

## Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

*Transport Strategy Group report – First 20 industry visits*

# Managing health and safety in the road transport industry

## Introduction

Between 19 February 2010 and 14 June 2010, 20 interviews were conducted with senior management from a diverse cross-section of the transport and storage industry to discuss the practical application of safety management. The people interviewed during this process were from a variety of senior management positions as indicated in the following table:

	National	State	Other
CEO/GM	1	3	
Manager	3	12	8
OHS Officer		6	1
Compliance Officer	1	4	

The interviewer, the Principal Advisor, Transport Strategy Group (TSG), had previous interaction with many of these employers prior to her commencement with Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ). The established level of trust enabled her to engage in open and frank discussions in relation to their current safety management practices and to gain insight into their beliefs about the gaps and barriers to improving safety that currently exist in the transport industry in Queensland.

Every interview began with the statement:

**“I am not here to conduct an audit of your safety management system I am sure that on paper it would look fantastic, but what I am really interested in is how safety is being managed through practical application at the coal face in your workplace.”**

It was also confirmed at the commencement of each visit that the information was to assist WHSQ in developing information to aid transport companies in addressing safety issues/concerns. Each representative was informed that WHSQ would be compiling a written report that would include the information that they shared and was assured that no individual or company would be specifically identified.

This process provided<sup>1</sup> the opportunity to build strong relationships between WHSQ and key stakeholders in the transport industry and was instrumental in securing the high level of attendance at the Zero Harm at Work Leadership Breakfast Forum held on 20 May 2010 with 14 of the 20 companies interviewed in attendance.

## Objectives

The project was designed to underpin a number of Transport Strategy Group objectives:

- promotion and awareness of the TSG among industry stakeholders
- creation and facilitation of effective communication networks between WHSQ and employers within the transport industry building and maintenance of positive relationships with employers in the industry
- gathering of specific information in relation to current safety management practices within the industry
- identifying gaps and/or barriers (if any) in current information around safety in the transport industry
- creation and maintenance of a database of key stakeholders in the industry.

## Questions asked

A written questionnaire was not used during the interviews however, the following questions, which were designed to gather specific information about how the company was managing safety, were consistently asked:

- What workplace health and safety WHS meetings/committees did the company have in place?
- What was the highest level of management in attendance at each of the WHS meetings/committees?
- How often did the company hold each of the identified WHS meetings/committees?
- What initiatives (if any) did the company have in place to address safety concerns/issues?
- What specific measures (if any) were in place to manage safety when using contractors?
- What specific measures were in place (if any) did the company have in place to manage safety at customer sites?
- Was the company aware of any barriers or gaps to the improvement of safety in the industry?

At the conclusion of each of the interviews, the company was offered the opportunity to make additional comments that they wished to have recorded.

As the visits progressed it became clear that this was also an opportunity to share the information about safety among stakeholders as it was being gathered. The interview process was then modified to include sharing of information that had been gathered from previous interviews - without identifying the company (i.e. *“One of the companies that I spoke to stated that they...”*). This assisted the interview process and resulted in the interviewee(s) opening up and providing information more freely.

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<sup>1</sup> The process is ongoing and will continue to be an important part of relationship management.

# Analytical process

In order to analyse the data, a 'summary of conversation' was written for each of the discussions that took place. These are contained in Appendix 1 of this report. A recording of the position(s) of the people involved in each interview was important as each conversation took a different direction depending on who was present.

Further points that were considered in the analysis of the data were:

- how solid, coherent and consistent the evidence was in support of the findings
- to what extent and in what ways did the findings increase and/or deepen understanding of the issues affecting safety in the transport industry
- to what extent are the findings consistent with other knowledge of the issues affecting safety in the transport industry
- to what extent are the findings useful for the intended purpose.

In considering these points, the skills, attitudes, feelings, behaviours and knowledge of the participants to the interviews were also taken into account.

*Thematic Analysis* was used for this report as the data analysis was an on-going process which took place throughout the data collection process.

The development of emerging themes was incremental. As themes were identified the methods of questioning was required adapting and changing. For example, the early interviews were conducted using a number of questions that had been developed in advance, however, during the interviews the participants raised issues that had not emerged previously. After carefully considering what had been said the words were analysed and the discussions were refined to include these issues for the remaining interviews.

## Actual findings and observations

This report contains analysis of the information gathered during the conversations with the participants in the first 20 industry visits. The following key themes emerge from the interpretive analysis of the records of conversation of those interviews:

When asked about the WHS meetings/committees that the company had in place, over 50% (11 out of 20) confirmed that they had active safety committees at a site level. The majority of companies stated that they hold a series of safety meetings including tool box talks within their company structure and have safety as a standing agenda item at every meeting. All but six of the companies interviewed stated that they have employed a full-time OHS and/or compliance officer.

Generally the highest level of management in attendance at those meetings was dependent on the level within the company the meeting was being convened. For example if the meeting was at a national level then the general manager would attend, if the meeting was being held at a state and/or regional level then the state manager would be in attendance and if the meeting was at the site level then it was likely attended by the depot manager and/or supervisor(s). The majority of companies are holding their safety meetings on a monthly basis with state managers in attendance whenever possible.

A trend is emerging in relation to the frequency in which safety discussions take place with employees through the use of tool box talks. Some employers are shifting towards calling tool box talks on a needs basis rather than a regularly scheduled systematic approach. One employer stated that their senior management was currently involved in a high level of debate in relation to the effectiveness of holding their tool box talks scheduled on a monthly basis as opposed to calling them on a needs basis and the level of interest that both methods created among the employees.

It is recommended that the most appropriate course of action would be for WHSQ to encourage the method that the majority of employers seem to be adopting and that is to call tool box talks on an as needs basis while ensuring that there is a minimum frequency maintained.

One of the issues that came out of the Transport Safety Summit that WHSQ held in May 2009 was the lack of control over safety in the use of contractors and at customer sites and specific questions were asked during the interviews designed to explore these areas. It was found that most of the employers interviewed either have or are in the process of implementing measures to address both of these concerns.

A number of the companies are now encouraging their drivers to report safety concerns at their customer and delivery sites with at least 50 per cent of them introducing a simplified '*Driver Hazard Identification Form*' which is kept in the cab of the vehicle. Over half of the companies interviewed stated that unless employers are aware of what is happening out there they cannot address the issues and/or concerns properly and the link to that information is through the drivers. This is supported in comments from the participants in the interviews.

**“The key to making the workplace safer is encouraging the reporting of near misses. That’s where we can make a real difference”**

**“No blame reporting encourages a high level of reporting and if we know what is going on we can address the problem”**

Another trend emerging is that employers are realising that the key to improving safety in the transport industry is through the engagement of the workers in the decision making process. Again this is clearly supported by the participants in the interviews.

**“Inclusion of the workers in the decision making process achieves the desired change.”**

**“Consultation is the key to good safety management”**

**“You can have all of the safety processes in the world but the real key to safety is how the drivers apply them”**

Fifty-five per cent of the companies interviewed stated that they treat contractors the same as their direct employees when it comes to the issue of safety and 45 per cent indicated that they now include contractors in their internal training programs and safety meetings.

The most commonly identified barrier to the improvement of health and safety in the transport industry was the cost and that some companies are restricted to just the bare minimum/requirements. The two other most significant barriers identified were:

- the problems associated with the aging workforce: and,
- an embedded culture with a level of acceptance that if you work in the transport industry you will probably get hurt.

