Lifting the OHS standard at Growthbuilt

Weighing in on major changes to the HVNL  
The makings of great safety leadership  
Best practice lessons in incident investigation
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Dying to make a living: One’s ability to recover from fatigue depends largely on resilience, which is a skill set that must be built before it is actually required, writes Phil La Duke

Weighing in on major changes to the HVNL: all parties are in the driver’s seat: A risk-based approach to compliance under new Heavy Vehicle National Laws will benefit from the support and attention of OHS professionals, according to Herbert Smith Freehills

Taking the safety pulse of Queensland: Australia’s OHS regulators play a fundamental role in improving health and safety outcomes, and Queensland’s Simon Blackwood discusses the evolving role of the regulator, priorities in compliance and enforcement, and the hallmarks of organisations with good OHS

Staying ahead of the OHS learning curve: There are a number of significant business, demographic and technological changes impacting OHS training and education, and OHS professionals and their organisations need to keep abreast of these trends

The makings of great safety leadership: Phil Walton, HSE director – Australia, for Savanna Energy Services Corp, explores the shortcomings of safety leadership programs and what OHS professionals can do to build effective safety leadership capability

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Lifting the OHS standard at Growthbuilt
Her 2 construction company Growthbuilt has taken a holistic approach to improving OHS standards, and its HSE leader Josh Maxwell discusses this process and how he drives OHS outcomes at every level of operations
The evolution of OHS, one step change at a time

It is important for OHS professionals to be clear on where and how they contribute to making a positive difference, rather than serving as custodians of the status quo, writes Patrick Murphy.

Working to improve workplace health and safety is no easy task. There are many layers and dimensions that we must consider and work through in enabling organisations to improve OHS outcomes across Australia.

Often, our work results in interventions, programs or initiatives, which usually require changes to systems, plant, processes or behaviours. Seldom do we ascertain the degree of effectiveness of the programs or interventions that we have sought to orchestrate and implement. The world moves at a faster pace and taking the time to understand the success of our work rarely presents itself. This in turn means we relinquish the opportunity to learn and reflect on what could have been done differently to further improve outcomes.

As a result of being time-poor and resource-constrained, it is often difficult to deeply challenge ourselves and our organisations in a meaningful way. How often do we make and take the time to deliberate on questions such as “Where are we going?”, “Why are we where we are?”, “What do I and the team need to do differently?” and “How does the work I do truly enable the business?”.

As a profession, we can at times be guilty of feeling like we need to have the answer, and too often than not that answer is likely another program or intervention – adding further complexity and cost.

It’s okay not to have the answer. Partnering with management to enable safe and profitable business is crucial, yet we rarely take stock of skills other than our technical skills. These include softer or core skills which are essential to our capability and how we go about our day-to-day work, and which are a measure of how effective we are in our role.

Preventing work-related fatalities, injuries or illness is complex and not easy, but sometimes it can be a fruitful exercise to pause and reflect. These times can be helpful in eliminating complexities. There is much research on how organisations can become learning organisations, and in some ways becoming better at learning is perhaps the key to unlocking the next wave of step change. Learning from incidents, learning from where and when things go well, learning from others inside and outside the organisation, learning from audits, learning from workers who actually perform the tasks, learning from committees, learning from different industries, learning from contractors, and learning from each other – those in our profession – are all invaluable. Learning about ourselves and our organisations is the first step before we can truly enable effective learning on the OHS front.

How do you and your organisation define a learning? And how are learnings applied and validated? These are important questions that can challenge the status quo. Being clear on where and how we contribute to making a positive difference, rather than serving as custodians of the same old, same old is necessary. We need to have a laser-sharp focus on what is most important. As the financial year for FY18 has closed it may well be timely to pause and reflect on how we can best make the most effective difference.
Why the construction sector needs to lift its safety game

The construction industry has one of the poorest OHS records out of all industries in Australia. However, there are a number of positive steps construction companies can take to improve OHS outcomes – which require the active support of executive leaders, writes Craig Donaldson

Safe Work Australia recently released data analysing the OHS performance of a range of sectors. It found that the construction industry has one of the poorest OHS records out of all industries in Australia, with three workplace fatalities per 100,000 workers and 8.1 serious claims per million hours worked. The nature of work in the construction industry means it is a relatively high-risk industry, and this is reflected in both the comparatively high level of fatalities and serious workers’ compensation claims (accounting for 16 per cent of fatalities and 11 per cent of serious claims).

However, there are construction companies which do buck this trend, thanks to a holistic and integrated approach to OHS, with a strong focus on factors including safety leadership and lead indicators. One such company is tier 2 construction firm Growthbuilt, which generates about $210 million in revenue and averages 10 live projects a year ranging in value from $10-$80 million in value across a range of sectors including commercial, residential, hospitality, aged care and education. Its head of HSE, Josh Maxwell, observes that while health and safety seems easy, in practice it is a lot harder to achieve a safe organisation that is capable of sustained safe performance in the face of significant hazards, and “construction projects have many different fronts when dealing with health and safety issues, all of which have significant hazards”.

Growthbuilt utilises lead indicators including leadership observations/director visits, HSE site inspections, communications (toolbox safety alerts), HSE audits and Growthbuilt-initiated corrective actions closed-out, as well as lag indicators including TIFR (standing at 3.71) and LTIFR (standing at 0.11). For the full story please see page 18.

Also on the topic of construction, our regulatory article for this issue features Dr Simon Blackwood, Queensland’s Deputy Director-General, Office of Industrial Relations. As the head of the state’s OHS regulator, Blackwood says construction is one of the priority industries over the coming 12 months and Queensland has taken a strong and proactive approach to compliance and enforcement. Blackwood also observes that whole sectors have the capacity to be transformed by the rise of the sharing economy due to P2P platforms. At the same time, technology presents solutions as well as problems. Facial recognition software, drones, GPS-positioning duress alarms, and hand-held devices with applications enabling real-time risk assessment all offer opportunities and hazards in the changes to how work and business is done. For the interview with Blackwood please turn to page 24.

Dr Aldo Raineri, discipline leader – occupational health and safety for CQ University, also notes that technology is changing the face of training and education for OHS (see page 26 for the full article) as well as entire business models. Major advances in automation, artificial intelligence, digitisation, augmented reality and virtual reality, cyber-physical systems and other technologies are on the horizon, Raineri says. Enabled by technological developments, the worldwide growth of P2P platforms have the potential to fundamentally shift employment patterns and structures towards a “gig economy” where freelance task-based work is common, he says.

“This is occurring in the context of an Australian workforce facing a number of key changes, such as a transition to professional service-based employment and the demographic shift towards an older workforce and rising levels of stress and chronic disease,” says Raineri.

Mental stress and psychological health and safety have increased significantly in importance in recent times. It is estimated that poor psychological safety costs Australian organisations $6 billion per annum in lost productivity, primarily because psychological injuries typically require three times more time off work than other injuries. The opinion article for this issue by Phil La Duke explores the link between stress and increased pressure in terms of working hours and workloads, and how these contribute to illness and worker fatigue (or burnout). Interestingly, La Duke observes that one’s ability to snap back to whatever passed for normal in one’s life before becoming fatigued depends largely on one’s resilience skill set, and he outlines five key steps for building resilience in his article, “Dying to make a living”, on page 14.
Process for the adoption of ISO 45001 commences in Australia

Australia will soon begin the adoption process for the International Standard ISO 45001, "Occupational health and safety management systems — Requirements with guidance for use," according to Standards Australia. The decision to begin the process, initially recommended by Standards Australia’s Technical Committee SF-001, Occupational Health & Safety Management, has been endorsed following further consultation with a broad range of experts from across government, industry, employee associations, and academic institutions. ISO 45001 is an International Standard that provides guidance to organisations and individuals responsible for safe work systems. The final standard, AS/ NZS ISO 45001, is expected for publication in late 2018. “Australian experts actively participated in the development of ISO 45001,” said CEO of Standards Australia, Bronwyn Evans. “We have since worked closely with the committee and a wider set of stakeholders to determine the most suitable solution for the Australian context. With the decision to adopt ISO 45001 we see Australia’s continued commitment to safer occupational health and safety practices across workplaces of all sectors and sizes. Work is also under way to scope what additional guidance could be provided on AS/ NZS ISO 45001 to support organisations and individuals utilising the standard.”

Workplace manslaughter laws proposed for Victoria

Employers whose negligence leads to the death of an employee will face up to 20 years in jail and fines of almost $16 million under new laws which have been proposed by the current Labor Government if re-elected. Up to 30 people are killed at work in Victoria every year, and Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews said the penalty must be a strong enough deterrent to make employers take workplace safety seriously, and not rely on deep pockets to avoid accountability while cutting corners on safety. Premier Andrews said his government would create a new criminal offence of workplace manslaughter in the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 if re-elected. Under the proposed new law, employers will face fines of almost $16 million and individuals responsible for negligently causing death will be held to account and face up to 20 years in jail. The offence would also apply when an employer’s negligent conduct causes the death of an innocent member of the public. WorkSafe Victoria would be responsible for prosecuting employers and will be given the powers and resources necessary for enforcing the new law. Premier Andrews said his government would also establish an implementation taskforce, including business and unions, to consult on the detail of the proposed laws.

2018 D&I Champions Awards to be announced

The SIA Women in Safety and Health (WISH) network has a strategic goal of diversity and inclusion across the Australian health & safety profession and in practice. WISH will announce the finalists for the 2018 D&I Champions Awards on 5 October 2018 while winners will be announced at the next WISH networking nights in October 2018 across all Australian states. The awards recognise those working in the Australian health & safety industry who are dedicated to and spend time and energy in helping and encouraging others (be it in their workplace, their community or among their peers) for increased diversity and inclusion for professionals and practitioners in the health & safety sector. Only 10 champions will be selected and the judging panel's decision is final (all nominee applications will be subject to strict and independent judging panel decisions). Successful nominees will also be invited to share their story with others through OHS Professional magazine, social media and through speaking and panel opportunities across the 2018 conference season. Kelly Lovely and Sarah-Jane (SJ) Dunford are “but two” foundation members of the WISH network, and they will be encouraging more and more male and female members of WISH to come forward with their personal share of outcomes for diversity and inclusion. For more information please visit the awards website at www.bit.ly/wishoptpzo.

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OHS PROFESSIONAL | September 2018
Injury or death in the workplace changes lives forever

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Lifting the safety standard in construction

Gloria Kyriacou Morosinotto, HSEQ manager at Contract Plant Hire Australia and sessional lecturer at RMIT University, speaks with OHS Professional about her personal and professional experience in OHS and shares her insights into the future of the profession

How did you become an OHS professional?

I always wanted a career that was challenging, interesting and diverse with endless opportunities and a moral feel-good cherry on top. A friend recommended that health and safety was a logical progression for me, and when I started my degree in Applied Science (Occupational Health and Safety) at RMIT University I just knew that I had made the right choice.

When I graduated I started working in a large commercial construction company and developed a passion for high-risk construction work, legislation, plant and equipment and systems, systems and more systems. I started lecturing in health and safety at RMIT University some time later while still working in the construction industry. I co-ordinated and lectured in risk management, legislation and rehabilitation and construction safety courses for over 10 years.

