Understanding the Impact of Participation in ABC’s Safety Training Evaluation Process on Overall Safety Performance
UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF PARTICIPATION IN ABC’S SAFETY TRAINING EVALUATION PROCESS ON OVERALL SAFETY PERFORMANCE
Introduction

Every company that works in nonresidential construction wants to send its workers home in the same condition in which they arrived—if not even better—after an active day of work that stimulates the mind and the body.

Until now, relatively few studies have been conducted on the correlation between the use of measures companies can take to keep workers safe on jobsites—leading indicators—and the number of incidents, accidents and injuries that occur—lagging indicators. The empirical evidence didn’t exist.

Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) created the Safety Performance Report to address this issue.

The charts and summaries within this report present the clearest picture yet of the remarkable impact that leading indicator use has on a company’s safety performance: fewer disrupted or lost lives and a safer, more productive jobsite regardless of the size of the company. In fact, companies that engage in leading indicator use are, statistically, considerably safer than their peers.
Methodology

The 2018 ABC Safety Performance Report is based on submissions of unique company data gathered from participants in the 2017 Safety Training Evaluation Process (STEP). ABC collects each company’s lagging indicator data as reported on its annual Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) Form 300A ("Summary of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses") and its self-assessment of leading indicator practices from its STEP application. Each of the 35 data points collected is sorted using statistically valid methodology developed by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) for its annual Occupational Injuries and Illnesses Survey, and combined to produce analyses of STEP participant performance against BLS industry average incident rates.
What If Your Company Could Be 670 Percent Safer Than the Industry Average?

And you could reduce your Total Recordable Incident Rate (TRIR) by 85 percent?

It’s more than possible. It’s doable.

The 2018 ABC Safety Performance Report is not a research project or academic study. It captures the results of ABC STEP member companies performing real work on real projects. ABC is building on analysis of more than a billion hours of work annually presented in the 2016 and 2017 reports to identify what comprises a world-class safety program.
Measuring Safety Performance

The construction industry has long evaluated safety performance based on lagging indicators—statistics that measure performance based on past incidents or conditions. These statistics judge companies not on the steps taken to prevent jobsite injuries and fatalities, but rather on the number of past safety failures. Lagging indicators only tell part of the story.

The fact is that safety performance isn’t reflected in what you did. It’s reflected in what you’re doing.

3
FATAL INJURIES PER DAY

Every workday in the construction industry, an average of three people are fatally injured.
What’s Behind World-class Safety Performance

Innovative thinking from contractors, the owner/user community and insurers puts leading indicators under the microscope.

ABC has been studying how to improve safety through STEP since 1989.

STEP is comprised of 20 “Key Components,” leading indicators that are proven to improve safety performance and the criteria that indicate best practices. Participating companies score their level of achievement for each component on a weighted scale of 0 points (low score) up to 12 points (high score). Companies receive a recognition level of Diamond, Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze or Participant based on their score.

ABC quantified the positive impact of proactive injury and hazard elimination tools on the jobsite using data gathered from STEP participants in construction, heavy construction, civil engineering and specialty trades. Analyzing aggregated data allows ABC to determine how measures taken to prevent incidents actually improve lagging indicator performance.

20 Key Components of a world-class safety program.
STEP Improves Safety

STEP is a safety benchmarking and improvement tool. Participating ABC member firms measure their safety processes and policies on the 20 Key Components through a detailed questionnaire with the goal of implementing or enhancing safety programs that reduce jobsite incident rates. Applying world-class processes dramatically improves safety performance among participants regardless of company size or type of work.
STEP ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

| TRIR at or below 50 percent of the BLS NAICS code average in each of the previous three data years |  
| TRIR at or below 25 percent of the BLS NAICS code average for the data year |  
| TRIR at or below BLS NAICS code average for the data year |  
| EMR at or below 0.7 beginning Jan. 1 of the application year |  
| EMR at or below 0.8 beginning Jan. 1 of the application year |  
| No lives lost or catastrophic incidents, company-wide, during the application year |  
| No lives lost or catastrophic incidents, company-wide, during the previous three years resulting in an OSHA citation |  
| Minimum 20 Key Components score |  

Get Into STEP

- Analyze your safety and loss program
- Learn the best practices that reduce TRIR and DART rates and mod factor (EMR)
- Benchmark your safety record against similar companies and industry averages
- Measure improvement from year to year
- Show your safety commitment to potential clients and insurers

---

% reduction in BLS average TRIR by
% safer than BLS average

Getting started is free up to the STEP Platinum level. Visit abc.org/step.
The Roadmap to World-class Safety

**LEADERSHIP**
is the courage to be out front and take a stand to challenge and transform the status quo to create a **CULTURE**
that is passionate in its belief that all incidents are preventable—a culture where safety is considered a moral obligation not just for leadership, but for all employees. A culture of safety cannot exist without leadership taking a stand that includes an unwillingness to compromise safety and modeling this belief in their every action.
C-suite Engagement and Commitment Matters

Employer involvement at the highest level of company management produces a 70 percent reduction in TRIR rates. In high-scoring ABC STEP member firms, the owner/CEO:

- Is a direct and active participant in the safety program
- Instills personal accountability for safety throughout the company
- Tracks and annually reviews safety goals and objectives
- Solicits feedback on the safety program and seeks ways to improve it
- Commits resources—money, time, personnel, equipment, supplies, etc.
- Integrates safety into performance appraisals and other company operations

EMPLOYER INVOLVEMENT AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS (C-SUITE): LOW SCORE VS. HIGH SCORE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TRIR</th>
<th>DART</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Score</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Score</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

70% Reduction

69% Reduction
Employee Participation Counts

Employee participation throughout the safety management system improves TRIR rates and DART rates by more than 40 percent. High-scoring STEP firms:

- Identify and explain opportunities for employee participation in hazard reporting, incident investigation, etc.
- Train supervisors how to actively engage employees
- Identify and eliminate potential barriers to participation
- Provide the necessary resources (time, money, staff, etc.)

