



NEW ZEALAND

WORK RESEARCH INSTITUTE

AN INSTITUTE OF AUT UNIVERSITY



TOWARDS HEALTHY WORK FOR ALL SYMPOSIUM

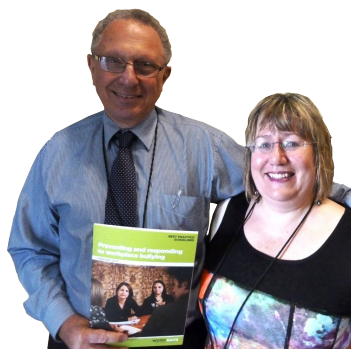
In February, the NZ Work Research Institute partnered with Massey University's Healthy Work Group in hosting the 'Towards healthy Work for All' Symposium.

The event, which was an initiative of the Institute's Future of Work Programme, was held at the Auckland Art Gallery auditorium, with approximately 80 delegates from academia, government and industry. The goals of the symposium were to promote the benefits of a healthy work culture, raise awareness about the consequences of bullying and ill-treatment for individuals and organisations, and to provide a forum for experts, practitioners and businesses to debate effective approaches for the prevention of workplace bullying.

"Workplace bullying is repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or a group of workers that creates a risk to health and safety" SAFEGUARD

A key purpose of the symposium was to launch the new Worksafe New Zealand Best Practice Guide for the prevention of workplace bullying. The development of the guide and overview of its content was presented by senior Worksafe staff, Frank Darby and Jeena Murphy (pictured below), with a statement provided by the Deputy Chair of Worksafe New Zealand, Ross Wilson.

WorkSafe's Frank Darby and Jeena Murphy launch the guidelines at the THWfA Symposium.
PHOTO : PETER BATEMAN



The first keynote address, entitled Trouble at Work: The Zeitgeist of Contemporary Britain, was provided by Professor Duncan Lewis, a UK-based expert in workplace ill-treatment, and co-author of the Bloomsbury book: 'Trouble at Work'. Duncan's presentation covered findings from the British Workplace Behaviour Survey and discussed ill-treatment at work from the UK perspective. The second keynote address, Recent Australian developments in Workplace bullying policy, practice and research, was provided by Dr Carlo Caponecchia from the University of NSW. Carlo's presentation outlined the Australian context for workplace bullying.

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NEWS

FROM NEW ZEALAND
WORK RESEARCH
INSTITUTE

April 2014

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First word

by Associate Professor Gail Pacheco (Acting Director)



Following the launch of the Future of Work Programme in November last year, we began 2014 with a hiss and a roar. This included numerous symposia, seminars, workshops, and other events. For instance, to name a few in the first quarter of this year - we held a symposium on healthy work for all (where the new Worksafe NZ Best Practice Guide was launched), a symposium focussed on the implications and profile of temporary / insecure work, and had a Harvard Law Professor (Elaine Bernard) speak to the Institute about the modern role for unions in today's society. It was really exciting to see so many of these events attended by both academic parties, as well

as individuals from both the private and public sector – this encouraged a lot of debate, and ensures our Future of Work Programme will be well informed by external stakeholders, by both formal and informal means.

It is also newsworthy to note that one of the Institute's specialist groups (Centre for Occupational Health and Safety Research) have now become an independent group, necessitated by the scale of their operations. We wish them well in this new phase, with the knowledge that we will maintain close links with the group, and will continue to have one of their directors (Associate Professor Felicity Lamm) attend our leadership meetings as a representative of an affiliate group.

Our close relationship was evident in February, when we co-hosted Professor Guy Standing from the University of London, well-renowned author of

Precariat: The New Dangerous Class.

Finally, note that Ann Williamson is pleased to be back from parental leave as the office manager for the institute, and she is in the office Tuesdays, through to Thursdays. Tamara Tesolin has moved back to her original role as Institute Administrator, Wednesdays, through to Fridays. Paula Wilkinson (who filled in while Ann was away) has been a fantastic administrator over the past nine months - we have appreciated her dedication and commitment to the temporary role and look forward to potentially utilising her skills in the future.

Please do get in touch with myself (gail.pacheco@aut.ac.nz) or one of our leadership team if you are interested in joining our network and participating in research or events in our Future of Work Programme.