I started my own OHS consultancy business after some time, providing health and safety consulting services all over Australia predominantly to the construction, manufacturing and transport industries. Around this time my husband and I started our family businesses in construction plant and equipment hire, rigging and transport.

I started the SIA OHS Construction Forum in 2008 because I identified a need for an open and inclusive space for OHS professionals working in construction, current OHS students and construction managers/workers to discuss pertinent construction health matters, and network with other industry stakeholders. Around the same time I also started working with WorkSafe Victoria as a consultant in the WorkSafe OHS Essentials Program, providing free consulting services to small and medium businesses in Victoria.

What makes a good health and safety professional?

In my experience, a good health and safety professional should have the following strengths and abilities:

People: Be able to develop positive relationships with people at all levels of the business where there is mutual respect and acknowledgement of skill sets and experience. This is critical in order to influence the people and achieve positive outcomes.

Business: Obtain an insight into the business in question and its characteristics – the type of industry, the size, business objectives, targets, climate, culture and so on.

Risk: Identify the health and safety risks that are present. It may sound obvious, but health and safety professionals can, and do, make the mistake of focusing on one particular risk and failing to identify other more serious risks in the business.

System, processes and legislation: Have extensive knowledge and understanding of health and safety management systems, processes and legislation, but more importantly, know how to effectively apply that knowledge to various businesses to achieve the required outcomes.

Educate, communicate, listen and learn: Effectively, equally and consistently cycle through all stages of this. Educate people, communicate with people, listen to people and learn from people at all levels of the business and at all stages of the work.

What factors (both personal and professional) are important to be effective in your role?

There are so many personal and professional factors that are important to be effective as a health and safety professional. Some of the main ones that I believe are important are persistence, resilience and having a growth mindset. The nature of this role requires health and safety professionals to be able to be persistent with objectives while being open to new and different ideas and approaches to managing health and safety in the workplace, and being resilient to the challenges and obstacles that will inevitably be presented.

Building relationships and engaging with people is also absolutely fundamental in my opinion. People are the foundation of everything that we do as health and safety professionals, and being able to engage with people and build relationships is an important factor to establish and maintain a positive and proactive workplace culture and achieve a safe and healthy workplace.

How have you made a contribution to the prevention of workplace injuries and ill health?

I have been immensely privileged in my career. I have and still do work in so many different facets of the health and safety profession, which has enabled me to contribute in so many ways to the prevention of injury and ill health.

Working as a lecturer enabled me to educate, support and influence the future generations of OHS professionals. Co-ordinating and lecturing in subjects such as risk management, OHS legislation and rehabilitation and construction safety has enabled me to contribute to the standards of health and safety in Australian workplaces by educating and supporting students and providing them with the knowledge required to prevent workplace injury and ill health.

Working as an OHS professional in the commercial construction industry, manufacturing and transport industry has presented many challenges and learning opportunities. Working with people in these high-risk industries to develop systems from scratch and change long-held negative OHS perceptions and workplace cultures to create positive, proactive and inclusive health and safety workplace cultures with systems and processes that work effectively has been enormously rewarding. There have been countless examples of where the
effectiveness of the system and the positive workplace culture has prevented an incident from occurring. Doing something simple like communicating with people and getting them to start communicating can make a huge difference, especially in male-dominated workforces.

What have been the most important/valuable learning lessons for you in your career as an OHS professional?

I have learnt a lot of lessons in my career. I am still learning and will always be learning. Some of the standout lessons for me have been:

• Acknowledge that everyone can make a positive contribution if encouraged and supported. People are our most valuable resource.

• It is absolutely fundamental to adopt an approach of life-long learning. Workplace environments, risk understanding and perceptions as well as the way we work, think and live are changing so quickly. Health and safety professionals don’t need to keep up, they need to keep ahead.

• What works for one doesn’t necessarily work for another. There is no such thing as “one size fits all” in health and safety. You can take two businesses that are virtually identical but will require two completely different approaches to health and safety management in order to achieve effective outcomes. You have to be innovative and capable of adapting.

• Know when to talk and when to listen. This is so important.

• Sometimes we are just the scribe, and that is not a bad thing.

How do you see OHS evolving as a profession over the coming five years, and how might this impact OHS professionals in practice?

I think we are moving towards a more holistic approach to health and wellbeing. There is such a push towards managing and supporting mental health and I think it is timely and relevant, although we will all need to really ensure that we are adequately prepared and capable of addressing mental health and wellbeing properly. Traditional approaches may not work, and we will need to be capable of understanding the complexities associated with this area of health and safety.

What developments would you most like to see in the OHS profession?

I would like to see more support from a government level to improve and manage drug and alcohol and mental health and wellbeing issues. Health and safety professionals can only do so much, and many businesses don’t have the funding or resources required to effectively address these issues.

I think we need to see a return of the undergraduate degree in occupational health and safety being offered in Victorian universities. I think we need to get students straight out of high school and be able to offer them a career path via a degree in health and safety, and support and nurture them to ensure that we create quality health and safety professionals.

I also think we need more opportunities for life-long learning and professional development. We still need more development in this profession in regard to continual, ongoing targeted learning.

We also need to learn to collaborate more and create opportunities to share knowledge and experiences.

Are you certified? If so, how do you value the qualification and what is your recommendation to others?

Yes, I am certified. Certification is essential to the integrity of our profession and the standard of service that we provide to Australian businesses. If we value our role and our reputation as professionals then we should all be certified.

Gloria also serves as director of Contract Safety Solutions and is the founder and chairperson of the SIA OHS Construction Forum. If you are an SIA member and would like to share your story with OHS Professional readers, please email: communications@sia.org.au.
How well do most organisations, in general, approach incident investigations?

It is encouraging to have seen great improvements generally across industries in relation to incident investigations over the past several years. However, admittedly for some there is still plenty of opportunity for improvement.

In the “old days” we saw plenty of incident investigation reports where, after the incident description and a couple of photographs, we’d turn the page to see the word “Finding” – no “s” on the end. Under this heading we’d often see two words – “Operator Error”. While this may have been true in the strictest sense of the words (i.e. that the operator committed an error), it was of little value in explaining why the incident occurred and of absolutely no value in preventing a repeat incident.

Contemporary investigation methodologies look deeper into the organisational factors that contributed to incidents. Organisations need to always keep in mind that incident investigations are about determining what happened, why it happened and how we can stop it happening again. After all, the raison d’être of an incident investigation is prevention of recurrence and reduction of risk. There’s nothing worse than responding to a repeat incident, particularly when it involves major harm or loss of people, to find that previous occurrences had not been investigated well and recommendations were not aimed at prevention of recurrence. It’s a very sad feeling to know that a significant incident could have so easily been avoided if previous incident investigations and associated recommendations had been effective.

Where are the most common gaps in incident investigations?

The most common challenges in relation to many organisations’ approach to incident investigations include a variety of systems issues that can be easily rectified, including:

Training: I’ve lost count of the number of attendees at ICAM training courses who make the comment during the introductions: “Well, I’ve been doing investigations for a few years but haven’t been formally trained. So I’m here today to make sure I’m actually doing it right.” Anyone nominated as an incident investigator should be trained in the process to ensure they have knowledge of the method and be able to avail themselves of experienced personnel to guide them through until they are assessed as competent.

Time/resources: The role of an incident investigator is often seen as a secondary role that is tacked on to a primary role. People are often so busy with their normal “day job”, yet there is the expectation they can also manage to juggle an incident investigation at the same time. Organisations need to ensure sufficient resources in terms of people, time and so on, are allocated.

Incident management procedures/protocols: Without formalised processes it is difficult for those undertaking incident investigations to know exactly what to do in terms of the investigation itself as well as being aware of timeframes, reporting frameworks and so on. All organisations should have an effective Incident Management Procedure specific to their operations. Those personnel nominated as investigators should be familiar with the requirements and protocols.

Lack of transparency/feedback: Without knowledge of contemporary investigation processes, there are still many workers who fear incident investigations and immediately perceive it as a punitive
process. There needs to be greater transparency so the workforce are aware and can see that the investigation process doesn’t just focus on the actions of operators but delves back into the conditions that may have influenced them and the organisation’s protocols and practices. If the methodology gains the trust of the workforce, it can improve the reporting culture.

What are a few hallmarks of “best practice” incident investigation?

Organisations with best practice incident investigations, above all, have management commitment to the process. They do not take a reactive approach and just deal with events as they happen. They ensure that they are prepared and review the effectiveness of their processes and systems on a scheduled basis. They ensure there is a consistent approach to incident investigations and that they have quality standards for both the investigators and for the approving officers. They ensure that they have a process for learning from incidents and that recommendations are seen as the opportunity to identify “error tolerance” improvement opportunities. Systemic investigations are seen as providing meaningful and useable data to promote aggregated learnings.

What are the implications in the above for OHS professionals?

I would suggest to OHS professionals that they keep in mind the very important and critical role of incident investigation. While it might simply be seen as a process, it really should be seen as a critical role that can mean the difference between repeat events happening or not.

If an incident investigation is not done well, if the recommendations do not address all of the contributing factors... then the door is left open for a repeat incident – and that repeat incident could well be an escalation that results in someone getting hurt or worse. Anyone appointed as an incident investigator should keep in mind that ultimately they’re looking after their wellbeing and that of their mates, their colleagues. Incident investigators should feel comfortable after each incident investigation that they have done their best in achieving prevention of recurrence and reduction of risk.

What steps can they take as a result? Advice for them?

Adopting a particular investigation analysis methodology is only one part of what we need. Hand-in-hand with that, there are additional measures to ensure we are striving for optimal safety performance and operational excellence.

In relation to incident management we need to ensure we have underlaying or foundation documents and systems in place. Including references, for example, in the company charter, HSE policy standards, procedures, templates and so on. Do your personnel appointed as investigators know the processes, know where the forms are? Are both actual and potential consequences considered?

Incident reporting is critical. Do you think you’re getting to hear about all the incidents? What are some road blocks that may exist to reporting (for example, perception of punitive culture, too hard to report incidents, takes too long)?

Corrective actions management process. When do you close-out the investigation process? Do you have a system to ensure that close-out doesn’t occur until actions are: (a) approved – subject to a change management assessment; (b) validated that they are actually done; and (c) have been reviewed for effectiveness after they are put in place operationally?

Metrics and tracking. Are incidents looked at one by one or is the true value of all incidents considered systemically? Incident management databases are not just for entering data, but being able to extract data out and consider it systemically. The high frequency, low-level incidents may be considered “nothing events” one by one, however, in considering trending we may be able to detect widespread deficiencies and vulnerabilities for the organisation.

Feedback/learning after the incident. Do you have formalised, effective measures in place to ensure the learnings from incidents are disseminated to the workforce? The investigator and management team know all about the incident, but operators should receive briefings to ensure the learnings are understood and applied in their work areas. Overall, organisations need to focus not only on having incident investigation protocols and systems established but ensure they focus on analysing their effectiveness.

