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# CONTENTS



## A FESTIVE SEASON FRUSTRATED BY FRAUDSTERS

Identity fraud is real, and a real headache... **4**



## THE HAPPINESS ADVANTAGE

People around the world consistently rate subjective well-being as the most important thing in their lives – more so than success and income. **14**



## NEUROSAFETY: A LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

Guiding the human consciousness requires specific leadership qualities. **18**



## BUILD A RESILIENT ORGANISATION

We take a look at how organisations can be resilient amongst all the turmoil threatening their existence. **22**



## SUFFERING FROM SICK-BUILDING SYNDROME?

Sick-building syndrome is sometimes the cause of severe physical ailments in the workplace, but it often goes unnoticed. **30**



## GOING COLD TURKEY ON DRUG ABUSE

Drug abuse among employees puts them and their peers at risk of workplace accidents. **36**



## EMERGENCY PLANNING MADE SIMPLE

There are six key actions that should be taken when planning for emergencies. **40**



## WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION SIMPLIFIED

The Federated Employer's Mutual Assurance Company (FEM) explains how it enables easier management of workmen's compensation. **42**

## COVER STORY

Saioosh brings delegates the largest OHS conference in the country. **P24**



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## REGULARS

Editor's letter **P4**  
Letter **P5**  
News **P6**  
Safety from the heart **P12**  
Sharman on safety **P14**  
Safety culture **P18**  
Legally speaking **P20**  
Risk perspective **P22**  
News from Saioosh **P26**  
Subscription form **P47**

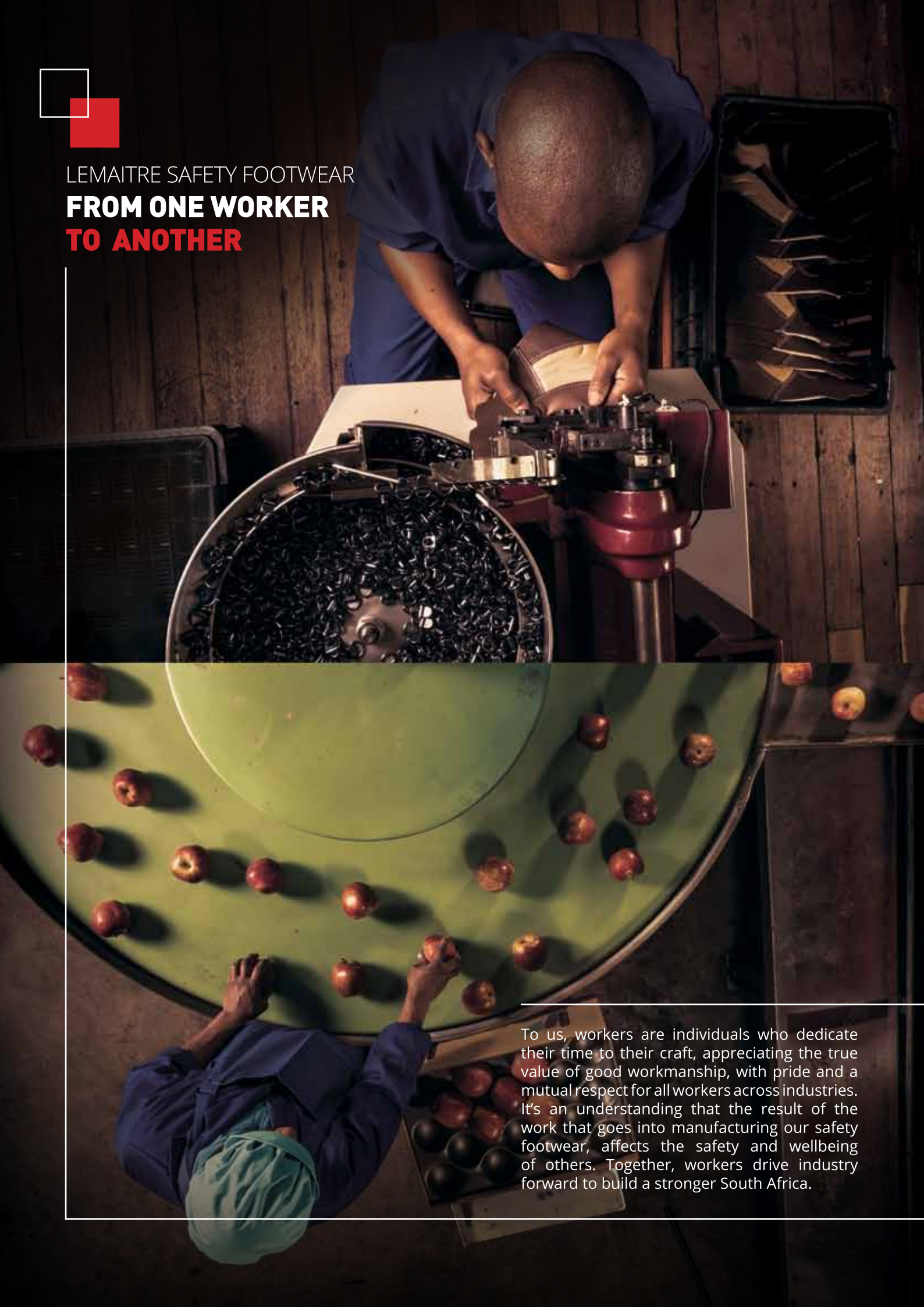


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**LEMAITRE**

# A FESTIVE SEASON FRUSTRATED BY FRAUDSTERS

**IDENTITY FRAUD IS REAL, AND  
A REAL HEADACHE ... TAKE MY  
WORD FOR IT**



**GAVIN MYERS**

**D**uring December, I decided that it was time to migrate my cellphone contract to one that better suited my needs. I happily marched into my local Cell C branch, told the friendly lady behind the counter what I wanted, handed over my ID and waited for her to finish clicking through her system to "upgrade" me.

But then she made a routine call to the Cell C credit department. Despite being a loyal customer for the past five years, and never missing a payment or having a poor credit score, her colleague on the other end of the line informed her that I have an outstanding balance with another provider and, as such, they would have to deny my request for a migration.

I was adamant that this simply could not be, and hurried off to sign up to as many credit bureaus as I could to check my credit record.

I was horrified to find that still listed was a Telkom Mobile account that had been taken out fraudulently in my name back in 2016 – which had burdened me with six months of emails, phone calls, affidavits and statements to Telkom and its tenacious debt collector. Despite eventual confirmation from both that the matter was closed and the credit agencies would be notified, this issue apparently still haunts me...

According to Experian South Africa, fraudsters are becoming smarter and more nimble, and it can take up to 292 days for individuals to notice their information has been fraudulently used.

"Criminal activity is often discovered only at the least-expected times, such as when paying a bill at a restaurant, applying for a credit card, or taking out a mobile phone contract," says Dion Scotten, fraud consultant at Experian South Africa. "This comes at a great cost to victims, with repercussions including large bill payments, inability to access credit and loans, as well as an impacted credit score."

So, what can you (and I, for that matter) do to not fall victim to identity theft and fraud?

"It is important to stay in control of calls, letters and emails to detect any unusual activity," explains Scotten.

Regular credit card and bank statement checks help to identify unusual transactional activities. One can also set up transaction SMS or email alerts on bank accounts. Be alert that fraud might have occurred if you receive a credit card that you did not apply for, or messages or phone calls regarding accounts which have received approval or denial of credit.

Credit reports should also be checked regularly. This can be done through various credit bureaus and is a good way to spot fraud early. When checking your credit report, it is important to keep an eye on irregular searches made on your report by lenders as a result of a credit application.

Looking out for loans or accounts on your credit report that are not yours, as well as incorrect personal details, such as your home address, are also vital, Experian adds.

If you do find yourself falling victim to fraud, it is important to take action quickly and contact all relevant parties immediately.

"Early detection of identity theft is important and, apart from financial losses, can save up to 300 hours of having to deal with the administrative consequences created by this fraud. Being extra vigilant and creating a monitoring routine can help to identify suspicious activity and protect you against identity fraud," Scotten says.

Had I done that regularly over the past year and a bit, I'd now have a new cellphone contract, instead of a re-emerging headache. **SM**



## YOU SNOOZE, YOU LOSE...

Growing up in Namibia, I spent many of my holidays on my grandparents' farm, which is in an arid area of the country. There was no electricity and every drop of water had to be pumped from a borehole. This didn't worry my grandfather in the least.

Regardless of the season, he was up every morning before sunrise when the old cuckoo clock struck four, and was then in the kitchen making coffee. After this he headed out to attend to the work of the day.

He didn't press a "snooze" button. In fact, I doubt he ever set an alarm clock. His motto was: "today, not tomorrow".

He knew that when it was time to plough, that's what had to be done, because the rains don't have a snooze button. The same went for the cows. When they came into the kraal in the early morning, it was milking time. No hitting the snooze button.

The snooze button is an invention which encourages the poor habit of delaying unavoidable action. Pressing the snooze button buys one a few extra minutes' sleep, but doesn't make a difference in the long run.

Instead of hitting the ground running, we fall prey to this folly of delayed action, which often results in things taking longer. Every time we choose "I-can-do-that-later", we waste time picking up the thread and re-focusing.



In terms of safety, there are a number of examples. Two of these are opportunity and risk. Opportunity normally has a short time frame and if you press snooze, in most cases, you will lose out. The expression: "there will always be another opportunity", is the language of losers.

The same goes for risk. Once it has been identified, it must be dealt with, because a risky situation cannot be put on hold. Actually, if swift action is not taken, an even bigger risk might be created by breeding complacency.

**Jürgen Tietz, director: eKhuluma and Disruptive Safety**



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## HIGH-TECH, INNOVATIVE BREAKTHROUGHS FROM BUREAU VERITAS

Bureau Veritas has unveiled innovative professional solutions and services, which will further assist its clients to meet the growing challenges of quality, health, safety, environmental protection and social responsibility.

The professional services company has also invested in infrastructure and footprint to further enhance its offerings to customers.

"We are committed to local legislation and we are poised to roll out social corporate responsibility initiatives that will further improve the lives of others. We continue to develop and engineer new solutions in support of our clients' wide range of needs," says Marc Roussel, senior vice president of Bureau Veritas in Africa.

Seven new service offerings have been announced from various divisions within Bureau Veritas:

### OIL AND PETROCHEMICALS

An online cloud-based reporting platform – the Lube Oil Analysis Management System – optimises productivity and improves maintenance, while reducing product waste and reducing pressure on the environment.

### METALS AND MINERALS

Transportable Moisture Limits is a new testing offering. This

type of testing is becoming a global requirement and refers to the maximum moisture content permissible for cargo of any ship to be considered safe for transportation. If a cargo liquefies, it can affect the centre of gravity and stability of the ship, which can result in safety and environmental issues.

### AGRI-FOOD

An innovative and high-tech automated laboratory has been opened in Cape Town. New equipment has been introduced at the laboratory for testing of pesticide chemicals. It will ensure faster reporting on the latest legislation in South Africa with a high-spec result.



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## INDUSTRY

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## CERTIFICATION

The Quality Management system ISO 9001, the Environmental Management system ISO 14001 and the Health and Safety Management system ISO 45001 have been revised.

Clients are poised to benefit from sets of technical documents providing guidance on the standards and its requisites through the website [www.lead.bureauveritas.com](http://www.lead.bureauveritas.com). Training courses, online self-assessment tools and transition packs have been designed to make the transition quick and efficient.

## ZAMBIAN OPERATIONS

Bureau Veritas Zambia has announced the launch of the instrument-based Vehicle Inspection Service (VIS), which brings improved reliability and safety to load vetting. VIS will benefit fleet-management clients requiring hazard control.



## GOVERNMENT SERVICES AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Various reformed solutions have been presented to government clients to ensure improved service delivery. Inspection testing is now done electronically and in real time, thereby improving the quality of reports, delivery periods, productivity and efficiency. The introduction of electronic certificates ensures enhanced security features for clients.

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## SANITECH INCREASES PEST CONTROL SERVICES

In October 2017, Pristine Health Services sold its Gauteng-based hygiene and pest-control services to Sanitech. The purchase has given Sanitech greater presence in the pest-control market, and the company is now able to offer an additional service to its current clients.

