

Symposium on Wheelchair Safety and Standards Monitoring



Rationale: The Assistive Technology industry in Australia has been developing a range of products for domestic and international use over many years. Australia has also adopted a range of national standards (often drawn from ISO standards) to set benchmarks for rehabilitation and assistive technology manufacture. To date most of these standards are implemented through a "type testing" arrangement that is voluntary. Some funding schemes have chosen to make compliance with relevant Australian Standards mandatory for inclusion on their list of approved products. An area of growing concern for professionals working in the field and consumers who use this technology, is both consistency of

product and adequate rectification when systemic or in-built faults are detected in a particular product model or system. There are documented cases of sudden failure of the back-canes of a manual wheelchair and of potential dangers to occupants from fire within components of a power wheelchair. Most publicly, evidence presented to the Victorian Task Force into Wheelchair Accidents at Railway Level Crossings suggested that flaws in design and/or manufacture may have contributed to the deaths of wheelchair users in level crossing accidents.

Aim: The National Committee on Rehabilitation Engineering is a Committee of The Institution of Engineers Australia. All Rehabilitation Engineering Centres are represented on the Committee. The Committee is seeking to bring together the key stakeholders in the assistive technology industry, together with users, to seek to identify the weaknesses and strengths of the current assistive technology manufacture/importation systems.

It is the Committee's aim to investigate the implications and potential benefits of "Standard's Mark" testing and a system of technology incident logging and recall as required (similar to the Prosthetic and Orthotic databases coordinated by **REHABTech**, or the more stringent durable medical device protocols administered by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA)).

Time and Venue:

The NCRE will facilitate a Symposium at **REHABTech** from 28–29 November 2002 and will include a half day to workshop appropriate solutions. To register attendance, contact **REHABTech**.



Please address correspondence to: The Editor- **Tech LINK**
c/o **REHAB Tech**, 260-294 Kooyong Road, Caulfield Vic 3162, Australia.
Telephone: +61 3 9528 1960, Facsimile: + 61 3 9528 1077, e-mail: REHAB.Tech@eng.monash.edu.au
INTERNET - <http://www.monash.edu.au/rehabtech/>

Positions Vacant

Please visit our website www.monash.edu.au/rehabtech for detailed information on vacancies as they come to hand.

ABC Radio Program: *ALL IN THE MIND...*

Natasha Mitchell of the ABC radio national's ALL IN THE MIND recently produced a program about prosthetics and the mind which dealt with such issues as: What does it feel like to lose a part of you? Is part of your essential psychological self lost as well? And can a prosthetic limb ever replace that? The psychology of adapting to a prosthesis. Powerfully candid stories of life after limb loss and the love/hate relationship with a synthetic limb that just isn't your own. [A transcript (or audio) of the program on September 29 and October 2 is available at the web-site: <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/science/mind/>]

Prosthetic Management Courses February 2003

Two AFRM accredited courses for medical practitioners and allied rehabilitation health professionals will be held at C.G.M.C. in February 2003.

Numbers will be limited. Please contact **REHABTech** to register your interest.

- **Lower Limb Prosthetics & Amputee Rehabilitation**
17–21 February, 2003
- **Clinical Management of Upper Limb Amputees**
24–28 February, 2003

Farewell Farewell Farewell Farewell Farewell

Farewell Karsten! Karsten Giertz has been with **REHABTech** over the last six months, researching the Shoulder Controlled Upper Limb Prosthesis.

We hope Karsten's experience in Australia was a memorable one, and wish him every success in his studies and future career.



COMING EVENTS

31 October/1 November, 2002	Material Science & Prosthetic/Orthotic Design: Maximising Patient Safety. This advanced two-day componentry inspection course will be conducted at REHABTech .
23–25 November, 2002	Clinical Management of Amputees Contact RehabPlus, New Zealand on 0011 64 9 815 5600 for details.
26 November, 2002	Veterans' Awareness Day Opportunity for an overview at REHABTech on latest P & O. developments.
28 & 29 November, 2002	Symposium on Wheelchair Safety & Standards Monitoring will be held at REHABTech . Please register for attendance.
17–21 February, 2003	Lower Limb Prosthetics Course Venue: C.G.M.C. Contact REHABTech to register.
24–28 February, 2003	Upper Limb Prosthetics Course Venue: REHABTech

Please address correspondence to: The Editor- **Tech LINK**
c/o **REHAB Tech**, 260-294 Kooyong Road, Caulfield Vic 3162, Australia.
Telephone: +61 3 9528 1960, Facsimile: + 61 3 9528 1077, e-mail: REHAB.Tech@eng.monash.edu.au
INTERNET - <http://www.monash.edu.au/rehabtech/>