In the news

Prof Tim Bentley talks to Susan Strongman about the impact of workplace bullying.

'New Zealand Work Research Institute director, Prof Tim Bentley says 'workplace bullying is the country's biggest health and safety problem, affecting between 15 and 20 per cent of the workforce'

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/s/GSpk> <http://i.stuff.co.nz/taranaki-daily-news/news/9886094/Workplace-bullies-make-their-victims-lives-hell>

31 March 2014, Susan Strongman

Prof Erling Rasmussen joins the debate on teleworking which is still the exception rather than the rule!

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle/news/article.cfm?c_id=6&objectid=11190340

Remote working is still the exception rather than the rule. In a 2008 paper "Why isn't teleworking working?", AUT University professor of work and employment Erling Rasmussen revealed that, on 2007 figures, 81 per cent New Zealand businesses had not one remote worker - and of the 19 per cent that did, three-quarters had less than 5 per cent of staff telecommuting.

The future of work ... office not required, Greg Dixon, NZ Herald, 25 Jan 2014

Towards Healthy Work for All Symposium continued

The third keynote presentation was given by Michael O'Brian of Kensington Swan. Michael's talk considered the legal landscape for workplace bullying and harassment. Professor Michael O'Driscoll of the University of Waikato provided the final keynote presentation, with a focus on intervention for preventing workplace bullying.

Other presenters included: Kate Blackwood (bullying in NZ nursing), Dr David Tappin and Dr Bevan Catley (employment law and bullying cases), Dr Helena Cooper-Thomas (the rotten effects of bullying), and Dr Alison Thirlwall (organisational factors inhibiting bullying resolution). In addition to the presentations, a panel comprising individuals from government, industry bodies, lawyers and academics discussed a number of questions provided from industry on a range of issues to do with the prevention of bullying and promotion of a healthy work environment.

Prof Duncan Lewis, Plymouth University

Dr Bevan Catley, Massey University

Prof Tim Bentley, Director New Zealand Work Research Institute



The Panel

Frank Darby, Duncan Lewis, Bev Cassidy MacKenzie, Bevan Catley, Carlo Caponecchia
Michael O'Brien, Tim Bentley (Facilitator)



The event received good media coverage and was well-received by delegates, and the event organisers are very grateful to all those who presented and participated in the symposium. A similar event is planned for 2015, with a strong emphasis on business needs in relation to promoting healthy work and preventing ill-treatment such as bullying and harassment in the workplace.

View / download [Speaker's presentations](#) from the event.

Leading workplace bullying and ill-treatment researchers meet at the New Zealand Work Research Institute

The Towards Healthy Work for All Symposium brought together a number of leading researchers on the workplace bullying, including international researchers from the UK, Dubai and Australia, as well as New Zealand's experts in this field.

These researchers held a special meeting at the NZ Work Research Institute the morning after the symposium. Research collaborations were discussed and new projects scoped out, including a plans for future events, building on the success of the Healthy Work for All Symposium.



Update

2013 was a fruitful and productive year for members of the group. We supported a number of researchers by providing them with seeding fund and research assistance. Members of the group celebrated a book launch, co-organized the second Industrial & Organizational Psychology symposium with the University of Auckland. This one day symposium attracted scholars from all of the university in New Zealand and a number of international visitors.

Prof Stephen Teo



New Zealand Industrial Organisational Conference December 2013

Stress and organisational change



Dr Roy Smollan recently conducted 31 interviews on the stress of organisational change in a New Zealand District Health Board. The respondents were in clinical positions (e.g. nursing and physiotherapy) and non-clinical positions (such as accounting and training). The organisation had been through a series of major restructurings and other types of change and the impact of these changes on the staff were stressful in many ways.

The aim of the study was to ascertain what the causes of stress were before, during and after the change, what the consequences were for the individuals and how they had coped.

Although some levels of stress predated the change, the transition phase proved to be far more stressful due mainly to the uncertainty about whether staff would be made redundant, how job descriptions could change and if workloads would increase. For some respondents the aftermath was more stressful when they found that the outcomes included heavier workloads, the animosity of staff who blamed them for replacing former colleagues and jobs that had lost their meaning.