"We can now move into various industries where we may not have had a presence before, thereby increasing our experience in all areas of cleaning and hygiene services," explains Erasmus.

With Sanitech's strong health, safety and environmental credentials of BS OHSAS 18001:2009 and ISO 14001:2004, customers are assured of quality products and services from 26 branches nationwide.

Sanitech is a leading provider of cleaning and hygiene services, operating in sub-Saharan Africa. It prides itself on being the continent's leader in toilet hire and technology, providing superior products and excellent customer service.

Sanitech is a division of Waco Africa, which is a subsidiary of Waco International: a global provider of formwork, shoring, scaffolding, industrial maintenances services, hydraulic and suspended access platforms, relocatable modular



buildings, portable sanitation, and hygiene solutions.

The group operates out of more than 100 locations in 15 countries across three continents.



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## SELF-SERVICE BULK ATM TO ELIMINATE PAPERWORK AND RECONCILIATION

Cash Connect has officially launched the bulk deposit acceptor (BDA) device. The compact under-counter cash deposit system allows bulk note and coin deposits to be processed quickly and easily. The device has been tested countrywide and is now live.

Pierre Liebenberg, GM development and manufacturing at Cash Connect Management Solutions, says the automated cash-handling device allows bulk note and cash deposits to be processed quickly. It also cuts down on time depositors spend in service queues and enables a

speedy reconciliation and bank deposit process for cashiers.

The device is flexible and cost-effective and has a processing speed of up to 300 banknotes per minute and a capacity of 10 000 bank notes.

The BDA is designed for



retail and distribution centres and makes efficient use of available space within cash offices with its through-the-wall configuration.

It automatically detects counterfeit notes and rejects them using its reject pocket, which can hold up to 50 bank notes.

"The system is four to six times faster than manual counting and verification processes," says Liebenberg.

Richard Phillips, CEO of Cash Connect Management Solutions, says: "Automated cash management eliminates the need for manual paperwork and reconciliation. The secure cash vault is built to South African Bureau of Standards Category 4 standards to withstand the most determined attacks."

Cash Connect backs up its technology with on-site training, 24-hour call centre support, on-site technical assistance and an online portal where customers can view their deposits and reconciliations, as well as view and download transaction history.



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# RENTOKIL FIRST ON LED TECHNOLOGY FOR PEST CONTROL

**THE NEW RANGE OF FLY KILLER DEVICES BY RENTOKIL USES LIGHT-EMITTING DIODE (LED) TECHNOLOGY, AND AIMS TO SAVE MONEY AS WELL AS DELIVER QUALITY, SAYS THE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PEST CONTROL SERVICE**

**A**ccording to Rentokil, 45 percent of businesses that have suffered fly infestation in the past five years report a moderate to high concern about loss of income and productivity.

For three years Rentokil has been analysing LED technology and testing its new units against the market. Rentokil believes the technology is now at a point that its benefits can be leveraged for customers, due to lower cost and enhanced performance of the newer LEDs.

Rentokil undertook months of testing at the Rentokil Global Science Centre, working with the key players in developing this technology, and trialling prototypes all over the world. At the same time, it gathered feedback from customers and tested the products' effectiveness. The company is now proud to announce the launch of the new fly killer range: Lumnia.


Mario Pluke, national technical manager at Rentokil, says: "Lumnia is the first electric fly-killer range in the world to use LED lighting rather than traditional blue-light fluorescent tubes.

"The Lumnia range is a result of working in partnership with a leading manufacturer of LEDs. The switch from traditional fluorescent tubes allows for an estimated average reduction in energy consumption of 60 percent when compared to similar units."

In addition to the energy saving benefits of using LEDs, the unit has different lighting settings to suit the requirements of specific locations, as well as an active lighting mode that adapts output according to the ambient lighting levels at individual premises, further reducing energy costs.



"The unit has improved serviceability, which reduces the number of times that our fly killers need to be serviced at heights. It also offers several energy modes: from high, to medium and low. It also offers an active mode, which continuously adapts to ultraviolet (UV) levels and the conditions of the customer's premises," says Pluke.

This unit has a modular design, which can be used on a glue board or in an encapsulation unit, and offers a control or monitor option depending on infestation levels. 

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON LUMNIA FROM RENTOKIL, SCAN THE QR CODE





# TAKING A LESSON FROM THE MILITARY

**IN MANY INSTANCES SAFETY ARTICLES ARE AIMED AT THE SAFETY PROFESSIONALS. HOWEVER, IT IS IMPORTANT FOR LEADERS TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SAFETY OF THEIR TEAMS WHEN DRIVING FOR DESIRED SAFETY CULTURES AND MATURITY LEVELS**

**A**s part of the military conscription, which was instituted in South Africa on August 4, 1967, like most young white South African males, I was called up to join the South African Defence Force (SADF) in July 1980, as I had finished college at the end of 1979.

I was subsequently sent to an infantry battalion located in a town on the banks of the Orange River called Upington, in the Northern Cape region of South Africa.

During our 12-week basic training, I became familiar with the mindset of continuous and repeated training and instruction in understanding rules and procedures and getting things right, as well as the importance of the "buddy" system.

At the time, most of the riflemen in my platoon thought all the retraining was a waste of time. The corporals would repeat everything and drill us until we understood what was required, and punish us when we did not meet the requirements. Most of us believed that the corporals and our staff sergeant (Palmer) just wanted to mess us around.

How wrong we were, and we would realise the importance of doing things right as time moved on during our two-year stint in the military, as well as during subsequent annual military camps.

As my grandfather fought and was captured in France during the First World War, I developed an interest in reading books based on the Great War. My interest later extended to the Second World War as well as the South African Border War that took place on the border of the former South West Africa and Angola from August 1966 to early 1990.

Through all this reading I came to realise that there are

many lessons that leaders in industry can take from the military.

Hopefully, this article – and the follow up in the next issue of SHEQ MANAGEMENT – will provide some of the reasons why we can compare the two.

## **LEADERSHIP IS THE KEY ASPECT OF SUCCESS**

Similar to the military, industry leaders have an important role to play in ensuring the safe operation of all the equipment, as well as safe behaviours of the employees and contractors in ensuring everybody returns home safely at the end of the day.

In the military, the corporal taking his team out on patrol is responsible for ensuring good planning and execution of the task. He ensures each member of the team has an understanding of the objectives, as well as making sure all procedures and requirements are clearly understood and followed.

Should things go wrong during the patrol, it is his or her responsibility to assess the situation and take action to ensure the safety of the team is not compromised. The corporal's prime responsibility is to ensure the team returns to base safely at the end of each patrol.

The same applies to industry leaders (managers, supervisors and foreman): they have the responsibility to ensure good planning of a task, clear understanding of the hazards and the risks, as well as mitigating procedures and controls to ensure the safety of the team who will conduct the work.

To do this successfully, comprehensive risk assessments and safe working procedures must be available and all those involved must be well trained in the details thereof.





Should conditions change, or new risks be identified, the leader has the responsibility to stop the activities and to develop and agree on suitable control measures. The prime objective of the leaders must be to send everybody home safely every day.

If the leaders responsible for the line do not take full responsibility for their teams, then all the aspects listed in this article will not be implemented successfully and undesired incidents, injuries, occupational health illnesses and diseases, as well as fatal injuries, will continue to occur.

It might at times mean that jobs are delayed to ensure the conditions are suitable and the safety of the team is considered. This is exactly what Commander General Dwight D Eisenhower did on June 4, 1944, when he learnt that the weather could be detrimental to the safety of the Allied troops during the D-Day landings. As a result, he suspended the landings by 24 hours and eventually they only commenced on June 6, 1944.

### SELECTION OF SUITABLE CANDIDATES

In the military, soldiers are put through a series of tests and

I am suggesting that pre-medical screening can ensure an understanding of the person's condition and whether they would be suitable for the specific type of work.

Leaders should have an understanding of whether people in their employ have any health issues that would exclude them when allocating the work. They should also identify suitable control measures to ensure health and medical conditions are not aggravated or compromised.

For example, a person suffering from occupational asthma can still be employed. They would, however, not be permitted to work in a chemical plant, and a person showing signs of noise-induced hearing loss should be placed on a continuous monitoring programme to identify if the condition worsens or remains stable.

### A "BUDDY" SYSTEM

In the military it is common to have a "buddy" system in which soldiers are trained and coached to take care of themselves as well as others during training sessions and in combat.

This approach is crucial to ensure the safety of each soldier in the team. Having a buddy system is a caring approach as soldiers can openly talk to each other about all aspects including their mental state.

There are many initiatives that can be considered to promote the buddy approach in industry. These include behaviour-based safety campaigns where staff observe peers conducting activities to identify issues of concern and to provide guidance and support. Using different colour t-shirts also enables employees look out for those who are still in training.

It is, however, crucial that leaders promote and support these types of initiatives to ensure that they are successful.


### ISSUING OF PPE

The issuing of personal protective equipment (PPE) is the last resort when considering mitigation of risks and when considering the hierarchy of risk controls, however in many circumstances the issuing of PPE is necessary.

It is, once again, the responsibility of the leaders to identify the most suitable PPE to provide the desired protection.

Selection of PPE should be undertaken by the leader in consultation with the employees to find the best solution (both practical and comfortable) and should not be left to the sole discretion of the purchasing department. Cost should not be the only consideration when selecting PPE.

In most instances, soldiers going into combat are issued with equipment to provide maximum ballistic protection, which is as comfortable as possible while providing sufficient manoeuvrability for the soldiers.

I end off part one of this article with the following quote from Eisenhower: "Farming looks mighty easy when your plough is a pencil and you're a thousand miles from the corn field". 



medical examinations to ensure that they are suitable for the military core that they wish, or are required, to join. If they do not pass the physical and health assessments, they are not permitted to join, as their relevant issue could place their own life, or that of fellow soldiers, at risk in a combat situation.

In some countries, it is a legislative requirement for companies to conduct pre-medical examinations as a baseline in understanding the limitations of the person.

Now, I am not suggesting that people with certain health conditions or disabilities should not be employed. Instead,



**Brian Darlington** is the group head of safety and health for the Mondi Group, based in Vienna, Austria. He has filled the role since 2012 and is responsible for safety and health in more than 30 countries. Brian started working at Iscor before joining Mondi in 1987, working in Gauteng. In 2000 he transferred to the Kraft Division in Richards Bay. During 2005, Brian transferred to Europe, taking up the position of business unit SHE manager, responsible for SHE in paper mills in Austria, Hungary, Israel, Slovakia, Poland, South Africa and Russia, as well as forests operations in South Africa and Russia.



# THE HAPPINESS ADVANTAGE

**PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD CONSISTENTLY RATE SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING AS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN THEIR LIVES - MORE SO THAN SUCCESS AND INCOME. FREQUENTLY IT EVEN RANKS ABOVE FAMILY TIES AND PERSONAL CONNECTIONS. AS WE KICK OFF 2018, LET'S DISCUSS HOW TO IMPROVE OUR HAPPINESS AND BOOST OUR WELL-BEING**

**D**espite what we may at first expect, well-being is not directly related to socioeconomic status, gender, race, or level of income or education. So, the young administrative assistant cycling to work in their old tennis shoes may be as happy as the business leader driving to the office in her top of the range BMW and Christian Louboutin heels.

The desire to improve our well-being has grown immensely and in recent years the meteoric rise of self-help and personal-improvement books, apps, online forums and blogs certainly serves to underline this and fuel a constant loop of generating interest and providing satisfaction.

With the surge in interest, the definition of the term well-being has also become easier, with both the self-development authors and the social sciences moving to define the previously hard-to-classify term of "subjective

well-being" with more clarity. Nowadays, well-being is about "feeling good", or perhaps in one word: "happiness".

## **THE HERITABILITY OF HAPPINESS**

The pursuit of happiness seems to intrigue psychologists as much as it intrigues journalists, Hollywood film makers and society at large. Research suggests that we may be born "happy" – inheriting our cheerfulness and subjective well-being from our parents.