While most employers stated that they have noticed an improvement in literacy skills among drivers all identified that there is a need for clear and concise information about safety delivered as simple messages designed specifically for the targeted audience. Some of the relevant comments from the participants were as follows:

**“The best way to communicate important messages to drivers is sharp, short and direct to the point”**

**“The way to improve safety in the industry is by bringing the message to the worker in the format necessary for them to understand it.”**

**“It is important to simplify the message(s) and to identify the audience”**

**“The method of delivery of a new idea is crucial”**

**“How an idea is delivered is the most important aspect of change management”**

# Safety initiatives

Throughout the interview process a number of safety initiatives were identified all of which are contained in the summary of conversations (Appendix 1). Highlights include:

**‘Fresh Eyes’** - fortnightly meetings are now held at alternating sites so that different people have a look at safety in each depot. They believe that people stop seeing things when they see them everyday

**‘Safety walk the dock’** – prior to every tool box talk one person from each shift is taken from their normal duties to walk the dock and look at nothing but safety

**‘Safety cuffs/chains’** – metal cuffs on a short chain that can be clipped onto the outside of container doors prior to opening which allow a driver to safely open the doors to check and see if the load has moved during transportation

**‘Mobile flashing unit’** - a mobile unit that any employee working in the vicinity of a forklift must have within a defined range of them at all times to alert a forklift driver that there is a person/pedestrian in the area.

Many employers have started to introduce new measures to monitor driver competency in addition to ensuring that appropriate licences are held. A number of the companies interviewed stated that they have introduced an internal *‘Competency Card’* that has to be renewed every 12 months and one company has introduced a compulsory two week period of classroom training prior to any new employee getting behind the wheel of one of their trucks.

**‘Safety walk’** – once a week an employee is chosen to conduct a safety walk to identify any ongoing safety issues and/or concerns. The policy is, that the names are not relevant unless there is a significant safety breach identified. The purpose is to identify any safety issues and/or concerns in order to address them and as indicated earlier by comments from the participants:

**“No blame reporting encourages a high level of reporting and if we know what is going on we can address the problem”**

Additionally, a number of low cost/ high impact safety initiatives were identified.

Further information on these initiatives should be collated and promoted among transport organisations to encourage them to ‘think outside of the box’ when trying to address a safety issue/concern.

## Company comments

As stated earlier, all companies that were interviewed were given the opportunity to make any further comments that they wished to have recorded and all of those comments are included at Appendix 1 of this report. Some of the comments include:

**“Our company has a strong belief that awareness defeats complacency”**

**“If you can’t afford safety then you shouldn’t be able to get a licence to operate a transport company”**

**“There is no grey area when it comes to safety”**

**“Corporate egos need to be parked when it comes to improving safety in the industry as a whole.”**

**“There is no respect for truckies on the road. Professional drivers drive the equivalent of 10 years driving every year (based on the average person driving 20,000 km/yr)”**

**“There should be a compulsory element of safety in contract procurement”**

**“An increase in the number of change over stations at appropriate places would help to improve the health of line-haul drivers by having them home every night”**

**“The industry is in desperate need of a traineeship program”**

**“All road users would be safer if general licensing included education in relation to sharing the roads with heavy vehicles”**

**“Actually looking in the mirror and seeing the distance to the back of the vehicle would provide a better understanding of heavy vehicles”**

**“Building a pool of real stories from real people from the shop floor would be powerful messages”**

## Conclusions

There appears to be a general consensus that effective safety management requires a strong commitment from the top level of management and that the majority of employers are now employing dedicated health and safety personnel.

Industry participants indicated that they have a strong level of commitment to improving safety in the transport industry and that employers are looking for someone to provide a coordinated approach to finding sustainable solutions to the problems faced by the industry. One of the participants made the following statement that clearly emphasises this:

**“It is going to take a collective approach by industry to tackle this problem”**

By TSG continuing to engage in open and frank discussions and building positive relationships with employers, WHSQ is in a position to provide the necessary guidance and assistance and create an opportunity for employers to work together.

## Recommendations

From the preliminary findings it is recommended that WHSQ continue the process of engaging in meaningful and productive discussions about managing safety with employers in the transport industry and that these discussions not only be confined to Brisbane and the surrounding areas but progress throughout the regional areas of Queensland in order to gain a statewide perspective.

It is further recommended that the information gathered during these ongoing discussions be shared between all stakeholders in the industry including employees, employers, associations, unions and all government departments that have a mutual interest in improving health and safety in the transport industry.

There is a need to promote an increased awareness of the importance of strong healthy communication strategies targeted at improving safety in the transport industry. Careful consideration needs to be given to the method of delivery of such information to ensure that it is delivered in a constructive and positive way.

The ‘low cost/high impact’ safety initiatives identified both as a result of the interviews and those that emerge later should be compiled for posting on the WHSQ website and broader distribution within the transport and storage industry.

# Acknowledgement

Recognising that the transport and storage industry is known for being '*time poor*', WHSQ would like to offer a note of thanks to all of the participants who willingly gave up their time to provide an insight into the practical application of safety management across the industry in Queensland.

# Appendix 1

# Summary of conversation - 1

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor  
National Employee Relations Manager

## Company profile:

A national company with numerous sites throughout Queensland.

## Safety structure:

The Safety Management Team consists of a National OHS Manager, a State OHS Manager and 20 Safety Coordinators. The Safety Management Team has one annual meeting at a National level however they hold monthly meetings at a Regional level.

Most sites have a safety committee however there is no set frequency for these committees to meet. They meet on a needs basis only (i.e. incident or safety alert).

It is mandatory that all incidents are tool boxed and the frequency is determined by need but is at least monthly. The issues discussed are:

- Why did it happen?
- How did it happen?
- What do we need to do to make sure it doesn't happen again?

## Initiatives:

Most collective agreements have safety related Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) that are incentive based and consist of measurable outcomes such as:

- filling in incident reports
- completing 'TAKE 5's' (internal reports for looking at safety)

## Barriers/gaps:

This Company did not identify any issues/concerns under this heading.

## Additional comments:

The Company states that they are extremely safety focused and have a strong belief that "*Awareness Defeats Complacency*". As a result, safety is a standing agenda item for every quarterly management meeting.

# Summary of conversation - 2

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor

Group General Manager

National Human Resources Manager

## Company profile:

A major multi group Employer consisting of multiple sites/depots within those groups. The primary business for the site visited is carting heavy freight both locally and long distance.

## Safety structure:

The Company uses Centralised Risk System at the corporate level where:

- everything is entered into the system
  - near misses
  - incidents
  - accidents
- used purely as a measurement tool
- doesn't identify How?, Why? or Where to?

The WH&S Committee meets on a monthly basis and the highest level of management in attendance is the State Manager. This committee has both investigating and reporting responsibilities that are attached to a measurable Key Performance Indicator (KPI).

The WH&S Committee also has a sub-group known as the Safety Team which has a higher level of interaction with the employees. The Employer believes that the creation of this team has created an increased awareness of Health & Safety issues amongst the workers and improved everyone's ability to identify Hazards and Risks in their day-to-day activities. In a sense it has created a culture where employees talk about safety amongst themselves on a regular basis without the constant prompting by management.

## Initiatives:

This arm of the business has a great safety record and believes that this success can be attributed to a number of factors as follows:

- Commitment to safety has to come from the highest level
- WHSO's should come from the operation
- Communication is essential
- Cultural change is crucial
- RESPECT needs to go both ways and can be achieved by clearly identifying values and standards
- Closing the gap between management and employees

## **Barriers/gaps:**

This Company believes that there is a real gap in the promotion of the benefits of safety to business such as the cost savings that can be achieved through improved safety and the increased involvement and awareness amongst the workforce.

This Company also believes that there is a lack of education around the benefits for employee morale and corporate image.

## **Additional comments:**

The problem with the Centralised Management System is that it provides very little feedback unless there is a problem and/or trend identified.

# Summary of conversation - 3

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor  
Regional Operations Manager – Brisbane  
Business Operations Manager Inbound & PUD

## Company profile:

A large site of a multi group employer who's core business is heavy vehicle freight both intrastate and interstate. This operation runs 24/7.

## Safety structure:

At a national level they produce a document known as the 'Leadership Ladder' on a monthly basis which is based purely on statistical data. The sites are all ranked according to safety based on the frequency of injuries, incidents/accidents and near misses and the duration of the time lost.

The WH&S Committee meets on a monthly basis, has a rotating chair and is attended by the Regional Operations Manager every second meeting.

