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Transdev Australasia

Sowing the seeds of safety: Growing a healthy safety culture

Fleet Size:

1,870+ vehicles and vessels

Staff:

5,200+

CASE STUDY



NRSP
NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY

PARTNERSHIP
PROGRAM

Organisation: Transdev Australasia
Fleet Size: 1,870+
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Case Study:

Sowing the seeds of safety: Growing a healthy safety culture

Key Outcomes:

- Developing a strong safety culture requires the integration of clearly expressed safety standards, objectives, and responsibilities into every area of the business and its operations
- Culture is created and sustained by the beliefs and values of an organisation – shared by leadership and its staff – and sets the environment employees operate in
- Senior leadership and a network of safety professionals is essential in driving safety improvements and ensuring safety is a continual topic of conversation
- Safety campaigns that frame safety as a personal concern for all individuals help to engage staff and instil a shared sense of responsibility
- Rewarding individual contributions to safety promotes safe work practices and encourages staff to actively recognise safety excellence among peers
- A healthy safety culture benefits the organisation, its staff, customers and clients and contributes to an improved safety record and improved business performance

Synopsis:

Transdev's commitment to making safety a priority within its business has generated a healthy internal safety culture and a shared sense of responsibility among its staff. The benefits of a strong safety culture include reduced lost-time injuries, greater awareness of risk, an improved safety record, and a better outlook for the future of the company, staff and customers.

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About Transdev

Transdev is a leading international transport company that operates 50,000 vehicles and vessels in 21 countries across five continents.

Transdev's ambition is to be the trusted partner of clients and customers by pioneering in mobility.

In Australasia, Transdev has been operating passenger transport services since 1998, with five modes of transport operating in eight distinct locations across Australia and New Zealand. Its operations include bus, rail, light rail and ferry for public transport, and coaches for resource sector employees. The Australasian business employs more than 5,200 staff and operates a fleet of more than 1,870 vehicles and vessels.

Safety Starts With Culture Change

Five years ago, Transdev embarked on an ambitious plan to revolutionise safety within its business. The realisation that a major change was needed in Transdev Australasia's approach to safety was spurred by a lacklustre performance, an unenviable safety record and a serious accident at an international counterpart. The decision was reinforced by feedback from employees and stakeholders.

At the conclusion of its five-year strategy to drastically improve safety within its business, Transdev can now proudly say that safety is at the core of everything it does, with safety as the first pillar of its six-pillar business strategy. It is a continuous effort – from local drivers, mechanics and engineers through to the company's senior executives and CEO. The safety of its teams and its customers is paramount, and Transdev now has the safety record to prove it.

The first step in Transdev achieving the desired improvement in safety performance was overcoming some key challenges: the capability of its safety and management functions, the lack of a positive track record to refer to or build upon, and the simple fact that culture change doesn't happen overnight – it takes time.

Sowing the Seeds of Safety

Safety is not just talked about at Transdev, it is actively lived day-to-day in every area of the business. Transdev has achieved this by integrating safety elements into all aspects of its business, through:

- Strategic framework
- Staff engagement
- Leadership roles
- Development and training
- Operational improvements
- Policies, processes and procedures
- Accreditation
- Industry stakeholder partnerships
- Community engagement
- Business performance



N R S P P

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Embedding the Values

A fundamental part of nurturing a strong safety culture at Transdev was sowing the seeds within the company's strategic framework. In 2012, Transdev launched a new strategic framework that was developed in collaboration with staff. Their collective thoughts, ideas and inspirations formed five new values that underpin what it means to work at Transdev, with safety identified as the core value for the business.

It was important to not only demonstrate how the values support the big picture – the business strategy and performance record – but how, at an individual level, staff throughout the business can connect to the values each day, in everything that they do.

To help embed the values into the daily activities of all staff, behaviours were associated with each value. The values and their associated behaviours are included in individual staff performance plans, and the Golden Star Awards were introduced to recognise staff who live the values.



Cultivating a Safety-First Workplace

A commitment to the development of its people is a key factor in the growth of Transdev's safety culture and, ultimately, in delivering safe services for its customers. To that end, safety is at the heart of Transdev's training programs. This includes in-vehicle driver training, the use and review of data logs, communication campaigns and supporting external safety initiatives.