According to recent studies, we are all born with a level of happiness, known as the hedonic set-point. Fortunately, for most of us, our set-points are usually above zero, in other words on the happy side of neutral.

In a study of subjective well-being in more than 2 300 individuals, social psychologists David Lykken and Auke Tellegen at the University of Minnesota, found that almost



90 percent rated themselves to have high levels of subjective well-being and long-term happiness.

It could well be, then, that as we human beings have evolved those of our forebears who were grouchy or miserable fared less well in the "struggle for survival" and had less luck in the mating game, leading the researchers to suggest that mankind has evolved a bias towards positive well-being simply through the process of natural selection.

Even for those in the minority, who didn't inherit the happiness gene, their personality may have already taken over to generate a higher level of well-being.

Several cross-sectional studies have shown that well-being is strongly related to the Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality, especially the factors of neuroticism, extraversion, and conscientiousness.

As many pre-hire personality profiling exercises utilise the FFM, this may offer the potential to screen for "happier employees" – but caution is needed as, typically, they offer only a snapshot at a single point in time.

While subjective well-being is not entirely subsumed by personality, the two constructs have been reliably correlated by the research for more than 20 years now. Elements such as coping styles, emotional intelligence, sociability and conflict-resolution skills have all been strongly linked to helping us feel happier for longer.

“ All humans have a “psychological immune system” that helps us feel better and “synthesise” happiness.

#### SATISFACTION GUARANTEED?

A meta-analysis of 99 cross-sectional and longitudinal studies revealed that happy people are more satisfied with their jobs. They perform better on assigned tasks than less happy peers and are more likely to take on extra role tasks such as helping others.

If, from a commercial perspective, the prospect of gaining discretionary work activity from employees is not quite enough of a motivator, the study also concluded that happy people are less likely to exhibit withdrawal behaviour such as absenteeism.

The Institute of People and Performance suggests that happier people are:

- forty-seven times more productive than their least-happy colleagues;
- set themselves higher work goals;
- work with 25-percent more efficiency and effectiveness; and
- contribute a day and a quarter more every week than those unhappy workers.

Gallup's Employee Engagement Index explores employees' attitudes to work and their well-being and reveals that engaged employees feel more emotionally connected to and involved in their work activities. These employees smile and laugh more, experience more enjoyment in life and experience less negative feelings such as worry and anger.

By contrast, those who are not emotionally connected to their workplace are less likely to invest discretionary effort, and those who are "actively disengaged" are not just emotionally disconnected, but also jeopardise the work of those around them – and, in fact, are less happy and have poorer levels of mental health than those people who are unemployed.

However, that's not all – disengaged employees have fewer happy days at work, and also suffer worse weekends than their colleagues. This could be due to negative work-related emotions drifting over into leisure time and family life.

It's feasible to expect that such elongation of negative emotion, coupled with the lack of respite typically afforded by the weekend, may produce harmful effects on long-term health.

Increasing engagement seems to improve the subjective well-being of employees. In turn, improved well-being has been shown by other studies to enhance work performance and play a causal role in the achievement of positive outcomes and goal attainment.

So, by engaging our employees fully in the workplace, we can maximise opportunities to improve their health, happiness and personal success, while at the same time boosting business productivity.

#### THE CAUSE OF HAPPINESS

Having what the positive psychology movement calls the "Happiness Advantage", or an optimistic, positive mindset, has also been shown to help doctors improve the speed and accuracy of diagnosis by almost 20 percent, raise the hit-rate of salesmen by over 37 percent, increase the productivity and job satisfaction of office workers by more than 30 percent, boost creativity and build resilience.

Happy feelings occur when the chemical dopamine floods our system, switching on the learning centres in our brain, generating feelings of being alive and outwardly exhibiting signs of happiness.

While it's not quite as easy as instructing those around us to "get positive", there are four simple actions that have proved to be highly successful in helping us attain that happiness advantage:

- **Being thankful** – identifying three things for which to say "thank you";
- **Exercise** – the heart rate is raised through short-duration moderate exercise. Ten minutes of activity such as jogging, body weight exercises like press ups or sit ups, or even walking at a fast pace are all sufficient;
- **Meditation** – cultivating a sense of openness or a "growth mindset" through self-guided or instructor-led meditation;
- **Random acts of kindness** – simple expressions of altruism, including opening a door for someone, allowing the car ahead to exit the junction, or bringing a colleague a coffee, all count.

Of course, there's a catch. Just engaging in one of these four actions in itself is not sufficient. The scientists behind this research agree that in order to rewire the brain and gain the advantage, we need to stick with the chosen new actions for a period of least 21 days. At this point, the actions turn into habits and start to elevate the dopamine levels, bring smiles to our faces and happiness to our hearts.

The benefits of happiness don't just end with improved well-being. A study, conducted by American strategy



consultants the Reliability Group in 2010, identified the most common underlying causes of safety accidents. Perhaps surprisingly, cheerfulness of the workplace; levels of stress experienced; and job satisfaction all ranked within the top ten.

### THE SOUND OF MUSIC

Psychologist Dan Gilbert suggests that all humans have a "psychological immune system" that helps us feel better and "synthesise" happiness. Listening to our favourite music has been a popular way to relax and unwind after a hard day, but researchers at Serbia's University of Nis have found that listening to music releases hormones which causes the synthesis referred to by Gilbert.

The researchers also found that listening to music was effective in improving health, as "when we listen to music that we like, endorphins are released from the brain and this improves our vascular health".

To test their hypotheses, 74 patients with cardiac disease were split into three groups. Group A was given an exercise routine to follow for three weeks. Group B followed the same exercise routine, but, in addition, were instructed to listen to their favourite music for 30 minutes every day. Group C only listened to music, and did not participate in exercise.

At the end of the programme, participants in Group A were found to have boosted vital measures of heart functionality significantly and increased their capacity for exercise by 29 percent.

The participants in Group B were observed to have increased their exercise capacity by 39 percent. Curiously, even Group C, who did not undertake any exercise, improved their exercise capacity by 19 percent.

While the study was conducted using patients already suffering from heart disease, the research team is confident that the findings are relevant to wider society, based on established knowledge that tells us that regular exercise is good for improving coronary health in healthy adults.

While the conclusions offer an interesting perspective for the enhancement of well-being, their findings are not exactly new. Around 2 800 years ago, simple musical patterns were

found to improve the physical performance of Olympic athletes by around 15 percent. Since then, our fascination with the science of music and its benefit to our well-being has continued.

Reactions to music are perhaps considered broadly as subjective, but a multitude of clinical studies reveal that cardiorespiratory variables are strongly influenced by music under a range of circumstances.


Music has been found to have a positive influence on those suffering from depression. It has also been shown to reduce hypertension, improve sleep quality, reduce heart rate and blood pressure and improve respiratory volumes.

So, if adding music to the range of workplace well-being interventions seems like the way forward, what should we be playing? The research team suggests that some genres of music are less effective – such as heavy metal, which is found to raise stress levels – while opera, classical and other kinds of "joyful" sounds were more likely to stimulate endorphins in the brain.

Researchers observed that music without lyrics was the most effective in creating happiness, because music with words "can upset the emotions". Classical music had proportionately greater positive impact than any other genre, and researches identified specific musical instruments, including the organ, piano, flute, guitar, harp and saxophone, that were all effective at getting the endorphins flowing.

So, it's time to pop another dime in the jukebox and bring the benefit of the sound of music to the workplace. The top-five tunes that have been scientifically proven to boost happiness and improve our well-being:

1. Bach's Brandenburg Concerto Number 3
2. Verdi's Va Pensiero
3. Puccini's Turandot
4. Beethoven's 9th Symphony
5. Vivaldi's Four Seasons

So, will it be beta-blockers or Bach, pills or Puccini, surveillance or symphonies, counselling or classics? Perhaps it's time to take a step back and look at alternatives to your well-being interventions. 



Professor **Andrew Sharman** is an international member of the South African Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (SAIOSH), a Chartered Fellow of IOSH, and the Chief Executive of RMS international consultants on leadership and cultural excellence to a wide range of blue-chip corporates and non-government organizations. Find out more at [www.RMSswitzerland.com](http://www.RMSswitzerland.com)

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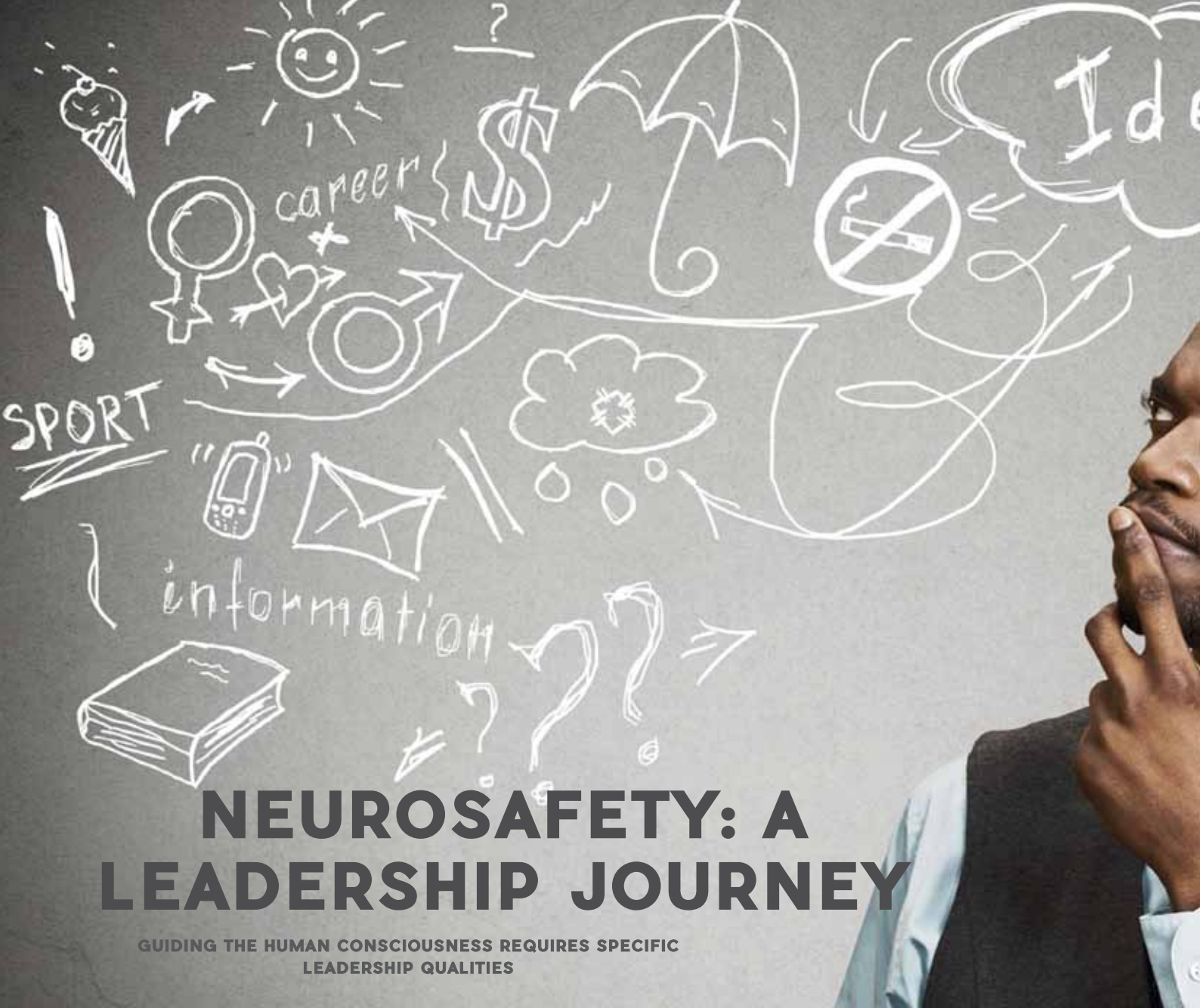


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# NEUROSAFETY: A LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

GUIDING THE HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS REQUIRES SPECIFIC LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

**T**he demand for mass production during the Industrial Revolution brought about greater efficiency in organisational processes. Improved methods of producing goods were required to maximise productivity, reduce costs and increase profitability. Business owners started to rely on managers to coordinate and optimise production.

