

### Pauls SUPA IGA East Ringwood “Building OH&S Best Practice”

What value do you place on the safety of your customers and your workers?

At Paul’s SUPA IGA in East Ringwood Victoria, the business owners Arthur and Andrew and their staff have demonstrated just how important safety is to them.

Arthur, Andrew and the team have taken the brave step of opening their store up to scrutiny by an OH&S consultant, not once but twice, all in an effort to ensure they are operating as safely as they possibly can.

Paul’s SUPA IGA is a great example of what can be achieved through focus, determination and a combined willingness to openly accept help.

### The Journey July 07 – April 08

The aim was clear - Paul’s wanted to enhance their current safety practices and to raise staff awareness of OH&S across their entire business.

To most effectively achieve this they required a qualified consultant to look at the business processes, systems and practices and provide a detailed review for action.

As the store employed less than 50 full time equivalent (FTE) employees, Master Groccers Australia (MGA) through their relationship with and the support of WorkSafe Victoria (VWA), were able to offer a free consultation conducted by their qualified consultant.

The safety consultation took half a day to complete and a comprehensive report inclusive of photographs and a safety action plan which contained the consultant’s findings with details of items identified for improvement, notes on compliance and a list of major to minor recommendations was provided.

As a result of the consultant’s findings, management invested a considerable number of hours in communicating with staff, including reviewing work practices which resulted in several initiatives. These recommendations included general staff training, training in manual handling and the progression of emergency evacuation plans. Further the store purchased necessary safety equipment, such as platform ladders and also improved the store layout.

In addition, a new OH&S committee comprising 4 staff and 3 managers was set up and following an election process three staff members were trained to become workplace health and safety representatives.

A notable side benefit was the improvements provided direct benefits to the efficiency of the business.

### What’s Involved

“In the course of the program we frequently needed to demonstrate the benefits of good OH&S work practices and overcome some difficulties. Such a program requires effort to explain new processes and at times management need to influence staff to help them understand the benefits of safe working practices.

“This type of business is always under time pressures so a key factor in the success of this project has been the overwhelmingly positive participation of staff and the determination of management to follow through.

“The positive attitudes the staff at Paul’s have developed to safety was the most encouraging aspect of the project as it evolved. Now staff happily incorporate effective OH&S practices into their work.

“Everyone benefits from this program.”

*Edited script from an overview written by the store consultant John Polkinghorn 29.7.08.*



*Pictured at the presentation.*

*Top: Paul’s Supa IGA Ringwood East Store Health and Safety representatives- Aaron Guthrie, Lois Harris and Jamie Bye.*

*Centre: Arthur Corcoris Paul’s Supa IGA Ringwood East owner and IGA’s Murray Gniel in the background.*

*Bottom: Andrew Florey and Trevor Martin VWA*