The Safety Committee is responsible for carrying out Risk Assessments whenever there is any change to work processes, any new equipment introduced and/or whenever there is an incident/accident or near miss.

Tool box talks are held twice a week on each of the three shifts and safety is the first item on the agenda at every meeting.

Employees are encouraged by every level of management to report on every incident/accident and/or near miss. Both electronic and manual reporting is available but every manual report has to be entered into the electronic system for corporate monitoring.

## Initiatives:

The company believes that the only way to combat safety and impact on the behaviour and culture within the workplace is by taking a holistic approach to safety. Site based safety issues are dealt with at site level and the company stated that they are very proactive in trying to improve their performance by introducing new systems and/or ideas. If there are safety initiatives identified at one site that senior management believe would work across all sites, then Head Office is proactive in managing the rollout.

The WHSO for this site has been in place for four years and is part of the team who works on the floor. The Company believes that this allows for a greater element of trust and more direct involvement of the workers in safety.

## Barriers/gaps:

The company stated that due to the fact that most of the supervisors come from the floor, poor literacy is a real problem however the benefits that come from promoting within far outweigh the problems associated with the literacy levels.

## **Additional comments:**

Management stated that interaction with the WHSO and WHSQ seems to be on a reactive basis only and they would welcome more contact. Management also commented that WHSQ Inspectors seem to be much more comfortable talking to the WHSO's than management.

# Summary of conversation - 4

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor

Cathie Grainger – TSG Senior Project Officer

State Manager

Senior OH&S Advisor

## Company profile:

This is a national company with multiple sites throughout Queensland. The company is self insured and is under the Comcare system however many aspects of the State Legislation have been retained as a result of enterprise bargaining negotiations.

The company has an annual safety plan and have brought everyone in line with the National Plan depot by depot.

## Safety structure:

They have a safety meeting at the start of every meeting in the business.

- National meeting held quarterly and attended by:
  - General Manager
  - Operations Manager
  - Human Resource Manager
  - an elected representative from the coal face in each State
- Regional meetings held weekly and attended by:
  - State Manager
  - Senior OH&S Advisor
  - Senior Rehabilitation Advisor
- Tool box talks twice a month with one per month dedicated to safety and attended by:
  - Supervisors
  - Leading Hands

## Initiatives:

The Company has a strong belief that safety starts at the top. Currently, they are at the stage where the focus is on cultural change designed to drive behavioural changes in the workforce.

The entire business focus has shifted to '*culture and people*' not just safety. They have found that one of the critical aspects of cultural/behavioural change is influencing Supervisors and Leading Hands. They have implemented a reward and recognition focus on safety rather than a disciplinary focus which has been a difficult change for middle management.

All Supervisors and Leading Hands have undergone Risk Management training to give them a better understanding of why injuries occur in the workplace.

The company has introduced a 'safety walk the dock' where one person from each shift is taken from their normal duties to walk the dock and look at nothing but safety. The introduction of this process was difficult for a number of reasons:

- Employees not wanting to ‘dob’ in their workmates – this was overcome when the company stated that they didn’t want to know ‘*who was doing what*’ they just wanted to know ‘*what*’ was going on.
- Supervisors and Leading Hands wanted to discipline on what was identified – this was overcome when the safety issues/concerns identified were discussed in depth at tool box talks with greater interest among the workers.

This initiative has now become a challenge among the employees:

- wanting to identify safety concerns that others may not have seen or been aware of.
- not wanting the person walking the dock to identify any safety issues
- not wanting to be the one that was doing an unsafe work practice identified

The company has also recognised the benefits and tapped into the aging workforce to promote safety. One of their workers who suffered a muscular skeletal injury approximately 20-25 years ago has been talking to his co-workers (in particular the younger ones just coming into the industry) and has even done a DVD for tool box/safety talks.

The theme of the talk is ‘*If only I knew then what I know now I wouldn’t be where I am today*’. This particular employee suffered a back injury and is now at a point where the only thing that can be done is pain management and lifestyle adjustment. He can no longer do the things that he loves including driving truck.

The Company identified that a significant number of injuries were occurring immediately following long weekends and/or periods of annual leave so this year they launched a ‘*warm-up*’ program at the commencement of each shift. They enlisted the assistance of QUT graduates and an onsite Physiotherapist but they found that the employees weren’t interested in the physical warm up. However, the Company used the warm up time to focus on the importance of safety and bringing it to the forefront and getting the Employees thinking about safety at the commencement of their shift.

This Company is also using the ‘well-being’ program to try to increase the overall health of their employees.

### **Barriers/gaps:**

Injury at customer sites has been a massive problem that needs a cultural shift in the industry. In an attempt to address this problem the company has:

- incorporated a risk assessment process on all new customer sites at the time that the contract is entered into
- introduced a driver safety concern form in all trucks to enable the driver to inform the company of any potential risks and/or hazards

### **Additional comments:**

The State Manager said that “*Safety systems don’t stop injuries and incidents, safety starts at the top*”

The Company believes that driver empowerment is crucial and has implemented “*It’s okay to say no*” from the Safety Summit last year. If the driver believes that it is unsafe they are encouraged to say no and at the very least “*If in doubt check it out*”.

Management believes that over all safety in the workplace has been increased over a period of time with the company reporting that they see their major achievement in behavioural change so far as a shift in the safety practices of their oldest employee.

# Summary of conversation - 5

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor

State Manager – Queensland

OH&SE Manager

Transport Manager

## Company profile:

The company is made up of six business units and employs 275-300 drivers depending on demand. The core business is containers however, they do carry steel and various other products as required.

## Safety structure:

The company believes that safety is a number one priority within the business however, it is expensive to maintain. Each budget within this company has a safety component built into it as you cannot have a separate safety budget because it is too easy for the department to cut.

Rehabilitation and safety have been split into two separate roles.

Monthly compliance meetings are held and regularly attended by both transport and depot Managers.

Monthly tool box meetings are held in the first week of the month with safety and fatigue as standing agenda items. In addition specific tool box meetings are held as necessary for:

- new sites
- new equipment
- new standing operating procedures (SOPs)

The company avoids the use of labour hire employees where ever possible however recognises their place in the transport industry. A process has been put in place in all aspects of the business for the use of labour hire employees as follows:

- personal interview
- print out of five year licence history
- driving assessment
- stringent reference checks
- two inductions both of which involve strong elements of safety
  - one site specific
  - one transport

All drivers have been put through fatigue management training and regular visitors to the site such as the drivers of the food vans must undergo a site induction.

## **Initiatives:**

Encouraging reporting requires trust and a simplified process.

- Simplify the documents
- Simplify the process
- Simplify the messages

They have found this method to be effective now that they have simplified the reporting – Keep it simple and offer both verbal and/or written options.

Drivers are told that if they think it is unsafe then call and ask the Allocator about it. Educating workers about reporting all incidents including near misses is imperative. It is important to recognise that this is not a blame tool but an awareness tool.

## **Barriers/gaps:**

This Company believes that cost may be one of the barriers to safety in the industry.

Another barrier is the bureaucracy attached to workplace safety in this industry and the layers of differential processes within Government departments.

## **Additional comments:**

The Company stated that *“If you can’t afford safety then you shouldn’t be able to get a licence to operate a transport company”*.

The Company also believes that WHSQ should identify the top 20 things that a transport company needs to do to make it safe and publish them.

# Summary of conversation - 6

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor  
Manager OHS & Rehabilitation (QLD)

## Company profile:

This is a national company with both Heavy Vehicle line haul and local pick up and delivery (PUD) components. They are covered by ComCare and the only element of State Legislation is in relation to Risk Plan Licensing.

## Safety structure:

National OHS Committee meets two to four times per year and is attended by:

- Executive
- National Operations Manager
- Unions

State OHS Committees meet two times per year and are attended by:

- OHS Manager (chair)
- Administrative Support
- State Operations Managers
  - Commercial
  - Mail network
  - Logistics
- Representatives from Operations
  - Commercial
  - Mail network
  - Logistics

As a general rule these meetings deal with the following:

- Direction – you will do
- Recommendation – fact gathering and/or action
- Request – incoming or outgoing

Four weeks prior to these meetings each business area is required to produce a safety report which allow for the meetings to be kept concise and on track.