This strategy soon spilled over to trying to manage people, as one of the ways to increase production is to improve worker performance. However, while systems, processes and budgets can be managed; people do not respond that well to being managed.

Things can be controlled, but people need to be led. This awareness led to the dawn of our modern-day concept of leadership.

## CONVENTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Extensive research has been undertaken to try to determine what constitutes a model leader. In spite of all the studies, there are considerable gaps in our understanding of leadership.

Currently, there are over 100 definitions of leadership and if you Google the word leader, you get over 300 000 hits. More than 100 000 books on leadership are listed on *Amazon.com* alone. However, the notion of leadership remains quite elusive. We are still unsure whether to focus on leadership traits, behaviours, styles or competencies.

In our inability to define the ideal leader, most people in positions of authority have defaulted to what works for them. This quandary is amplified by the fact that countless people are promoted into leadership positions because of their technical acumen. The reality is that the skills needed to be, for example, an artisan, shop steward, or engineer are entirely different to those of a capable leader.

The expertise to manage a business is not the same as technical proficiency, and, at times, is contrary to the aptitude needed to lead people. As a result, the quality of leadership in many organisations is rather low.

Gallup's State of the Global Workplace report revealed that 85 percent of employees are either not engaged in, or are actively disengaged from, their work. This equated to approximately seven trillion dollars in lost productivity. The





ramifications for safety are just as serious.

The good news is Gallup's research found that companies with high employee engagement had a 78-percent higher success rate in their safety figures than those with low engagement. Having effective leaders is, therefore, not a "nice to have", but rather an outright necessity.

#### NEURO-LEADERSHIP

Fortunately, advances in the field of neuroscience are helping to connect the dots between human interaction and successful leadership practices. More than ever before, we have a better grasp into how the neural connections in the brain impact behaviour.

The recent discoveries in neuroscience are playing a significant role in reshaping how we define, select and develop competent leaders.



**Dr Brett Solomon** is the CEO of The Kinetic Leadership Institute and is a recognised leader in combining neuroscience, change management and leadership theory to drive cultural transformation processes. Brett specialises in neuroleadership, especially when it comes to an understanding of what motivates human behaviour and how to influence it. He has been involved in numerous culture change and leadership development initiatives throughout Africa, Australia, Canada, Saudi Arabia and the United States.

Tobias Kiefer, global learning leader at EY, said: "The art of synchronising the science of the brain with leadership behaviours offers the best hope for effecting real change in a leader and within an organisation. That is because understanding neuro-leadership provides insight to the impact that our emotions and behaviours – and the behaviours of those around us – have on our success and failure."

Neuro-leadership empowers leaders with insight into how the brain works. Being aware of what drives human behaviour – based on a few fundamental "brain rules" – places leaders in the driver's seat. Instead of working against the brain's natural processes, this new knowledge enables leaders to influence their teams far more effectively.

“Our conscious mind is similar to a torch. It can focus on only one place at one time.

#### THE CONSCIOUS BRAIN

We have a small conscious capacity. According to neuroscientist Dr Joseph Dispenza, every second the brain processes around 400-billion bits of information. Of those 400-billion bits, the conscious mind uses only 2 000 bits to make us aware of what is happening around us.

Despite popular belief, it is impossible to multi-task consciously. Our conscious mind is similar to a torch. It can focus on only one place at one time. You cannot scatter its beam.

This means that it is very easy for us to fail to see a lot of what is happening around us. While I am focused on one task, it is natural to miss a potential hazard behind me. This is not an issue of attitude or intelligence; it is an inherent limitation of the conscious brain.

It is common to hear that people can look directly at something, but do not register or "see" it. This is because their mind is focused on something else.

Knowing this, leaders should continue to encourage their teams to undertake quality risk assessments, actively pay attention during toolbox talks, and pay attention when participating in inspections and walkabouts.

Completing a risk assessment and signing it off is inadequate; being disengaged in a toolbox talk is irresponsible; and being absent minded during a walk-about is not only a waste of time, it is potentially dangerous.

When doing high-risk jobs, or working in hazardous environments, it is critical to be thorough, alert and conscientious. This is far more important than just being legally compliant; it could be life-saving. **SM**



# THEORY OF EXTERNALITIES AND WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION

**WHAT ARE THE PROPER ROLES OF LABOUR, THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND GOVERNMENT IN THE PROVISION AND OPERATION OF WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION? THE ECONOMIC THEORY OF EXTERNALITIES PROVIDES AN EXCELLENT FRAMEWORK TO ANSWER THESE AND OTHER QUESTIONS RELATING TO WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION**



**F**irst, what is the economic theory of externalities? The basic theory is simple and sound; the problem arises in the detail and in its application. A person (A) faces an externality when the actions of another person (B) impose a cost on him or her. Pollution is the most common example.

Assume B is an upstream factory and discharges polluted water into the river. Factory A is downstream. Before factory A can use the water, it has to clean it. It can then be said that B is imposing an externality on A.

A's solution is to internalise the externality, which would mean that B would bear the cost of cleaning the pollution it has caused. This forms the basis of the polluter-pays principle.

Occupational accidents and diseases impose externalities. What would happen if a person is injured at work, or contracts an occupational disease? They would not be able to work and support themselves, which would mean someone else, or the state, would have to support them. The same would apply to medical expenses.

So, it can rightly be said that the injury or disease imposes an externality on other persons. The injury or disease is a consequence of working, regardless of whether or not someone else can be blamed. The cost of the injury or disease should be internalised as a cost of production.

What happens if legitimate costs of production are not internalised? If the person responsible for the externality does not internalise the cost as a cost of production, that person then has an unfair competitive advantage, and the person who bears the cost is at a competitive disadvantage. It makes sense, therefore, for the costs to be correctly internalised.

In the case of pollution, it should be noted that there is no cost transfer from B to A, as B bears the cost of cleaning the pollution and does not pay A to clean up the pollution.

The same applies to occupational injuries and diseases. The first obligation is to prevent the injury and disease,

and the question of paying compensation to the injured employee arises only as a second obligation.

If workmen's compensation is introduced, the uncertainty regarding the costs of accidents is replaced by the annually fixed premium and the injured employee receives compensation. The externality is removed, as it has been internalised via the premium or levy.

Therefore, the existence of accident-prevention programmes, such as workmen's compensation, can be explained in terms of the economic theory of externalities.

## COMPLICATION IN THE DETAIL

As most economic theories show, the problems arise when details are considered during implementation. So, what are the problems?

Free marketers argue that costs are captured via the price in the free market. Marxists argue the costs are not captured, and thus government intervention is required.

The Marxists agree that the market can do what free marketers say it does, but that it may fail to capture all the costs.

The free marketers are probably correct. It can be recalled that workmen's compensation was first introduced in South Africa by Rand Mutual before legislation on workmen's compensation was introduced. Today workmen's compensation exists because of legislation, therefore the free market argument need not be considered.

It is thus accepted that the purpose of workmen's compensation is to internalise the costs associated with occupational injuries and accidents. With or without government legislation, the costs would be internalised. The private market solution is the spontaneous evolution of the appropriate forms of insurance. Private sector workmen's compensation insurance is well known.

## CONSEQUENCES OF GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION

A reason why free market advocates would be unhappy with



government intervention would revolve around the decision on what costs should be internalised. Interventionists take the opportunity to add costs which fall outside of the scope of mere internalisation of costs. This problem can be dealt with by examining the different types of costs, or utilising a principle basis.

We also suggest that, since government intervention exists, and has done for over a century, it has to be accepted that employers cannot now (at this late stage) be exposed to unknown costs. The responsibility to internalise the costs correctly should be settled by a process of negotiation between government, the private sector and labour organisations.

We therefore argue that section 56 of the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act 1993 (COIDA), which deals with increased compensation where fault is proved, is correct and is a significant, conceptually sound provision.

In the United Kingdom (UK) two forms of claims evolved: common law claims and workmen's compensation claims. The common law claims ceased to exist in 1880 when the UK passed the Employer's Liability Act.

The UK thus has two forms of statutory actions; employer's liability and workmen's compensation (via the welfare provisions). We believe there should be only one internalisation mechanism.

In South Africa, because of section 35 and 56, there is only one course of action. We argue that this is correct; the uncertainty of workmen's compensation facing the employer is replaced by the levy paid to internalise the costs of workmen's compensation.

### OCCUPATIONAL DISEASES

The argument in favour of the concept of internalisation via a single levy payment (which produces certainty), has practical relevance when it comes to occupational diseases.

Occupational diseases take a long time to manifest, sometimes decades. In the historical sense it is impossible to prove the existence of the common law elements: act, cause, fault, wrongfulness and harm.

Employees who contract an occupational disease should be entitled to compensation; the mere existence of harm caused by the disease should result in the appropriate compensation.

This compensation should be paid by a single central fund so there is no dispute as to which fund, what time and when, and so on.

Since its introduction, workmen's compensation has treated accidents and disease equally (except in the mining industry). What is required is a single fund governed by the same piece of legislation.

### JURISTS HEAD IN THE SAME DIRECTION – RISK LIABILITY

Oddly, as indicated earlier, the theory of externalities is an economic theory. The jurists of yesteryear are, however, heading in the same direction – towards what can be called risk liability.

The problem with this adventure is that internalising cost requires legislation. It could not be introduced via case law, which can only state general laws. Workmen's compensation requires specific laws and courts (via case law) are just not suited for this task. Any attempts at internalising costs via the courts would just create problems. Nevertheless, the judicial adventure is an interesting story.

In the late 1800s, UK judges recognised and articulated what economists now call the problem of externalities. American jurists, such as Jeremiah, and the more famous Dean of the Harvard Law School, Roscoe Pound, plotted out in great detail how he saw the common law changing to accommodate what can now be called risk liability.

In South Africa, the judges took a great short-lived leap in the case of Rabie versus the Minister of Police, when the Appellate Division (the previous equivalent of today's Supreme Court) introduced risk liability – the jurists' equivalent of the economists' externalities.

The court could not articulate this doctrine in a satisfactory manner, and this opened the door too wide. In a subsequent case the Rabie decision was reversed. This was decried by one academic.

The courts are just not the institution to introduce new legal doctrines; that can only be done by parliament, but to do that parliament needs the correct theory. We suggest that in the context of occupational injuries and diseases, the economic theory of externalisation is that theory. <sup>SM</sup>



Legally Speaking is a regular column by **Albert Mushai** from the school of Economics and Business Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand. Mushai holds a master's degree from the City University, London, and was the head of the insurance department at the National University of Science and Technology in Zimbabwe before joining the University of the Witwatersrand as a lecturer in insurance.

# BUILD A RESILIENT ORGANISATION

**THE GOVERNANCE, RISK AND CONTROL CRISES IMPACTING ON SEVERAL COMPANIES ON OUR SHORES AND GLOBALLY CANNOT GO UNNOTICED. WE TAKE A LOOK AT HOW ORGANISATIONS CAN BE RESILIENT AMONGST ALL THE TURMOIL THREATENING THEIR EXISTENCE**



**P**resently, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) is fighting to rebuild its reputation in India. In the *Financial Times* of January 11, there was a headline by Simon Mundy that states: "PwC hit with two-year India audit ban for Satyam case". Another was: "Accountancy firm penalised for failing to spot US\$ 1.7 billion fraud at IT-services company".

The Steinhoff saga relating to irregularities in its financials is still fresh in our minds. Both Steinhoff and PwC are feeling the heat. The sagas are testing their short and long-haul resilience, as well as their business continuity.

It is not surprising that the British Standards Institution (BSI) Organisational Resilience Index Report 2017 states: "Organisations perceive reputational risk as the single most important organisational resilience element."

## HOW TO CREATE A RESILIENT ENTITY

In March 2017, the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) published the standard ISO 22316:2017 - Security and resilience - Organisational resilience - Principles and attributes.

The standard is a guidance document and not intended for certification. As a result, ISO defines organisational resilience as "the ability of an organisation to absorb and adapt in a changing environment".