Negative consequences were found on a variety of levels: the physiological (e.g. weight gain, illness), the emotional (anxiety, frustration, anger), the behavioural (sleeplessness, abruptness) and the cognitive (inability to concentrate, excessive rumination).

Coping strategies varied from seeking support from family, friends, colleagues, bosses, professional supervision (which is available to staff in certain professions) and occasional use of the organisation's Employee Assistance Programme. Some respondents relied on their own resilience, optimism and determination to succeed.

Key issues that emerged were that every individual experienced change in different ways, that work varied in stressfulness as the changes unfolded over time and that support is vitally important in helping staff to cope. Better planning of change, which includes full and transparent communication and genuine participation of staff, helps to avoid or mitigate the stress of processes and outcomes.

Key research shows HR competencies relevant to different types of organisations?

KAREN LO



Karen Lo, PhD student and researcher with the NZWRI Wellbeing and Performance research group has recently submitted her thesis entitled *“Contextualising the competency requirements for human resource (HR) practitioners”*. Her study explores whether some HR competencies are context-specific; that is, relevant to a narrower range of settings.

The findings revealed seven key themes of HR competencies which are critical to HR practitioners’ effective performance: Leadership and Relationship Building, Self-Belief and Social Factors, Strategic Focus and Drive, Input and Support, Business Awareness, HR Acumen and Systems and Technology.

Study revealed - Business Awareness competencies (e.g. financial savvy and strategic thinking skills) are sector-specific and more relevant to private organisations when compared to public and not-for-profit organisations.

This research topic is important given growing interest in how the HR function can add greater value to organisational performance. Although Dave Ulrich and his associates have conducted extensive global research in HR competencies, their studies were underpinned by a universalist approach, which assumes that some HR competencies are necessary and desirable for all organisations.

Weaknesses of prior HR competency studies by focusing on the contextual relevance of HR competencies to public sector organisations, not-for-profit organisations, multinational enterprises and different firm size and has important implications for selection and development of HR practitioners.

Research has involved analysing the HR literature and HR job descriptions, and brainstorming focus groups with HR experts to generate a list of 44 key HR competencies. 63 HR practitioners in New Zealand responded to a concept mapping online survey, which asked them to sort these 44 HR competencies by thematic similarity and rate them for their importance for successful performance in their roles.

Most importantly, Karen’s study showed that Business Awareness competencies (e.g. financial savvy and strategic thinking skills) are sector-specific and more relevant to private organisations when compared to public and not-for-profit organisations. Whereas HR Acumen competencies (e.g. expertise in recruitment and selection and performance management) are highly context-specific to smaller firms and New Zealand based multinational enterprises.

There were also shared views about the overall top two competencies required for HR practitioners : Leadership and Relationship Building and Self-Belief and Social Factors.

Overall, the key implication from Karen’s research is that context-specific HR competencies have been a neglected area in both research and development of HR competency models. Future research should move away from the one-size-fits-all universalist approach advocated by Dave Ulrich and his associates and focus on more nuanced understandings on what shapes HR competency expectations.



Invitation to be a member of an ILO advisory committee

Dr. Rahul Sen has been invited and funded by the Research Department of the International Labour Office (ILO) in Geneva, Switzerland to participate in an international conference on *Workers’ Rights in a Globalizing World: The Role of labour provisions in Free Trade Agreements* to be held at the University of Toronto, Canada on 8-9 May 2014. He will also be a part of the advisory committee meeting in the currently ongoing Research Project on the same topic, as part of this event. This research project has received initial funding from the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, and aims to improve understanding of the interactions between the economic and social dimensions of globalization. The mapping and assessment of labour provisions in trade and investment agreements in Asia-Pacific will constitute an important part of this project

Labour Market Research Group News

Future of non-permanent employment symposium (February 2014)

Presentations dealt with a range of issues related to temporary work including, but not limited to:

- A snapshot of New Zealand's temporary workforce (Statistics New Zealand)
- The relationship between temporary employment and job satisfaction (Professor Wooden, University of Melbourne)
- Legal issues surrounding insecure work (Helen White)
- The consequences of job insecurity from a study of Maori Employees (Professor Haar, Massey University)
- Work experiences following injury for non-permanent employees in NZ (Dr Lilley, University of Otago)
- and much, much more

It was an eventful day, with a range of perspectives from both the public and private sector, and research on this issue from NZ, Australia and the UK.