Three weeks prior to these meetings an agenda is circulated along with any reading material. This process allows for the meetings to be more solutions focused and for managing achievements within allocated timeframes.

Facilities OHS Committees meet eight times per year and are attended by local elected representatives and the Facilities Managers. Originally they were only meeting four times a year but the increased frequency allows them to achieve more, maintain their focus and stay on top of any issues. The minutes from the Facilities OHS Committees are provided to the State OHS Committees.

## Initiatives:

The Company makes it a point to always provide feedback to the Facilities OHS Committees and to not just take a 'big stick' approach. Positive feedback creates an opportunity to improve. Positive initiatives are praised and rewarded with being asked to attend and/or present at the State OHS Committee.

Recently one facility committee implemented a hazard warning system for delivery sites that included photographs of the delivery sites that were considered to have a higher level of risk attached to them than normal. The photographs removed any uncertainty about what to expect when the driver arrives at those particular sites.

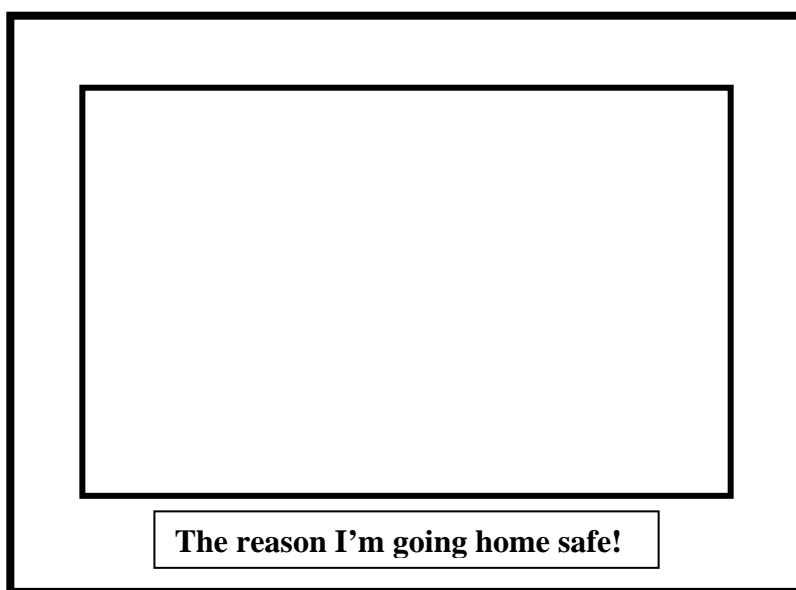
Other safety initiatives include refresher training for drivers every two (2) years which includes a ½ day practical and a ½ day technical training.

All drivers are supplied with:

- Incident Report Forms
- Hazard Report Forms
- Driver Report Forms

Significant issues are addressed immediately with tool box talks being held on every shift in every facility. Information is delivered both verbally and in writing as required however is dependant on the urgency of the issue.

Recently the company gave each driver a magnetic picture frame and asked each driver to bring in a photograph of their reason for wanting to go home safe after every shift.



### **Barriers/gaps:**

This Company stated that some of the major barriers to safety in the transport industry are:

- Poor literacy levels in both writing skills and computer skills
- An aging workforce and demand on employees
- Job diversity and skill set.
- Health related matters physical and psychological
- Rotational shift work
- Limited redeployment opportunities for individuals with limited transferable skills internal and external to the organisation.

**Additional comments:**

This Company did not identify any issues/concerns under this heading.

# Summary of conversation - 7

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor

State Manager

Senior SHE Coordinator

## Company profile:

A National concrete company with State based operations with 42 plants in SEQ.

## Safety structure:

The company has a number of safety meetings as follows:

Safety Meetings	Frequency	Highest Level of Management in Attendance
Site	bi-monthly	State Manager
Area	monthly	State Manager
Divisional	monthly	General Manager
National	quarterly	CEO
Tool box	monthly	Site Managers

Tool box meetings are held as needed or whenever the opportunity arises such as bad weather or low work.

This Company has placed a strong focus on the importance of reporting and the education that comes from it. They stated that it has been difficult to achieve the trust and respect necessary to have a high level of reporting in this area but they are starting to see significant improvements.

The company has zero tolerance of serious issues where the driver has been negligent in safety and believe that it is necessary to eliminate any fault of the company before taking action. For this reason whenever there is any investigation required the first point of call is to look at the company.

## Initiatives:

Drivers have the right to say no if they feel they are at risk and the company will investigate the concern. Success depends on immediate action by the company when a driver reports an issue on another site.

Prior to the commencement of any project the company holds a pre-start safety meeting and if the project is large then they have regular meetings throughout the duration of the work.

The company has stepped away from using generic safety checklists and has developed a number of job specific checklists with a direct link to the size of the job. They have also produced a DVD about serious injuries from internal employees who talks about being injured on the job early in his working life and the long term impact that it has had in an attempt to educate the aging workforce that believes that nothing will happen with them.

### **Barriers/gaps:**

The Company stated that one of the barriers to safety that they constantly experience is the use of sub-contractors however, they have seen some level of improvement over the past two (2) years and they now have a ninety per cent attendance rate of sub-contractors at their internal safety meetings.

They identified another barrier that they have experienced has been that the setting of such a high level of safety internally can cause problems when the drivers have to go onto other sites where the safety standards may not meet their company standards. The company has developed a site delivery brochure that can be given to the manager of that site that explains the safety guidelines of the company that the driver must comply with.

### **Additional comments:**

They plan their health & safety under a '*Wholesome Banner*' and believe that the only way to stay on top of safety is to:

- take a proactive approach
- encourage the reporting of near misses and minor incidents
- have safety as the primary topic of any meeting
- lead by example

The company stated that "*The best way to communicate important messages to their drivers is sharp, short and direct to the point.*"

# Summary of conversation - 8

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor  
Cathie Grainger – TSG Senior Project Officer  
State Manager – Qld  
Queensland Risk Manager  
Safety & Risk Co-Ordinator,  
2 Business Managers

## Company profile:

This is the Contract Management division of a major national company. They have an overarching corporate Safety Management System however each division is required to implement their own internal safety management system.

## Safety structure:

In 2008 the company introduced an over arching umbrella on a national level which is primarily designed around national safety audits which are carried out monthly on all divisions. Following the national audits an OHS score card is produced and circulated to all divisions ranking all areas of the business according to their safety performance. These rankings are based on the following management tools:

- safe driving plan audits
- hazard audits
- run sheet audits
- fatigue audits
- use of corrective action reports (must show opening and closing CAR's)
- near miss reporting
- incident reports on time (must be in within 24 hours of incident occurring)
- safety committee meetings & tool box talks (must be at least one per month)
- emergency evacuation drills

All sites have an active safety committee and any site that is too small for its own committee has a minimum of two trained representatives, one management and one employee, these sites must hold toolbox talks and minute them as for safety committee meetings. Where necessary one safety management system will cover both the manufacturing and transport operations.

They have found that in order to improve safety it is necessary to have a two tiered approach which is directed at both compliance and cultural/behaviour change.

The company has implemented monthly audits with quarterly cross over audits. They have found that having a different set of eyes looking at the sites has been found to be extremely successful.

## Initiatives:

This Company believes that the length of induction can be one of the most important aspects of good safety management. In this company the length of the induction is based on both management and driver assessment of readiness and they have found that this support/buddy system creates an immediate element of trust.

In October 2008 the company achieved a major cultural change when they eliminated the use of dogs from the business. During that process they discovered that cultural change comes from the workplace gaining ownership and embracing the change. ***“Inclusion of the workers in the decision making process achieves the desired change.”***

Contractors are treated no differently to employees of the business when it comes to safety and have to comply with the same level of reporting, accountability and compliance. Sub-contractors have to provide six months worth of maintenance records for their vehicle(s) prior to commencement.

