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More than 1000 businesses turn to SafeWork SA for advice

In just over a year, more than one thousand businesses have turned to SafeWork SA's new educator arm for assistance, figures released by the workplace regulator have revealed.

SafeWork SA's Workplace Advisory Services team began operation in July last year, and includes team of seven Work Health and Safety Advisors, who can visit businesses direct to offer face-to-face advice and support.

SafeWork SA Executive Director Martyn Campbell said that, to date, more than 1070 requests for assistance and support had been made to the Workplace Advisory Services team, with 96% of participants rating the service as 'very useful'.

"When SafeWork SA was restructured last year the clear goal was to deliver a practical and pragmatic service that helps businesses not just understand their legal obligations but also support them to put in place effective systems to manage their health and safety risks," Mr Campbell said.

"The reforms saw one arm of the agency to focus on regulation and ensuring compliance with work health and safety laws, while the other arm - the Educator - works with business and industry to help them better understand their responsibilities.

"Our Workplace Advisory Services team are not inspectors, and have no inspector powers – to make businesses feel comfortable to ask us in to provide advice, and discuss matters in an open and frank manner.

"It's encouraging to see so many businesses have turned to us for help since the new team started work in July last year."

Sean D'Apollonio owns Mr Dapy's Demolition, working in residential demolition and asbestos removal, and said the advice provided by the Workplace Advisory Services team had been invaluable.

"Receiving advice from SafeWork SA's Workplace Advisory Service has been a really good experience – it has helped me with the right systems to keep my workers safe which is helping us win more jobs," he said.

Tony Cufone, whose business SA Contract Tippers delivers sand, asphalt and other materials, said support from the Workplace Advisory Services team made it easier for him win a large contract that has helped secure his business for the next five years.

He said he wouldn't hesitate to take advantage of the service again in future.

"I know they can help keep me up to date with any work health and safety changes and that will keep my business competitive," he said.

"You need the right safety systems in place that comply with your WHS requirements to win the bigger contracts."

Mr Campbell said that, to date, most calls for assistance have come from people working in the construction industry, with more than 250 requests, followed by public administration and safety, agriculture and manufacturing.

"It doesn't matter what industry you're from, we are here to help," he said.

"I'd encourage any employer to take advantage of this free service, which will benefit both their staff and their business."

To find out more about this free service and to see real customer testimonials, visit www.safework.sa.gov.au/freeadvice.