

# PRESTART CHECKS MADE EASY

New Technology  
for Plant Safety

Unlawful  
Behaviour in the  
Workplace

First Person Jailed  
under WA Safety  
Law



How Do You Measure Up?  
Benchmarking Survey 2021

# What's New in June?

Welcome to the June Safety News.

This month we discuss the importance of pre-start safety checks and share a new innovative product from our friends at Safety Connect IT.

A new manslaughter bill has been introduced in NSW and WA has jailed it's first offender under their new safety penalties.

With our benchmarking survey taking place next month we outline what is needed to participate, and the benefits to your business.



**Andrea Rowe**

***Stay Safe!***

## Safety Webinar – Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> June 10am

We invite you to join us at **10am on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> June** for our free monthly webinar to keep you up to date on workplace health and safety. Gary and the team present short informal sessions of only 20 to 30 minutes on topical issues and answer your questions.

**Register [here](#)**

***Missed our last webinar? View them [here](#)***

## SAFETY ACTION TEAM



**Gary**



**Stephen**



**Katie**



**Ben**



**Miriam**



**Sarah**



**Kirill**

# Pre-Start Checks Made Easy

## What is a Pre-Start Check?

Pre-start checks are safety checks conducted on equipment before using the item. Commonly these are required for plant, equipment and machinery prior to being started or used each day.

Pre-start checks are routine inspections conducted by the equipment operator, usually with the aid of an inspection checklist. Where the checks are critical for safety, they are usually documented.

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**Pre-start checks identify safety deficiencies, maintenance problems or damage before the equipment is used – reducing the risk of accidents or failures during use.**

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## Why Conduct Pre-Start Checks?

Checking for damage or faults before starting equipment is important for safety.



Pre-start checks on mobile plant and production equipment can assist companies to identify and repair minor problems before they cause more serious problems or accident e.g. brakes, lights and steering operate correctly, and checking oil or water levels to ensure the plant operates correctly.

## What Should be Included?

A checklist helps the operator conduct the pre-start check in a standardised way.

The contents of the pre-start checklist differs for each type of equipment. The equipment supplier usually provides detail of what should be included in the daily pre-start checks in the Operation Manual.

Pre-start checks should also confirm that the operator has the required licence or training to use the equipment.

Some common things to check:

- Production machinery- Emergency stop buttons are accessible and working, all machine guards are in place.
- Portable electrical equipment- electrical cord is not causing trip hazard or damaged, and inspection tag is within date, no physical damage to equipment, guards secured in place, any attachments are compatible and correctly attached.
- Mobile plant- brakes, warning lights etc.





Companies can easily create geofences, so drivers are warned when they get close to a 'no-go' zone and emails are sent to managers if there are deficiencies relating to equipment servicing, operator compliance or equipment is being used in locations it shouldn't.

## Key Features

The key difference with this patented product and other online platforms is that there is a direct connection between the equipment and the driver, management and the site.

Companies can create their own site inductions, safety checks, company policies or even training programs, and deliver these to specific equipment via Bluetooth or locations via geofences.

This will ensure that servicing needs are reported on, and no key dates for licences expiry, risk assessments, warranty expiry or services are missed, with management being reminded by email beforehand, taking the worry out of these compliance issues.



It can also be used without immobilization for all types of plant and equipment, with reminders built in for service dates, or 'how to' videos being shown to users for on-the-job training if required. It's a great idea if the owner or manager can't be around due to shift times or distance, there's peace of mind, because you know things are being done properly.

The company can set their own frequency, so whether a company policy is delivered to all users once a month, or the safety checks are being done by every user every day, it's in your control, no more paperwork and lost documentation.

'All the data is stored online for up to 5 years' says Lisa Remato, Safety Connect IT's other developer 'so you can see who acknowledged and agreed to what version of what document any time you need.

My favourite question on the current safety check is: "Do you understand the work instructions you have been given today and do you have the knowledge and correct PPE to do it safely?" I'd rather know before they start the shift than when something goes wrong.'

For more information or a demo, check Safety Connect IT [website](#) or call 1300 406 186.

***Note: Safety Action News do not use paid advertisements or have any financial relationship with Safety Connect IT, but we welcome contributions we believe will be of interest and value to our readers about innovative safety products or services. If you are aware of any novel safety initiatives that would benefit others please let us know.***

# WHS Manslaughter Bill Introduced in New South Wales

The opposition Industrial Relations Minister has introduced an Amendment Bill into state parliament in May 2021, with the intention of creating the industrial manslaughter offence in NSW.

The *Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2021* includes maximum penalties of 25 years' jail for "senior officers" and \$10 million for bodies corporate that negligently or recklessly engage in conduct that "causes" the death of a worker or another person at a workplace.

A 'senior officer' is an executive officer of the body corporate, or person who makes decisions which directly or substantially affects the worker, eg their work practices or environment etc.

It is unclear whether this legislation will pass as a similar motion introduced last year was defeated in the Legislation Council.

## Proactive Duty to Prevent Unlawful Behaviour in the Workplace

South Australia has recently introduced a new Bill for review, with the intent to impose a positive duty on employers to eliminate sexual harassment, discrimination and victimisation in workplaces.

