

Safety Star Rating Pilot Evaluation

The proposed Safety Star Rating (SSR) is an injury prevention initiative that aims to help lift the performance of workplace health and safety in New Zealand businesses. It checks how well a business is performing against standards that are important for good health and safety performance and provides businesses with guidance and advice on how to improve.

Between November 2015 and June 2016 95 businesses took part in the SSR Pilot to test the effectiveness, relevance and value of the proposed tool. Each business completed an online self-assessment exercise against the standards and 38 businesses participated in an independent onsite assessment. 33 of these businesses participated in an evaluation with Research New Zealand.



research
NEW ZEALAND



RESEARCH NZ FINDINGS

EFFECTIVENESS

- > The standards focus on the right issues. They are well aligned with business practices and the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.
- > The self-assessment is a productive and helpful exercise to provide insights and effective guidance for improving health and safety.
- > The behaviour based assessment approach was an effective way to judge health and safety practices and culture within a business.
- > High performing organisations said SSR provided independent and credible evidence that they are on track and have the right approaches in place.
- > Less well performing businesses said SSR is an effective way to identify improvement areas and provided useful and tailored guidance to support improvement – especially around risk management and work-related health.

VALUE

- > The SSR approach is different from other health and safety initiatives in New Zealand.
- > The behaviour-based assessment approach is a better way to understand what is going on in their workplace and assess the effectiveness of health and safety performance.
- > The assessors experience and skills engaging with different staff is key to success.
- > Almost all businesses said they are willing to pay to use the SSR tool in the future as it provides value in terms of tailored advice and education.

“

SSR's actually delving into how things are, rather than what's written. It's a fairer reflection and fairer test on safety systems.

”

“

We've brought a lot of these recommendations into practice and built them into our policy. We've built in more targeted SMART measures. We've introduced more risk assessments...

”

RELEVANCE

- > SSR has the ability to drive health and safety performance improvements.
- > One of the main strengths of the onsite assessment is the focus on risk identification and risk management.
- > Almost all participants have taken on board SSR assessment feedback and are implementing recommendations.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Businesses made suggestions to make SSR more user-friendly and enhance its ability for driving continual improvements including:

- > Simplifying the SSR standards and maturity scales
- > Creating reports that clearly communicated action points and cater to different audiences within the organisation.
- > Simplify language and decrease the amount of supporting reading material in the self-assessment tool.

“

The 15 standards give really good, comprehensive coverage across all the areas that are critical to businesses in New Zealand.

”

“

The self-assessment, and the onsite assessment, gave us a really good understanding of how we're going and where we should be going next.

”

RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall consensus is that SSR is a more appropriate tool for assessing health and safety performance in the current environment when compared with audited document management systems. It was seen as well-aligned with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, and as such, a valuable improvement to managing workplace health and safety in New Zealand.

SSR's behavioural-based assessment approach is better aligned with how businesses actually operate, with participants highlighting that SSR is a robust process that examines how tasks in the workplace are being completed and if they are completed in a safe manner.

Should the SSR proceed in some form, the primary benefits of driving continual improvement and providing a degree of business confidence (as opposed to being a regulatory-focused audit tool) need to be clearly communicated.

Pilot participants were of the view the SSR would more likely appeal to medium-sized and large businesses due to the expected financial costs of the onsite assessment process.

The WorkSafe, ACC and MBIE co-branding of SSR is seen as a strength. Respondents felt that having all three of the lead agencies involved gave the initiative a degree of 'weight' and credibility. Therefore it is recommended that co-branding be retained. There was also clear indication that WorkSafe or ACC are the most suitable organisation to implement the initiative, with WorkSafe being the preferred agency. The function of SSR should be clearly independent of WorkSafe's regulatory function to reinforce that the initiative is about education and driving continual improvement.

SSR PROGRAMME RESPONSE - OCTOBER 2016

Work is underway to consider how the SSR tool could be used in the market and complete the tool design refinement work based on the learnings of the pilot.

This work includes:

- > Refining the SSR standards, assessment methodology, guidance material and the maturity scales for easier application
- > Developing a report template that clearly communicates action points and connects with different audiences

After this work is completed, the Minister for ACC and the Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety and the ACC and WorkSafe boards will decide on the next steps for SSR.



Ph 0800 030 040



Email starrating@worksafe.govt.nz



www.worksafe.govt.nz/worksafe/about/what-we-do/the-safety-star-rating-scheme