



# Workforce now recognising the benefits

By Mark Armstrong\*

The BOSS program is now entering its third year at Newcrest Mining Ltd's Telfer operation in Western Australia and Byrnegut Australia Pty Ltd continues to get significant results from this sprain and strain prevention initiative, having halved the total recordable injuries frequency rate (TRIFR) in the last two years.

A further snapshot of the contractor's injury performance at the mine showed that the average cost of a low back injury had decreased by 75%, with the proportionate cost of back injuries having fallen from 30% of total costs to 16% of total costs of all injuries.

This information was supplied by Aurenda, Byrnegut's injury management company.

Byrnegut, Newcrest and Body Active Consultancy (BAC) continue to work together on this program and are realising some significant results.

From the initiative there has been the development of new boots and improved miners' belts.

All work crews continue to perform well and, in doing so, productivity records at this operation are eclipsed on a regular basis without compromising safety, which is a great outcome for all concerned.

The BOSS program now involves all work crews from both the mining and maintenance sections, while management is actively engaged (as are the foremen and supervisors).

This level of participation is one element that is contributing to BOSS' ongoing success. Having everybody on the one page is a must for these types of programs if one truly wants to effect long term sustainable change amongst the workforce.

## Modifications made

The BOSS program is now in its third year and the format has been refined to having a specific monthly focus (such as working postures).

During each month, BAC delivers both a theoretical and practical component which is designed specifically for each of the work crews.

This approach is adopted to ensure that the information is highly relevant to each individual, and the practical session – which

is normally carried out in the field – means something to the work crews.

BAC endeavours at each session to ensure that everybody takes away with them at least one piece of information that will add to their ability to avoid a sprain and/or strain injury.

The consultancy spends considerable time interacting with the different work groups in their respective work environments and this helps create a full understanding of the various aspects of the work performed on a daily basis by the workers.

This knowledge then allows BAC to transfer it into the monthly focus, resulting in educational sessions that are relevant, informative and which provide the work crews with tools to utilise it in the field.

## Stretching out

Warm up for work has been a big winner for Byrnegut, with all crews simply doing it now as part of their pre-start. Many of them now report feeling the benefits of such an undertaking, whereas before there was a lot of scepticism as to the genuine benefits of this type of initiative.

The warm up for work exercises are completed to music and changed every 8-12 weeks.

As the BOSS program continues to be expanded, it is becoming obvious to all those involved that there are several important components that must come together if a change

in the behaviour/culture of a particular work force is to happen given all of the variables.

These elements are becoming clearer day by day, and soon Byrnegut will have a model that it will be able to apply to all of its locations (which is its intention).

This will provide the company with significant ongoing direct and indirect cost savings across all of its respective site operations.

BAC looks forward to sharing this exciting journey with its client Byrnegut Australia over the coming years.

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