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# ACC Levies Increase

On the 10 December 2009, ACC Minister Nick Smith announced the new levy rates for 2010/11.

These rates were considered and agreed by Cabinet to be passed into legislation.

The levies for workers, employers and motorists have increased but are less than those recommended by the ACC Board.

The new rates for the Work Account (including Residual Claims Account) and Earners' Account came into effect on 1 April 2010. The increase in Motor Vehicle rates will begin on 1 July 2010.

Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) plays an integral part in NZ society. ACC Levies provide cover for personal injuries regardless of where the injury happens.

Levy rates are set each year to cover the costs of personal injury claims. Levy payers can have a say on the proposed rates for the coming year during the annual levy consultation process.

## How much is the increase?

The Government has adopted the following rates:

- The Earners' Account Levy (paid by all employees and self employed to cover their non-work, non-motor vehicle injuries) will increase from \$1.70 to \$2.00 (including GST) per \$100 of liable earnings from 1 April 2010.
- The average composite employer and self-employed levy will increase from \$1.31 to \$1.47 per \$100 of payroll from 1 April 2010. This levy excludes GST and is an average rate. Individual rates for industry groups may be higher or lower.
- The ACC component of the motor vehicle license fee for a petrol car will increase from \$168.46 to \$198.46 from 1 July 2010 while the ACC petrol levy will remain at 9.90 cents per litre.

# How can I pay less ACC Levies?



You are definitely not alone if you want to pay less ACC levies. Thankfully ACC will reward businesses for safe workplace practices and they will discount your levies. Three specific programmes have been designed to meet the needs of differing business types. These programmes are:

- **ACC Workplace Safety Discounts**
- **ACC Workplace Safety Management Practices Programme (WSMP)**
- **ACC Partnership Programme**

For 2010 the Obsidium/SafeTsmart account managers are focusing on each client achieving the basic requirements for ACC WSMP - we know this may seem like a tall order, however we know that each of you have this potential and we want to help you achieve this and its associated savings - we just need your help!

If you have not returned your reports recently then your account manager will be following up by phone.

If you are returning your reports, complete regular reviews of your health and safety documentation and hold consistent Health and Safety meetings then you may well be ready for the ACC Workplace Safety Discount or WSMP programme. For a brief overview see below or call your account manager to discuss this further.

## ACC Workplace Safety Discounts

ACC Workplace Safety Discounts are a great way for small businesses to save money and reduce the risk of injuries.

To apply, you must either be self-employed, or have a small business with a total annual payroll of \$450,000 (or less) or have ten (or fewer) full-time employees. The industry must also fall within the specified ACC classification units of agriculture, forestry, construction, road transport, waste management, motor trades or fishing industries. You will then attend a training course or provide evidence of appropriate experience, then complete a self assessment and return the application form. ACC will then advise you if you were successful or if additional information is required.

A certain percentage of all applications will be selected for an on-site audit. Once the audit has been completed, ACC will inform you whether you have passed the audit and if you have been given a discount.

## ACC Workplace Safety Management Practices Programme (WSMP)

The ACC Workplace Safety Management Practices programme was designed specifically for medium-sized employers, however sole operators and small businesses may still apply if they have systems and processes for managing and improving workplace safety. Successful applicants may be eligible to receive discounts for ACC's WorkPlace Cover levies of up to 20%.



There are four stages to joining the ACC Workplace Safety Management Practices programme.

1. Self assessment
2. Completing the application form
3. Comprehensive Independent Workplace Audit (**ACC will pay for the independent auditor**)
4. Auditor's report

WSMP should come at **no cost** to applicants, ACC will pay for the auditor and the workplace audit report. ACC will be invoiced by the auditor for the services they perform.

The benefits of having WSMP accreditation not only includes discounts of up to 20% but some organisations recognise your WSMP certification and this will often give you an edge over the competition during the tendering process.

If you fail the audit or do not reach the level you were aiming to achieve (or do not complete the minor tasks required to meet the minimum requirements in 30 days) then you may reapply for WSMP 12 months after the audit date. You can avoid this by being honest with yourself and completing a pre-audit checklist that your Obsidium/SafeTsmart Account Manager can assist you with.

## ACC Partnership Programme

The ACC Partnership Programme gives employers significant discounts on their ACC levies in exchange for taking responsibility for their employees' work injury claims. Under the Programme, an employer's existing levies can be reduced by up to 90%. However, responsibilities include the delivery of all statutory entitlements, such as weekly compensation for lost earnings.

The ACC Partnership Programme is more suitable for large employers whose levies exceed \$150,000 per year.

### The Pros and the Cons

Employers should be aware of all the implications of joining the ACC Partnership Programme. For example, if you join and one of your employees suffers a fatal or permanent disability injury, you could end up providing financial support to the claimant or their surviving dependants. You would carry this responsibility for the period agreed to as part of your ACC Partnership Programme contract with ACC. However the benefits of joining include levy savings and you can have a direct input into managing the claim and in reducing overall costs. Both employers and employees benefit from effective injury prevention and management. Well managed claims reduce work-related injury costs, including ACC levies, and promote the early and safe return to work of employees after an injury.

## I want to apply for one of the discount programmes...

Over the years the service desk has helped our clients obtain and maintain their ACC discounts through the Workplace Safe Management Practices (WSMP) and Workplace Safety Discount (WSD) programmes.

If you would like to be apply for ACC Workplace Safety Discounts, ACC Workplace Safety Management Practices Programme (WSMP), or ACC Partnership Programme then you may visit <http://www.acc.co.nz> or simply give your account manager a call or send us an email. We will then send through some information via email, fax or in the post.

Also, if you require a pre-audit for WSMP we can arrange for an independent auditor to visit you. There will be a charge. If you would like a general picture of how you are doing we can provide a brief gap analysis (at no cost) based on the information you have provided us to identify your strengths and offer some constructive feedback on areas that require improvement prior to applying for an ACC discount programme.

Please remember to call if you have any questions! If the line is busy just leave a message and we'll call you back.

## Department of Labour Consultations

The DOL is seeking Consultation on the following:

- My First Job – info for young workers
- Precast Concrete Approved Code of Practice
- Excavations and Shafts Approved Code of Practice
- Passenger Ropeways Approved Code of Practice
- Pressure Equipment (excluding Boilers) Approved Code of Practice
- Trees Code Part 1 - Arboriculture Approved Code of Practice
- Trees Code Part 2 - Maintenance around power lines Approved Code of Practice
- Trees Code Part 3 - River and Stream Operations Approved Code of Practice
- Trees Code Part 4 - Helicopter Logging Approved Code of Practice
- Trees Code Part 5 - Timber Stacking, Packeting and Transportation Approved Code of Practice
- Forestry Operations Approved Code of Practice
- 'Working in a confined space' guideline
- Consultation on revocation of the safe use and erection of scaffolding approved code of practice
- Consultation on revocation of the Power-Operated elevated work platforms Approved Code of Practice
- Consultation on revocation of the Demolition Approved Code of Practice
- Approved Code of Practice for Boilers
- Consultation on new Industrial rope access in New Zealand: Best practice guidelines



If you would like to make a submission please go to the appropriate link at <http://www.dol.govt.nz/consultation/>

## Obsidium Workspace Solutions - New Additions

The service desk would like to welcome John Showell onboard as the General Manager for Business Development in New Zealand and Australia. John will be assisting with sales and marketing of Obsidium's risk management applications which include SafeTsmart, RugbyMed, and IMed.

**FAX NUMBER REMINDER: Our dedicated Fax number for SafeTsmart is +64 7 847 5883**