Understanding how attitudes and behaviours contribute to injury and harm in New Zealand workplaces is key to improving health and safety practices so everyone comes home healthy and safe. The only way to get this understanding is to ask workers and employers about their views and what happens in their workplaces. To get this information, WorkSafe commissioned the research company Nielsen to carry out a comprehensive survey, as part of a three-year survey programme.

More than 3,700 workers and 1,900 employers took part in the survey. The survey covered the four high-risk sectors WorkSafe is focused on – agriculture, forestry, construction and manufacturing. It also covered the high-risk commercial fishing sector which is a focus for Maritime New Zealand, who part-funded the 2014 survey. The findings for the commercial fishing sector can be found at www.maritimenz.govt.nz/hse

The survey also included workers and employers from lower-risk occupations for comparison.

**Key Conclusions and Results for the Four High-Risk Sectors Include:**

1. **Key Conclusion**
   - Workers and employers give priority to health and safety but this could be even higher and carry through to safer behaviour.

   - 1/2 of employers said health and safety was the most important consideration in their business

   - 1/3 of workers said this was one of the top three considerations in their work

   Note: Workers and employers were asked what the top three considerations were.

2. **Key Conclusion**
   - Leadership, shared responsibility and a positive workplace culture are important in ensuring healthy and safe workplaces but could be strengthened.

   - Over 8 out of 10 employers (86%) and workers (84%) felt that workers themselves had a very big responsibility for their health and safety at work.

   Fewer workers (57%) and employers (58%) saw top management having this level of responsibility and fewer still thought that government, industry bodies and unions should play a big role.

3. **Key Conclusion**
   - Workers and employers in the four high-risk sectors acknowledge that they are in risky industries but they do not acknowledge the potential for harm in their own workplaces.

   - 17% of workers thought that there was at least a moderate risk of a worker/workmate getting seriously hurt in their workplace in the next 12 months.

   - 6% of employers thought this.

4. **Key Conclusion**
   - There is a mismatch between workers’ and employers’ perceptions of what happens in the workplace, with employers more positive about health and safety than workers.*

   - There is also a mismatch between workers’ views about how safe they are and the extent to which serious injuries and near misses occur.

   - Over 8 out of 10 employers and workers felt that workers themselves had a very big responsibility for their health and safety at work.

   - Fewer workers and employers saw top management having this level of responsibility and fewer still thought that government, industry bodies and unions should play a big role.

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### Summary Findings

**Key Conclusion**

There is a lot of good practice but it could be better.

1. **94%** of employers said that Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is used most or all of the time.
2. **74%** of employers believed that workers reported hazards, near misses and accidents to bosses or supervisors at least most of the time.
3. **89%** of workers said that Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is used most or all of the time.
4. **65%** of workers believed that workers reported hazards, near misses and accidents to bosses or supervisors at least most of the time.

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**5. Key Conclusion**

Workers and employers are aware to some extent of, and respond to, Campaigns run by WorkSafe but awareness could be higher and responses more widespread.

#### Quad Bike Campaign

- **56%** of employers were certain they had noticed the quad bike campaign.
- **54%** of workers were certain they had noticed the quad bike campaign.
- **31%** of employers who were certain/ thought they’d seen the campaign said “the workers always wear helmets”.
- **24%** of workers who were certain/ thought they’d seen the campaign said “they’d started to always wear helmets”.

#### Knowledge of WorkSafe

- 28% of workers had never heard of WorkSafe (before the survey).
- 23% of employers who had never heard of WorkSafe (before the survey) didn’t know anything about them.

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Summary Findings

FINDINGS

Other Key Findings:

Around two-thirds of workers said they were confident they knew their legal responsibilities (63%) and rights (65%) and a similar proportion of employers said they were fully aware of their health and safety obligations (67%) and were confident that they knew how to comply with these obligations (62%). This still leaves a substantial proportion of both groups who lack confidence about these critical aspects of health and safety. There may also be a question of whether this reported confidence and knowledge is sound.

Appendix 1.0 – Risky Behaviours in the Workplace by Workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% saying from time to time or a lot</th>
<th>Workers</th>
<th>Employers</th>
<th>Percentage point difference between workers’ and employers’ responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work when sick or injured</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work when they are overtired</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a mistake by being careless or not having their mind on the job</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take a risk or shortcut on purpose (eg to save time)</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a mistake from being under pressure by the boss to get the job done</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a mistake because they have been working too long or too hard without a break</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get put at risk by working in conditions when work should have been stopped (eg bad weather, not enough people on the job)</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do a risky job that they don’t have the right skills for</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get put at risk by something outside of their control (eg a freak accident)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get put at risk from not having proper supervision</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get put at risk because our processes or ways we are told to do things are not safe</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work when hungover or stoned</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get put at risk by a machinery or equipment fault or breakdown</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of responses (from the four high-risk sectors)</td>
<td>(2266-2280)</td>
<td>(1342-1349)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questions:

Workers – How often does someone in your workplace (you or anyone you work with)...  
Employers – How often does a worker in your business...

June 2015

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