Jo De Landre is COO for Safety Wise, which is a diamond corporate SIA member. After 15 years with the Bureau of Air Safety Investigation (BASI), Jo started co-facilitating ICAM training with Safety Wise in 2001 as the principal human factors consultant. She was subsequently promoted to the positions of executive general manager in 2005 then chief operating officer in 2017 of Safety Wise. Jo has been the Safety Wise Lead Investigator for many high-profile accidents, including multiple fatality investigations. She has a Bachelor’s Degree in Applied Psychology and a Graduate Diploma of Psychology, and has published papers in aviation, mining and police journals and publications.
Young safety professionals: leading from the front

OHS Professional speaks with Naomi Kemp, who is leading the SIA’s Young Safety Professionals initiative, about her career challenges and successes and how she has progressed in her career to-date

What is your current role?

My current role is the manager of enterprise compliance at The University of Queensland.

What does it involve?

Basically, compliance with everything, not just health and safety. A more official answer would be that I am responsible for leading the university’s efforts in effectively managing its legal and regulatory compliance obligations. This involves collaborating with management and staff to build and enhance compliance awareness and culture, capabilities, controls and processes. Ultimately, my office is responsible for providing assurance to the governance committees that we have, and use, effective processes for complying with duties or obligations.

What have been some challenges faced in the course of your career?

When I first took on a safety and training role I felt a bit like an imposter. I remember asking my manager, “You want me to tell the boilermaker whether he is safe or not?”. Thankfully, the answer was no. Rather, my manager said, “I want you to talk to the boilermaker and ask him what makes his job safe. If you do that, he will stop and think about it, and you will learn.” At first, I just assumed what was meant by learning was understanding boilermaker safety. Now, I truly understand what that statement meant.

Overcoming the imposter complex in that role took time. I was fortunate to work with crews who were willing to help me out, but also to listen. My manager was supportive and provided me with the appropriate training, and the company assigned a senior health and safety adviser to be my mentor. I think for all those reasons I was able to be successful and progress to bigger things.

Recently, my professional challenge has been ensuring that I don’t allow myself to be narrow in my focus. I am extremely passionate about health and safety, but I must remind myself that it is important to understand the broader business context. That is why I jumped at the opportunity to manage compliance – to be able to broaden my knowledge across myriad topics and gain a more holistic sense of the business.

What do you consider notable achievements in your career?

When I think of “notable success/achievements”, my

“Being able to earn the respect of senior managers, union reps and contractors isn’t easy sometimes”
mind immediately goes to awards and recognition. And yeah, awards and recognition make you feel special at the time. However, what I would truly consider as success over my career would be the respect I feel I have gained. Being able to earn the respect of senior managers, union reps and contractors isn’t easy sometimes. But when you do, you are able to build a relationship that can positively influence outcomes for everyone. That is what I consider success.

If I had to pick one particular achievement it would be my election to the SIA board. Being recognised (and voted) by my peers, colleagues and fellow members to represent them is such an honour and I am extremely thankful. Hearing my named called was one of those happy-dance moments.

What I consider as a success, and it’s not mine alone, is the growth we have achieved with the Young Safety Professionals Network, YSP, as we generally refer to it, has gone from strength to strength since 2016. Working with colleagues who have now become close friends, we have over 120 YSPs in Queensland and over 500 across Australia. I am so proud of the Queensland team, who has successfully developed and hosted YSPspeak as well as a series of YSP events over the past three years. I enjoy networking with emerging health and safety professionals, listening to their stories and challenges. I hope that I am providing them with the same support and guidance I received.

Do you have any mentors you look up to?

I have never really had an “official” mentor, but I often refer to Noeleen Clarke (currently chief risk officer for Aerosafe Risk Management) as having been my mentor. It was Noeleen who showed me what systems thinking is all about and supported me in my role. What I also learnt (implicitly) working with Noeleen is resilience and that if you demonstrate your capability and “lean in”, then you can break the glass ceiling.

Early on in my career I worked for a CEO, Andre Martel. He was the kind of manager who set standards, expected them to be met and followed up. He listened and he led. Andre made a real impression on me, and in essence, he has made it really hard for any CEO to meet my standards for a leader.

More recently, I would recognise Dr Margaret Cook as a mentor, supporter and leader I admire. Balancing a career in academia and consultancy, Margaret has done and achieved so much. I am in awe of her longevity and resilience and appreciative of what she has done for the health and safety industry. Margaret was not only one of my senior lecturers at university, she also provided me guidance to navigate the next steps of my career.

What are your areas of interest and career aspirations?

My area of interest is restorative justice. I also like to keep up with work health and safety compliance and enforcement by reading court files and case documents.

In the long term, I hope to continue as a board member of the SIA for as long as I can. I am driven to support the growth of the institute in terms of achieving our vision through our mission, I really believe in it. As a board member and founder of a start-up business, I am constantly chipping away at that glass ceiling as I aspire to work at the senior executive management level.

About Young Safety Professionals

YSP Spotlight is a social media initiative to profile emerging safety professionals and continue to build the YSP Network, as well as promote the SIA. The initiative began on 1 August, in the lead-up to YSPspeak, and will continue for a one-year commitment. The initiative is based on the successful #celebratingwomen campaign run by Dr Kirstin Ferguson in 2017. This initiative will be led by Naomi Kemp, as a way of showing her ongoing support of YSP and the SIA Mentor Program. From 1 August 2018, Naomi will post a YSP Spotlight profile of an emerging safety professional every day. Profiles will be posted on various social media platforms. To participate please email yspinfo@sia.org.au.
Dying to make a living

One’s ability to recover from fatigue depends largely on resilience, which is a skill set that must be built before it is actually required, writes Phil La Duke

In the workplace today, people are literally killing themselves to make a living, and if employers aren’t careful they will end up with the dregs of the workforce unless they do something about it. Boss Tweed reputedly said that you can always pay half the poor to kill the other half, but for some workers, this has become a grim reality. Having worked “the outside” of safety for many years I have seen some true death traps, and the reality is fewer and fewer workers are willing to break their backs and risk their necks to make a subsistence wage. As the storied baby boomers shuffle this mortal coil, fewer and fewer workers are likely to take jobs that work them to the point of illness or injury.

The link between stress and illness is scientifically well established. Recent research into fatigue and sleep deprivation has found strong links between worker fatigue and injuries, impaired judgment, and at-risk behaviour. In a 2007 study conducted by Vegso et al, researchers found an 88 per cent increased risk of an incident for individuals working more than 64 hours a week. As employers try to do more work with fewer workers, workers are often forced to work while sleep deprived, ill and fatigued. As workers tire they make more mistakes and riskier choices, are less likely to comply with rules, and may become combative.

In his book, Whack-a-Mole, David Marx identifies conditions that cause human errors to become more prevalent (drugs and alcohol, stress – either at work or at home – physical or mental illness, and more), and on top of that, stress and sleep deprivation also make it more likely that workers will make poor judgments and even engage in reckless behaviour.

That was 30 years ago, but not a lot has changed in many workplaces – many companies are demanding more work with fewer workers for fewer wages (creating money problems at home that further stress the worker). Low wages often create conditions ripe for fatigue – many workers are forced to take on a second and sometimes a third job, just to make ends meet. I once worked with a man who worked 22 hours a day. He would put in a 10-hour shift at our company, sleep in his car for two hours, and then clock another 12-hour shift at his other employer (who was a short distance away). His behaviour became increasingly erratic until he was dismissed after he started an altercation with another employee.

And in China, Apple made the news when one of its component manufacturers had a spate of suicides by workers so stressed out that death seemed to be the only release. These may seem like isolated cases but they are not. Many companies recognise the growing threat of worker fatigue and are doing something about it. Worker wellbeing is also being more closely scrutinised both by government regulators and companies as they select vendors.

Resiliency is the answer

A good share of the research on worker fatigue (or burnout) and resilience has been conducted in healthcare, much as Just Culture has become widely popular in healthcare. This is no coincidence. Healthcare is one of those “high consequence” industries where even minor mistakes could have dire results. Researchers define the term “resilience” in almost as many ways as there are researchers (perhaps a bit more), but for our purposes, resilience is a person’s ability to bounce back from a traumatic event. You may be thinking, “Is this man describing people’s jobs as traumatic events?” and that is what I am precisely doing. There comes a point, as I have already illustrated, where the hours are so long, the work is so physically demanding and the working conditions so stressful that some workers are claiming Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and seeking medical leave or claiming a permanent disability.

Some companies don’t think this is all that far-fetched and are implementing resiliency programs. According to Shelby Livingston, in Business Insurance (June 2015), companies are turning to resiliency “programs... to halt the cuts in productivity and increases in health care costs related to workplace stress by preparing workers to cope with stressful environments”.

Shelby also notes that “Training and educational programs that foster resilience give workers skills to manage and recover from stressful situations quickly, they say. They include in-person or online coaching on topics such as mental awareness, getting enough sleep, exercising regularly, eating a balanced diet and even meditation.”

Alan Kohl agrees: “Employee wellness needs to reflect this all-encompassing definition of health. Employee resilience is one wellness issue that, in recent years, has come to encompass both physical and mental health territories. Resilience has become a growing focus for employers. According to a survey from Conduent HR Services, 22 per cent of companies already have resilience programs, and 28 per cent are planning to offer them soon.” (Forbes, January 2017)

Physical and mental resilience

One’s ability to snap back to whatever passed for normal in your life before becoming fatigued depends largely on your resilience skill set. A key to resilience is to recognise that it is a skill, not a natural attribute. What this means in practical terms is that you must build these skills before you need them. Just as old-time factories used to talk about work hardening (the practice of working in abject misery until you built the muscles you would need to successfully work in a physically demanding job), too often mental resilience was treated as if workers would just have to deal with the stress and fatigue until they got used to it. In fact, studies have shown that short-term exposure to high-stress environments actually strengthens our immune systems, but that quickly changes when the stress continues unmanaged and unabated.

Physical resilience serves two purposes: 1) it makes you less likely to get ill or injured, and 2) it helps speed your recovery. The closer you are to being in peak physical condition, the less likely you are to suffer the long-term effects of stress and fatigue and the less time it will
take you to recover from the ill effects. Mental resilience is all about keeping a positive outlook, having fun and maintaining a good sense of humour. People who lack mental resilience are always looking to take offence, are quick to complain and are generally miserable and miserable to be around.

**Tips for building resilience**

1. **Maintain an optimistic outlook.** No matter what stress one is under, the optimist can always see the silver lining. Train yourself to avoid falling into the trap where you try to shield yourself from disappointment by focusing on the good in the situation. Years ago I was a chronic complainer. I would gripe about poor service I received in restaurants and complain about long lines, and well... just about anything you can imagine. One day I just got sick and tired of being sick and tired, so I made a commitment to myself: from that point forward I would compliment three times more frequently than I complained (and I still complain a lot) – it was hard at first (especially because I decided that I wanted to compliment with as much ferocity as I did when I complained). Soon I found myself getting better service and people treated me better. I approached situations expecting the best, and when I did I generally got the best. When I complimented I started getting everything from a free drink to an upgrade on my hotel room or a seat on an aeroplane. And most of all it allowed me to bounce back from a bad mood.

2. **Get in shape.** Yes, I know I sound like your nagging doctor but it’s true. Eat right and maintain a healthy weight. You need not run marathons or spend hours working out at the gym to build physical resilience, but try a relaxing stroll in the evening air or a leisure activity of your choosing (provided that it provides at least some physical benefit). And don’t think of exercise as a punishment – think of it as an investment in your ability to avoid illnesses and injuries and to recover more quickly in those cases where you were unable to avoid the illness or injury.

