



Dear Commissioner,

RE: SafeWork Evaluation

Firstly, my husband is a fourth generation showman. Having been raised and worked in the Amusement Industry for over 40 years. I have been alongside my husband for over 37 years. Our aim has always been to bring fun and entertainment to all, with safety being our number one priority. As well as being able to earn a living.

As Amusement Ride Owner/Operators, we would like to use this opportunity, to make the following submission regarding some concerns we have had with Safework in the past. Drawing particular attention to wasted resources such as money, officers and time. As well as questioning the training and credibility of experience/expertise of an officer given the authority to make decisions on mechanical, structural, electrical and operating components of an amusement ride/device.

We are at a loss to understand the sudden intensity and unfair scrutiny we have been subjected to. Especially over the last 2 years, with no obvious or due cause for the basis of this EXTRA attention.

I have listed some of our concerns, based on personal observation and our own experiences with SafeWork.

1. **An unusual increase in the frequency of Site and Full Audits.** Frequency being weekly, with minimal difference between a Site or a Full Audit. Both causing lengthy delays in our set-up procedures. SafeWork Officers repeatedly requiring us to present the same paperwork from 1 week to the next. With the exception of Set-up, dismantle and daily checklists prior to working, there is little or no change within our Log-Books. Certificates required are renewed on an Annual basis and 5 years for SafeWork Registration. Never the less, each week they view these same certificates within the Log-books, writing down Registration numbers and expiry dates over and over. Wasting working hours for both parties.
2. **Safety issues from our perspective.** In some instances we have been forced to work well outside the range of normal working hours, caused by SafeWork Audits, resulting in stress and fatigue. On one occasion, the situation became quite volatile. SafeWork had given an instruction regarding a childrens ride and demanded it be done prior to opening to the public the following day. This ride set up had already been completed and had worked on this particular site numerous times, without any issues occurring, not even in wet weather (which was the concern). Our experience and knowledge of the device on this particular site (which is a requirement of the Standards when making a load bearing capacity decision), was completely ignored by SafeWork. Forcing my husband to work well into the night, prior to opening day. SafeWorks lack of, understanding procedure within the Amusement Industry is concerning. In particular, working hours (very different to the normal office hours) and availability of sites prior to set-up. During audits, my husband has been called away from what he was doing on numerous occasions by SafeWork. My concern being, that he may be doing something regarding a critical component of the ride and could become forcibly distracted, forgetting to go back and finish what he was doing.
3. **The number of officers attending during Audits.** At one time there were a minimum of 15 officers, including 4 consultants who were being contracted by SafeWork on a regular basis. Which leads me to question why these consultants were brought in often, when we have independent and qualified professionals who complete the necessary inspections on our rides. How many vehicles were used to transport all?

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4. **Wasted Resources.** SafeWork Officers and their consultants, travelled over 200km to conduct Audits, resulting in the need for Vehicle, accommodation, meal expenses etc., These audits could easily have been organised and initiated at a venue in Adelaide, reducing costs and simply being more convenient. We have not had any incident, nor any report or complaint of any kind made against our ride in the past, that may have warranted such a hasty need for this particular Audit. Therefore, the seemingly desperation by SafeWork , was by ourselves, questionable.
5. **Lack of Amusement Industry experience.** We are concerned that SafeWork Officers are suggesting we make changes to some things we have been practising for years and are comfortable with, without them having any knowledge or understanding of a particular ride. The saying goes “you don’t change a winning team”. With the high turnover of officers, it is not often to be audited by the same officers, resulting in high inconsistencies of what individual officers consider correct or incorrect.
6. **Unfair Authority.** We were told we would not be working the next day if SafeWork officers did not get to Audit our ride due to set-up being incomplete and the audit not taking place within their working hours. Again, the audit could have taken place at another time. I reiterate, we have not had an incident. At times we felt we were being intimidated to rush and complete our set-up, in order for SafeWork to complete their jobs by knock off time. Yet, there have been times when we have finished setting up and are in our down time, along come SafeWork and want to perform an audit over the next couple of hours or more, all within THEIR normal working hours. On another occasion, a minor electrical issue was sighted by an officer, who told us to get it fixed or don’t work. It was the day prior to working and we were frantic at such short notice to find an electrician. When we did, the electrician called us back and with an apology, stated he had been ordered not to do the job, due to a conflict of interest. We eventually found another electrician and SafeWork were at our site the following day, checking the job had been completed.
7. **Unnecessary and time consuming Tasks.** The amount of photographs being taken of ride components and Log-Book papers is almost as if we were being investigated following a fatality.
8. **Orders without Basis.** SafeWork demanding the Electrician now write on the Certificate of Currency, he/she has inspected the device in accordance with the Australian Standard, 3533. Many of whom are disgusted and feel their professionalism is being questioned. Our electrician stating that he signs the COC and that document stands as a legal binding document indicating he has performed his job correctly. This extra requirement is not in the standards, but who is giving this order?

I would like to finish by bringing to your attention, since 1968 there have been **15** fatalities nationwide in this industry. ONE of those being in South Australia in 2001 and the device involved owned by a South Australian, but, not a member of the Showmens guild of SA. This incident was caused by a freak wind ripping an inflatable off the ground, sadly resulting in the death of a young child. I point out freak winds blow rooves off houses and up root trees with no fore- warning. Strangely enough a few years later, these types of inflatable were de-regulated by Safework.

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The remaining 14 fatalities happened either in other states, or as in the case of Adelaide Show, the rides were owned and operated by interstate people. **Six** of those **15** fatalities were in the Ghost Train fire in Sydney's Lunar Park.

Since 1968 to 2000 (a 32 year span) there have been 7 nationwide fatalities (6 being the Ghost Train). From 2000 to the present (an 18 year span), there have been 8 fatalities and I remind you, only one being owned in South Australia. Therefore, my point is that with the extra presence of SafeWork in the Amusement Industry in South Australia, there has been no increased benefit or reasonable reasoning for the increase. I was informed by a SafeWork officer, a whole department has now been set up solely to monitor the Amusement Industry here in South Australia. I am curious as to why this is necessary for such a small and relatively safe and compliant industry in this state. Are the extra resources, officers and their presence simply unnecessary?

We completely understand the need for SafeWork and welcome their presence within the Amusement Industry, but to what extent is considered cost effective, fair and reasonable for all.

Thank you for taking the time to read our submission. If I have strayed outside of the guidelines, I sincerely apologise, please ignore whatever you consider this to be. We hope there is a good and fair outcome for all areas of concern resulting from the Inquiry.

Kind Regards,

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