We have to acknowledge that the risk appetites of organisations are not the same, and applying the definition will influence different situations in a unique way.

The interpretation of the ISO 22316:2017 standard assures us that resilience cannot be achieved in isolation. It is, rather, a combination of principles, attributes and activities that an organisation would adopt when implementing its approach to resilience.

In a nutshell, the aforementioned attributes relate to:

- Shared vision and clarity of purpose;
- Understanding and influencing context;

- Effective and empowered leadership;
- A culture supportive of organisational resilience;
- Shared information and knowledge;
- Availability of resources;
- Development and coordination of management disciplines;
- Supporting continual improvement; and
- Ability to anticipate and managing change.

## ARE WE ABLE TO ADAPT?

Organisations that already have business continuity processes, or are embarking on them, will reap benefits. This is because they are constantly assessing and analysing risks and what the impact will be if key functions, activities and processes are interrupted.


The focus on such scenarios is to provide assurance to stakeholders that strategies are in place to ensure continuity of these functions, activities and processes. Hence, the shift towards organisational resilience reaps benefits.

Although disruptions are happening at a pace that is sometimes faster than we anticipate, the good news is that organisations are able to withstand the turbulence...

During 2018, the risk landscape is likely to be defined by multifaceted challenges such as governance, industrial and social upheavals, cyber attacks and supply chain risks.

The Global Risks Report 2018 points out ten future shocks that we should look out for; one of them being "war without rules", which refers to cyber attacks.

In conclusion, even though businesses operate in diverse environments, stakeholders will be watching how they overcome the turbulence that they encounter.

Charles Darwin once said: "It is not the biggest, the brightest or the best that will survive, but those that adapt the quickest." 



**Hope Mugagga Kiwekete** is a managing consultant at the Centre for Enterprise Sustainability. Prior to his current role, he was a principal consultant: risk management at Transnet Freight Rail, and a management systems specialist and senior EHS auditor at the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS).



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# THE OHS PROFESSIONAL: COMPETENCY VERSUS CAPABILITY

**DURING THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 2017, THE SAIOSH CEO AND PRESIDENT ATTENDED MEETINGS AT THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR (DOL) IN PRETORIA. TWO REPORTS WERE PARTICULARLY INTERESTING**



SANJAY MUNNOO

**A**t the meetings, we were handed literature from the World Congress on Safety and Health at Work, which was hosted in Singapore by the International Network of Safety and Health Practitioner Organisations (INSHPPO).

One of the documents that stood out was entitled: The Occupational Health and Safety Professional Capability Framework. According to the report "competency" is commonly referred to as describing the nature of a professional framework, however, a different approach should be taken by using the term "capability".

To distinguish between the two terms, the report states that competency is about delivering the present based on the past, while capability is about imagining and being able to realise the future.

The report states that capable people have knowledge, skills, self-esteem and values that make them confident in their ability as individuals and in association with others in a diverse and changing society. This enables them to:

- take effective and appropriate action;
- explain what they are about;
- live and work effectively with others; and
- continue to learn from their experiences.

When defining "strategic capability" the report refers to the ability of a business to successfully employ competitive strategies that allow it to survive and increase its value over time.

Another interesting report was the one titled: The Value Proposition for the Occupational Health and Safety Professional. It indicated that occupational health and safety (OHS) specialists are usually cast as problem solvers.

The problems they are required to solve range from helping organisations identify hazards and assess their associated risks, to proposing solutions to control those risks.

The report states that there is a need to re-conceptualise the OHS professional's role into that of a continuous improvement expert, or "safety engineer" as opposed to the current role as just a "problem solver or enforcer".

The report recommends that the OHS professional understands the work processes as a system and offers solutions to improve the system of work before anything goes wrong, or an actual injury or damage is identified.

One of the major bottlenecks in most organisations is the potential to break down barriers (silos) between safety and operations.

Ideally, safety should be integrated into business operations where the OHS specialists work alongside workers, supervisors and managers with the shared purpose of continually improving work processes.

Cameron, Hare and Duff (2007) conducted a study on behalf of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) in the United Kingdom (UK) with the aim of investigating the relationship between an investment in competent occupational health and safety programmes (OHSPs) and OHS performance in UK construction companies.

The study was based on the assumption that the number of OHSPs employed in an organisation (a measure of quantity) is the main factor associated with a lower accident frequency rate (AFR), with the experience and qualifications of the OHSP (a measure of quality).

The findings from the research indicated that organisations that employed an in-house OHSP had an AFR that was 60-percent lower than those using only external consultants. Furthermore, construction companies that gave their OHSP management authority had an AFR that was 60-percent lower than those where the OHSP gave advice only."




The above information indicates that OHS professionals add value to organisations, and that employers should include OHS professionals in senior decision-making.

SaiosH members are consistently updated with latest OHS information including free subscription to SHEQ MANAGEMENT magazine. They are also required to undergo continuous professional development (CPD).

Fortunately, SaioSH members, who are located in outlying areas and are unable to attend workshops, now have the opportunity to earn CPD points via Webinars.

SaiosH encourages our members to enrol at leading institutions for degrees related to OHS, thereby increasing the number of Chartered Members. The number of Chartered Members in South Africa is lower than in other leading countries.

SaiosH will be contacting the International Network of Safety and Health Practitioner Organisations (INSHPPO) in 2018 to represent South Africa as the leading OHS professional body with over 10 000 members. 



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# PLAYING DEAF TO NOISE POLLUTION



**EMPLOYEES WHO WORK IN AN INDUSTRY WITH HIGH LEVELS OF NOISE POLLUTION COULD POTENTIALLY LOSE THEIR HEARING AND SUFFER FROM SEVERE STRESS, WHICH INCREASES HEART RATE AND BLOOD PRESSURE. SHEQ MANAGEMENT LOOKS AT WAYS TO PREVENT AND REDUCE NOISE POLLUTION**

Noise pollution is caused by loud sounds that distresses and could possibly harm the hearing of employees. Industries such as underground mining and trade workshops with heavy equipment are especially susceptible to noise pollution, as these can generate noise levels above 85 dB.

Noise pollution can damage the structure of the hair cells in the ear, which could result in hearing loss. This is most often a gradual process. Workers in industries with high levels of noise pollution could also experience temporary hearing loss. However, noise pollution can also have non-auditory effects on employees.

Pieta van Deventer, director at HASS Industrial, explains: "Employees can get stressed when exposed to high noise levels, which will lead to health risks such as high blood pressure and an elevated heart rate.

"Stress can also lead to conflict between employees at the workplace, or with their family at home. Noise pollution could also cause sleeping disorders and a deterioration in mental health."

According to Van Deventer, workers in a noise-polluted industry are also more at risk of workplace accidents. He says: "They may not hear any warning signals, or will simply not be able to think straight, due to the constant noise within their working environment."

It is, therefore, important for these industries to reduce or prevent noise pollution as much as possible. Companies can start by implementing engineering control measures to eliminate or reduce noise at its source.

The decibel level of the noise in the workplace can also be measured. This should be done by an occupational

hygienist certified by the Southern African Institute for Occupational Hygiene (SAIOH).

Van Deventer advises: "Check the equipment to make sure it is operating properly. Provide hearing protection and education to the employees on noise pollution. Employees should also be regularly tested for hearing loss when they are exposed to high levels of noise pollution."

By law, an employer should ensure the hearing of employees is protected and that workers are taught about their rights regarding hearing protection. Employees should also undergo an annual hearing test.

If there is a change in the environment, such as the introduction of new equipment, benchmark hearing tests might also have to be undertaken. Tests should take place more frequently (around every six months) if the noise levels in the workplace exceeds 105 dB. Companies should also actively try to reduce the number of employees exposed to the noise and the duration of exposure by rotating personnel.

However, employees are ultimately responsible for adhering to regulations set out by the employer. Van Deventer notes that while some industries are very prone to noise pollution, everyone is exposed to some noise pollution.

"We should consciously look after our hearing, as noise does not occur solely in the workplace, but forms part of our daily lives. Hearing conservation starts with the company, which should be proactive and discuss the possible noise issues with a support partner, such as HASS Industrial, to help with the management of noise levels and protecting the hearing of the employees," he concludes. **SM**



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# SUFFERING FROM SICK-BUILDING SYNDROME?

**SICK-BUILDING SYNDROME (SBS) IS SOMETIMES THE CAUSE OF SEVERE HEADACHES AND EYE IRRITATION IN A WORKPLACE, BUT, BECAUSE OF ITS COMPLEX DIAGNOSIS FACTORS, IT OFTEN GOES UNNOTICED. WILLIAM GEORGE INVESTIGATES**

**S**ick-building syndrome (SBS) is a health-psychological condition that affects people residing or working in a building with poor indoor air quality.

The term was coined by the World Health Organization (WHO) in the 1980s.

At the time SBS was estimated to be present in almost 30 percent of new and remodelled buildings.

The condition is caused by a combination of factors present in poorly ventilated buildings, public spaces, workplaces and even homes.

The people suffering from SBS may experience various ailments, such as fatigue, headaches, difficulty in concentrating, irritation, dry eyes and skin rashes.

## A PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL PROBLEM

According to *The Health and Safety Executive (HSE)*, sick-building syndrome is not classified as an illness, but is a phenomenon caused by personal and organisational factors.

HSE notes that this "phenomenon" should not be confused with specific illnesses that can be directly associated with workplaces, such as exposure to specific toxic substances in the workplace, or long-term cumulative hazards.

HSE further explains that there are physical and environmental problems that can be exacerbated by an organisational factor, such as the lack of personal control over working conditions in an office, or a lack of work variation, which could lead to job dissatisfaction.

From the organisational side, new furnishings can release chemical pollutants into the atmosphere and poorly organised cleaning services can further exacerbate the problem.

As a result, the productivity of employees is affected, resulting in absenteeism, poor work morale and unwell employees.

## THE CAUSE OF SBS

Sick-building syndrome can be induced or worsened by:

- High room temperature;
- Air-conditioning;
- Very low or high humidity;
- Chemical pollutants;

- Dust particles and fibres in the atmosphere;
- Smoking in the workplace; and
- Psychological factors such as stress or an inadequate work support system.

“If you take into account that adults consume between 11 000 and 14 000 litres of air every 24 hours, breathing quality indoor air is vital for our well-being.”

## CLEANING THE AIR

Uliilog is one of the many companies with new technology that helps to manage SBS.


Through the use of its air-purifying device, the Safe-Air, known carcinogens regularly found to pollute indoor air are neutralised. These include volatile organic compounds, oxides of nitrogen, odours and cigarette smoke.

According to Uliilog, employees working in transport, healthcare and aftercare centres at schools and pre-schools are reported to suffer most from the condition, due to a large number of people in those areas.

Trevor Williams, director at Uliilog, says: "Some droplet nuclei can live in the air for hours, and molecules from a cough or sneeze can travel at 40 m. If you take into account that adults consume between 11 000 and 14 000 litres of air every 24 hours, breathing quality indoor air is vital for our well-being."

He adds: "The SafeAir is an ideal device that can be installed in public areas, such as gyms, malls, health centres, schools, offices and homes."

The other methods to manage the condition is through maintenance and repair of ventilation systems to allow for clean air to enter the work building. Cleaning of carpets and soft furniture is also necessary as they can trap dust and moisture, which could affect the indoor air quality.

If all these methods fail to help to restore good quality air, it is advisable to contact a health or air-quality expert to help track down the cause of the poor air quality. 





# A SAFETY NET FOR MEDICAL WASTE MANAGEMENT

**IT IS VITAL FOR HEALTHCARE WASTE SERVICE PROVIDERS TO HAVE A CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR UNEXPECTED CHALLENGES, WHICH COULD LEAD TO A BUILD-UP OF DANGEROUS MEDICAL WASTE. SAMANTHA IMMELMAN, NATIONAL SALES MANAGER FOR COMPASS MEDICAL WASTE SERVICES, EXPLAINS**

**G**enerators of medical waste – such as hospitals, clinics, laboratories, pharmacies and veterinarians – must ensure that the service provider that collects, contains, treats and disposes of their healthcare risk waste (HCRW) has a contingency plan in place to cater for unforeseen circumstances which may arise.