3. **Build healthy and close relationships.** Paula Davis-Laack JD, MAPP, in her article “Seven Things Resilient Employees Do Differently: The important ways developing resilience helps you work better”, in *Psychology Today* (October 2004), says, “One big building block of resilience is connection, but not just any old connection. High-quality relationships are critical to resilience. According to business and psychology professor, Dr Jane Dutton, there are four distinct pathways for building high-quality connections at work. The first is respectfully engaging others by communicating supportively and being an effective listener. Second, facilitate another person’s success with guidance, recognition and support. Third, build trust, which can be done by relying on another person to follow through on projects and other commitments. Finally, have moments of play. Play evokes positive emotions and is often associated with creativity and innovation (Dutton & Spreitzer, 2014). Work can be a serious place, but so many workplaces take the world far too seriously.”

4. **Stay away from mental “junk food”.** Instead of spending hours with your nose in your phone reading the latest trash talk on an anti-social network, seek out quotes or stories that inspire you. When you feel good mentally, you tend to feel better physically.

5. **Forgive someone.** Life is too short to carry around bitterness and hatred; forgiveness is a gift we give ourselves. So if you want to be truly resilient, find a grudge that you have been carrying and let it go. Remember, sometimes the hardest person to forgive is ourselves.

*Phil La Duke is a safety transformation architect at Environmental Resources Management, an international provider of environmental, health, safety, risk and social consulting services with more than 200 offices in 42 countries. An author, speaker and consultant, La Duke writes and speaks about business, worker safety, culture and organisational change topics.*
Weighing in on major changes to the HVNL: all parties are in the driver’s seat

A risk-based approach to compliance under new Heavy Vehicle National Laws will benefit from the support and attention of OHS professionals, writes Herbert Smith Freehills’ Steve Bell, Julie Marotta and Kara Reynolds

It’s been over four years since the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) commenced in Australia, with all states and territories except WA and NT having now adopted it either in whole or in part. These laws are about to be subject to further reform and updating, with increased penalties for non-compliance and an increased expectation for senior leaders to exercise due diligence over their business’ road transport operations. The reforms will take effect from 1 October 2018.

A central element of the HVNL is the concept of the road transport “chain of responsibility” (CoR) concept. This operates to require that all participants in a road transport chain take steps to ensure safety over key areas of compliance. This extends the legal duty to manage vehicle loads and movements beyond transport providers to other businesses which move or receive goods by heavy vehicle.

Three major changes

The three headline changes of the reforms are summarised below.

First, a new primary duty will be introduced. This will require each party in the road transport chain to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of their transport activities. What will be required for each party to meet this standard will depend on the road transport activities performed, the degree of public risk and their capacity to control, eliminate or minimise those risks. As with ordinary WHS laws, each party’s duties run concurrently, meaning one party cannot merely rely on another party to meet their duty.

Today, once an on-road offence occurs, the HVNL operates to “deem” guilt and liability onto other parties in the CoR – generally, unless those parties can demonstrate they had each taken “reasonable steps” to prevent the breach. The new laws will be amended to introduce a “reasonably practicable” standard of required behaviour on each party, but this rebalancing of the legal duty will be met with increased penalties for non-compliance.

Businesses in the road transport chain should ensure a systematic approach to addressing at least the following key questions, so far as each road transport participant can influence or control these matters:

• Have we ensured that the vehicle is not overloaded, and the load is properly distributed?
• Is the load properly restrained?
• Is the driver properly rested, and not fatigued?
• Is the vehicle being driven safely, in accordance with speed limits?
• Is the vehicle itself safe, and properly maintained?

“A new proactive duty of due diligence has been introduced to require executive officers to exercise reasonable due diligence to ensure the company complies with its ‘safety duties’”

Offences and penalties for breach of the new “primary duty of care” have been hierarchised into three categories based on risk, adopting the same approach as the model WHS Act. The most serious “Category 1” offences can attract a potential penalty of up to $3 million per breach.

Second, the duty of executive officers will also change, and a new proactive duty of due diligence has been introduced to require executive officers to exercise reasonable due diligence to ensure the company complies with its “safety duties”. Meeting this personal duty requires consideration of whether the person is in a position to influence the company’s conduct in relation to the offence, the action the officer took or could have reasonably taken to prevent the breach, and any other relevant matter.

Third, it will be an offence to ask, direct or require a driver or a fellow road transport chain party to do something that the person knows, or ought to reasonably know, would have the effect of causing the driver to exceed a speed limit or to drive while fatigued or in breach of a work or rest hours requirement.

Driving safety culture through a national approach to enforcement and prosecution

The amendments will also expand the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator’s investigative and enforcement powers, the availability of undertakings, and enable court outcomes to be published. Further information-gathering powers will also be introduced (similar to that under the model WHS laws) for use when investigating potential breaches of the primary duty.

The existing national heavy vehicle laws were recently applied in the case of Remondis. In that case, the waste collection business and one of its directors were separately charged with offences as consignor of loads transported by a contractor which repeatedly overloaded...
their trucks. Remondis was fined almost $1 million (from a maximum possible $2.1 million) after pleading guilty. However, conducting this prosecution under the current laws required the prosecutor to lead evidence of scores of breaches occurring over a sustained period of time.

On the other hand, under the reformed laws, it would be sufficient merely to demonstrate that there was evidence that there was an insufficient “system” to mitigate against overloading breaches (without needing to prove that the non-compliances were recorded a number of times) – and so after 1 October 2018 prosecutions of this nature will be more simple to commence and conduct, and the financial exposure for an offending road transport participant will increase.

The suggestions from the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator are that in the period immediately following 1 October 2018, it will be focusing on information sharing and enforcement action primarily directed towards systems improvement and reform (for example, through the issuing of Improvement Notices). Experience from other regulatory reforms suggests, however, that this will likely be accompanied by threatened or commenced prosecution activity, seeking to demonstrate the general deterrence impact of the increased penalty regime.

**Time to road test your CoR safety procedures, or accelerate their development**

In our experience over recent months, the proposed changes to the laws have certainly led to an increased focus on CoR compliance for many businesses that engage or interact with heavy vehicle road transport chains.

For those businesses, an approach to ensuring current and ongoing compliance has generally included undertaking the following analysis, or asking the following questions:
- Conducting a thorough review of interactions between the business and the heavy vehicle sector – asking, what road transport chains are we a part of? Do we engage these directly, or are they engaged as part of other procured services or projects? What influence or control do we have over the chain?
- Have we conducted a review of any existing CoR compliance arrangements and assessed whether they will continue to provide a basis for asserting compliance with any applicable requirements owed under the HVNL?
- What specific functions do we perform in the road transport chains where we have the capacity to exercise control or influence to ensure compliance? Are we the scheduler of road transport deliveries or dispatches, through the role we play in arranging delivery or pick-up windows? Do we perform the role of loading or unloading vehicles, and do our people understand their roles to ensure the load is (or remains) safe?
- Are we clear on our current level of CoR awareness or competency amongst our people? Does our procurement team understand their role in ensuring safe and competent operators are engaged by the business? Do we prefer to engage road transport operators operating under accredited mass, fatigue or maintenance regimes?
- Do we seek assurance from operators about their capacity and history of compliance with the HVNL as part of our engagement and on-boarding process?
- Do we have clear contractual terms identifying the need for compliance by road transport contractors we engage, and establishing the processes and arrangements for ongoing monitoring regimes?
- Are we clear about the steps we will take to obtain appropriate ongoing assurance of compliance with the CoR requirements from transport contractors, and have we conducted the necessary awareness training with those workers in the business who may be required to undertake that assurance?
- Do we have an appropriate due diligence framework and reporting rhythm to support senior leaders in meeting their personal due diligence obligations under the HVNL?
- Have we captured the above into a cohesive CoR compliance system, or have we built this thinking into our existing safety management system?

Many businesses are already subject to the CoR regime, and should already have in place sophisticated arrangements for ensuring safety in their supply chains. For many, though, the current reforms to the laws have served as a reminder of the importance of this compliance area, and this has led to a refreshed focus on this area. Either way, the risk-based approach to compliance under the new laws will benefit from support and attention of OHS professionals on behalf of their clients or employers.

**Steve Bell, partner, Julie Marotta & Kara Reynolds, senior associates, are part of the Herbert Smith Freehills national safety team, advising parties in all roles and parts of road transport chains on compliance, investigations and litigation.**
Growthbuilt is one of Australia’s leading tier 2 construction companies, generating about $210 million in revenue with more than 140 professional engineers, builders and other staff. Specialising in the commercial, residential, hospitality, aged care, education, mixed use, student accommodation and retail sectors, the company averages 10 live projects a year ranging in value from $10-$80 million in value. With an 80 per cent repeat client base, it has a track record of successfully working in live environments and has completed more than 20 projects in the Sydney CBD over the past five years and another 20 projects completed within 15 kilometres of Sydney.

The company has a policy of reinvesting into the business to ensure strategic growth and investment (the company has no debt and access to $40 million in bank guarantee and insurance bond facilities). Growthbuilt is privately owned and has a flat management structure, which allows its directors and joint CEOs Colin Rahim and Peter Sukkar, and senior management, to oversee progress on projects and ensure they remain on track. “Growthbuilt recognise the value of our people and that they are our greatest asset,” says joint CEO Rahim. “We work in a collaborative environment, and it is this approach with our internal teams and our stakeholders that results in the successful delivery of a project for our clients.”

With a record $80.1 billion infrastructure pipeline in NSW – the largest program ever undertaken by any state in Australia – construction employment rates are predicted to grow by another 13 per cent by 2022, resulting in a workforce of almost 400,000. As a result, Growthbuilt has a fruitful pipeline with a range of new projects in both its commercial and residential divisions. “Like all construction enterprise across Australia, the boom in infrastructure has made the challenge of finding competent and quality workers hard. The labour market is tight, with significant construction projects across NSW,” says Growthbuilt’s head of HSE, Josh Maxwell. “Health and safety seems so easy – just make sure people don’t get hurt. In practice it is a lot harder to achieve a safe organisation that is capable of sustained safe performance in the face of significant hazards. Construction projects have many different fronts when dealing with health and safety issues, all of which have significant hazards.”

**Major OHS risks**

Growthbuilt faces a number of OHS risks on a tactical level, and on a day-to-day basis Maxwell says falls from heights, scaffold, penetrations, formwork, electrical and falling objects, exposure to asbestos and silica, musculoskeletal disorders, fatigue and mental health are priority areas. To help manage these risks, the company has developed a three-tiered approach to risk management aligned to ISO 31000.

At a strategic level, he says the risk profile is a list of known hazards and risks for working on Growthbuilt construction sites. “This list does not have every possible hazard or risk but has
“We work in a collaborative environment, and it is this approach with our internal teams and our stakeholders that results in the successful delivery of a project for our clients”

Growthbuilt’s Joint CEOs Colin Rahim and Peter Sukkar
been developed to assist our delivery partners in identifying, assessing and developing controls during the development of their respective risk assessments, safe work practices or Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS). Site-specific risks are discussed with delivery partners prior to commencing works on site, where SWMS and risk assessments can be reviewed, and risk eliminated if able to or mitigated in so far as is reasonably practicable,” he says.