The Company has introduced a ‘*reward and recognition*’ system for safety in the workplace which includes certificates, vouchers and awards.

## Barriers/gaps:

They believe that a huge gap exists in applying the safety principals at a site level and getting commitment from the employees.

The Company stated that queuing is a major problem for fatigue in the industry and pick-up and delivery times is a significant factor. However, they believe that ***“it is going to take a collective approach from industry to tackle this problem”***. They also stated that ***“there is no grey area when it comes to safety”*** and ***“corporate egos need to be parked when it comes to improving safety in the industry as a whole”***.

This Company believes that in general the supply chain outside of the major players have little or no knowledge of the Chain of Responsibility Legislation (COR) and their obligations. As a result they have now started including managers from the supply chain (their customers) to attend any internal COR training that is being delivered to their own drivers.

The Company stated that most of the work of a truck driver is carried out on external sites and one of the major problems is the lack of safety on smaller sites. They believe that this can be due to a number of factors including but not limited to a lack of knowledge and/or understanding of the COR legislation and the obligations that it places on them.

## Additional comments:

This company stated they have as customers a number of Australian major companies who are leaders in the COR process and compliance and mentioned that having a customer working on the same safety principals is an importance key to safety management.

The Company also stated that they have spent a great deal of time and energy in giving the drivers the skills to recognise safety issues and/or concerns.

The company stated ***“You can have all the safety processes in the world but the real key to safety is how the drivers apply them”***.

They also believe that any messages from WHSQ should be concise and kept to the very basics of what is needed to comply with safety.

This company is very keen on having a presentation from a ‘champion/employee’ regarding the impact of an injury if and when WHSQ can find one.

# Summary of conversation - 9

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor  
Risk & Compliance Officer (WHSO)

## Company profile:

Regional site of a multi-group national employer with a core business of heavy freight both locally and interstate.

## Safety structure:

The site has an active safety committee consisting of six members with three management representatives and three employee representatives. It meets monthly however it also has the ability to meet on a needs basis and the highest level of management in attendance is the Acting Branch Manager.

They hold tool box talks fortnightly but also call them on a needs basis whenever they receive an internal safety alert or an incident occurs.

All of the groups within the company must provide a checklist/report card to the national office on a monthly basis however there is no response or feed back from the corporate office unless there is a problem identified.

The Regional Manager responsible for this site came from the floor and is extremely safety conscious.

## Initiatives:

At this site the role of WHSO, Rehabilitation and Maintenance is combined.

This company believes that there is a totally different perspective about safety between employees and management and that the best way to improve safety in the workplace is to involve the workers in the decision making.

## Barriers/gaps:

Some of the barriers that they are experiencing are:

- failure to report near misses
- aging workforce and difficulty in recruiting young workers into the industry
- not knowing what to expect at contract sites
- lack of 'practical' hands on assessment to ensure competency following online training

WHSO's have the knowledge and the training but they are not the decision makers and that can be very frustrating.

The Company also believes that another barrier is that safety is costly and many of employers are concerned that if they push the issue of safety then they won't get the work.

## **Additional comments:**

The company identified that the biggest issue for Health & Safety in this site is manual handling tasks and the second is working with forklifts.

This company believes that sales people should be forced to ensure that the site is safe but they don't always do that.

The company stated that *“The key to making the workplace safer is encouraging the reporting of near misses, that's where we can make a difference”*.

# Summary of conversation - 10

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor  
Transport Projects Manager

## Company profile:

This Company is major transport company located in a regional area and has six divisions.

## Safety structure:

The Company employs a Safety Representative in each of the six divisions, three Safety Officers and two Safety Managers. All meetings start with safety and a safety topic is chosen to be discussed at the tool box talk which is held on a weekly basis.

Company regulations must be followed at all times on all sites. Drivers are instructed to assess the situation at external sites and report it if it is unsafe. The Company will send someone else out to assess the situation.

Contractors must go through the internal induction process before they get any work.

## Initiatives:

Safety in the workshop area is crucial and is seen as a prestige area of work by the employees, therefore the drivers want to be there. On that basis the company has implemented a system that if a worker isn't 'up on safety' then they get kicked out of the workshop area.

Employees are encouraged to speak up about anything that is unsafe but they are told don't just report it come up with a solution and believe that every idea is worth looking.

This Company tried hanging safety alert signage upside down and people identified with it on mass – it seemed to get everyone's attention. The Company stated "*Everybody seems to be looking at and reporting on safety so we must be doing something right*".

## Barriers/gaps:

The Company stated that one barrier to safety that they are experiencing is that new developments with smaller blocks are creating a greater risk for companies that have to deliver there. They stated that one issue in particular was working around powerlines and that underground cables do make a difference but it is still very difficult and they are not the only solution to reducing the risks.

They identified that another barrier is that it is difficult to educate older workers to adapt to new safer ways of doing the work. They stated that the older workers do not adapt or make changes very easily. They are considering the introduction of a mentoring system to try to encourage the older workers to work safer and teach the younger workers.

## Comments:

This Company stated that they have a very disciplinary focus on workplace health and safety and believes that drivers should be fined for failing to work safely. They stated that *“If drivers thought that they risked fines or even losing their house then they would take safety more seriously and work safer”* and *“Drivers have the responsibility for safety therefore they should be liable.”*

The Company also stated that *“There is no respect for truckies, professional drivers drive the equivalent of 10 years of driving every year (based on the average person driving 20,000 km/yr)”*.

They went on to say that one of the major problems is that there is a lack of education and awareness to the general public on issues such as:

- breaking distances
- sharing the road with heavy vehicles

They also believe that education is the key however the material needs to be:

- relevant
- important
- exciting new delivery methods
- adapted to suit different levels of numeracy

# Summary of conversation - 11

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor

Managing Director

WHSO

Compliance Officer

Administration Support

## Company profile:

This major transport company is based in a regional area.

## Safety structure:

The company has a safety committee and the Director is the highest level of management to sit on that committee. All of the representatives are volunteers as the company believes that people who want to be there are more committed and more informed about current safety issues.

This Company stated that they have a firm belief that it is counter productive to put workers at risk.

They also stated that safety is a huge cost to the company. They do not have a separate safety budget it is incorporated into every aspect of the running costs.

## Initiatives:

This company believes that communication is the key to safety and that their drivers are encouraged to speak up about safety issues. They stated that *“When the drivers are happy they are productive”*.

In their business safety is negotiated into the terms of the contract with any Contractor and they have to comply with those terms. They stated that *“It is a way of controlling the contractor without the contractor knowing that they are being controlled”*.

## Barriers/gaps:

The company representatives stated that they believe that there is a gap in information for companies that are taking the leap in growth from a small company to a medium sized business. They believe that if the government is serious about improving safety in the industry then they should provide assistance to these employers because:

- when they're taking that leap they're not there yet but they are ready and it is all a bit overwhelming for them as they have new legislation to deal with and not enough experience; and
- in their experience contractors with multiple vehicles (5-25) don't seem to care as much about safety and maintenance.

The company representatives stated that literacy didn't seem to be a problem however communication with the *'older blokes'* can be difficult because no one wants to change or be told what to do. However they went on to say that they have found that once the older workers do adopt an improved safety practice they seem to embrace it wholeheartedly.

This company finds that younger drivers seem to adjust to new safety strategies easier when they first come in but seem to pick up bad habits from the other workers when they get out in the depot.

## Additional comments:

This Company believes that the introduction of Fatigue Management is the biggest achievement in the improvement of health & safety in the transport industry so far. The forced rest periods encourage drivers to show up for work fit for duty – not tired, not sick.

This company believes that the Chain of Responsibility legislation has been good but said that it hasn't gone far enough. However they have noticed a shift in safety between suppliers and customers and said that *“now when they ring to say that a driver is running late there is no more screaming”* and that *“there seems to be a level of acceptance of the situation”*.