The service provider must be able to continue providing products and services without interruption and inconvenience, while at the same time ensuring compliance.

Here are some of the important factors HCRW generators and service providers should consider when drawing up or reviewing a contingency plan:

## CONTAINERS

These have to be approved by the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) and aligned to the South African National Standards (SANS) to ensure the safe containment of medical waste. Ideally, a service provider should have more than one supplier, so that containers can be sourced from other approved suppliers in the event that a supplier can no longer deliver or produce SABS-approved containers.

## TRANSPORTATION

The service provider should deliver clean containers and collect the containers filled with waste for treatment and/or disposal. It is important to consider whether the particular service provider has its own fleet, or whether it relies on a third party.

When a service provider makes use of a third party, it is important to be aware of how the medical waste generator will be impacted if there is a breakdown in the relationship between the service provider and transporter.

If the service provider owns its fleet, there should be a comprehensive maintenance programme in place to

ensure the vehicles are fully operational at all times and properly maintained.

## TREATMENT

HCRW should be treated in accordance with the provisions of an issued waste-management licence. The service provider should have sufficient capacity to deal with a significant increase in medical waste volumes.

If the treatment plant breaks down, the service provider should have a contingency plan in place to ensure the waste is treated and not stored outside the time-span parameters of the waste-management licence.

The contingency plan could include having an agreement in place with other permitted treatment facilities to assist with breakdowns, or unscheduled maintenance. Another option for the service provider is to have multiple treatment units, so that a second unit could assist in the treatment of waste if the first unit breaks down.

If treatment facilities in an entire region are down, the service provider should have the resources to transport waste to facilities in other regions. A waste generator should be concerned when a service provider requests it to hold waste until the service provider can overcome any challenges at the treatment facility.

## DISPOSAL

After waste has been correctly treated, it must be disposed in a permitted landfill. HCRW service providers should be aware of the holding capacity of the landfill being used and when the landfill is due to be closed. Once again, it is important to know whether the service provider has any agreements in place with other permitted sites.

## EMPLOYEES

An HCRW service provider should have contingency plans



in the event of labour unrest and strikes to ensure medical waste generators are not inconvenienced in terms of service delivery. Ideally, they should have an agreement in place with a reputable labour broker to fill the gap left by a possible strike.

It is also important that the replacement staff be appropriately trained and available within a guaranteed period, for example 24 hours. A delay in HCRW management services could result in a build up of medical waste at the generator, which could cause a health risk to employees at the generator and surrounding communities.

#### **ELECTRICITY OUTAGES**

As power outages do occur (sometimes frequently) in South Africa, it is important for the service provider to be prepared and able to continue with normal services despite an electricity outage. An on-site electricity generator is an excellent backup to ensure business continuity without interruption.

#### **DATA**

In terms of quality management standard ISO 9001, certain documentation is required to be stored for a specified

period of time, which should be noted on the document itself. It is important for the service provider to keep these documents off site and in accordance with the standard requirements.

If an HCRW generator misplaces its Safe Disposal Certificate, or agreement with a service provider, the service provider should have a copy available. Copies of all documents should be kept in an off-site location to ensure that they are secure in the event of a fire.



Most healthcare risk waste generators, such as hospitals, cannot afford delays or inconveniences. It is important for service providers to work efficiently, but it is also the responsibility of the waste generator to ensure that the service provider is competent and has a backup plan for any unforeseen obstacles. It is always better to be safe than to resort to hoarding healthcare risk waste. <sup>SM</sup>

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# A COMMITMENT TO SAFE CHEMICAL TRANSPORTATION



**THE TRANSPORTATION OF HAZARDOUS FUELS AND CHEMICALS REQUIRES CAREFUL ATTENTION TO DETAIL AND SPECIALISED SUPPLY CHAIN AND TRANSPORT LOGISTICS SERVICES THAT ADHERE TO SAFETY, HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT, AND QUALITY (SHEQ) SYSTEMS. NKOSINI NGWENYA EXPLORES THE TOPIC FROM TWO PERSPECTIVES**

**T**he risks involved in the transportation of hazardous materials require a mitigation strategy that will ensure risk-management systems are put in place to identify and control any risks. Failure to do so can result in extensive damage to the environment, property and the loss of lives in the unfortunate event of an accident.

Thus, it is essential for hauliers and logistics service providers of fuels and chemicals to have risk-management systems in place as stipulated by the Chemical and Allied Industries' Association (CAIA).

In its pledge to improve SHEQ performance, CAIA launched the Responsible Care programme in South Africa during 1994.

"The Responsible Care, Safety and Quality Assessment System Southern Africa (SQAS-SA) is designed to evaluate the quality, safety and environmental performance of hauliers, logistics service providers and chemical distributors by means of standardised assessments," says Deidré Penfold, executive director of CAIA.

CAIA members pledge their support for this cause by voluntarily signing the CAIA Responsible Care public commitment.

By signing the pledge, the companies commit to "conducting all operations, including the transport of hazardous materials, in a safe and environmentally sustainable manner and to incorporate the Responsible Care ethics and requirements into their business strategy, management system and daily operations," explains Penfold.

In addition, SQAS-SA was developed specifically with local conditions in mind. As such, SQAS-SA covers many elements of the ISO standards and more. It looks at things like legal compliance, driver employment, driver training, driver wellness, emergency procedures, risk assessments, vehicle maintenance, tyre maintenance, operational controls, security, on-road behaviour of drivers and the quality of the vehicle itself.

"The principle behind it is that a company will implement the management system and an independent auditor will conduct an audit of the system every two years to ensure quality and safety for all," says Richard Durrant, owner of Transheq and an independent consultant to CAIA on transport safety.

The SQAS-SA auditing process covers three important sectors: road transportation, warehousing operations and

tanker washing facilities. Although traditionally SQAS-SA auditing focused on audits related to road transport, the increase in the number of warehouses storing hazardous materials in South Africa has necessitated the need for local warehouse auditing.

Consequently, strict compliance to quality standards for storing and transporting fuel and chemical products is expected from warehouse providers and hauliers with health and safety of the environment in mind.

This is the case with haulier Cargo Carriers, whose long and close affiliation with South Africa's steel, fuel, chemicals, powders and sugar industries bears testament to its unrelenting commitment to SHEQ, as explained by Elmarie Ollewagen, business development and communications manager at Cargo Carriers.

"Cargo Carriers has been a leading logistics service provider for fuel and chemical products for over 60 years. We have managed to retain and renew most of our contracts because our clients have full confidence in us and in our management systems... Some of our clients have been with us for many years and they continue to trust us with their products," Ollewagen explains..

It comes as no surprise that two companies operating in the local fuel and chemical industries recently renewed their contracts with Cargo Carriers. The company's ability to meet the high safety and environmental health standards in the industry played an important role in the renewal of its contract to transport a raw-tar product, or "black fuel" (a classified hazardous product) for an important client in this industrial market segment.

Ollewagen also points out that the company's leading position in the larger fuel industry is characterised by its

load-and-route optimisation, enhanced load security and delivery visibility capabilities.

In addition, the company's sophisticated technologies, including the latest vehicle and trailer configurations, have helped reduce emissions in the large-transport component of the industry's value chain. This is in line with the growing "green" consciousness that has placed significant onus on businesses, especially fossil-fuel based sectors, to reduce their carbon footprints.

These technologies have also contributed to increased payload and reduced fuel burn, helping players in this increasingly competitive industry to contain logistics costs and, therefore, improve efficiencies.

These capabilities are augmented by improved turnaround times on last-mile distribution operations, preloading vehicles and offloading procedures, as well as ensuring close to 100-percent vehicle availability, due to a sound preventative and structured maintenance regime.

Meanwhile, the focus on SHEQ has also been a key component of the company's efficient and safe delivery of flocculants, acids, fertilisers and heavy oils. It is also the preferred transporter of oxygen, nitrogen, argon and carbon dioxide.

The gravitas Cargo Carriers places on maintaining its high SHEQ standards is further motivated by the extensive audits it undergoes by the local and German-based DEKRA-ITS certification services.

This complements the company's ISO 9001:2015; ISO 14001:2015 and OHSAS 18001:2007 accreditation and affiliation to the CAIA.

The Sasolburg branch of Cargo Carriers has been rated as an "accredited haulier" meeting CAIA's stringent criteria. The Sasolburg operation is one of the branches from which the company coordinates deliveries throughout South Africa and as far afield as Zambia and Malawi. Importantly, the company is also a signatory to SQAS and Responsible Care. 







# GOING COLD TURKEY ON DRUG ABUSE

**DRUG ABUSE AMONG EMPLOYEES PUTS THEM AND THEIR PEERS AT RISK OF WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS. SHEQ MANAGEMENT INVESTIGATES HOW COMPANIES CAN IDENTIFY, PREVENT AND REDUCE SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN THE WORKPLACE**

**T**he World Drug Report 2016 by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimated that in 2014, around 207 400 people between the age of 15 and 64 died worldwide, due to drug abuse. It also estimates that between 11 and 25 percent of the South African population use drugs.

According to Africa Check, there is no regular representative survey on substance abuse in South Africa. Most available statistics are referencing figures from the South African Community Epidemiology of Drug Use (SACENDU), which collects its data from government-funded and private rehabilitation centres.

SACENDU currently collects information from 70 percent of the treatment centres in the country. A report from 2015 gathered information from 10 936 patients and found that the biggest proportion, around 32 percent, were at the centre for cannabis abuse.

Many drugs, including cannabis, are used for recreational purposes and to enhance cognitive functions, such as staying awake. However, these drugs also often inhibit cognitive functions and impair judgement. This puts the employee, peers and the company at risk.

Employees in high-stress industries are especially vulnerable to substance abuse as they turn to narcotics to

cope. Companies need to know the warning signs of drug abuse and the actions they can take to prevent it.

## **WARNING SIGNS**

Mike Crossland, product manager at safety equipment supplier PSA Africa, shares a few of the tell-tale signs indicating that employees might be under the influence of narcotics. Some of the most obvious signs are poor performance, absenteeism and a lack of motivation.

"Companies should also look for signs of agitation, aggressiveness, bloodshot eyes, shakes, tremors, lack of concern for appearance or personal hygiene, financial problems or an unusual need for money as a potential indication of drug abuse," he explains.

## **REDUCE OR PREVENT DRUG USE**

Whether or not an employer suspects drug abuse, it is best to take a proactive approach. Employers can start by educating employees, reviewing their performance and undertaking routine drug testing.

The latter is an effective way of preventing or reducing drug abuse, as employees are forced to abstain from using narcotics in order to pass the tests. Crossland explains that

there are various ways to test for narcotics, which include urine, saliva, hair and blood testing.

"In the workplace, urine and saliva testing is the most common. Testing saliva is the least invasive, but more expensive. Testing of urine is the most widely used and the most reliable when testing for tetrahydrocannabinol (THC),

or marijuana. The Noble Split Specimen Cup is, for example, a premium product that PSA Africa offers and is widely used across the United States for workplace testing," he says.

#### SPONTANEOUS TESTING IS BEST

Ideally, drug tests should be carried out every six months or 



## DOES THE LEGALISATION OF MARIJUANA NEED MORE THOUGHT?

In 2017 Judge Dennis Davis ruled in a full bench decision of the Western Cape High Court, that the use and cultivation of cannabis by an adult in a private home is constitutionally legal. The ruling still needs to be ratified by the Constitutional Court before any changes can be made to the law. There could, however, be unforeseen consequences that have an effect in the workplace.

This is the view of Richard Malkin, MD of Workforce Healthcare. He notes that the adequacy of company policies regarding the use of legal and illegal substances (including marijuana) in the workplace may not be robust enough.

"An employer is held personally responsible if the workplace is not safe, and employees can be prosecuted if they don't comply with the rules. In fact, every employer has a duty to stop employees from entering the workplace, or remaining at work, if they appear to be under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs.

"Depending on a company's policy, an employee who arrives at work impaired, or under the influence, and who poses a safety risk, could be fired or arrested.