For a copy of the presentations from this symposium, please email gail.pacheco@aut.ac.nz

New Zealand Aged Care Workforce Survey

Researchers from the New Zealand Work Research Institute (AUT University) are carrying out a survey of the New Zealand aged care workforce in April and May this year. Dr Katherine Ravenswood, along with colleagues, Dr Julie Douglas and Prof Stephen Teo, believe that this survey will fill a gap in information about the current aged care workforce and workforce trends. The survey itself is adapted from the Australian National Aged Care Workforce Census and Survey, and is therefore a well tested survey instrument. It is the first of its kind in New Zealand and will complement existing workforce projections and organisational benchmarking.

All residential and home aged care providers should receive a survey by post during April. The survey comprises both a survey for managers of each facility to complete, and employee surveys for employees to complete and return to the research team.

Managers may also complete the survey online:

- Managers of Residential Aged Care facilities:
http://autfbl.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_0D0a4fk5ssi7ioR
- Managers of home aged care providers/service outlets:
http://autfbl.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_5bWbWCwK7UTY1Rb

The survey is anonymous and the final report will not use information that can identify any single organisation.

The Survey will provide data on workforce trends and demographics which will benefit industry stakeholders in, for example:

- Planning: it will provide current profile of the total aged care workforce
- Benchmarking in New Zealand
- Trends in staff/client ratio

All aged care (both residential and home care) providers should receive manager and employee surveys by Easter. If not, or any provider needs more employee surveys, please also contact Dr Ravenswood kravensw@aut.ac.nz

There has been tremendous support for this project and key organisations in the sector are advising their members that it is taking place: New Zealand Aged Care Association, the New Zealand Home Health Association, the Care Association of New Zealand, the PSA, the New Zealand Nurses Organisation and the Service and Food Workers Union. Several large providers are assisting in distribution of surveys throughout their organisations nationwide also. An item on the survey will also appear in industry magazine Insite. This support is pivotal in trying to maximise the response rate. We encourage all in the sector to return surveys, and to spread word and in turn encourage their networks to complete and fill the surveys too.

A final report will be made publicly available through www.workresearch.aut.ac.nz

The Team



Dr Katherine Ravenswood



Dr Julie Douglas



Prof Stephen Teo



Small Business: Teleworking - Tim Bentley [Caitlin Sykes](#)

Caitlin Sykes is the NZ Herald's Your Business editor

Following up on The Trans Tasman Telework Survey - a major joint study of teleworking practices in New Zealand and Australian businesses, Caitlin Sykes talks to Prof Tim Bentley, Director of the [New Zealand Work Research Institute](#) about the main findings of the study.

Tim firstly defined telework as a flexible work arrangement whereby workers work in locations remote from their central offices or production facilities with limited personal contact with coworkers, but with the ability to communicate with coworkers using ICT.

The key thing is are they using ICT to communicate not only with coworkers, but managers, staff, clients and others in an environment that isn't a central office. Even if they've always worked from a home office it can still be telework if that's an option they're taking rather than being located in a central office, because they're still getting the benefits of teleworking.

It was a major study of trans-Tasman teleworkers across businesses of all sizes, with small businesses making up about 35 per cent of our sample. It involved 50 organisations, including 28 from New Zealand, and 1827 respondents, making it the biggest survey of its kind that's been done in region.

[The Study looked at the outcomes of telework around things like productivity and wellbeing.](#)

The main findings from detailed questions about teleworkers' experiences as well as that of their managers, were that people who telework very much enjoy that mode of working. Most were hybrid

teleworkers, doing one to three days of telework a week - just 16% did more than three days a week - and the rest of the time they were in the office. In terms of where they did their teleworking, 85 per cent worked from home, with the rest shared out among different areas of the community such as in satellite centres, hubs and so on.

'hybrid teleworkers were more productive and they were more satisfied with their work, compared with those who worked solely in an office environment.'

