

1 Sep 2022

### **MOM Safety Time Out Requirement**

There have been 36 fatal workplace accidents in 2022 so far, close to the 37 recorded for the whole of 2021. This is tragic and alarming. Almost all the fatal cases could have been prevented if workers were more aware of risky situations, and companies ensured that workers followed safe working procedures.

2. Close to half of the fatal accidents in the past three months were vehicular-related. Workers were killed due to reasons like being in vehicles' blind spots, crushed between the moving parts of vehicles, run over by vehicles whose handbrakes were not engaged, or whose engines were left running when there was no driver/operator.

3. To stop this worrying trend, MOM is requiring the following companies to conduct a mandatory Safety Time Out (STO) anytime during the 1 to 15 Sep 2022 period:

- All companies in the construction, manufacturing, marine, process or transport and storage industries; and
- All companies in other industries, which use heavy or industrial vehicles (e.g. buses, lorries, prime movers, forklifts, cranes, wheel-loader).

4. Conducting the STO means suspending operations temporarily to review safety procedures and complete the STO activities in the STO Checklist (link in para 6 below). The length of the STO should be sufficiently long to review risks corresponding to the scale of the operations. Companies should conduct the STO between 1 Sep 2022 and 15 Sep 2022 . For companies that need to operate 24/7, you can choose to do the STO for different teams of workers separately, such that critical work can still proceed at all times, rather than for all workers to pause work. This STO should cover all workplace risks but pay special attention to reinforcing vehicular safety due to the frequency of such incidents.

5. STO activities can take various forms, including (but not limited to) the following:

#### **For top management<sup>1</sup>:**

- Personally do a walk-about on site to encourage workers to report safety risks and near misses to their supervisors. Ask workers to surface their safety concerns, if any, and reassure them that they will not be penalised for doing so. Emphasise top management's commitment to safety and inform site/project managers and supervisors that any safety risks should be resolved before work commencement.
- Share learning points from recent fatal accidents from the [WSH Alerts](#) with all workers, to avoid a repeat of such cases in your own company.

#### **For WSH personnel:**

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<sup>1</sup> "Top management" refers to the chief executive, managing director, or other similar officer in the company purporting to act in any such capacity.

- Identify any new risks that were not factored into the Risk Assessment, and devise control measures to mitigate these risks. Pay special attention to mitigate the risks of recent vehicular-related fatal accidents.
- Ensure that the control measures in the company's Risk Assessment are being implemented.
- Hold workshops or meetings with workers to recap basic site safety, and how they can uphold good WSH standards.

6. To guide your company in implementing the STO, you can refer to the WSH Council's resources, including a [Safety Time Out checklist](#), WSH Alerts on recent fatal cases, and other relevant information, which can be found on the WSH Council's website [here](#).

7. As this is a period of heightened safety, MOM requires your company to complete the activities in the [Safety Time Out checklist](#) anytime during the 1 to 15 Sep 2022 timeframe. You are encouraged to take more measures as well, beyond what was stated. We advise you to retain evidence of your STO activities. If MOM finds that the STO activities were not done by 15 Sep 2022, your company will face debarment from hiring new work pass holders for 1 month.

8. Prevent more accidents by setting aside the time and management attention to conduct an effective STO.