returning to work after a break complete a “Take 5” and identify the hazard of the work to be done today prior to leaving the depot.