



O.S.H. Policy Information Requests

The Claims Committee is aware that architects are increasingly being asked by their clients to provide or complete a detailed questionnaire concerning the contractors or subcontractors safety procedures on site. Clients have broadly grouped architects in with other building contractors without appreciating the different role undertaken by the architect.

Some architectural practices felt as if their reply to the O.S.H. questionnaire may influence the client's choice of project architect and accordingly sought our advice. When faced with this situation the following letter is offered for members' guidance in responding to their client:

DRAFT LETTER

"Our OHS questionnaire is inappropriate for the nature of architectural practice and is being held on file.

This architectural practice, like other architectural practices operates as a professional office. It is not involved in the building construction process other than in the preparation of building design and construction drawings. Periodically the architect is required to attend the building site to observe the construction progress and/or attend site meetings.

When our staff are required to attend construction site, they do so as 'site visitors' whereupon they come under the control of the main contractor. The main contractor is required to have an OSH Health & Safety Plan which covers the situation when visitors attend their building site and works.

Your OSH questionnaire format is designed specifically for building contractors and subcontractors who intend to work on your property or premises. This questionnaire has no relevance whatsoever to any architectural practice which might be commissioned by you as client.

For your interest, this office is (a small) one where all staff are familiar with office procedure. Our internal office OSH policy, with respect, is of no concern to others. It is concerned primarily with safety within our office. For example: fire safety and evacuation procedures, Xerox use, VDU screen and keyboard use,

lighting etc. When our staff are on site they are required to wear appropriate clothing, but this requirement is overridden by the requirements of the main contractor's OSH policy.

We trust this explanation has addressed your concerns. Please contact the writer should you require further clarification on any related matter."

Yours faithfully"

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