This company believes that most employers want to do the right thing but there is a lack of information out there. They stated that WHSQ tells them what they have to do BUT not how to do it.

This company believes that there should be a manual created (similar to the Food Standards Manual) which includes 'principals' that tell people what they need to do to comply with WHS in their business.

This company says that they do everything that they can to combat fatigue and that many of their drivers just do the wrong thing and then sit back and wait to sue the company. The company says that they:

- buy safer trucks
- train the employees
- implement every safety concept
- mentor new drivers
- conduct safety inductions on all new sites

They believe that the current system is unbalanced and that the Employee has to have some responsibility for not complying.

This company believes that WHSQ should recruit inspectors with industry experience because they believe that most of the inspectors are flying blind. They also say that it doesn't take employers long to realise that the inspector doesn't have any knowledge of the industry.

This company also stated that driver trainers are not industry based as they are all either ex-cops or ex-army and have no knowledge of the transport industry. They said that the government should tap into the older experienced drivers for these roles – *“let's use the experience out there”*.

This Company believes that Workplace Health and Safety in Queensland:

- is haphazard
- doesn't offer any guidance material
- gives no contact or help until an incident happens
- is confusing and difficult to understand

On this basis they have asked the question *“If this is so important why is it so haphazard?”* They believe that WHSQ should engage with companies more especially after audits and/or blitzes.

# Summary of conversation - 12

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor

Victoria Thompson – Director Industry Strategy

General Manager

Operations Manager

## Company profile:

A large regionally based Transport Company whose core business is the transportation of Dangerous Goods in the mining industry.

## Safety structure:

This Company has a five year ‘*Goal Zero*’ plan aimed at zero injuries and zero fatalities. Earlier this year the Executive met with all senior level management together for three days to identify ‘*Where to from here?*’. They looked at the following four areas:

- Compliance
- Customers
- Environment
- Safety

They identified the top 100 initiatives and then prioritised them and included timelines.

The company has monthly tool box talks with a safety focus and has recently introduced a ‘*Reward & Recognition*’ program at each of those tool box meetings.

## Initiatives:

The Company has recently installed an on-board computer system in every truck at a cost of \$2,500 per vehicle. All paperwork is now on these computers and all drivers have their own login identification. The system requires a driver to log in and review any information in relation to safety at that particular delivery site prior to attendance at that site.

Sub-contractors and employees have the same obligations in this company when it comes to safety.

Prior to the monthly tool box meetings two employees from each site are asked to carry out a safety audit. As a result of those safety audits nominations are put up at the tool box talk and an employee at each site is recognised and rewarded for their safety.

The Company has also introduced an annual award to allow for peer recognition of an individual that has ‘*stood out in safety*’ throughout the year.

## Barriers/gaps:

This company stated that a major barrier to improving health and safety is the age of the drivers in the industry including:

- “young drivers seem to want to argue the point – they feel that they can get another job whereas older drivers think about things in a more practical sense”
- “middle management is difficult to change due to the fact that in most cases they are ex drivers and are set in their ways”

This company also believes that companies with a large sub-contractor base are a real problem when dealing with safety. They stated that they won't get picked up in the statistics and are finding gaps in the current systems.

### **Additional comments:**

The Company stated that working in the mining industry and the strict compliance associated with that has assisted them in significantly reducing injuries/incidents in the transport area. They believe that safety is easier in this industry due to the fact that customers are not looking for the cheapest cost; they are more focused on the highest level of compliance and are prepared to pay for it.

They stated that "*Consultation is the key to good safety management*" and stated that they have a firm belief that it is important to lead by example which requires an active participation by management in safety.

This Company stated that "*There should be a compulsory element of safety in contract procurement.*"

They also stated that there needs to be some sort of incentive program from either the State or Federal governments to encourage employers to spend more than the minimum requirement on safety.

# Summary of conversation - 13

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor  
Cathie Grainger – TSG Senior Project Officer  
National Safety & Compliance Officer

## Company profile:

A national transport company in long distance heavy freight transport with branches located in each state.

## Safety structure:

Every branch has a quarterly safety meeting and each meeting has the same standing agenda. Issues reported on at the meeting are on the basis of – ‘no name, no blame’ and are used for the sharing of information and discussion on ideas for improvement.

Each branch also has a quarterly review meeting and wherever possible these two meetings are held one right after the other with safety is the first item on the agenda for review.

A major incident in this company is classed as any incident with a cost in excess of \$2,500 or any lost time injury (LTI). All major incidents are fully investigated and reported on in both the quarterly safety and branch review meetings.

With the exception of one branch the company generally only holds tool box talks on an as required basis. Whenever an issue surfaces or a safety alert in relation to an incident or a near miss is produced they immediately schedule a tool box talk for every shift in every branch.

There is currently a high level of debate among the senior management of the company as to the effectiveness of regularly scheduled tool box talks as apposed to an as required basis. Some of the arguments are as follows:

- |                           |                         |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| • As Necessary            | • Regularly Scheduled   |
| higher level of interest  | lower level of interest |
| something new             | boring                  |
| what’s happened and where | here we go again        |

## Initiatives:

All branches are now conducting risk assessments in line with BlueScope Steel’s initiative of “*Take 2 for Safety*” – *take two minutes to assess the safety and ask yourself - What’s different today?*”

This company now has their own nationally accredited training program for drivers and all new employees spend two weeks in a classroom before they can get behind the wheel of a truck.

## Barriers/gaps:

This company believes that some of the barriers to health and safety are:

- lack of educational tools/information
- no one takes responsibility/ownership of safety
- it’s costly therefore companies are sometimes limited to the bare minimum/requirements

They also believe that a gap exists in getting information from the Government. They stated that when they ring up with an issue or a question they can’t get any help.

## **Additional comments:**

This company stated that they don't believe that literacy is as big of a problem in the industry as it used to be. They currently have seven drivers with known literacy problems out of 50 long distance drives.

They did state that *"It is important to simplify the message(s) and to identify the audience"*. They believe that the average level of education among drivers in the industry is Grade 10.

They also stated that they believe all material should be produced in A4 size as it makes it affordable to print and accessible to drivers at home.

# Summary of conversation - 14

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor

State Transport Manager

## Company profile:

A National Company with multiple operations in every State. They are a diverse business with interests in asphalt, concrete, quarries and transport. Transport is by far the largest arm of the business as it interacts with all other areas.

## Safety structure:

This company is accredited under the National Heavy Vehicle Scheme in Mass, Maintenance and Fatigue. They stated that their managers find this very useful as a benchmark for implementing safety.

They hold tool box talks in every depot on a monthly basis or as required. The Field Supervisor always attends these meetings. The Operations Managers attend whenever possible and the General Manager attends at least one meeting per year in every depot.

Any lost time injury (LTI), accident or major incident results in an urgent teleconference and leads to a National discussion and decision on what to do next.

The National approach to safety is discipline with varying degrees of safety breaches attracting varying levels of discipline. Safety breaches are defined as minor, intermediate or major with a major breach attracting a warning letter.

## Initiatives:

Different elements of safety are attached to management's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which are cascaded down throughout the different levels of management.

This company recently held a safety training seminar which included everyone in their supply chain.

The company has also recently introduced a preventative maintenance system for their entire fleet of vehicles. The system automatically schedules a vehicle for maintenance based on both time and kilometres.

Drivers also have 'Fault Request Forms' in every vehicle which can identify unscheduled maintenance. The mechanics are now rostered to work from 3:00pm to midnight to enable work to be carried out immediately as *"trucks don't make money when they're off the road"*.

Every truck has been fitted with a Mobile Data Terminal (MDT). When the driver logs on to the system they are immediately asked the following two questions:

- Are you fit for duty?
- Have you completed your pre-start checks?

The MDT's also have an automated fatigue break alert system which gives the driver a 30 minute warning, a 15 minute warning and if the driver fails to stop and take the required break it automatically sends an SMS back to central office and the driver is disciplined for breaching fatigue legislation.