Also the study found that hybrid teleworkers were more productive and they were more satisfied with their work, compared with those who worked solely in an office environment.

However, when the levels of telework got quite high there were some issues around social isolation, stress and work/family conflict when the boundaries between work and home got a bit fuzzy. But in instances where the organisation provided good support for teleworkers - there was good communication, for example, and they had a manager who was supportive of telework - those issues went away.

It was revealed that most didn't have any agreement to telework; it was mostly done informally and about half of all respondents didn't even have a verbal agreement to telework.

[Implications - particularly in relation to small businesses.](#)

With that level of informal teleworking, it seems to me organisations are not going to be measuring the benefits of it and they're probably not managing the

appropriate goal setting and feedback processes for the time that's not spent in the office.

The message is organisations should look at the impact of teleworking and seek to measure the benefits, because they could be saving more than they realise from the likes of increased productivity and reduced office costs, as well as the environmental benefits and costs savings to employees. As part of that they should also ask whether some tasks are done more effectively at home or if some are better saved for time spent in the office.

Also, people rated their work environment very highly when they worked at home - much more highly than when working in an office in relation to their environment allowing them to do quality work and meeting the expectations of their managers.

Tim spoke of some issues around the physical environment at home that could affect their work; things like their thermal environment - hot, cold, draughts - were an issue, as was noise and aspects of the workspace design - their desk space and so on. Yet when we asked, most didn't receive any training at all in how to telework, and certainly nothing on setting up a home office.

So another thing organisations can do is give these workers information and help in terms of setting up an office at home. It makes good sense from an organisational point of view because if you want good performance out of these people then you want them to work at optimum levels and for their sense of wellbeing and satisfaction to be high.

Events

In the first quarter of 2014

Early Career Researcher's Workshop

The (ECR) Early Career Researcher's Workshop was held on the 20 March 2014 in the Sir Paul Reeves Building, sponsored by the Australia New Zealand Academy of Management (ANZAM) and the New Zealand Work Research Institute. The workshop was organised by Edwina Pio, Professor of diversity from the AUT Business School, and Bevan Catley, Associate Head of the school of management, Massey University. Both Edwina and Bevan are New Zealand representatives on the board of ANZAM. Paula Wilkinson from the Work Research Institute was immensely helpful in ensuring that the event ran smoothly. A total of twelve high powered academics from New Zealand and Australia enthusiastically and frankly shared their wealth of knowledge and experience with the 50 plus participants from various universities, who attended the half day workshop. The workshop was inaugurated by Professor Geoff Perry, Dean of AUT Business School. Two Maori colleagues did an opening and closing blessing for the event, in tune with the indigenous protocols of Aotearoa New Zealand.

There were four sessions for the workshop and they encompassed: Managing Your Career, Establishing a Research Strategy, Teaching Matters, and The Ups & Downs of academic life. Some of the questions raised during the sessions were: What do you know now that you wished you knew when you were an ECR? There was a lot of talk about 'impactful research' and being 'relevant.' In your opinions, what do you think is the role of a business school academic? What do I look for in my first job out of my PhD? Do you have any tips for getting into and conducting grant funded research? What sort of trends are you anticipating that will have an impact on the business school that we need to be prepared for?

Prof Edwina Pio



Role of Unions in the Modern Workplace & Civil Society



Prof Elaine Bernard

The Institute hosted Professor Elaine Bernard (Executive Director of the Labor and Worklife Program at Harvard Law School) for a week in March 2014. She gave a public seminar on the changing trends in union characteristics and participation, as well as what unions should be trying to do in today's society to engage with its members. During her week-long stay, Elaine also engaged in numerous fruitful research meetings with NZWRI members.

Labor-market returns to the GED using regression discontinuity analysis



Prof Peter Meuser

The Institute co-hosted Professor Peter Mueser (University of Missouri) for 3 weeks in March/April 2014. He also gave a public seminar on behalf of the labour Market Research Group, regarding the benefits of the GED (General Educational Development) test in the United States. This test provides certification for high school dropouts for achieving a threshold score, and is unofficially referred to as "high school equivalency". Interestingly, his research found small or negligible effects on earnings and / or employment for those that get GED certification.