SAFETY ACTION PTY LTD®

May 2024

Measuring Safety Performance

What is a Notifiable Electric Shock

Shaved Face Enforced for Respirators

Harsh Tone is not Bullying

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What's New in May?

Safety Action is pleased to welcome Tracey Bailey as our new Safety Administrator. Throughout her career, Tracey has worked in various administration and customer service roles. She is currently studying her Certificate IV in Occupational Health and Safety and is excited to work in the industy. We look forward to introducing her to our clients and friends.

Tracey Bailey

This month Gary discusses how to measure the safety of your business and shares when an electric shock is notifiable.

Also this month;

- Clean (shaved) face enforced for respirators.
- Using a harsh tone and repeated training ruled as not bullying.
- Join our 2 day safety leadership training.

Stay Safe!

SAFETY ACTION TEAM

Gary Rowe

Andrea Rowe

Stephen Weber

Sarah Oliver

Safety Webinar – 10th May 2024

Join us at 10am on the Friday 10th May for our free monthly webinar to keep you up to date on Workplace Health and Safety. Gary and the team present short informal sessions of only 20 to 30 minutes on topical issues and answer your question.

Register Here

Missed our last webinar? View it here

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How to Measure Safety Performance

Most businesses have traditionally judged safety performance by reporting and monitoring their Lost-Time Injury (LTI) rate eg number of LTI injuries per million work hours.

A lost-time injury essentially includes any work-related injury or illness requiring one shift or more off work.

Old Standard - AS 1885

For many decades LTI rate was the only common measure available and was specified in Australian Standard AS 1885: 1990, which dated back to 1976.

This standard has long been out-of-date (when older than 10 years) but was only officially withdrawn* in November 2022.

* Standard withdrawn from sale by Intertek Inform, formerly SAI Global the distributor of Australian Standards.

Executive's Focus on LTI Rate

Executives and directors have traditionally used LTI rate, almost exclusively, as an easy and quick way to compare occupational health and safety (OHS) performance between businesses or sites.

Many people are still using and only comfortable with LTI rate, although total recordable injury frequency rate (TRIFR) is increasingly being used. Note: TRIFR term is a tautology as something is either a rate or a frequency, not both, but the abbreviation pronounced "triffer" sounds better.

Unintended Consequences

As result of the executive focus on LTI rate or TRIFR, every lost-time injury tends to be closely scrutinised and options to exclude it or re-classify the reported work injury is explored by safety and human resources staff, in order to achieve corporate safety targets, or to avoid operations appearing to be "unsafe" or suffering declining performance.

Today, most progressive businesses recognise that LTI rate is only one measure of safety performance, being a "lag" or "loss" measure, and that "lead indicators" can also assist to gain a more complete picture of an organisation's safety performance.

New International Standard - ISO 45,004

The first edition of a new International Standard, ISO 45,004: 2024: OHS Mgt – Guidelines on Performance Evaluation, has been released.

This standard follows the format of other recent ISO safety standards eg ISO 45,001: OHS Mgt Systems, by taking a holistic view of measuring safety performance, which starts at the board room, through acquisitions, planning processes, design and

maintenance of facilities and systems, safety meetings, surveys, incident investigations, audits, and management reviews.

The new ISO standard includes lag and lead indicators for performance evaluation, as exampled below.

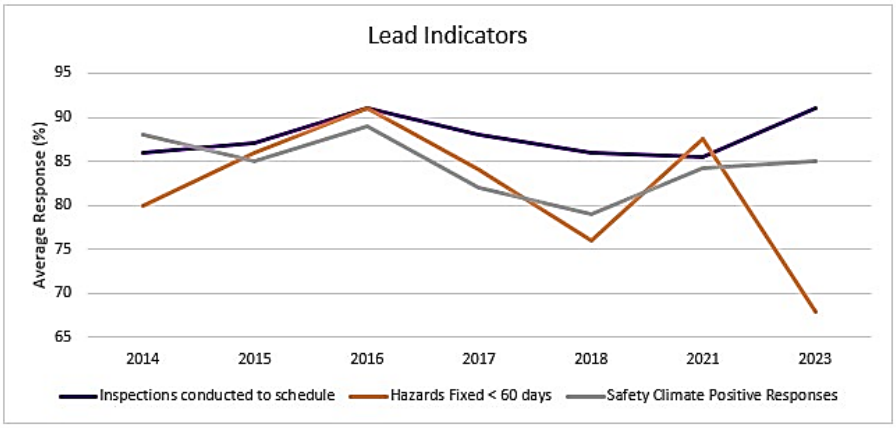
Lag Indicators

Lag indicators, also called loss indicators, measure such things as:

- Number of first aid injuries,
- Number of lost-time injuries (LTIs),
- LTI rate,
- Total Recordable rate (TRIFR),
- Days lost per worker per year, and
- Workers compensation cost per worker per year.

Lead Indicators

Lead indicators are a measure of things done that help reduce the likelihood of work injury or illness occurring.