The *Equal Opportunity (Unlawful Acts at Workplace) Amendment Bill 2021* states that all persons with management and control of a workplace must take reasonable steps to prevent, as far as possible, prescribed unlawful acts at the workplace, which includes Victimisation, Sexual Harassment, and Discrimination.



Workplaces will need to ensure their health and safety systems and processes not only effectively and reasonably responds to allegations of unlawful and unreasonable behaviour in the workplace, but that those systems and processes look to identify potential risk or threats which may result in unlawful behaviour. Then undertake regular reviews of the workplace to identify potentially unlawful behaviour occurring, and to ensure all staff are trained in company Vision, Values and Rules regarding safe and reasonable behaviour in the workplace.

"By building clear processes, an empowered workforce and a strong and positive culture, organisations can look to provide a workplace that is free of sexual harassment and discrimination" says Dr Stephen Weber.

# First Person Jailed Under Western Australia's Safety Laws

The director of a shed building company has become the first person to be sentenced to a term of imprisonment under Western Australia's (WA) workplace safety and health laws.

The Director pleaded guilty to a charge that the company's gross negligence offence occurred with his consent or was attributable to his neglect and was sentenced to two years and two months' imprisonment following the 2020 death of a young worker and the serious injury of another.

On the day of the incident, the two workers were installing roof sheets on a large machinery shed without safety control measures in place. A strong wind lifted a sheet from the pack of roof sheets they were working near, causing them both to fall from a significant height. One fell nearly 9m to his death and the other fell 7m and sustained multiple serious injuries.



There was no perimeter guard railing or safety harnesses worn.

The director is to serve eight months of the sentence immediately, with the remaining 18 months suspended for 12 months.

The term of imprisonment of 26 months is the longest term of imprisonment ever imposed for a workplace safety offence in Australia, and the eight-month immediate term of imprisonment is also the longest immediate term ever imposed for a workplace safety offence in Australia.

Other charges included failure to ensure High Risk Work Licences were held by workers, that MT Shed failed to ensure all workers held a Construction Induction Training Certificate ("white card"), for which the company was fined \$55,000 and one of gross negligence against MT Sheds, for which the company was fined \$550,000.

The fines are the highest under the *Occupational Safety and Health Act*, following the McGowan Government's increase in penalties for breaches of the workplace safety laws in 2018.

Ref: OHS Alert, Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021

[www.safetyaction.com.au](http://www.safetyaction.com.au)

# How Do You Measure Up?

By request Safety Action is again running our Safety Benchmarking survey this year. From July our Safety Benchmarking Survey will be open, via an online survey containing a series of safety performance data questions and 20 Yes-No and multiple choice safety system questions. This survey will be both emailed out and available on our website.



The last benchmarking survey, conducted in 2018, found a consistent downward trend in incident rates, workers compensation premiums, whilst the number of safety staff increased.

## What activities lead to the most benefit

In the 2018 data we introduced a series of YES-NO and multiple-choice questions for the first time to determine what activities provided the most benefit to safety. This found that some activities like; having a safety system, board reporting and doing internal safety audits **did not raise safety performance** above average, yet its absence significantly reduced performance.

The top 4 things found last survey to be of most benefit were:

1. Key risks register
2. 5 to 10-year strategic plan
3. Use of external safety advisors
4. Conduct 3 yearly external audits

A similar set of questions will be included this year.

## Participation

All participants receive a free copy of the full report. All data is kept confidential and only unique company identifiers are included within the report. When you receive your copy of the report you will be given your businesses unique identification number so you can clearly see how you have performed against the industry benchmarks.

***Start putting your data together now.***

## What you will need

Next month we will include a link to our online survey. The data and information will include;



**General Business details;**

- Business name
- A contact person and contact details.
- Number of staff (effective full time EFT)
- Workers compensation premium (per annum)
- Number of safety personnel (EFT)

**Lag Indicators**

- Number of lost time injuries
- Number of medical treatment injuries and/or number of total recordable injuries (TRIs)
- Number of first aid injuries (if known)
- Total days lost

**Lead Indicators**

- % Inspections conducted to schedule
- % Hazards fixed within 60 days (estimate ok)
- % Safety climate survey positive responses

**System Questions**

There are 20 yes-no or multiple choice questions relating to what systems and activities your business currently undertakes. Including if you have a formal safety system, do you report safety to a board, qualifications of safety staff.

Not every business will have the data for all the above mentioned items, but we ask participants to answer as best they can and complete everything they can, leaving those they can't blank.

We will start the safety performance benchmarking survey in July for a recent 12 month period, eg 2020 calendar year or 2021 financial year, and we encourage every organisation to participate.

## Updated Victorian Dangerous Goods Notification Requirement

From 1 July, amendments to the Victorian Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulations 2012 commence. Changes include requiring workplaces with prescribed quantities of dangerous goods (DGs) to notify WorkSafe of storage quantities at least every two years. Notification was previously required every five years.



If there are significant changes to a site where DGs are stored and handled, an additional notification will also be required within three business days of the change occurring.

See WorkSafe Victoria for more information [here](#).