To support this profile at an operational level, a risk register has been developed to address foreseeable hazards and risks identified by Growthbuilt. “Risks have been quantified, control measures have been developed and the hazards assessed again with controls applied. Should all controls be applied, the risk of injury and damage to property is reduced in so far as is reasonably practicable,” says Maxwell, who adds that delivery partners review the register to ensure their tactical documents (SWMS, risk assessments or job safety and environmental analysis JSEA) include the Growthbuilt control measures.

At a tactical level, Maxwell says delivery partners develop safe work method procedures that include the control measures identified by Growthbuilt and any other control measures required to eliminate risks to health and safety and the environment, or if risks can’t be eliminated, mitigation strategies are developed to ensure all workers, public and the environment are free from harm.

**Challenges and lessons learnt**

In late 2016 and early 2017, Growthbuilt had three significant incidents occur across three different construction sites in a very short period of time. As part of Growthbuilt’s initial review of the incidents, the company engaged law firm Clyde & Co with a view to improving its health and safety performance and guidance in building a safety culture across all business units and projects.

The firm advised Growthbuilt to work proactively with SafeWork NSW in the development of a voluntary engagement program, to identify opportunities to improve its policies, processes and systems. As part of the engagement program with SafeWork NSW, Growthbuilt committed to investing in training programs across three areas: a specific Growthbuilt Certificate IV in Work Health and Safety; risk management; and incident management.

Further analysis of the incidents by Maxwell in February 2018 revealed:

- safety metrics were previously ad hoc and did not show the level of OHS proactivity
- hazards were not reported/hidden by sub-contractors
- fear of reporting HSE near misses
- a transient workforce, with international workers and limited English skills.

**HSE improvements**

In February 2018, Maxwell joined Growthbuilt with a mandate of reviewing and improving the company’s safety systems. In the first 100 days, working with the company’s operations team and the HSE team, he has driven:

- the Growthbuilt STEM (Stop, Think, Eliminate, Mitigate) program
- a site-safety leadership program, which is currently being delivered via four modules
- new technologies in safety management, which have been researched, trialled and implemented
- dashboard reporting on all projects and company performance development and implementation, including new lead indicator metrics
- due diligence framework development and publication
- Growthbuilt risk profile development and publication
- new major incident management plan development, with accompanying direction of a major multiagency emergency management exercise onsite at one major project.

“The drive to proactive safety as opposed to reactive safety has been the key element to Growthbuilt’s change in OHS. The new HSE strategic plan and safety continuum is the roadmap for our change process for 2018/2019 and 2019/2020,” says joint CEO Sukkar.

“A positive safety culture driven by leadership at all levels of Growthbuilt is key to our current success and future growth,” Maxwell adds. “The site safety leadership program has been designed..."
to develop a deeper understanding of what it means to keep our people (including contractors) safe, whilst engaged in high-risk works. The outcome is a safety culture that drives how we do business. Safety leadership begets safety culture, with communication and trust the key tools to unlock the potential of all leaders in Growthbuilt.”

Driving collaborative safety outcomes
Earlier this year, Growthbuilt developed an enhanced strategy to ensure collaboration across all aspects of the business. New reporting systems, development of lead indicators and reporting dashboards allow visibility across the organisation in terms of the safety performance of each project and the company overall. “The company’s 2018–2020 HSE Strategic Plan places key responsibilities and accountabilities to all levels of the organisation to lead the safety change,” says Maxwell, who adds that new safety leadership key performance indicators have been adopted into each role’s agreed performance measures.

Collaboration strategies have included the implementation of Growthbuilt’s due diligence framework and the HSE executive review, with the board and executive engaged in setting the direction and safety strategy. With the advent of ISO 45001, Maxwell says Growthbuilt has also developed a Health, Safety and Environment Participative Leadership Committee (HSEPLC) in preparation for transition.

The role of the HSEPLC is to provide a participative forum to oversee, monitor and review the implementation of the Growthbuilt health and safety management system, the Growthbuilt HSE Strategic Plan 2018–2020, and its associated procedures in order to provide a safe and healthy workplace for all workers. He adds that consultation between workers and Growthbuilt is a key element of NSW health and safety laws, and the HSEPLC adds in the concept of participation as recommended by the newly ratified ISO 45001. “When Growthbuilt decides to develop, plan, implement, performance evaluate, or improve its health and safety management system, it is directly engaging the consultative provisions of the WHS Act NSW and the participative requirements of ISO 45001,” he says. “In simple terms, workers shall be given the opportunity to be involved in the direction and decision making on HSE matters.”

Leading safety from the top and front
In reviewing the company’s training strategy, Maxwell identified that leadership was an area that had not been previously considered enough

“In practice it is a lot harder to achieve a safe organisation that is capable of sustained safe performance in the face of significant hazards”

Supporting mental health at Growthbuilt
Mental health is a significant issue in the construction industry, according to Maxwell, and in order to support a mentally healthy workforce, Growthbuilt has signed up with the Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance (which includes Heads Up and Beyond Blue) and Mates in Construction. As part of this the Growthbuilt Mental Health Action Plan 2018/2019 was developed with three key result areas:
1. Increasing awareness and reducing stigma
2. Supporting individuals with a mental health condition
3. Reducing risks to mental health in the workplace.

Each KRA has several strategies/deliverables the HSE team will champion over the next 12 months in conjunction with the Growthbuilt leadership team and the newly constituted Growthbuilt Health Safety and Environment Leadership and Participative Committee (HSEPLC).
in safety. “Key to the success of this program is the role the Growthbuilt leadership team, project managers, site manager and foreman play. A safety and environmental plan or system is only as good as the people who lead and drive its implementation, and the culture they foster within the team and onsite. Engaging with the Growthbuilt leadership team and the wider Growthbuilt organisation, the Growthbuilt site safety leadership program was created,” he says.

Site leadership teams are crucial in working with clients and delivery partners to ensure Growthbuilt provides a safe workplace that is without risk to health, safety of workers and the community, and without risk to the environment. Maxwell explains that the aim of the program is to develop effective safety leaders which:

• Support project teams through active monitoring of decisions and actions, and ensuring alignment with the Growthbuilt safety strategy, vision and values
• Recognise and reward team members based on their demonstration of effective safety behaviour
• Actively care for the health, safety and general wellbeing of the project team
• Collaborate or share ownership of safety with the project team by asking for their active participation in safety decision-making, and empowering individuals to take personal responsibility for safety
• Share a vision for safety and facilitate the development of project goals, targets and plans to achieve it
• Inspire all workers on a project to achieve the safety vision and safety excellence through motivational and encouraging communication
• Role model safety-compliant behaviours that set the benchmark of what is expected from the team
• Challenge team members to think about safety issues and scenarios in ways that they might not have considered before.

Supporting growth through systems
Growthbuilt utilises a range of procurement methods for its project delivery, and 85 per cent of its projects are delivered through the design and construct experience procurement method. In this approach the company partners with a range of external consultants to ensure that the best qualified design team is engaged throughout each project, managed by Growthbuilt’s in-house design and services team, to deliver the most efficient design solution possible. This method is also used as a risk mitigation tool for many clients as Growthbuilt takes on responsibility for co-ordination of the design between various disciplines, which eliminates the possibility of variations during the construction phase as a result of conflicts in design documentation.

Underpinning this is “The Growthbuilt Way”, which is the company’s certified Integrated Management System (IMS), incorporating an occupational health and safety management system, quality management system and environmental management system. Rapid growth in projects requires a flexible and adaptable OHS management system that can be implemented across all projects based on risk, complexity, client requirements and the law. “Looking forward into the future, the implementation of new safety technologies, simplifying systems and ensuring our sites go ‘paper light’ will enable faster, more comprehensive risk and safety management,” explains Maxwell.

Safety results
Growthbuilt has experienced a significant improvement in OHS across its operations, and joint CEO Sukkar says OHS is now at the forefront of everything the company does. “From a CEO’s
perspective, having a culture that allows people to report all hazards and incidents to the site leadership team without fear of repercussions is paramount,” he says. “As a principal contractor, we must know what is happening that puts our people, including contractors, at risk and importantly what we all need to do to eliminate or mitigate the risk. The STEM program developed and implemented by the HSE team encourages all workers to stop anything that may be unsafe and follow up with a report to our site leadership teams.”

Joint CEO Rahim acknowledges that mistakes have been made in the past “from which we must learn to ensure they do not happen again, but just as importantly we must learn from what went right on our projects and capture good practice for the future of our business,” he says. “This often gets lost when the focus of OHS can be often reactive after an incident has occurred. Josh has really driven the message of proactive safety in our business and we fully support this.”

In analysing the company’s OHS performance, Maxwell says its results for the first half of 2018 are encouraging, with 41,632 workers engaged on projects over 1009 working days. In terms of lead indicators, there have been 188 leadership observations/director visits, 228 HSE site inspections, 246 communications (toolbox and safety alerts), 13 HSE audits and 106 Growthbuilt-initiated corrective actions closed-out. In analysing lag indicators, its Total Incident Frequency is 1 incident every 269,326 hours (including near misses, property damage, first aid, medical treatment and lost time injuries) while its Total Incident Frequency Rate is 3.71 and LTIFR stands at 0.11.

"Safety leadership begets safety culture, with communication and trust the key tools to unlock the potential of all leaders in Growthbuilt”
What are the priority areas that WHSQ will be focusing on over the coming 12 months?

For the next 12 months, like most other jurisdictions, we will continue to focus on the priority industries of manufacturing, construction, transport and agriculture. Drilling down, there’s also the sub-sectors of meat processing, metal manufacturing, civil construction, construction trades, road freight, livestock and horticulture. Those not doing the right thing in priority industries will feel the heat of our strong compliance and enforcement activity. However, that doesn't mean we'll stop working with businesses and workers and their representatives, as well as the broader community, to improve overall safety through information, resources and education.

We've recently made health care and social assistance (HCSCA) a priority industry too. HCSCA is Queensland's largest industry by employment, with unique issues impacting on safety and wellbeing of workers.

Diving (both recreational and occupational) is another focus area, as we do our bit to protect the reputation of this high-profile state industry and those who enjoy it. With world-class marine attractions like the Great Barrier Reef, we want to ensure recreational diving and snorkelling is safe and fun for everyone.

We'll also continue to prioritise a number of occupational injuries and diseases because of the serious consequences they have for workers and because of the very high frequencies involved. Some of the disorders we're tackling relate to asbestos; chemical, dust and infection; noise, ultraviolet radiation and heat; chronic diseases due to poor lifestyle; and psychosocial issues. I must point out that we are working hard on prevention in these areas, not just cure.

How is the role of WHSQ as a regulator currently evolving with regards to its work with both government and employer organisations?

Through our board and committees, the industry safety networks we've helped to establish around the state, and interagency working groups tackling issues like asbestos and quad bikes, we are collaborating and “fighting the fight” alongside our government colleagues, and worker and employer groups. We'd be flying blind if we didn't listen to the expertise these groups offer.

