What determines efficacy? The roles of codes and guidance materials in occupational safety and health regulation

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Abstract:

Codes of practice and guidance material fulfil important roles, especially (but not exclusively) under the occupational safety and health regimes of countries that have adopted the 'Robens model' of legislation, such as Australia, New Zealand and the UK. In these countries, codes provide greater certainty about what constitutes compliance, while guidance material provides broader advice. Despite the centrality of these mechanisms to the success of occupational safety and health regulation, they have been subjected to very little empirical scrutiny. The principal aim of this paper is to review the key characteristics that determine the efficacy of occupational safety and health codes of practice and guidance materials and, in so doing, to fill some gaps in the knowledge base about them. The empirical component

was drawn from interviews and questionnaires in Australia, Canada (in particular British Columbia), Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, New Zealand and the UK.

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