

WORKERS COMPENSATION ACT 1987

PREMIUM FORMS DEFINITIONS

This DEFINITIONS supplement is common to the Insurance Proposal, Declaration of Estimated Wages, Declaration of Actual Wages and Request for Certificate of Currency and Statement of Wages forms. The supplement is provided by the Scheme Agent to assist employers complete the forms. Employers are required to acknowledge that they have obtained the DEFINITIONS supplement when completing the forms.

RECORDS

Section 174 of the *Workers Compensation Amendment Act 1987* (the Act) requires an employer to keep correct records of all wages paid to their workers as well as the trade or occupation of each worker. Section 174(2) of the Act stipulates that the employer is to retain these records in good order and condition for at least 5 years after the last entry is made in the record.

INPUT TAX CREDIT ENTITLEMENT

If you are registered for GST and you are entitled to claim back all the GST on your premium from the ATO in your business activity statement (BAS) return, you have a 100% input tax credit entitlement. Some employers such as banks or financial service providers are input taxed and only able to claim back a portion of the GST from the ATO. Those entities have a 'reduced input tax credit entitlement' and are required to note this percentage on the form. In the event of non-notification of a lower input tax credit entitlement, the premium will be based on a 100% entitlement.

WAGES

Gross wages includes total gross earnings (before tax deductions) and some payments that are not generally thought of as wages.

It includes, but is not limited to:

- salary/wages
- overtime, shift and other allowances
- over-award payments
- bonuses, commissions
- payments to working directors (including directors' fees)
- payments to certain contractors
- payments to pieceworkers
- payments for sick leave, public holidays and the associated leave loadings
- value of any substitutes for wages
- grossed-up value of fringe benefits (allowances subject to fringe benefits tax are counted at the grossed-up value, that is the value of the benefit multiplied by the relevant Australian Tax Office benefit formula)*
- trust distributions to workers where the distribution is in lieu of wages for work done for the trust.
- employer superannuation contributions (including the superannuation guarantee levy)
- long service payments (including lump sum payments instead of long service leave)
- termination payments (lump sum payments in respect of annual leave, long service leave, sick leave and related leave loadings).

It does not include:

- directors' fees paid to non-working directors
- compensation under the *Workers Compensation Act 1987*
- any GST component in a payment to a worker.

* Non-profit organisations, public benevolent institutions (PBIs) and charities should continue to declare worker benefits that aren't subject to fringe benefits tax at the net value. Once the worker benefits exceed the Australian Tax Office fringe benefit threshold, the employer must declare the benefit at the grossed-up value.

For further information refer to the WorkCover *Wages Definition Manual*, available as a Publication from WorkCover's website www.workcover.nsw.gov.au

WORKER

A 'worker' is any person who has entered into, or who works under, a contract of service or apprenticeship with an employer (whether by way of manual labour, clerical work or otherwise, and whether the contract is expressed or implied, and whether the contract is verbal or in writing).

An injured worker is only eligible to claim workers compensation in NSW when they have a 'State of Connection' that is NSW. A worker's 'State of Connection' is determined using the following tests.

- test A – the State in which the worker usually works in that employment
- test B – if no State is identified by test A, the State in which the worker is usually based for the purposes of that employment
- test C – if no State is identified by test A or B, the State in which the employer's principal place of business in Australia is located.

If it is determined that NSW is a worker's 'State of Connection' their wages must be declared for NSW premium calculation purposes and they must be covered under their employer's NSW workers compensation policy, unless their employer's NSW workers combined wages are \$7500 or less per financial year, in which case the employer is not required to hold a policy. The exception is those employers who engage an apprentice/trainee and/or are a member of a Group, in which case a workers compensation policy is required regardless of the estimated wages total.

APPRENTICE INCENTIVE SCHEME

The *Growing Our Skills Base: Apprentice Incentive Scheme* provides a premium reduction for employers of apprentices.

For new or renewed policies commencing on or after 31 December 2006, the wages you pay to an apprentice will be used to calculate your premium reduction.

To be eligible you must have entered into a NSW Department of Education and Training (NSW DET) approved 'Training Contract' with the apprentice in a designated trade vocation and the apprentice identified in the training contract. [Note the reduction is available only to these apprentices and not to NSW DET recognised traineeships].

When renewing or obtaining a new workers compensation policy, you are required to declare the amount of wages you pay your apprentice(s) and the industry in which they work separately from wages to other workers. This will allow your Scheme Agent to calculate your premium reduction.

You will need to retain your apprentice wages records, as well as your Apprentice Training Contract and letter from the Department of Education and Training advising that the application for the training contract has been approved. These documents will need to be produced in the event of a wage audit.

For further information contact: your workers compensation Scheme Agent, the WorkCover Information Centre on 13 10 50 or visit www.workcover.nsw.gov.au [Enter "Apprentice" under the Search facility for a Fact Sheet and FAQs on the Apprentice Incentive Scheme].

PREMIUM FORMS DEFINITIONS (cont.)

CONTRACTOR

Some people working as contractors are also treated as workers for workers compensation purposes, depending on the individual circumstances. This means that if there is a workplace injury the contractor may be entitled to receive workers compensation. The law refers to these contractors as 'deemed workers'. For this reason, their employer (or principal) must declare any payments made as wages and cover them for workers compensation if the total estimated wages for all that employer's NSW workers combined is greater than \$7500 per financial year (unless employing an apprentice and/or a trainee and/or are a member of a Group in which case the \$7500 exemption does not apply). For further information see www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/insurancepremiums/policies/doyouneedinsurance

Under workers compensation law, a principal contractor is anyone who enters into a contract with another person (subcontractor) to carry out work. A principal may be liable to pay workers compensation to workers employed by subcontractors if a subcontractor was required to have a policy and does not have one and there is a workplace injury. Further, a principal contractor may be liable for their subcontractor's unpaid premiums if they fail to check that their subcontractors are properly insured (this law only applies when a subcontractor is engaged to carry out work relating to the business of the principal).