Last year, we came under the spotlight of the Best Practice Review (BPR) of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, which was an independent review commissioned after the deaths at Dreamworld and the Eagle Farm construction site. These tragedies highlighted the need to ensure the work health and safety legislative framework is robust, is an effective deterrent to non-compliance, and is responsive to emerging issues.

The review report made 58 recommendations to strengthen work health and safety in Queensland. Twenty-one legislative amendments were proposed and then passed by the Queensland Parliament last year, including a new industrial manslaughter provision. The work continues, and we are currently developing regulatory amendments to improve safety in theme park and amusement ride industries.

Many of the BPR recommendations focused on our compliance approach and the need to re-balance this so our inspectors can issue improvement, prohibition and infringement notices more frequently. To address this, we're developing a new Queensland-specific compliance monitoring and enforcement policy, improving our reporting on regulatory activities, and beefing up ICT support. This will mean we can better target the organisations and work activities presenting the greatest risks of harm to workers and members of the public.

I'm proud we've made changes to Queensland WHS legislation to further support the unique role of health and safety representatives (HSRs). We're developing ways in which we as the regulator will collaborate directly with HSRs across Queensland to optimise their WHS activities and learn from their unique perspective. Training for HSRs is now mandatory in Queensland, and our support for the role will help them contribute to good safety outcomes.

We're also looking to increase the capability of organisations to manage their own health and safety. We've re-established work health and safety officers. This means organisations will be more aware of the risks their work activities create and will have better expertise on-hand to properly manage these risks.
How do you see this evolving over the coming three to five years?

Delivering effective and efficient regulation does not happen in a vacuum. Interagency co-operation as well as industry knowledge is crucial to addressing emerging issues, which often don’t fit neatly into jurisdictional silos. As such, our ongoing collaboration with other government agencies, and worker and employer groups, is vital. Disruptive technologies are changing the nature of work as we know it, further blurring the line between workplace, home and public space. Whole sectors have the capacity to be transformed by the rise of the sharing economy due to P2P platforms. At the same time, technology presents solutions as well as problems. Facial recognition software, drones, GPS-positioning duress alarms, and hand-held devices with applications enabling real-time risk assessment all offer opportunities and hazards in the changes to how work and business is done.

The Workplace Safety Futures report by CSIRO’s Data 61 group identifies six megatrends which will impact on work health and safety over the next 20 years. They are:

- an increase in automated systems and robots
- rising workplace stress and mental health issues
- rising screen time, sedentary behaviour and chronic illness
- blurring of work and home boundaries
- the gig and entrepreneurial economy
- an ageing workforce.

We are looking at these trends carefully and working on ways to ensure risks to workers and the community are managed, and work health and safety is effectively regulated.

Are there any common traits/factors among employers that are served with improvement notices/found to be in breach of OHS laws/prosecuted for workplace fatalities/incidents?

In general, the “positive” aspect of employers’ primary duty of care is one we can’t emphasise enough. WHS legislation, at its process-driven essence, makes statutory responsibilities out of good business management tools.

The incident alerts we issue in the wake of serious injuries, deaths or sometimes near-misses, often cover situations where employers simply have not met their basic duties to manage risks, consult, collaborate with other duty holders and provide safe systems of work and workplaces. Our enforcement actions are frequently for breaches involving risks which are well understood and with known controls. However, steps aren’t being taken to put these controls in place and manage the risks – we have to turn this around.

To give you an example, since July 2012 there have been 278 incidents where a worker or bystander was crushed, hit or trapped by a conveyor, auger, miner or mixer. Of these, 173 resulted in a serious injury. During the same period, 105 improvement notices, 56 prohibition notices and one electrical safety protection notice were issued relating to conveyors, augers, miners or mixers. Many of these cases involve long-understood plant guarding principles, which could have been applied through systematic risk management and consultation, but weren’t.

Similarly, what do you notice among “best practice” organisations that consistently have good WHS outcomes?

Performing against the framework set by the legislation sounds like a regulator’s answer, but the simple truth is that WHS law provides the framework to achieve best practice. There are three key aspects for success: senior management commitment, effective worker involvement, and integration into normal management. These are built into the legislative requirements as the general duties for PCBUs, the due diligence required for officers of corporations and the duties to consult with workers and other duty holders.

An effective system for proactively managing health and safety risks underpins the management system; again, this is a key part of the legislation. As well as being legislative requirements, these aspects are key features of commercial frameworks or standards for health and safety management, for example, the Australian Standard AS 4801, or the recently released international standard ISO 45001.

Good performers see these as business tools rather than compliance activities. Adopting these as business tools rather than compliance activities is the key to best practice, and we have many resources to help employers achieve this. We want best practice to be within reach of all.

For example, our IPaM (Injury Prevention and Management) program draws on the practices of well-performing businesses. In order to embed this approach effectively, our IPaM advisers work with businesses with high compensation claim rates to guide them towards best practice. The program starts with critically examining their WHS management systems, culture and performance, then implementing plans to drive improvement. The program then moves to a self-management phase during which the adviser continues with regular on-site reviews to coach the employer and monitor progress. Once the employer has completed the 24-month program, we review their systems again to identify areas that need attention and ensure ongoing sustainability of the lessons learnt throughout the process.

Along these lines, what advice would you offer OHS leaders in their organisations to work with their own leaders and employees, to drive/realise good OHS?

I can’t stress enough the importance of integrating health and safety management into general business practices. The commitment needs to span the organisation, from the CEO throughout the whole management structure, and be embedded into the culture of all workers and work groups. Health and safety leadership has to occur at all levels.

Our Safety Leadership at Work Program (SLaW) recognises and supports the influence safety leaders can have on good WHS outcomes. The program is designed to develop safety leadership capacity, improve safety culture and contribute to reducing work-related injuries and fatalities. We provide a series of masterclasses, workshops and roundtables where participants come together to learn how to identify, influence and build a positive safety culture within their organisations. Through the program, safety leaders at all levels have the opportunity to learn from others, develop their safety leadership skills and build a positive safety culture in their workplace.

Culture is not just about attitudes – embedding good work design principles enables an organisation to go beyond a traditional “hazards and risks” approach. For me, an inclusive WHS management scope that includes supply chain safety and safety in design, aligns the characteristics of the work with the needs and capabilities of the people involved, and looks to enhance health and wellbeing, is indeed a safety-mature organisation.

And we look for outstanding examples of this by celebrating high performers through our Safe Work and Return to Work Awards, with the “Best demonstrated leadership in WHS” category decided by the Work Health and Safety board members. Nominating for an award or attending the awards function is a great way to hear about outstanding approaches, share your own ideas and learn from others.
Staying ahead of the OHS learning curve

There are a number of significant business, demographic and technological changes impacting OHS training and education, and OHS professionals and their organisations need to keep abreast of these trends in order to stay ahead of the learning curve, writes Craig Donaldson.

There is a significant expansion in the role of supervisors and front-line managers in leading, managing and implementing OHS strategy and systems, according to Carl Tinsley, founder of consulting firm Breaking Ground. While a few companies do this now, he says more will train and develop their supervisors’ leadership, influence and management of group dynamics so they truly act as an extension of the CEO and executive team. “Smart businesses of the future will leverage the capacity of the supervisor to drive a safe, healthy and positive culture,” he says. “Smart CEOs of the future will develop supervisors akin to their own personal ‘knights templar’. Their supervisors will be an extension of their own view and drive healthy growth, as opposed to often being passive – or in the worst case, leading the resistance to organisational change.”

Mental health and wellness will also continue to grow, according to Tinsley, who says all levels of management and particularly OHS professionals will receive and seek more training and development on the benefits of a mentally healthy organisation, from a social, moral and productivity point of view. “This training and development will generate a shift from a band aid approach of having a ‘day’ to focus on mental health, to it being part of normal business. The future training and development of OHS professionals will facilitate them influencing executive views on the importance of mental health for culture and productivity,” says Tinsley.

A third trend can be found in OHS professionals broadening their field of influence by having a greater understanding of broader human performance concepts. “Combining traditional OHS with a working knowledge of intentional and unintentional complacency, human errors/factors, motivation theories and emotional intelligence will be key knowledge tools of the future OHS professional,” Tinsley explains.

Neuroscience and behavioural science research findings will drive these changes and the expansion of the traditional training and development provided to OHS professionals, he adds. “The amount of neuroscience and human behaviour research that we can utilise in the work sphere is phenomenal and is growing daily. This is providing massive opportunity for OHS training and development to expand and lead the way in human performance at work,” he says. “Further research into traditional OHS models such as the safety pyramid, risk control hierarchy and human error, is also providing a stimulus to change the rhetoric about OHS in the workplace. As some old beliefs are questioned, new knowledge and techniques emerge. This OHS-focused research will also drive the change in the future training and development of the OHS professional.”

Tinsley advises that organisations should begin leveraging the capacity of their supervisors by taking steps to ensure greater alignment between the actions of their supervisors with the plans and strategies of the CEO and executive group. “To maximise their investment there needs to be a unique partnership between the CEO/ executive group and the supervisor level within an organisation,” he says. “Organisations will begin selecting OHS professionals with the experience, and in the future, qualifications in workplace mental health and healthy productivity. Organisations should sponsor motivated OHS professionals to further their studies into these fields as well as work closely with educational institutions to develop meaningful programs of study.”

Compliance issues and requirements

Over the past year at HBA Learning Centres there has been an ever-increasing number of enquiries from people who hold very senior national OHS/ WHS positions, for the BSB60615 Advanced Diploma of Work Health and Safety qualification, according to managing director of HBA Learning Centres, Harold Baldry, who says there are usually two reasons behind this:

1. “I have a Diploma of OHS that I did a few years ago and I want to upgrade.”
2. “These enquiries find their way to my desk about four times a week at the moment, and in each case the catalyst for the enquiry is simply to formalise the individual’s competency,” he says. “This of course begs the question as to why would anyone want to hold a formal qualification? Our studies show that the holding of the formal qualification provides a certain level of risk management for the enterprise plus it ensures best practice in what must surely be the most important responsibility of any employer, and that is keeping its people safe.”
safe. Additionally, it would clearly enhance an individual’s employment opportunities.”

When legislation transitioned the VET qualifications from OHS to WHS in 2012, the change brought with it entry requirements. The pathway for individuals who seek the BSB60615 Advanced Diploma of Work and Safety qualification is:

- complete via RPL or by completing the assessment tasks of the five core Units of Competency of BSB41415 Certificate IV in Work Health and Safety
- then complete via RPL or by completing the assessment tasks of the five core Units of Competency of BSB51315 Diploma of Work Health and Safety
- then undertake BSB60615 Advanced Diploma of Work Health and Safety.

“It is our experience that the folk who hold these positions have little trouble in providing the evidence required to RPL (recognition of prior learning) the entry requirements,” says Baldry.

“As we go through our normal working week we chat with many people who work in some very hazardous environments, from mining to construction, from manufacturing to distribution. Interestingly, we note the very substantial incidence of injuries and death in the farming industry, and the question must be asked, how many farmers or people who work on farms ever study OHS/WHS?”

5 steps to building a culture of learning

There are a number of important steps organisations should take to build genuine cultures of learning when uplifting OHS skills and capability, according to Trevor Strother, director of Safety Culture Development.