Spreading the Message

The introduction of annual internal safety campaigns has played a crucial role in stimulating Transdev's safety culture. The initiative was launched in 2011, with the RAE (Risk Assessment Expert) campaign that promoted safety as a priority to staff across the business and included messages about safety basics and injury prevention.

The 2012 campaign, 'Hear our Safety Stories', featured a series of videos produced across Transdev's operations. The videos were accompanied by posters and banners featuring the staff in the videos alongside key safety messages, regular e-newsletter articles, local events centred on the campaign's themes, and safety giveaways.

Based on the success of the 2012 campaign's personal focus, Transdev's 2013 'Safety Starts with Me' campaign again featured employees and aimed to embed the message that safety is everyone's responsibility. The 2014 safety culture campaign continues the legacy with 'Living Safety Smart' which, now that the core value of safety has been fully embedded within the business, aims to combat complacency and reinforce the importance of continued commitment, carrying the message that safety is an "every person, every day" activity.

Having staff tell their own stories created a greater sense of engagement and relatable material for colleagues to draw upon. The introduction of a common approach to safety has been extremely effective in engaging staff and reminding them of the importance of safety.



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Safe Work Australia Month

Transdev's participation in Safe Work Australia's Safe Work Month further allows the business to shine a light on safety, encouraging staff at all levels of the organisation to give special thought to health and safety in their business and to reflect on the personal reasons that help motivate them to stay safe at work.

Safety Culture 'on the Ground'

Safety management and crisis reporting systems, staff induction programs, and safety and behavioural policies and procedures are fundamental in integrating safety principles into the daily operations of the business. They provide a vital guide for the way staff are expected to carry out their roles.

At Transdev's bus operations in WA, legislative compliance is translated into an integrated system that proactively identifies all hazards unique to the workplace; undertakes risk assessments to identify their ideal management; monitors, evaluates and improves performance; and facilitates reporting, investigating, auditing and reviewing processes that focus on corrective and preventative actions. A robust auditing system has been implemented to ensure all OHS processes are tested, fine-tuned and tracked to identify any areas that may require enhancement.

Multiple initiatives are underway across Transdev that focus on reducing collision frequency and risk. Its NSW bus business has developed a dedicated On Road Assurance Team who ride with drivers to give feedback on several fronts, including safe driving; and, in 2013, Transdev's Queensland bus business held operational focus campaigns to identify hazards en route and deal with issues like poor visibility and stops that were difficult or dangerous to pull in and out of.

Transdev Queensland is in its third year of holding training and competency assessment of drivers using dedicated training coaches. These coaches use a range of technologies, including state-of-the-art IT systems that provide feedback for drivers on their performance and areas for focus or improvement.

To achieve continuous improvement in bus safety, it is critical to conduct thorough investigations into incidents to identify the causes, put in place actions to prevent a repeat, and monitor effectiveness of these actions. Following the release of an incident investigation report in 2014, Transport Safety Victoria commended Transdev's Melbourne bus business and its safety team on demonstrating commitment to quality investigations, and using the findings to improve the safety of its bus services.

Staff Innovation

Staff are actively encouraged to be safety leaders within their business. As such, many of Transdev's safety innovations have been devised by its own employees. In WA, a team of four mechanics developed a solution to the hazard of refuelling a bus in traffic. Their innovative design of a fuel transfer pump device has reduced the risk of manual handling injuries and the risk of being hit by oncoming traffic when staff perform refuelling on the road.

This translates to a lower risk of workers compensatable injuries and increased productivity in faster on-road refuelling. The solutions were extremely effective in controlling the identified hazards and reducing the risks initially associated with each hazard. The mechanics were awarded the Transdev Australasia Golden Star Award for Safety Innovation.



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Leading Growth from the Top

Transdev Australasia CEO Jonathan Metcalfe ensures that safety remains front-of-mind for all staff by setting safety as a key component of all the executive team's performance reviews each year and encouraging the team to be seen to be taking the lead in safety in the business.

Regular visits are scheduled where Jonathan and the executive team engage in safety conversations with local business team members. These include experiencing first hand Transdev's workplaces and reviewing them from a safety perspective. This is known within the business as the "Walk the Talk". It has been a tremendously successful initiative for team members and executives and has created positive cultural changes by enhancing the engagement of staff in thinking about safety.

