**Toolbox Talk – Tools Powered by Compressed Air**

**Objective:**
To ensure the safe use and handling of pneumatic (compressed air) tools in an automotive workshop, highlighting key safety measures to prevent accidents, injuries, and damage to equipment.

**Relevant Legislation & Standards:**

* **WHS Act** / **OH&S Act 2004 (Vic)** – Duty of Care, Risk Management
* **AS 1319:1994** – Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment
* **AS 2671:2001** – Compressed Air Systems for Industrial Applications

**Key Hazards of Compressed Air Tools**

1. **High-Pressure Air** – Can cause serious injury if directed at the body, eyes, or skin.
2. **Flying Debris** – Debris or particles from tools can cause eye injuries or cuts.
3. **Hearing Damage** – Prolonged exposure to the noise from air-powered tools can cause hearing loss.
4. **Mechanical Failure** – Faulty or poorly maintained tools can lead to accidents, such as crushing injuries.
5. **Whipping Hoses** – Damaged hoses can cause severe injury if they whip when disconnected.
6. **Misuse for Cleaning** – Using compressed air for cleaning can drive debris into skin or eyes.

**Safe Work Practices for Compressed Air Tools**

**1. Pre-use Inspections**

* **Check tools** for any visible damage, wear, or leaks before use.
* Ensure **hoses** are intact, with no fraying or cracks.
* Confirm **secure connections** to avoid accidental disconnection during operation.

**2. Correct Air Pressure**

* **Follow manufacturer’s instructions** for the correct air pressure settings for each tool.
* **Never exceed** the recommended pressure, as this can cause tools to malfunction or break.

**3. Proper Handling**

* **Do not point** pneumatic tools at yourself or others.
* Always **secure the tool** before starting to use it to avoid accidental discharges.
* Always **wear PPE** such as safety glasses, hearing protection, and gloves.

**4. Hose Safety**

* Ensure **air hoses** are free from kinks, cuts, and frays.
* **Store hoses properly** to avoid tripping hazards or damage when not in use.
* Keep hoses **secured** to prevent them from whipping around during use.

**5. Using Safety Features**

* **Do not remove safety guards** or bypass any safety mechanisms on tools.
* Follow the manufacturer’s safety instructions for each tool.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

* **Eye Protection:** Always wear safety goggles or face shields to protect from flying debris.
* **Hearing Protection:** Use earmuffs or earplugs to protect against high noise levels.
* **Gloves:** Wear gloves to protect your hands from abrasions or injury when handling tools.
* **Safety Footwear:** Steel-toed boots to protect feet from falling tools or equipment.
* **Protective Clothing:** Long sleeves and pants should be worn to protect skin from accidental tool contact or flying debris.

**Maintenance and Inspections**

* **Daily Inspections:** Ensure tools are inspected before use each day. Report any faults immediately.
* **Routine Maintenance:** Compressed air tools must be serviced regularly according to the manufacturer’s guidelines.
* **Record Maintenance:** Keep records of inspections and maintenance activities for each tool.

**Emergency Procedures**

1. **Injury from Air Tool or Hose:**
	* If you are injured by a pneumatic tool or compressed air, **seek medical attention immediately**.
	* In the case of an eye injury, **flush with water** for at least 15 minutes and seek medical help.
2. **Fire Hazard:**
	* Keep **air tools away from open flames** or heat sources.
	* Know the location of fire extinguishers and emergency exits.

**Reporting and Incident Management**

* **Report any faulty tools** immediately to your supervisor.
* **Tag out and isolate** defective tools to prevent use.
* Record any **incidents or near-misses** involving pneumatic tools and review them for corrective actions.

**Summary**

* **Always inspect and maintain** your tools before use to prevent accidents.
* **Ensure correct air pressure settings** for each tool.
* **Wear appropriate PPE** and follow safety protocols to protect yourself and your colleagues.
* **Report any faults or issues** with tools to ensure safe work conditions.

**Remember**: Safe use of pneumatic tools not only protects you but also ensures the ongoing safety and efficiency of the workplace. Always work within your training and adhere to the safety standards provided.