“Sometimes, when we think about culture change we immediately think about major organisational change activities. However, there are simple behaviours that we can practice that will influence people around us, and this too can lead to change,” says Strother, who outlines five practices to ensure learning is viewed positively and embedded within teams and organisations:

1. Show that learning is a key value and that learning is appreciated: Most organisations have a value that learning can be associated with. There will be statements about excellence, or respect or profitability, and others that continual learning can be associated with. Continually explain learning as being a reflection of a particular value.

2. Talk positively about learning: Always talk and behave positively about any form of learning. When you are going to an event or routine workshops, or others are attending workshops, talk about the benefits of the experiences rather than the negatives such as falling behind on work, boring facilitators or whatever. When you or other personnel return from learning, also talk positively about the experience. If the workshop didn’t meet expectations, don’t run

Creating mutually beneficial symbiotic relationships between safety and organisations through the application of Organisational Development principles.

Our Influences

Our work is guided by the knowledge and skills required by WHS specialists identified in the following:
- SIA “OHS Body of Knowledge”;
- inshpo “The Occupational Health and Safety Professional Capability Framework”;
- Safework Australia “Australian WHS Strategy 2012—2022”; along with contemporary debate about the safety function’s contribution to organisational success as well as consultation with practicing WHS specialists.

Workshop examples

Our public and in-house workshops are designed for safety specialists and include:
- Change Management;
- Building Organisational Influence;
- Safety Culture Development;
- Safety Leadership;
- Applying Organisational Psychology to Workplace Safety;
- Coaching and Internal Consulting;
- Presentation and Facilitation Skills.

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it down in front of others – be objective, and by the way let the facilitator know instead of talking behind their back. You can either ensure your learner does this, which is preferable, or you can follow up. How can they improve to ensure others attending have a good experience if they don’t know there is a problem?

3. Pre-learning planning, post-learning follow-up: When personnel are participating in a learning experience, ensure they know why they are participating in that experience and what the performance expectations are after the experience. Provide support when they are implementing learning at work. If your supervisor has not done this for you, take personal responsibility and have a conversation with your supervisors about expectations. If you are not getting the support you need, also take personal responsibility and do something about it.

4. Focus on solutions to issues: Many people are familiar with the direction “Don’t bring me problems, bring me solutions”, or similar. Acknowledge and understand the issue and then move to problem solving. Encourage personnel to bring information that explains the issue to meetings. As a leader, avoid always being the person with the solution – encourage personnel to find out for themselves. It may take more time in the beginning, but it will be worth it when you have personnel solving issues rather than you solving issues for them.

5. What have we learnt and what do we need to learn? When there has been an issue, take time afterwards to reflect with those involved on what was learnt from the experience and whether there is anything else to learn. We often encourage worksite personnel to perform “after action reviews” – we should also do that ourselves. Consider adding this to your meeting agendas. There may be nothing, however, it is developing the habit that is important.

Tertiary OHS education trends and developments

In the tertiary OHS education space, OHS has traditionally been studied as a secondary discipline by mature-age students on a part-time fee-paying basis, according to Dr Aldo Raineri, discipline leader – occupational health and safety for CQ University. “There has been a lack of an agreed core body of knowledge, an emphasis on distance or mixed-mode teaching models, and substantial variation in OHS education provided by universities. Furthermore, the demise of some OHS undergraduate degree programs has negatively impacted the acceptance of OHS as a profession and the availability of researchers and future educators,” he says.

Despite these issues in OHS education, a SafeSearch 2011 report revealed that the first decade of the 21st century saw an increasing demand for OHS professionals at all levels to hold formal OHS qualifications. There is also an increasing trend for higher-level professionals to hold postgraduate degrees in OHS, according to Raineri, who says that while larger organisations are showing signs of understanding the benefits of employing university-qualified OHS professionals, small and medium enterprises, however, generally do not appear to have the same understanding, and display confusion between VET and university qualifications discussed previously.

The decision by WorkSafe Victoria to include “repositioning the OHS professional” in their 2008-2012 strategy and the publication of the Victorian Code of Ethics and Minimum Service Standards for Professional Members of Occupational Health and Safety, which recommended the certification of OHS professionals acting as consultants providing advice, have provided the impetus for a greater focus on recognition of OHS as a profession. “Recognition that development and implementation of a professional certification process was inhibited by lack of agreement on the knowledge base required for certification, fuelled the development of an OHS Body of Knowledge alongside the creation of an accreditation process for university courses and the implementation of an accreditation process for OHS practitioners and professionals,” says Raineri.

A defined body of knowledge is required as a basis for professional certification and for accreditation of education programs giving entry to a profession. The OHS Body of Knowledge sets out a core conceptual approach to OHS issues and professional

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**Training and education challenges**

A challenge for both individuals and organisations in this is to avoid jumping on a fad program, according to founder of consulting firm Breaking Ground, Carl Tinsley, who says the key to success in this area is analytics of desired performance compared to actual performance, with identification of shortfalls and blockages along the way. “Because a program worked in one culture, that does not mean it will work in all. Customisation is key,” he says. “This will be further challenged by the ready, real-time data provided by apps and software. The requirement of the skills needed to transform data into useful information may be diminishing, but this in turn develops a new need for interpreting, forecasting and evaluating that information with respect to the cultural and health needs of an organisation.”

Raineri also notes that, for employees, resistance to change is a common barrier to learning. “People who have been at their jobs for a long time and are set in their ways often don’t want to learn new processes,” he says. “But resistance to change doesn’t only occur among the most tenured of employees; this kind of mentality can arise among anyone who doesn’t want to step away from the comfort of familiar processes and systems. To prevent resistance to change, employees need to be advised of the importance of the training to the organisation and how it will benefit them.”

practice. In addition to discipline-related matters, Raineri says the OHS Body of Knowledge emphasises the “soft skills” necessary for professionals to analyse critically, problem solve, communicate and manage change effectively.

“The overall goal of the accreditation process is to ensure that education objectives and learning outcomes, educational design and review processes, and delivery of learning and assessment appropriately equip graduates with the knowledge and skills required to enter the workplace as entry-level generalist OHS professionals. The OHS education accreditation process is administered through the Australian OHS Education Accreditation Board, which is auspiced by the Safety Institute of Australia,” says Raineri, who explains that the Australian certification process accommodates the transportability and transferability of OHS professional qualifications internationally through the adoption of the OHS Professional Capability Framework recently developed by the International Network of Safety and Health Practitioner Organisations (INSHPPO). “From an organisational perspective, greater increased professionalisation engenders a greater degree of comfort that OHS professionals, be they employees or consultants, are equipped to meet the growing challenges of business in the 21st century,” he says.

**Return on investment**

Raineri explains that since the introduction of Robens-style OHS legislation into all Australian jurisdictions, educational interventions have been promoted as a means of achieving improvements in OHS, usually through training for employee representatives or committee members. The nationally harmonised OHS legislation implemented in Australian states and territories from 2011 has also placed a requirement on corporate officers to have knowledge of OHS matters.

“Business operators should therefore take every opportunity to encourage employee representatives, OHS committee members and corporate officers to undertake initial and refresher training appropriate to their respective roles. Those organisations that employ or engage safety professionals should ensure they are appropriately qualified and certified,” he says.

“In addition, organisations need to regularly undertake a gap analysis of their OHS training needs and approach training providers and universities to tailor-make training programs to address these needs. These types of programs can be offered as un-credentialled or can be micro-credentialled.”

Raineri also observes that many companies fail to see training as an investment. In addition, time is seen as a major challenge, with organisations now being more aware of the indirect costs of training—such as time off the job—being a barrier to increasing training. “This leads to many organisations moving to e-learning as the solution, as it reduces the cost per head of training; however, appropriate and specific off-the-shelf content is hard to find,” he says.

Baldry also says that any organisation that sees nationally recognised qualifications in work health and safety as simply a cost is, “in my opinion, myopic in their perspective,” he says. “We hear of cases where companies have spent less than $40,000 to train their leading hands and supervisors, and this has resulted in savings that total over $1 million on their workers' compensation premium due to a reduced incidence of LTIs and subsequent workers compensation claims.”

Baldry also noted that demand for in-house courses is dramatically increasing, with large and small enterprises all over the country training groups typically ranging from eight to 15 in number. “Last week we were contacted by a council that has an enforceable undertaking placed upon it due to an injury a worker has sustained while at work,” says Baldry. “Their estimate of the cost to them of rectification exceeds $400,000, and failure to comply with the EU by year’s end will have massive implications for the organisation, both structurally and financially. It is worth remembering with all things OHS/WHS, that you are dealing with legislation and that is spelt LAW. If you break the law, regardless of the justification, then the price must be paid,” he says.

Strother says there are a number of steps organisations and OHS professionals can take in order to maximise return on investments in OHS training:

1. **Be discerning in your assessment of training.** Fully understand what you aim to achieve and how you will assess the success of your approach. Avoid fads/trends and focusing on the “event” until you have genuinely assessed the contribution to your organisation’s safety and performance overall return on investment.

2. **Focus on the application of learning back at work.** Provide coaching, support and follow-up to ensure that knowledge gained and skills learnt are applied. We all forget things, and if we don’t apply what we learnt soon after learning, we forget (Ebbinghaus’s Forgetting Curve). Dr Brent Peterson from Columbia University in his research on learning effectiveness found that what happens back at work contributes to 50 per cent of learning effectiveness. Most organisations only allocate about 5 per cent of their effort (budget and time) to follow-up and don’t achieve their expected outcomes.

3. **Ensure that personnel understand why they are attending the training and what they are expected to do when they return to work.** In the same study quoted above, Peterson found that good pre-learning setup contributes to 26 per cent of learning effectiveness. (Note that workshop attendance only contributes 24 per cent to the overall effectiveness of learning whereas organisations focus 85 per cent of their effort (time and cost) on the program.)

4. **Recognise that training is not the solution to all issues.** How many times is training included
as a corrective action from an incident investigation when people do know what they are supposed to do, but didn’t do it? I love training people, however, I want people to be there for the right reasons, not because they are being punished – yes, I have had people say that in a workshop.

Training will not solve a performance issue where people already know what they are meant to do. A question to ask yourself is: “If their life depended on doing this action to the safety standard I require, could they do it?” If the answer is “no”, then you have a skill or knowledge issue so training/coaching/mentoring may be the answer, if the answer is “yes”, then you have a behaviour, performance, work design or some other issue so discussing performance to find solutions is appropriate. (Adapted from Mager and Pipe, Analyzing Performance Problems).

5. Understand what the need is and question the most appropriate way to provide the development required. Often the first consideration is a course. This is not always the best approach, particularly if you are not prepared to provide the follow-up referred to earlier. Is coaching, just-in-time training? Remember the 70-20-10 development approach which says that 70 per cent of learning occurs through hands-on experience, 20 per cent through interaction with peers and 10 per cent from attending training activities.

## Technology and continuous learning

New technologies and ways of working introduce new risks and challenges for OHS, according to Dr Aldo Raineri, discipline leader – occupational health and safety for CQ University. The recent Safe Work Australia report, Workplace Safety Futures, noted that as digital technologies advance in capability and decrease in cost, they are likely to enter the work environment in greater numbers and in a wider variety of roles. “Major advances in automation, artificial intelligence (AI), digitisation, augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), cyber-physical systems and other technologies are on the horizon,” he says.