The company stated that when it comes to safety contractors, both permanent and casual are treated the same as a company driver. The company has employed a full-time compliance officer to look

after their contractors however they apply the same safety management system and the same discipline.

Every contractor is required to provide a copy of a Department of Transport and Main Roads vehicle inspection annually and MDT's are fitted into all of their vehicles.

If a driver feels unsafe at a worksite then they are encouraged to call it into base and a Field Officer will visit the site to carry out a risk assessment.

### **Barriers/gaps:**

This company believes that the biggest barrier to improving safety in the industry is the aging workforce as older workers are more difficult to change.

### **Additional comments:**

This company stated that *"It is a pain not to have good safety because of the additional work that it places on management"*.

# Summary of conversation - 15

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor

State Manager – Queensland

Transport Manager - Queensland

## Company profile:

This company provides transport of refrigerated goods throughout Queensland and New South Wales.

## Safety structure:

Every six weeks the company holds a National Safety meeting which is attended by the National Manager, CEO and the State Managers. Any Supervisor that has had an incident in their depot has to report by teleconference to that meeting on what happened and what follow up measures have been taken.

The company believes that the '*threat*' of having to report and be questioned by Senior Management encourages their Supervisors to be more safety conscious.

Incidents are reported nationally within 24 hours and the follow up is determined by the seriousness of the incident.

Tool box talks are held in the depots on an as needed basis and on some occasions have held more than one meeting in the same week. The company believes that the employees were becoming very complacent and that now they have a higher level of interest when one is called.

This company does not have a separate safety budget and has a policy that there is always money for safety.

## Initiatives:

This company has employed a driver trainer who is responsible for travelling to all customer sites with the drivers. This person has created a data base of all pick and delivery sites containing information such as:

- identified potential hazards
- difficulties in relation to entry/exit gates
- available equipment

The company has also implemented their own control for vehicle immobilisation to eliminate the risk of a truck pulling away from the dock before the forklift driver is finished loading the trailer.

The company purchased a number of pad locks with long shanks that are placed over the hydraulic hoses and the key is given to the forklift driver while the trailer is at the dock.

## Barriers/gaps:

The company believes that it is difficult to change the safety behaviours of the older drivers and that there is a '*top this tale*' attitude which is problematic and that it is not uncommon for drivers to discuss their injuries as '*battle scars*' from working a lifetime in the industry.

This company believes that there is a lack of appropriately targeted information for drivers. They stated that whenever there is new information made available consideration of the targeted audience needs to be given.

## **Additional comments:**

This company stated that they believe that there is a fundamental flaw in the concept of ‘timeslots’ for loading and unloading. They stated that all timeslots are the same duration and that there has been no consideration given to the vehicle or trailer size or the load type.

This company also stated that *“An increase in the number of change over stations at appropriate places would help improve the health of line-haul drivers by having drivers home every night”*.

The company has recently introduced work practices which enable them to have the majority of their drivers at home every night. They stated that since the introduction of this new system they have seen a notable improvement in driver’s health and a measurable reduction in sick leave.

# Summary of conversation - 16

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor  
Cathie Grainger – TSG Senior Project Officer  
Director  
Risk & Compliance Officer

## Company profile:

A state based company that hauls heavy freight both locally and interstate.

## Safety structure:

The company stated that over the last three years they have experienced a huge cultural change in the way the company deals with safety.

All meetings start with a discussion about safety including the:

- monthly managers' meeting
- monthly operations managers meetings
- monthly financial meetings

The site safety committee meets on a monthly basis and is attended by the Director, the WHSO and three volunteer employee representatives. Managers attend the meetings as invited guests on a scheduled rotational basis.

The committee is solution focused and has a charter which clearly states the timing of the meetings and defines a quorum as a majority of employee representatives. There is no voting but majority support for any issue creates a recommendation that is referred to management for the final sign off.

Frequency of the tool box meetings is determined at the site level however there is a minimum requirement of at least one per month.

## Initiatives:

This company stated that they have provided all of their drivers with a risk assessment booklet containing a number of checklists. In the booklet identified risks are colour coded as follows:

- Green and/or yellow                      make sure it's on the agenda for the next safety committee meeting
- Red and/or orange                         don't wait for the next meeting, immediate action is required

This company stated that *"The way to improve safety in the industry is by bringing the message to the workers in the format necessary for them to understand it."* Recently this company convinced all of their employees that they do have the necessary skills to do a risk assessment because in simple terms they do one every time that they cross the road.

In this company contractors are treated the same as employees when it comes to safety however additional measures are in place for pre-approval of all subcontractors and escort drivers. The pre-employment checklist includes:

- licences
- previous six month driving record
- previous six months of vehicle maintenance records
- fatigue management declaration on:
  - tracking

- monitoring
  - compliance
- site induction

### **Barriers/gaps:**

The company believes that owner operators are one of the biggest barriers to lifting safety across the industry because they may be good at driving but they have limited knowledge when it comes to costing the work.

### **Additional comments:**

This company believes that there are a number of inconsistencies in the reporting standards across the industry, particularly in the definitions being used to record Lost Time Injuries (LTI) and LTI frequency rates. They stated that people don't seem to be telling it like it is because they are able to find loopholes in the definitions that they use and are hiding the truth.

The company suggested that WHSQ should publish guidelines and/or definitions to assist employers to all work on the same playing field.

This company stated that *"The industry is desperately in need of a traineeship program."*

The company also stated that *"All road users would be safer if general licensing included education in relation to sharing the roads with heavy vehicles"*.

# Summary of conversation - 17

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor

Operations Manager – Queensland

OHS&E Advisor - Queensland

## Company profile:

A National Transport Company operating in every State and Territory with a core business of heavy freight haulage both locally and interstate.

At the time of the interview this particular company had recorded 912 days without any Lost Time Injuries (LTI).

## Safety structure:

This company has numerous safety committees at various levels of the business.

- Executive Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Committee - meets on a monthly basis and minutes are recorded and distributed to the other committees.
- National OHS Committee - meets on a monthly basis, records the minutes and sets the topic of safety for the tool box talks.
- Site Safety Committee - meets monthly, consists of the State Manager and a number of elected workers. This meeting is attended by the General Manager whenever he is in town and the minutes are recorded and sent to the National OHS Committee
- Tool box talks – held monthly or an extra ordinary meeting can be called as required. No minutes are taken however, attendance is recorded.

A risk assessment is carried out on all new customer sites prior to the commencement of any work and on an adhoc basis as continuous follow up. This company conducts a site induction for every delivery point and has a National sub-contractor induction handbook.

All drivers have a hazard identification report in their vehicle and are encouraged to call in if they have any doubts or concerns about the safety of any external site. The company stated that they follow up on every report/concern that is raised in relation to an external site.

This company is confident that drivers are comfortable raising concerns about safety and are reporting near misses.

## Initiatives:

This company has implemented a '*national safety walk process*'. Everyone, including top level management does the walk to look for safety issues. The policy is that names are not relevant unless an incident of a serious nature is identified and then the necessary steps are taken to ensure that the particular employee is aware of the proper safe operating procedures. If the incident is serious enough or the person is a repeat offender then disciplinary measures are taken.

The company stated that while there aren't any employee Key Performance Indicators (KPI) linked to safety all levels of management have at least one KPI linked to safety.

All Safe Operating Procedures (SOP) have checklists and managers are expected to do a competency checklist every week. Training is provided on every SOP at least every 12 months or if an incident occurs.

Any site can recommend a variation to an existing SOP through the National OHS Committee for consideration and then through extensive consultation in every state.

An increased awareness and education process has been introduced for injured employees. This process allows for a sharing of information between the employee and management and increases a feeling of value during rehabilitation.

### **Barriers/gaps:**

This company did not identify any barriers or gaps.

### **Additional comments:**

This company believes that everyone should have to get into a truck before they get their drivers licence. *“Actually looking in the mirror and seeing the distance to the back of the vehicle would provide a better understanding of heavy vehicles”.*

This company also believes that the safety initiatives that have been introduced into the transport industry over the past few years will show a decrease in musculoskeletal injury rates in the future.