"The problem is that marijuana can show up in the bloodstream for up to a week after it has been used – it could become legal at home, but not in the workplace, and then what does a company do?" queries Malkin.

He has observed that certain industries tend to turn a blind eye to substance use when it is perceived to make employees more productive. However, safety concerns are often a company's primary reason for prohibiting marijuana in the workplace, and they are a valid basis for banning the drug.

Usage has been linked to an increase in accidents and injuries in the workplace. The short-term effects include impaired body movement, difficulty with thinking and

problem-solving, memory problems, and an altered sense of time.

Testing in the workplace also poses challenges. "Companies can't simply say that they have a zero tolerance for substance abuse. Instead, it is important to state acceptable levels in the company's policy document. Levels also depend on the job itself and the risks associated with doing it safely. Employers can set the standard in their own workplace, irrespective of legal limits," he suggests.

In this regard, policy is critical in getting employee consent. Before drug and alcohol tests may be performed, employees must give written consent. "We need to have a source for reference. To do this, an occupational health and safety policy must be in place, which is set out in the employment contract. The employee's signature on his employment contract should include consent for drug testing," says Malkin, who advises that companies make use of experts to help formulate their company policy and "avoid the minefield of complications around substance abuse in the workplace".

"Another issue that can have an unintended consequence is that if a person consumes cannabis at home and then drives a vehicle while under the influence, they cannot be successfully prosecuted, as there is no current legislation that defines an acceptable level of cannabis in the body while driving.

"Legislation needs to be amended to define the acceptable level of cannabis in the body in order to be allowed to drive – just like alcohol, which is clearly defined. Until legislation is amended, South Africans face the risk of being exposed to drivers under the influence of cannabis with no apparent consequence to the perpetrator," Malkin concludes.

during the employees' yearly medical examination. However, when drug testing becomes too predictable, it could make it easy for employees to clear their system beforehand in order to pass the test.

"The best option is a random screening programme that has the element of surprise. However, the screening must still be fair and not target any specific employees or groups of employees. The best policy is to test all employees including the CEO," Crossland notes.

Another preventative measure is to conduct drug screenings before employment is offered to an individual and a screening after an incident occurs. Crossland states: "All employees must be notified in writing, in either their employment contract or via a signed copy of the substance abuse policy, that screening or testing may take place at the discretion of the employer."

#### WHAT TO DO WHEN DRUGS ARE FOUND

If a company should find that an employee is under the influence of narcotics, the employee can be dismissed. Crossland explains: "The use of drugs at the workplace, or coming to work while under the influence of drugs, is a dismissible offence, but the company will have to make sure it follows the rules, regulations and labour laws closely."

Employers should consider the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act and the internal policies and regulation documents of the company. Crossland adds that many companies choose to support employees who might have a substance-abuse problem through employee assistance programmes (EAP) and counselling.

"Most companies also have EAPs, which are designed to help employees who have substance abuse issues. Addiction is a disease and employees deserve a fair chance," he concludes. <sup>SM</sup>

LEARN IF YOUR INDUSTRY IS  
AT HIGH RISK OF DRUG ABUSE  
AND HOW TO MANAGE IT



## ALCO-SAFE ASSISTS IN COMBATING DRUNK DRIVING

Alcohol and drug testing provider, Alco-Safe, will supply the South Africa Police Service (SAPS) with Alcoblow Rapid Test breathalysers. The compact, hand-held breathalyser was selected for its speed and ease of use. The individual simply blows onto the inverted cone area on the device. The results will be delivered in under a second. There is no need for mouthpieces – disposable or otherwise.

Rhys Evans, director at Alco-Safe, explains that the SAPS required a fast, user-friendly device that could identify whether a professional or private driver is over the legal drinking limit.

"To accommodate the SAPS, Alco-Safe modified the device to indicate a pass or fail through coloured light indicators. A negative test, indicating acceptable sobriety, will give a green light; a person who tests over the professional drinking limit will produce an orange light; while a red light will indicate that a person is over all legal alcohol limits," Evans says.

This will allow officers to quickly proceed through the testing process, spending less time on the actual test and more on attending to individuals who are over the legal driving limit. Individuals who test positive for drunk driving will still require a secondary blood test to confirm blood alcohol levels, which is necessary for prosecution.

"Alco-Safe is proud to be associated with the SAPS and is confident that the Alcoblow Rapid Test will make their jobs easier, and will go a long way towards combatting the ever-present problem of drunk driving in South Africa," Evans concludes.



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# SKYRIDERS STANDS TALL

**A ZERO-FATALITY RATE, IN LINE WITH OHSAS 18001:2007 AND THE INSTITUTE FOR WORK AT HEIGHT'S BEST PRACTICE, IS A CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT OF SKYRIDERS ACCESS SPECIALISTS. WE SPEAK TO MARKETING MANAGER MIKE ZINN**

**S**afety is critical in the rope-access industry. "Safety is paramount in any industry. Mining, for example, is an inherently dangerous environment, as it encompasses both work at height and work in confined spaces," Zinn comments.

Skyriders employs teams of highly experienced and trained rope-access technicians. "The career path of a rope-access technician is ongoing from a skills-development point of view. One needs to bear in mind that rope access is just a means of moving from one work point to another work point. This requires renewal every three years, which poses the challenge of progressing from Level 1 to Level 2 and, ultimately, to Level 3, depending on experience in terms of hours logged," Zinn stresses.

Apart from the rope-access discipline, itself, technicians at Skyriders also require trade skills such as welding, non-destructive testing and inspection, grit blasting, ultra-high-pressure washing, protective-coating application and rigging.

Current projects and contracts being undertaken by Skyriders include: ongoing work on new power station builds; inspection and maintenance of industrial smokestacks in Indonesia; inspection and maintenance at a gold mine in western Africa; ongoing maintenance and inspection work at a large petrochemical company in Mpumalanga; and work at Eskom's existing fleet.

A recent major project, which involved undertaking essential maintenance on the 237-m-tall Sentech Tower in Johannesburg (known originally as the Brixton Tower),



showcased Skyriders' expertise and working-at-height safety.

The project was particularly daunting due to the height of the tower. This was combined with the fact that the five-person Skyriders team had to effectively abseil and simultaneously follow the cables downwards at the correct angle in order to be able to carry out the maintenance work.

"Another major challenge, apart from the height of the tower, was the high wind and the potential for electrical storms," Zinn adds.

"When the cost of access is disproportionate to the scope of work, when time is of the essence, and where height or confined space poses a challenge, that is when Skyriders can offer an optimal solution, which is cost-effective, time-saving, and also the safest possible option for all those involved," Zinn concludes. <sup>SM</sup>

## ROPE ACCESS, BEYOND EXPECTATIONS

Height safety  
Welding Installations  
Inspection & NDT  
Confined spaces  
Maintenance Protective Coatings  
Drones





# EMERGENCY PLANNING MADE SIMPLE

**GARY CUNDILL, RESEARCHER AND CONSULTANT FROM THE CRANFIELD SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, TALKS ABOUT SIX KEY ACTIONS THAT SHOULD BE TAKEN WHEN PLANNING FOR EMERGENCIES**

**E**mergencies happen, and when they do there is not usually the luxury of time. It's therefore crucial to prepare for foreseeable emergencies before they occur, so that adverse consequences can be mitigated. Although emergencies can take many forms, there are six key actions to consider when planning for an emergency.

## **1. IDENTIFY THE EMERGENCY**

First, we need to be clear on what constitutes an emergency. Because something is a risk, it does not mean that it is an emergency, or that we need to prepare for it.

One day, while walking around a small refinery with its managing director and an insurance assessor, an aeroplane flew low over the site en route to land at the nearby airport.

The assessor turned to the two of us and asked us to confirm that the scenario of that aeroplane crashing into the refinery had been explicitly considered in the site emergency plan, and asked us to explain what the site's actions would then be.

Our slightly unhelpful reply was along the lines of: "If that passenger jet lands here we can assure you that we'll do absolutely nothing about it, as we and all our colleagues would have disappeared in a ball of fire. We do not need to plan for this problem!"

Now, this was probably a little unkind to the insurance assessor – that jet was certainly low over the refinery columns, and, while such an event would be unlikely, it would certainly be possible.

What did need to be carefully described in the plan was

how to deal with a situation where a jet crashed sufficiently close to impact the site without obliterating it. The obvious consequences of such an event would be explosions, fires and injuries on the site. Any emergency plan for a refinery should naturally describe how to deal with such consequences.

It is not usually necessary to plan in detail for each and every possible individual emergency event. Such an approach would result in emergency plans that are overly complicated and too unwieldy to deploy quickly and effectively.

## **2. DETERMINE THE RESPONSE**

Too often emergency planners do not give enough thought to the best practical response to an emergency. Emergencies can quickly go through transitions, and it can be difficult for personnel to identify and to cope with these, particularly after several hours when there is less management presence.

For those first on the scene to respond effectively, they should have proper training and a clear idea of their duties.

## **3. DEVELOP RESOURCES**

It's all very well to know exactly what needs to be done, but planning is of limited value if there is not the capability and resources to respond. For a plan to work properly, the necessary resources must be available, in the right place, at the appropriate time.

There are several types of resources that we need to ensure are available for deployment.

The first is physical kit, such as fire extinguishers or gas



rooms in which to take shelter.

The second is that of human resources – there should be enough people (particularly after-hours) to execute the plan, and they need to have the necessary knowledge, skills, experience and information required to execute the plan.

The third is that of resources outside of the organisation that may need to be called in. If the plan includes calling a fire brigade, someone needs to have checked that there actually is a fire brigade reasonably nearby, and that it is able to respond effectively to the call for help.

It is important to allocate responsibilities in advance. Many organisations have moved away from strong hierarchical structures, and have embraced flexibility, job-sharing and matrix reporting lines. This can have marvellous results, empowering people within organisations to achieve things that could never have taken place within rigid structures.

However, if emergency plans don't take these changes into account they may fail when put to the test.

Emergency plans must also work within the context of corporate cultures. Therefore, those doing the planning need to understand the specific culture, and ensure that what needs to get done, will get done. If no one is made responsible for something, it probably won't get done, and if everyone is made responsible for something, it also probably won't get done.

#### 5. DEAL WITH THE CONTEXT

Emergencies seldom happen in isolation – ask any first-

responder on southern African roads. Emergencies draw crowds, and even where they don't, they have neighbours. Emergencies are also usually news, which means journalists will be present.


Trying to deal with scared and angry neighbours during an emergency (when there is no existing relationship) can be very difficult. Community liaison can be time consuming, but at least some liaison is a crucial part of emergency planning and preparedness. If possible, educate the community before an emergency occurs as to how you'll protect them.

Media liaison is a topic all of its own, but, at a minimum, the person responsible should be adequately trained, and ideally shouldn't be the individual tasked with leading the emergency response as a whole.

#### 6. TEST THE PLAN

Emergency drills generally result in learning and, if that learning is taken on board (which is not always the case), improvements can be made to the emergency plan. This can be the case even with plans that have been in place for many years.

It is especially important to test new plans, or those that have been recently revised to cater for changed circumstances. An untested plan is, in itself, a risk.

While these six key actions all require time and attention from busy managers, the alternative could be an emergency that spirals out of control. Planning is time well spent, if spent on the right actions. 

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# WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION SIMPLIFIED



## THE FEDERATED EMPLOYER'S MUTUAL ASSURANCE COMPANY (FEM) EXPLAINS HOW IT ENABLES EASIER MANAGEMENT OF WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION FOR ITS CLIENTS IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

**W**orkmen's compensation is a compulsory assurance that is taken out by a company to cover its employees in the unlikely event that they are injured, or contract an illness while performing their daily work duties.

### WHAT IS COVERED BY THIS INSURANCE?

Workmen's compensation cover is prescribed by the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act 130/1993 (COIDA). This assurance typically covers accidents that arise out of and during employment resulting in personal injury or illness; occupational diseases contracted in the workplace, and fatalities resulting from an accident while on duty.