Enabled by technological developments, the worldwide growth of peer-to-peer (P2P) platforms, such as Uber, Airtasker, and GOBI, has the potential to fundamentally shift employment patterns and structures towards a “gig economy” where freelance task-based work is common. “This is occurring in the context of an Australian workforce facing a number of key changes, such as a transition to professional service-based employment and the demographic shift towards an older workforce and rising levels of stress and chronic disease,” says Raineri.

In response to new technologies, changed legislation, social and cultural adjustments and organisational transformations, Raineri says people have had to redefine their roles and adapt to a life of more or less continuous turbulence. Central to this adaptation is the need for continuous learning. “OHS practitioners tend to be predominantly concerned with attitudinal change at the individual level, and with cultural change at the corporate or organisational level. Hence, a global shift towards lifelong learning, learning organisations and even a learning society would seem to be providential from the point of view of assisting OHS professionals with the broader aspects of their role. At the more micro level, OHS professionals are themselves subject to exactly the same trends and influences as their colleagues and clients. It is therefore necessary – perhaps even more necessary for them than for others – to be active lifelong learners,” he says.
The makings of great safety leadership

OHS Professional speaks with Phil Walton, HSE director – Australia, for Savanna Energy Services Corp, about the shortcomings of safety leadership programs and what OHS professionals can do to build effective safety leadership capability

How well do organisations generally fare when it comes to safety leadership?

In general terms, there are a lot of good intentions. Most of us know that leadership is the game changer for safety performance. Execution, however, is often poor and longevity is rarely achieved – great operation but the patient died.

What are the common hallmarks of a more effective approach to such programs?

1. Any serious discussion about safety leadership programs must start with an evaluation of readiness (which is seldom acknowledged). The maturity of the business will largely govern the nature of the program and its characteristics. For example, a program that worked spectacularly for a special forces unit may not be so appropriate in the upstream oil and gas industry – different environments and different levels of maturity.

2. Consultation with the audience is imperative. By talking to the target audience and asking them the right questions, the end user (i.e. the intended participants) can be recruited to become architects of the program. You won’t have to worry about the program becoming a success, as the end users will make it happen because it’s something that they want and something they see will add value.

3. Integration into other core business objectives and strategies will make or break the program. If the program pulls participants too far away from what is important to the business strategically, it’s impact, sustainability and overall success will be seriously compromised. There is an art to building a program around the strategic goals of the business to ensure good overlap, relevance and relatability.

What are the most common oversights in these programs?

Oversights usually begin with a neglect of the readiness of the business and the maturity baseline you have to work with. If the pitch is too sophisticated (or too simplistic), the credibility of the program will be wounded out of the gate. Readiness is the foundation of the program. Get this wrong and everything built on top of it will be wobbly.

The sheep-dip-style course is also a common oversight. This approach usually involves a one-off and intense exposure to the program, commonly delivered in a classroom in a compressed/stressed learning environment. Box ticked!

Learning preferences are an important ingredient for success. Failure to acknowledge that different people like to learn in different ways will not be beneficial to the success of the program.

Common feedback from the frontline has suggested that the use of external consultants and third parties has limited success in leadership programs. Workers prefer to deal with internal stakeholders who they have strong relationships and existing rapport with.

Lastly, in the absence of solid performance metrics being established for the program, a default reliance on injury frequency rates will emerge as a gauge for the success of the program. If injury rates move north then the program will be blamed for not doing its job. I’ve seen this derail programs that, in their youth, enjoyed very strong support from the upper echelons. Objective and evidence-based metrics for success are essential when implementing a safety leadership program.

What steps can organisations take to address these oversights?

Every flock needs a shepherd! The first step is to ensure the program has a champion who is going to go above and beyond demonstrating the strongest of convictions in implementation. This is the person who must lead the charge (notwithstanding, this is not the A person in the RACI matrix, this is the R person). It’s important to sweat the details and the endeavour should be run as...
A business serious about safety leadership should ensure that it has the right horsepower in the right places. Bespoke content and structure aligned to the maturity of the business are solid foundations.

As hinted at previously, if you take the time to ask workers what’s missing for them, they will tell you and participate in bridging the gap. Consultation with front-line workers, the end user of the program, is a must.

The learning environment is everything. The program should have enough bend to accommodate the main learning preferences of the end users. Classrooms and PowerPoints are withering on the vine. Coaching triads seem to be emerging in contemporary programs as being a reliable learning environment.

Pomp and ceremony around a grand rollout always tend to disappoint. Talk about “go live” and “sprints” tends to bore the end user and erode credibility. A steady pace and a practised hand can quietly grind away on implementation without the need for labels and fanfare. One day it’s not there and the next day it is. A modest and low-key approach to implementation often has significant benefits. And let’s face it, who really gets enthusiastic about another safety rollout these days?

How it all works and hangs together should be simple (but not simplistic). As Einstein said, if you can’t explain it simply then you don’t understand it well enough. The less complex the concept is, the better the chances of success will be. Safety people can sometimes make life very complicated. I always look for the main idea to be explained to me on one page with more pictures than words. If this can be achieved, then the idea will generally pass the smell test.

What are the implications for OHS professionals?

The OHS professional has to be front and centre of a safety leadership program. It begins at concept stage by playing a coaching and influencing role in helping the controlling minds of the business to make the right decisions when designing their program, allocating budget and setting timelines. It’s often a tough balance to strike. The OHS professional has to be the disruptor in these discussions – challenging norms and asking difficult questions. This can be hard work and lonely work. There are no silver bullets here. It takes time and diplomatic finesse (and this, by the way, is before the program even gets approved and leaves the boardroom table).

A key point to remember is that during the lifecycle of the program, most people will be busy doing their day job. Interest in the program can wane after the predictable and initial spike in interest – somebody has to ensure the message is kept fresh and appealing. There is a definite branding and public relations aspect to the program. Guess who this job often falls to?

There is also opportunity in taking a bold approach. Break the mould. If the engagement with the workforce has been successful, you’ll know the secret ingredients before you get started. The special blend of those secret ingredients may be a novel thing and not look like the off-the-shelf program. Lean into this and don’t be afraid of it. Do you want to be a bold leader or a timid follower? Coach and disrupt. Ask questions to steer/elevate thinking. Organisations generally don’t respond well to being told what to do. Coaching tends to consistently achieve better results. We have really begun to see this skill set emerge as a defining requirement for OHS professionals – not just in the safety leadership program space but across the board.

Walton recently spoke at the SIA Visions Conference 2018, which was held at the Mantra Southport on the Gold Coast from 5-7 September 2018.
Reducing psychological injuries through improving EI

A recent research study conducted in Australia found that developing the emotional intelligence of managers and workers will help prevent psychological injuries in the workplace, writes Dr Ben Palmer.

Building mentally safer workplaces is of ongoing importance to organisations and government. A 2015 study by Safe Work Australia found that over 7500 Australians are psychologically injured at work each year. These psychological injuries total some $480 million in claim costs and typically result in extended periods of time off work for those injured (typically 14.8 weeks).

Considerable effort has been taken to identify initiatives, strategies and legislation to prevent or minimise psychological injuries in workplaces. One initiative among many that has been rated as essential by expert panels of employers, mental health professionals and employees with experience of mental health problems has been the development of employees’ emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence refers to a set of skills to do with how well we perceive, understand, express, reason with and regulate emotions. Collectively, these skills help us make intelligent responses to, and use of, emotions. Emotions play a central role in psychological injuries caused by workplaces, particularly traumatic stress, depression and anxiety disorders. Research on emotional intelligence suggests it is a useful competency to develop within people to help prevent and bounce back from these types of injuries. People with higher levels of emotional intelligence report feeling less stressed, are physically healthier, build better working relationships with colleagues and outperform their less emotionally intelligent peers.

Improving mental health through EI

A recent research study conducted by Genos International in collaboration with WorkSafe Tasmania and the Department of Premier and Cabinet Tasmania, examined the relationship between individuals’ level of emotional intelligence and their level of resilience, mindfulness, occupational stress and employee engagement, in the working population of Tasmania. Importantly, the correlation between these variables and average annual salary for the different occupations of the participants involved in the study was also examined as a way of estimating the likely return on investment (ROI) that might be achieved from making incremental improvements in emotional intelligence.

As expected, results from over 1700 participants in the study found that people with higher levels of emotional intelligence also had higher levels of resilience and mindfulness and lower levels of occupational stress. They also reported greater levels of employee engagement. Uniquely, the study also found that people with higher emotional intelligence were typically working in higher-paid jobs. Statistical techniques were able to establish that the average annual salaries of employees could improve by $3801 per annum from a 1-point increase in their emotional intelligence.

The Tasmanian study suggests that organisations can make their workplaces more mentally safer by encouraging people to improve their emotional self-awareness (via self-reflection and techniques such as mindfulness meditation) and their emotional self-management (by engaging in self-care behaviours that build resilience and wellbeing, such as eating better, sleeping more, limiting screen time and caffeine, and regularly exercising). Importantly, the study also showed that organisations could also make their workplaces more mentally safer by helping people help others.

One of the more interesting findings of the current study was the correlation between skills of emotional intelligence to do with the awareness and management of others’ emotions, and personal levels of resilience and stress. They correlated almost as highly as the skills of emotional intelligence to do with the awareness and management of one’s own emotions.

A lot of work in developing resilience and stress management focuses on the self-oriented skills of emotional intelligence, self-awareness and self-management. The Tasmanian study suggests that of almost equal importance to personal resilience and stress management is building employees’ capacity to help others, that is, for example, their capacity to positively influence the way others feel, to help others deal effectively with stressful situations, and to help others resolve workplace conflicts.

Building emotional intelligence

Recent meta-analytical research (i.e. research on research studies) on the development of emotional intelligence has shown that good programs improve individuals’ emotional intelligence by, on average, 17 percentile points. One of the benefits of these programs is that the development of emotional intelligence capabilities doesn’t just help improve individuals’ stress management, relationships and wellbeing at work. People most often transfer the learning to all other aspects of their lives, helping them become better partners, parents and building better relationships outside of the workplace.

The return on investment from emotional intelligence development is likely to be more than simply a reduction in psychological injuries and stress-related leave claims. As previously mentioned, emotional intelligence has been shown to account for variance in various indices of workplace performance, and other variables that can readily be monetarised such as absenteeism (the number of sick days off people take), employee engagement and employee turnover. Essentially, people with higher levels of emotional intelligence tend to perform better, have less days off per year, report higher levels of employee engagement and aren’t as likely to leave or turn over (either voluntarily or involuntarily).

In summary, the Tasmanian study and other research like it confirms that developing the emotional intelligence of employees will result in a reduction of psychological injuries. Moreover, it is likely to improve staff wellbeing and performance within and outside of the workplace.

Dr Ben Palmer is CEO of Genos International, a leading consulting firm which specialises in emotional intelligence assessment and programs that enhance self-awareness, empathy, leadership and resilience. For the full report on the research study please email support@genosinternational.com.
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