Graph 5.6: Lead Indicators over time

For example:

- Corporate OHS objectives and targets,
- Percentage of procedures updated per schedule,
- Safety training conducted per schedule,
- Worker participation,
- Hazard reporting,
- Elimination of hazards,
- Safety inspections,
- Risk assessments,
- Degree of completion of safety business plans,
- Safety culture (percentage positive response to safety culture survey),
- Top management safety walks etc.

For more examples of safety activities you can implement in your business, that have been linked to better performance call us on 03 8544 4300 or email us to register for our next safety performance benchmarking survey. You will also receive a free copy of our last benchmarking report.

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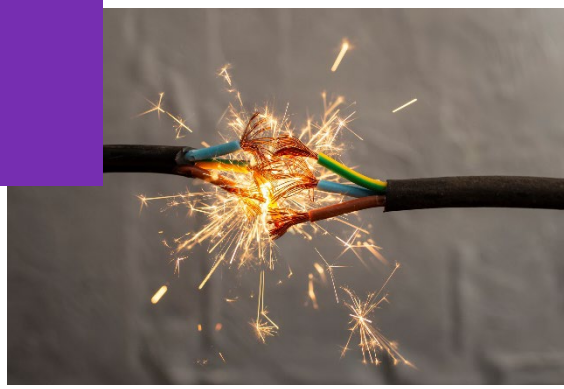
What is a Notifiable Electric Shock?



The workplace safety Act in each state specifies the incident notification requirements, which in part, require employers to notify the relevant authority in the event of an "electric shock" that:

a) Results in a person requiring immediate medical treatment, or
b) An incident that exposed a person to an imminent risk of electric shock.

Many businesses would, of course, be cautious and send any person who experiences any type of electrical sensation or electric shock for a medical check-up or treatment. Does this mean every minor "tickle" or suspected electrical incident must be reported to the relevant state authority? Answer: No!

WorkSafe WA recently clarified the criteria for notifying electrical shock incidents and offered the following **notification exemptions eg shock from:**

1) **Static electricity**,
2) **Extra-low voltage** eg <50V AC or <120V DC, or
3) **Deliberate shocks from a defibrillator** for medical or first aid purposes.

However, it would be prudent for employers to always explore the source of persistent experiences including static electricity and extra-low voltage equipment.

Safety Leadership Workshop
Foundation Course

At Safety Action we believe that all frontline managers and supervisors need help and practical guidance on how to balance psychological safety and workplace safety and performance.

Our next safety leadership foundation course is a good starting place. Book in to our next public safety leadership course below or email or phone us on 03 8544 4300 for a quote for in-house training or workplace health & safety risk assessments.

When: 18th and 19th June

8 am to 4 pm each day at Safety Action, Clayton.

Early Bird Price until 10th May $980+GST (Normally $1,500 +GST).

Includes catering, training materials and comprehensive manual.

Click here For more information and to register or email us.

Clean Shaven Face Enforceable for Respirators

The Tasmanian Fair Work Commission (FWC) has confirmed the right of employers to enforce a clean (shaven) face safety rule for workers required to wear respirators, especially where serious health risks are imminent if the respirator is ineffective.

TasWater, the employer in question, explained to the commission that workers were required to enter treatment plants and pump stations where they could be exposed to chlorine, concentrated carbon dioxide and airborne pathogens. Other workers are sometimes required to cut through concrete and bricks, to access or repair water systems, which could release hazardous asbestos or silica dust.

We all know wearing respirators can be hot and uncomfortable and interfere with easy communication. Ideally employers should adopt work practices and processes that contain the dust or respiratory hazards, thus avoiding the need for personal protective equipment (PPE), such as respirators.

However, many tasks in the water industry involve repairing leaking pipes in situ and working in proximity to hazardous water treatment chemicals, thus making PPE essential.

The union involved, CEPU, argued that alternate types of respiratory protection should be provided which doesn't require a clean shaven face to ensure a good airtight seal, such as air supplied helmets.

The FWC accepted alternatives might be available, but the CEPU failed to provide any conclusive evidence that they would be effective or suitable for the TasWater circumstances.

Therefore, the outcome of this case applies to TasWater work environments and circumstances, and other means of controlling exposure to harmful respiratory hazards may be appropriate for different workplaces.

Harsh Tone and Repeated Training Not Bullying

A workplace manager used a blunt tone when speaking to an employee and provided more training than the employee wanted, or felt she needed.

Despite hearing these facts and the employer's "clumsy" attempts to resolve the differences between the worker and her manager, the WA Fair Work Commission (FWC) recently found the worker was not bullied within the meaning of the Commonwealth Fair Work Act 2009.

The FWC concluded both parties misconstrued the intent of each other's words and interactions, and this built up to a point where the mental health of both employees was affected.

The aggrieved worker was very sensitive to any management or control and perceived any interaction as criticism or over-bearing supervision.

In these circumstances the FWC concluded it was appropriate to relocate the worker to another department and this was not discriminatory or punishment, but reasonable management action.

The worker's allegation of bullying was dismissed.