Principal contractors should check that their subcontractors have signed a statement that there are no outstanding liabilities and that all workers compensation premiums applicable for that work have been paid. If the subcontractor is required to have a policy they should also have a Certificate of Currency in which they:

- are classified in the correct industry
- have declared an appropriate amount of wages for their insurance cover.

WORKER STATUS SERVICE & PRIVATE RULINGS

WorkCover NSW provides assistance to employers through the Worker Status Service to help them determine whether a person is a worker or contractor for premium calculation purposes.

Employers can contact the Worker Status Service to discuss their particular situation or use the tools provided. These tools include a self-assessment tool, which is a simple, anonymous tool that can provide clarity on whether a person is a worker or contractor. This tool also may help an employer decide whether they wish to lodge an application for a private ruling. The self-assessment tool is a guide only and not a binding ruling.

A private ruling is a binding notice from WorkCover that states whether a person is a worker or contractor. A private ruling is only relevant for the circumstances described by the employer in their application and does not impact upon a person's ability to lodge a workers compensation claim, nor can it be used in any claims proceedings.

The Worker Status Service can be contacted on 13 10 50 or email privaterulings@workcover.nsw.gov.au

The worker status self-assessment tool, fact sheets and the private ruling application form are also available at

www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/insurancepremiums/policies/workerstatusservice

NON-WAGE BASED BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

To calculate the premium for taxi operators additional details are required to those requested in the forms. These details are to include the following: a list of plate/s held at the beginning of the relevant period of insurance (including plate number/s), purchase/sale dates of any plate/s that have changed hands in both the 12 months prior to and during the relevant period of insurance, an indication if plate/s are metropolitan or country, the anticipated number of drivers and the average number of bailee shifts/week per plate. If you are unsure as to what constitutes the relevant period of insurance, please contact your Scheme Agent. Taxi operators are to provide these additional details on the supplementary form available from the NSW Taxi Council or on a separate sheet, and attach to the other form/s being submitted.

ASBESTOS

Asbestos is the generic term for a number of fibrous silicate minerals including chrysotile (white asbestos), amosite (brown asbestos), crocidolite (blue asbestos), tremolite, actinolite and anthophyllite. The manufacture and use of products containing chrysotile was prohibited nationally from 31 December 2003 and all other forms of asbestos were banned in the mid-1980s.

As a result, the use of all forms of asbestos is no longer permitted except for the purpose of sampling or analysis, maintenance, removal, disposal, encapsulation or enclosure. The prohibition of products containing chrysotile did not extend to the removal of asbestos products *in situ* at the time the prohibition took effect.

These *in situ* asbestos-containing materials must be appropriately managed to ensure that the risks of exposure to airborne asbestos fibres are eliminated or controlled. It is important that employers indicate whether any of their workers in the course of their employment handle, process or manufacture any asbestos-containing products. It is a legal requirement for the controller of premises to identify all asbestos-containing materials within a workplace, and these materials must be recorded in an asbestos register.

A Dust Diseases Levy rate will be applied to calculate the premium of those employers whose business activities involve exposure to asbestos.

BUSINESS ACTIVITY

Provide a full description of your business activities and include any brochures or website addresses that may clarify the definition of these business activities. Based on this description your Scheme Agent will assign a WorkCover Industry Classification (WIC) to enable calculation of your premium.

Refer to the *Insurance Premiums Order* for further clarification, available from www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/insurancepremiums/premiums/Pages/Insurancepremiumorders.aspx

GROUPING OF RELATED EMPLOYERS

Provisions for grouping for workers compensation purposes are set out in Divisions 2A & 2B of Part 7 of the *Workers Compensation Act 1987*. These provisions determine who is a related entity.

All related employers that pay combined wages over \$600,000 in NSW must be grouped for premium assessment purposes.

However, charitable and not-for-profit organisations may apply to WorkCover for exemption to grouping status for those related employers who are not in direct competition with the private sector.

All employers within a Group must have separate policies and must insure with the same Scheme Agent, with a common renewal date for all policies.

Note: Grouping provisions commenced from 30 June 2006.

For further information contact 13 10 50 or visit

<http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/insurancepremiums/premiums/Calculatingpremiums/Pages/Groupingprovisions.aspx>

WORKCOVER INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION ALLOCATION FOR GROUP EMPLOYERS

If an employer is a member of a group and carries on clerical, administrative, technical, managerial or warehousing services only and predominantly supplies those services to another group member, then that employer is classified on the same basis as the other group member. Clerical, administrative, technical or managerial services include accounting, computer support, drafting, designing, marketing, sales, legal and training.

INSURANCE POLICY WORDING

The wording of the employer's insurance policy is prescribed by Form 3 of Schedule 1 of the *Workers Compensation Regulation 2003*.

This may be accessed through a link from WorkCover's website to the NSW legislation website. Go to www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/lawpolicy/Regulations Alternatively you may contact your Scheme Agent for a copy of the policy wording.

DISCLAIMER

This DEFINITIONS supplement provides information and may refer to some of your obligations under the various workers compensation and occupational health and safety legislation that WorkCover NSW administers. To ensure you comply with your legal obligations you must refer to the appropriate Acts and regulations at www.legislation.nsw.gov.au