UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

**SAFETY CULTURE SURVEY
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

COAA
Construction Owners
Association of Alberta

1. Introduction

COAA's vision for the industry is to be "Twice as Safe, Twice as Productive by 2020". A key element in this journey is to understand Alberta's safety culture and the level of safety maturity across the industry. COAA's Safety Committee has developed a survey to assess safety culture maturity levels: **Vulnerable**, **Reactive**, **Compliant**, **Proactive** and **Transformational.**

2. Who responded?

In total 1294 individuals responded with 82% male, 17 % female, and 2 % others, with 80% permanent employees..
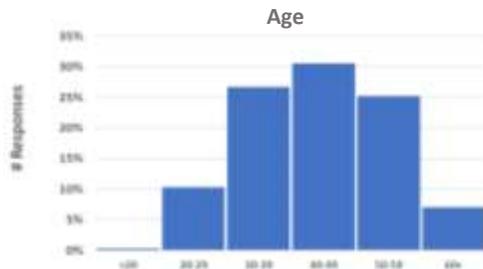
3. What are respondents' perceptions their companies' safety culture?

Following are respondents' percpetions of the 12 safety culture elements, in descending order, from the most mature (top) to the least.

4. What is the industry's relative maturity level?

The overall safety culture for companies with >20 respondents is **Proactive** (We try to anticipate safety problems before they arise), which we graph against safety performance (TRIR) in the left figure below. When compared to safety performance of the entire industry from ISNet in the right figure below, we see those who responded to the survey tend to be working at safer companies than those who did not respond.
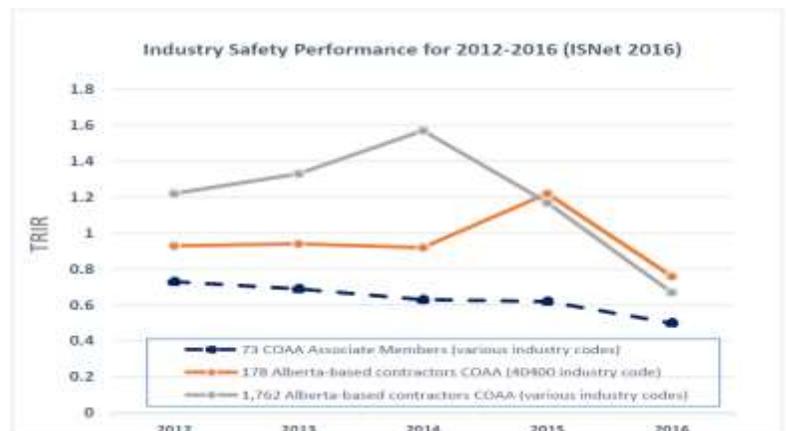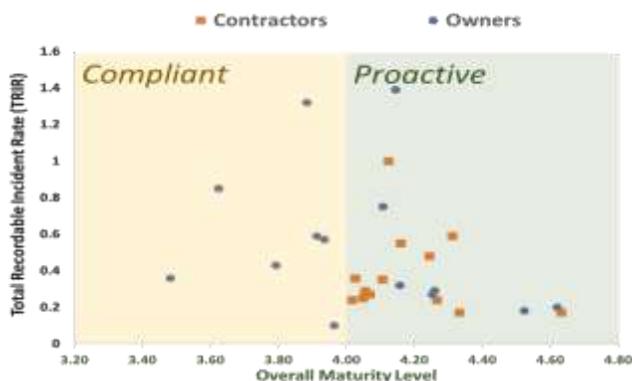
5. What are the opportunity areas? What are strengths?