### WHO PROVIDES THIS INSURANCE?

Employers within the construction sector can get cover through FEM, which is one of only two private companies licensed by the Department of Labour (DoL), to provide COIDA cover outside of the Compensation Fund. FEM is the only company that provides cover for the construction sector.

### ABOUT FEM

FEM was established as a mutual insurer in 1936 to provide more affordable assurance for the construction industry, after new legislation forced all industrial employers to insure their workers against accident or injury.

The introduction of the Workman's Compensation Act of 1941 saw FEM being granted a licence to continue to transact workmen's compensation insurance for the construction industry. FEM operates in line with COIDA.

### WHY JOIN FEM?

FEM specialises in providing COIDA cover to the construction sector and has a track record of more than 80 years. Good health and safety practices are rewarded through merit rebates, which are incentives paid back to the policyholder for a good safety track record.

Policyholders with a claims experience of ten percent or less of their total annual premium can get up to 50 percent of their premium paid back to them, subject to certain terms and conditions. FEM also issues Letters of Good Standing.

### HOW DOES FEM USE TECHNOLOGY?

FEM provides easy access to online assessments. The company has embraced technology which allows its clients to complete their documentation online to speed up the Return of Earnings process.

### HOW ARE PREMIUMS CALCULATED?

Premiums are based on the total amount of wages paid per annum. Depending on the nature of the business, a predetermined percentage – as set by the Compensation Commissioner – is applied to the annual wages, which will determine the premium.

On payment of the premium, a Letter of Good Standing is issued, which will grant access to construction sites to perform work. Letters are valid for up to 15 months subject to terms and conditions.

### WHERE DO EMPLOYEES GO FOR TREATMENT?

FEM works closely with an array of service providers, including a vast network of private hospitals, to ensure employees receive the best possible medical care after any injury.



**LEFT:**

FEM is the only private organisation, licensed by the DoL, that provides COIDA cover for the construction industry.

The cover includes the immediate treatment of an injury, the transport to and from a hospital, as well as follow up treatment and ongoing care to ensure the employee is fit and ready to resume their duties.

**WHO ADMINISTERS THE CLAIMS?**

Personalised claims services are provided by FEM's team of specialised administrators to ensure that the administration burden is taken off the clients' shoulders. As experts in the field, FEM will guide its clients through the claims procedure; leaving them the time to fulfil their core functions.

**FEM'S CORPORATE SOCIAL INVESTMENT (CSI)**

FEM is committed to making a positive contribution to South Africa. The company has a structured CSI programme

covering areas such as housing, health, social services and education.

In addition, in 2016 FEM committed R750 million to set up the FEM Education Foundation to contribute towards education and leadership development.

The company has, to date, partnered with the Make a Difference Leadership Foundation and the Columba Leadership Trust, to provide much-needed funding towards education and development of leadership skills among young South Africans. SM

SCAN HERE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HOW FEM CAN HELP YOU!



## TAKING THE 'WORK' OUT OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION



LETTERS OF GOOD STANDING ASSESSMENTS RETURN OF EARNINGS MERIT REBATES EMPLOYERS REPORT OF ACCIDENT RESUMPTION REPORTS COIDA DEATH & DISABILITY MEDICALS RETURN OF EARNINGS MERIT REBATES EMPLOYERS REPORT OF ACCIDENT RESUMPTION REPORTS ASSESSMENTS

## PROVIDING WORKERS' COMPENSATION TO THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY SINCE 1936



# FARMERS MAKING A PLAN FOR SAFETY

**SAFETY COMPLIANCE IS NON-NEGOTIABLE IN HIGH-RISK INDUSTRIES, PARTICULARLY THE FARMING SECTOR. WE SPEAK TO ADVOCATE HENDRIK TERBLANCHE, MD AT LEGRICON, ABOUT THE SAFETY REGULATIONS THAT GOVERN THE AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY**

**A**ccording to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), there are more than 1.3-million workers in the agricultural industry, worldwide. The ILO estimates that, globally, 170 000 agricultural workers are killed each year, due to risks associated with the farming industry.

Agriculture is one of the top three high-risk industries with the most injuries and fatalities, along with construction and mining. Other high-risk industries are forestry and transport.

Guy Ryder, director general of ILO, says that many agricultural businesses, particularly in African countries, are not willing to invest in better safety equipment and training.

## **RISKS OF WORKING IN AGRICULTURE**

Terblanche, says that, in South Africa, agricultural work involving heavy machinery and equipment is often performed by unskilled workers resulting in injuries and death.

The common risks associated with working in agriculture include exposure to extreme weather, fatigue, noise, vibrations, contact with animals and exposure to hazardous chemicals and substances.

"While some of the high-risk industries have industry-specific health and safety legislation, there is no specific

legislation for the agricultural industry, which has to comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)," he advises.

## **REGULATIONS TO ENSURE WORKER SAFETY**

The OHSA applies to a broad range of workplaces, from shops and offices to factories, power stations and large chemical process plants.

Terblanche explains that the legislation deals with the problem of a one-size-fits-all approach by placing general obligations on an employer. These are contained in section 8 of the OHSA.

"The main principle is that the employer must provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risk to the health of employees, by identifying hazards in the workplace and implementing reasonable practical precautions to protect employees and other persons against such hazards.

"Often OSHA regulations that would apply on farms are those that would apply in factories. For example, the Regulations for Hazardous Chemical Substances for the use of pesticides and the Driven Machinery Regulations, as lifting equipment and other driven machinery are often used on farms."



### POSSIBLE CAUSES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

Terblanche notes: "It will be quite costly for a farmer in an isolated rural location to obtain the services of an approved inspection authority to conduct hygiene surveys, or perform a pressure test on a mobile compressor. As a result, there would be a high instance of non-compliance to the legal requirements in the sector."

He continues: "Other factors currently affecting the industry – such as drought, livestock and crop diseases, minimum wages and security risks – add further pressure to the cash flow of many private farmers, which could result in limited funds being available to spend on health and safety compliance."

“ While some of the high-risk industries have industry-specific health and safety legislation, there is no specific legislation for the agricultural industry.

Terblanche urges farmers to ensure basic compliance by not risk operating without:

- Personal protective equipment for workers – which is available at most farming suppliers and co-ops;
- A first-aid kit – which is widely available; and
- At least a few portable fire extinguishers – particularly



where flammable liquids, such as petrol and diesel, are used and stored.

Terblanche concludes: "Since the farming sector makes use of unskilled labour, the introduction of health and safety training should be a starting point for farmers.

"Although the remoteness of farms could be a challenge for some compliance requirements, the Department of Labour has a booklet (available in Afrikaans and English) discussing health and safety in the agricultural sector. This could be a useful starting point for many farmers," he concludes. <sup>SM</sup>

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# SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS: BUSTED!

**SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS CAN BE PREVENTED! JUST FOLLOW THIS ADVICE FROM THE CANADIAN CENTRE FOR OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY**

**S**tatistics show that the majority (66 percent) of falls happen on the same level resulting from slips and trips. The remaining 34 percent are falls from a height.

Slips happen where there is too little friction or traction between the footwear and the walking surface.

Common causes of slips are:

- wet or oily surfaces;
- occasional spills;
- weather hazards;
- loose, unanchored rugs or mats; and
- flooring or other walking surfaces that do not have same degree of traction in all areas.

Trips happen when your foot collides with (strikes, hits) an object causing you to lose the balance and, eventually, fall.

Common causes of tripping are:

- obstructed view;
- poor lighting;
- clutter in your way;
- wrinkled carpeting;
- uncovered cables;
- bottom drawers not being closed; and
- uneven steps, thresholds, or walking surfaces.

## **SO, HOW DO YOU PREVENT FALLS DUE TO SLIPS AND TRIPS?**

Both slips and trips result from some kind of unintended or unexpected change in the contact between the feet and the ground or walking surface. This shows that good housekeeping, quality of walking surfaces (flooring), selection of proper footwear, and appropriate pace of walking are critical for preventing fall accidents.

### **HOUSEKEEPING**

Good housekeeping is the first and the most important (fundamental) level of preventing falls due to slips and trips.

It includes:

- cleaning all spills immediately;
- marking spills and wet areas;
- mopping or sweeping debris from floors;
- removing obstacles from walkways and always keeping them free of clutter;
- tacking and taping of mats, rugs and carpets that do not lay flat;
- always closing file cabinet or storage drawers;
- covering cables that cross walkways;
- keeping working areas and walkways well lit; and
- replacing used light bulbs and faulty switches.

Without good housekeeping practices, any other preventive measures, such as installation of sophisticated flooring, specialty footwear or training on techniques of walking and safe falling, will never be fully effective.


### **FLOORING**

Changing or modifying walking surfaces is the next level of preventing slip and trips. Recoating or replacing floors, installing mats, pressure-sensitive abrasive strips or abrasive-filled paint-on coating and metal or synthetic decking can further improve safety and reduce risk of falling.

However, it is critical to remember that high-tech flooring requires good housekeeping as much as any other flooring. In addition, resilient, non-slippery flooring prevents or reduces foot fatigue and contributes to slip prevention measures.

### **FOOTWEAR**

In workplaces where floors may be oily or wet, or where workers spend considerable time outdoors, prevention of fall accidents should focus on selecting proper footwear. Since there is no footwear with anti-slip properties for every condition, consultation with manufacturers is highly recommended.

Properly fitting footwear increases comfort and prevents fatigue which, in turn, improves safety for the employee. 



# SHEQ

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# TAKING CARE OF YOUR PPE

**USING WORN OR DAMAGED PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) MAY BE A CATALYST TO HARM. WILLIAM GEORGE SPEAKS TO SUPPLIERS ABOUT TAKING PROPER CARE OF PPE**

In the workplace, the employer is responsible for identifying and assessing potential risks. PPE is only one part of the solution. Christo Nel, director sales and marketing in Africa for Uvex, notes: "Safety managers are responsible for preventing potential risks to employees, and as a 'last resort' offer PPE to protect workers from any potential harm."

PPE is intended to protect a wearer from any potential risks and hazards, however, if it is worn out, it may not provide effective protection.

While Section 14 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act stipulates that the employer must provide the PPE, it remains the responsibility of the user to inspect, care for and correctly use the PPE for its intended purpose.

There are routines and guidelines that should be followed in order to maintain the quality of PPE. It is also advisable to keep PPE in good shape even when it is not in use.


Nel says the best place to start would be the manufacturer's user instructions, which are included in the packaging of the product.

He explains: "All PPE should be supplied with detailed instructions on how to maintain and care for the product. Some reputable manufacturers will offer training in this regard."

"A simple rule of thumb is to avoid using solvents or chemicals to clean PPE, and to always refer to the manufacturer's recommendations when cleaning the product."

Nel advises: "A visual inspection of all PPE products must be done before the wearer dons the apparel. This is to make sure that there is no damage that may affect the integrity of the product and put the user at risk of injury."

"The manufacturer's recommendations and/or regulatory requirements on whether a product is 'disposable' must be adhered to by the end user. The recommended usage period (or lifespan) of the product must not be exceeded, as this may affect the integrity of the product and put the wearer at risk."

Nel concludes: "If PPE is well looked after it should provide protection when an incident occurs." 

## LEFT AND BELOW:

PPE should be used and cared for in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.





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### Comfort

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- Excellent weight distribution of the apparatus on the hips
- Large adjustable fast-tightening shoulder straps buckles
- Washable harness

### Modular design

- Panoramasque full-face mask with anti-scratch coating accommodates all face shapes
- Compatible with both quick click positive pressure demand valves
- Adjustable cylinder strap
- Reducer with built-in second user outlet

### Safety

- Harness and straps in self-extinguishing aramid fibre
- End of operation alarm whistle integrated into the gauge
- Anti-static HP/MP flexible hose and reducer with safety valve



## SPECIFICATIONS

**Weight** (backplate & harness & Zenith demand valve): 3.50 kg

**High-pressure pneumatic gauge:** 0-400 bar, photo-luminescent gauge, rubber protection and integrated alarm whistle

**Alarm activation:** 55 ± 5 bar

**Alarm volume:** > 90 dBA

**Approved temperature:** -30°C/+60°C

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**Full-face-mask type approval:** EN 136 Class III+



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