

Drug and Alcohol Programme and Management

The use of drugs, alcohol, and substances even if consumed outside the workplace, can lead to employee impairment while at work. Poor concentration, carelessness, risk-taking behaviour and errors in judgement can occur. Drug, alcohol and substance abuse not only affects work performance, but also results in higher rates of injuries, fatalities and absenteeism as well as reduced productivity.

A safe operation is the fundamental objective of the management of drug, alcohol and substance impairment, and reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that impairment does not exist.

Impairment detection is evidenced by the use of tests for detectable levels of drug, alcohol or other substances. Should a non-negative result be found, the situation must be considered as that of impairment existing. The immediate effect of this is that the person tested should cease work in safety critical roles until they are considered no longer impaired.

Non-negative means the initial test has given an indication that there may be drugs or alcohol present. An additional laboratory test, on the same sample, is then performed to establish the result as positive or not.

Developing a response to the potential risk is more complicated than simply stopping work, banning all drugs and alcohol from the workplace, or even suggesting employees don't drink or use drugs in their lives beyond work. The goals of good and effective management of the issue not only identifies and deals with the immediate safety situation, but should also deal with the issue on a long term basis, when necessary, to ensure that repeat behaviour is identified and managed. A workplace policy which applies to all staff can provide the structure for effective management.

Clear heads

On 10 February 2016, the Government announced changes to the commercial aviation and maritime sectors. This initiative is known as Clear heads.

Operators in these sectors will now be required to have drug and alcohol management plans. These plans need to be agreed with the Civil Aviation Authority or Maritime New Zealand, and must include random drug and alcohol testing of staff performing safety sensitive activities.

The Directors of Civil Aviation and Maritime New Zealand will have the power to undertake non-notified testing of safety sensitive staff in the commercial aviation and maritime sectors.

These changes are designed to assure passengers and crew that their aviation and maritime operations are safe and free from drug and alcohol impairment.

This is an ongoing program of implementation and will become a requirement in the future. The CAA HSU will update as more information comes out.

These Fact Sheets can give guidance for a successful Drug and Alcohol Programme:

- [Policy Development](#)
- [Testing for Drugs and Alcohol in the Workplace](#)

Sample Policy

Please note that this policy is provided as a sample only. It does not cover all of the elements considered necessary to provide a full and comprehensive policy, but does demonstrate what a basic policy construction or layout could be, along with some elements that should be considered.

Readers will need to assess the information and material on this web site and provide additional policy commentary where they consider it necessary to do so.

A copy of the policy can be downloaded here:

[Sample Policy](#)

The information presented in this document is intended for general use only. It should not be viewed as a definitive guide to the law, and should be read in conjunction with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and associated regulations (where relevant).