For the following elements/questions, 30-40% of respondents perceive their company to be **compliant or lower**:

ELEMENT	QUESTION	MOST COMMON ANSWER	OPPORTUNITY AREAS
Communication and Use of Procedures	How are procedures kept up-to-date and correct?	There is a system to track procedure reviews but it does not ensure that procedures are up-to-date and correct.	The workforce could be involved in the writing and updating of the procedures, thus making the procedures more effective.
Learning Culture	How does learning from observations take place?	We analyze observations with either actual or potentially serious outcomes in order to learn from them	In addition to learning from their own observation, workers could learn from observations, near misses and incidents from other companies.
	Do workers understand how to use tools and equipment?	We have a formal training program to ensure that workers understand how to use necessary equipment.	Training programs could be enhanced by testing the knowledge learn in the class room and in field. For major equipment, refresher courses could be required.
Major Incident Risk	How ready is your workplace for an emergency?	There are emergency response plans for most types of incidents and some drills are conducted.	The frequency of emergency drills would increase workers' confidence about what to do in an emergency. After the drill, worker feedback would identify opportunities to improve. Also, benchmarking what other companies do during an emergency, would allow you to take and adapt the best, to further improve your company's safety culture.
Management Commitment to Safety	What is the recognition for safe behavior?	There is some recognition for following safety standards and procedures. Incidents caused by not following them are penalized.	Excellent safety behavior could be rewarded. Having an incident should not been penalized as this discourages the worker to report incidents or near misses.
Manager/Team Leader Respect	How supported do you feel in your work-life balance?	My immediate supervisor talks about work-life balance but they only mean it as long as targets are met	Having a healthy work-life balance reduces sickness and absenteeism, enhancing working relationships between colleagues, encouraging employees to show more initiative and teamwork, increasing levels of production and satisfaction and decreasing stress and burn-out. Thus, this supports positive safety performance.
	What are the consequences of success & failure?	Managers follow the company guidelines for dealing with both success and failure.	Workers should see failures as an opportunity to improve and avoid negative events in the future, thus, feeling more motivated to share their own failures and learn from these.
Production/Cost vs. Safety	Does leadership prioritize safety?	Leadership walks the talk. Safety is a priority and they have the systems in place.	Although leaders walk the talk, workers must see that leaders are passionate and live safety. Safety is not just a guideline or policy from the company. Safety must always be the priority in decision-making.
	How do you think your client selects contractors?	Most of our clients select contractors primarily on cost, provided they meet defined minimum safety standards.	Contractors and company employees are jointly responsible for operations; mistakes by contractors could affect the safety of everyone. Employees expect contractors to have the same training, so they feel safe working with them

Following are **10 questions for which >50% of employees** perceive their company to be **transformational**:

1. My supervisor engages me to review the scope of work, assess the hazards, and supports me in reducing risks so work is safe.
2. They expect us to learn from problems by understanding what caused them and by looking for ways to prevent future problems.
3. All levels of the workforce participate in peer-to-peer safety assessments as a routine part of their day-to-day activities.
4. All levels of the workforce are actively involved in hazard assessments
5. Safety information flows naturally between the workforce, supervisors and managers as well as through formal processes.
6. Managers, supervisors and fellow workers give positive and constructive feedback on a regular and ongoing basis. We are all self-motivated to make our workplace as safe and possible.
7. The MoC process is applied to organizational, technical, operational and plant changes. Workforce involvement is used to enhance effectiveness.
8. I have complete trust in my immediate supervisor.
9. The supervisor ensures that only those with up-to-date training and appropriate competency get involved in hazardous work.
10. The culture of the entire workforce discourages risk taking behaviors and actively engage each other if they observe issues.

6. What's next?

- Tailored company-specific reports were sent to those that had >30 respondents. Then, the overall results (anonymous) were presented and discussed at a COAA BP2017 workshop.
- These results will also be publicized through JWNEnergy.com and the August issue of *Oilweek*.
- Additional analysis will examine: 1) the linkages between elements (i.e., management commitment, learning culture, team leader respect, and two-way communications; 2) the variations between office/field and location, workgroup, and level; and 3) the most influential elements for improving safety performance.
- COAA's Board will consider the implications of these findings to further support "Twice as Safe, Twice as Productive by 2020" through: development of Best Practices, engaging companies who did not respond to the survey, and connecting with Dr. Aminah Robinson's research on project management competencies and productivity to elaborate the 'business case' for safety.
- These findings will be published in other EHS specific publications to motivate industry-level improvements, such as *Occupational Health and Safety Magazine*, *Safety + Health Magazine*, *OHS Canada*, and *EHS Today*.
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