Transdev wins three awards at the National Safety Awards of Excellence 2014

At the National Safety Awards of Excellence (run by the National Safety Council of Australia) announced in Sydney on 15 October 2014, Transdev won three awards. Transdev Queensland won the National Award for Best WHS Training Program; Transdev Australasia was Highly Commended for Best Communication of a Safety Message and then Transdev Australasia also won the overall award for excellence in WHS, the Pinnacle Award. This is the Judges' Choice Award for the most outstanding achievement in work health and safety chosen from among the category winners. We were privileged at Transdev to take out three awards from over 150 nominations which was a tremendous achievement and great recognition from safety experts for our safety strategy, communications, and training.

Jonathan Metcalfe's safety leadership was recognised by Safe Work Australia with the annual Safety Ambassador of the Year Award in 2013.

The award recognises an individual who leads by example to highlight the importance of a safe working environment and encourages others to improve work health and safety.

Jonathan was recognised for his commitment to keeping his workers and users of Transdev's services safe, and for his passion, innovation and influence in driving cultural change and safety reform within Transdev. "Driving his motivation for safety excellence is the philosophy that great organisations are differentiated by the culture and values underpinning what they do," said Safe Work Australia CEO Rex Hoy (below left) in presenting the Award to Jonathan.



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Managing the Safety Landscape

In 2013, Transdev demonstrated its commitment to taking safety to the next level by creating the position of Director Safety, Quality & Risk Management. This position ensures that safety is represented at an executive leadership level and enables a consistent and coordinated message to be promoted to staff, with a focus on best practice, risk reduction, strong collaboration, effective communication, and continued improvement.

The creation of the role was a key building block in enhancing Transdev's safety culture by driving numerous improvements in its operations and processes, invigorating safety teams and consolidating Transdev's commitment to safety.

Transdev has also established a network of safety managers in all of its businesses across Australia and New Zealand. These managers work with staff to drive safety policies, procedures, and initiatives, and ensure that safety is a continual conversation topic throughout the business.

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Safety Charter

Transdev cemented its commitment to safety with the 2013 launch and signing of the official Transdev Australasia Safety Charter, which was not only signed by the executive leadership team but the global and regional CEOs, who were asked to join the pledge. The Safety Charter has pride of place at the entrance to the head office and copies are displayed in all offices and depots across Australia and New Zealand.



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Harvesting Results

Through a concerted and comprehensive approach to improving its safety performance, together with supporting and listening to staff and endorsing activities that continually seek out safer work practices, Transdev Australasia's executive team has led the way in nurturing a thriving culture of safety throughout the business.

At the end of Transdev's five-year strategy to improve its safety performance and establish a robust safety culture, the business has reaped many rewards.

Vehicle Collision Reductions

2013 saw a strong reduction in the number of vehicle and vessel collisions across the business. Vehicle collisions were at 1.4 per 100,00 km for 2013, with some operations down more than 33% on 2012 results. In addition, the 87 collisions recorded in December 2013 was the lowest number of collisions in a month since December 2011, when Transdev Australasia was a much smaller business.

Lost Time Injury Reductions

LTIFR figures show a reduction of more than 80% across Transdev's overall operations between 2009 and 2013.

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Staff Engagement

Transdev's 2013 Employee Opinion Survey showed high levels of staff satisfaction with the company's commitment to safety and its related activities, with safety receiving the highest positive perception score (73%) over all other engagement drivers.

Its 2013 Staff Communications Survey revealed the overwhelming success of the 'Safety Starts With Me' campaign, showing high levels of staff engagement across the organisation. The campaign returned the highest levels of recollection by staff over all communications programs and initiatives, with 88% of participants identifying the 2013 campaign in the survey.

Final Thoughts

While there is plenty of work ahead to continue to improve safety, Transdev is reaping the rewards of its efforts to grow a strong safety culture. Transdev employees and customers are safer and productivity continues to improve with fewer accidents impacting performance and the wellbeing of staff.

Got a question?

Transdev is happy to provide further information or answer questions that may help your organisation in developing its own safety culture.

Contact

ROD MAULE
Director Safety, Quality & Risk Management
rod.maule@transdev.com.au