This company stated that any information that is produced should be designed with truck drivers in mind. The messages should be short and sharp with as few words as possible with pictures for a visual impact.

The company also stated that safety needs to have a solution focus and that employers need to recognise that valued input and ownership is a huge issue for employees.

# Summary of conversation - 18

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor

State OHS Manager

## Company profile:

A national company with multiple sites throughout Queensland. This company is involved in local pick up and delivery as well as long distance freight movement.

## Safety structure:

Although the company has a National Plan with a national focus on safety, each state manages their safety autonomously. The State based application is in recognition of the different cultures that exist in each State.

The company states that they have high level of commitment health and safety which is evidenced by the fact that they hold fortnightly national teleconference and have an annual national two day safety conference.

The Safety Committee meets monthly and is attended by the Queensland Director, the AM and PM Site Managers and four employee representatives. The employee representatives are provided with internal training in the areas of risk assessments, hazard identification and effective consultation. They are given the message that *“they are not just another employee they are part of the safety team”*.

Tool box talks are held at the area level as required however there is an operations meeting held at the beginning of each shift and employees are encouraged to raise any emerging safety issues or concerns then.

The company also conducts safety inspections at every site once a month.

## Initiatives:

The company stated that their Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Manager works very closely with the Compliance Managers from all of their customers and contracting companies.

This company has a strict drug and alcohol policy which includes random testing for everyone on site. All of the names of their employees and the contracting companies that they use are stored in the data base and can be randomly selected at any time. Whenever the name of a contracting company comes up during a random drug test, whatever driver(s) happens to be on site from that particular company is tested.

## Barriers/gaps:

This company believes that one of the barriers to improving safety in the industry is the fact that people are becoming very complacent when they hear safety – again!

## Additional comments:

This company stated that employers are starting to notice a change in the way that WHSQ interacts with them however they did not go into any detail on this statement.

# Summary of conversation - 19

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor  
Cathie Grainger – TSG Senior Project Officer  
Safety Manager Asia Pacific  
Compliance Manager Qld  
Safety Systems Manager

## Company profile:

This is a national company with multiple sites throughout Queensland. The company is self insured under Comcare however they deal with many customers and contractors in Queensland that are in the state system.

## Safety structure:

This company believes that safety needs to be driven from the top down and therefore all meetings from Senior Management down start with safety as the first agenda item.

The company has introduced the concept of 'Fresh Eyes' into their managers meetings so that different people have a look at safety in each depot. They believe that people stop seeing things when they see them everyday. The fortnightly meetings are now held at alternating sites so that there can be a fresh look at safety, a sharing of ideas and initiatives and are focused on positive feedback. They also hold these meetings at customer sites and the WHSO and/or Safety Manager from that site are actively involved.

All employees in this company are encouraged to take Hazard Identification Forms (HIF) to all sites. This company insists that supervisors and managers respond quickly to any issues or concerns that are raised through the use of these forms to ensure that drivers are confident in using them.

## Initiatives:

Business Unit Safety Managers are closely aligned with the safety managers of their customers in the supply chain. One of the safety audit questions asked of all managers is *“Are you on your customer’s safety committee?”*

This company has introduced 'Contractor Days' to provide free training in relation to hazard identification, chain of responsibility and safety management for any contractor that works for them and say that so far the level of involvement has been impressive.

This company erected a photo wall in each of its depots and asked all employees to bring in a photo of “The reason I go home”. They found that once the photos started coming in it created an element of pride amongst the workers and the pictures included wives, children, pets, boats, cars, motorcycles etc.

There are no licensing requirements for the use of electric pallet jacks so the company has introduced a Competency Card for all operators on their sites which is valid for a period of 12 months. They advised that as a result they have seen a notable reduction in the number of accidents/incidents.

The company said that “There is a huge difference between being licensed and being competent.” and on that basis have now rolled out a similar Competency Card scheme to forklift drivers and heavy vehicle drivers.

This company has implemented a number of low cost safety solutions to their business over the years to address immediate hazards such as:

- **Loading Platform** – a steel frame loading platform that was used to safely load a container prior to it being placed on the floor.
- **Safety Cuffs/Chains** – metal cuffs on a short chain that can be clipped onto the outside of container doors prior to opening which allow a driver to safely open the doors to check and see if the load has moved during transportation.
- **Mobile Flashing Unit (MFU)** – a mobile unit that any employee working in the vicinity of a forklift must have within a defined range of them at all times to alert a forklift driver that there is a person/pedestrian in the area.
- **Competency Cards** – an internal card provided to drivers and operators which is renewed every 12 months.

### **Barriers/gaps:**

This company stated that long term operators resist change and that the message '*change is important, necessary and beneficial*' needs to be reinforced in the industry.

This company believes that the lack of time is a huge barrier and described managers in the transport industry as being '*time poor*'.

This company also stated that the lack of control over health and safety in the supply chain is a major problem.

### **Additional comments:**

The company stated that they have found the Comcare reporting requirements to be much more thorough than any of the state-based ones and that through this process the reporting of near misses has improved significantly. They stated that they believe that the increased reporting of near misses has shown a decrease in the severity of injuries/incidents more so than any notable decrease in the frequency of them.

This company believes that getting the message about safety to the people who influence the industry and/or operators such as suppliers, families and friends will achieve better results. They stated that "*Building a pool of real stories from real people from the shop floor would be powerful messages.*"

This company also stated that they believe that the Chain of Responsibility legislation is having a great benefit in improving safety in the transport industry.

# Summary of conversation - 20

## Attendance:

Karen Bow – TSG Principal Advisor

Cathie Grainger – TSG Senior Project Officer

Manager Health and Safety and Environmental Waste Management

## Company profile:

A national company based in Queensland with a number of depots in Brisbane and regional areas. The business is involved in service, mining and construction and has heavy vehicle transport involved in all areas.

## Safety structure:

Queensland has Workplace Health and Safety Officers (WHSO) and therefore do not always have safety committee in every depot however approximately sixty per cent of their sites have committees.

The Company employs two WHSOs in advisory roles in Queensland. One responsible for the area north of the Brisbane river and one responsible for the area south of the river.

The company holds a weekly telephone hook-up every Monday at 11:00am to report on safety matters including:

- employee raised issues/concerns
- incidents/accidents
- near hits/misses
- what measures have been put in place to address all of the above

Tool box talks are held on a fortnightly basis however some of the smaller sites hold them on a monthly basis. The Divisional Manager attends the tool box talks whenever possible however the Regional Manager is always in attendance.

## Initiatives:

The company stated that they have employed a Driver Trainer Assessor who is now responsible for all of their in-cab driver assessments.

The company stated that they have recently introduced a system of pre-loading the trailers the night before in an attempt to reduce the number of musculoskeletal injuries that seem to occur early in the mornings particularly in the colder months.

The company have recently introduced an 'induction card' that is current for a period of 12 months and is currently in the process of re-inducting all of their contractors.

The company stated that they have a number of recordable Key Performance Indicators (KPI) directly connected to safety in the areas of:

- lost time injuries (LTI)
- medically treated injuries (MTI)
- restricted work injuries (RWI)

## **Barriers/gaps:**

The company believes that the biggest barrier to improving safety in the transport industry is the entrenched cultures and the drivers' attitude of *"We've done it this way for a long time so why do we have to change now?"*

The company believes that one of the barriers that they have faced in the past was the use of inconsistent safety management systems in the different States and regions. They stated that they have now changed to an industry based management of safety.

## **Additional comments:**

The company stated that *"No blame reporting encourages a high level of reporting and that if they know what is going on then we can address the problem"*.

The company stated that through this process they have identified plant damage as the most serious/frequent incident in their company and the introduction of recurring inductions is designed to specifically address this problem.

The company also stated that *"The method of delivery of a new idea is crucial"* and that *"How an idea is delivered is the most important aspect of change management."*

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