A commitment to employee safety training lowers incident rates.

Employee Participation Throughout the Safety Management System: Low Score vs. High Score

Low Score
- TRIR: 2.15
- DART: 1.28
- Reduction: 44%

High Score
- TRIR: 1.20
- DART: 0.66
- Reduction: 48%

Employee participation throughout the safety management system improves TRIR rates and DART rates by more than 40 percent. High-scoring STEP firms:
Six Core Leading Indicators

A leading indicator is a system or process used to identify hazards and eliminate or minimize the condition to prevent injury.

This report focuses on six core leading indicators that have the most dramatic impact on safety performance.
Substance Abuse Program

A written substance abuse program/policy with provisions for drug and alcohol testing where permitted.

One-third of all incidents on construction jobsites are drug- or alcohol-related. Companies with substance abuse programs in place are more than 60 percent safer than those without an implemented program. Plus, substance abuse testing can be an effective method of incident prevention if used properly.

ABC is an active member of the Construction Coalition for a Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace. Take the pledge at drugfreeconstruction.org.
"Our team is absolutely committed to ensuring alcohol- and drug-free jobsites and workplaces through adoption of, monitoring and strict adherence to clear policies that both set forth our expectations and reflect our culture. We know that introducing the effects of drugs and alcohol into our work processes greatly increases risk to our workers and customers, negatively impacts productivity and quality, and prevents us from fulfilling our commitments to each other and the customer. We consider an effective substance abuse policy a cornerstone of workplace and workforce safety."

—Jon Lynch, president, Three Rivers Corp., Midland, Mich., STEP Diamond member
New Hire Safety Orientation

Length of time spent on safety awareness and education during training for new hires.

Companies that conduct an in-depth indoctrination of new hires into the safety culture, systems and processes based on a documented orientation process experience nearly 50 percent lower incident rates than companies that limit their orientations to basic safety and health compliance topics. The CEO or senior leadership delivers that introduction to the company’s safety culture and core values, including:

- Safety commitment, expectations and responsibilities
- Workplace safety rules specific to the site and hazards
- Hazard, injury and emergency communication and reporting procedures
- Protective gear/safety skills demonstrations
- Assignment of a safety mentor to each new hire until orientation is complete
- Performance evaluation and record-keeping

### NEW EMPLOYEE SAFETY ORIENTATION: LOW SCORE VS. HIGH SCORE

**Low Score**

- TRIR: 2.32
- DART: 1.32

**High Score**

- TRIR: 1.20
- DART: 0.68

Reduction:

- TRIR: 48%
- DART: 49%
New hire orientation is the employer’s opportunity to make a first impression, setting precedents for worker safety and expectations. It is the opportunity to demonstrate what safety means within your team and to define their obligations in protecting themselves and others around them.”

—Shelley Sutton, director of shared services, hth companies inc., Union, Mo., STEP Diamond member
**3 CORE LEADING INDICATORS**

**Site-specific Safety Orientation**

Companies that conduct site-specific orientations reduce their TRIR and DART rates by 50 percent. These sessions incorporate:

- Site-specific policies and procedures
- Site-specific hazards and operations
- Company safety vision and core values
- Emphasis on the importance of stop-work authority and peer observations

Site-specific orientations are an invaluable tool. Through the orientation, new hires meet construction managers and see firsthand our concern for their safety, which is woven into our safety culture.

—Gordon Beaver, senior vice president of environment, health, safety and security, S & B Engineers and Constructors Ltd., Houston, STEP Diamond member

---

**SITE-SPECIFIC SAFETY ORIENTATION (NO/YES) VS. TRIR & DART**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRIR</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DART</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

50% Reduction
Toolbox Talks

Brief, single-topic training sessions of 15 to 30 minutes conducted on the jobsite for all employees.

Can you brief employees on safety too much? No matter what you may have heard, there is no negative effect to conducting daily toolbox talks. The less frequently this type of training is conducted and the fewer safety topics covered, the higher the lagging indicators. Companies that conduct daily toolbox talks reduce TRIR by more than 60 percent compared to companies that hold them weekly.

“Toolbox talks are one of the easiest and most fundamental ways to improve your company safety training, employee knowledge and performance. We have utilized toolbox talks for many years to keep our employees up to date and refreshed on the many important safety topics and workplace hazards they may face during any given day. These moments of ongoing training throughout the year are tracked in our training records.”

—James K. Thompson, corporate EH&S director, Kwest Group LLC, Perrysburg, Ohio, STEP Diamond level
Near-miss/Near-hit Analysis

The quintessential leading indicator, near-miss/near-hit analysis records observations of situations that could have potentially been catastrophic, but did not result in disrupted or lost lives. While there is no industry-wide recognized definition of a near miss, tracking and learning from such episodes shows much promise in improving safety, with TRIR and DART rates reduced by 61 percent and 63 percent, respectively, at companies that do so. Companies that conduct near-miss/near-hit analysis:

1. Ensure that the site supervisor investigates both accidents and near misses promptly.
2. Determine causal factors.
3. Follow up and take corrective actions.

As part of senior management, it is my obligation to analyze every incident in order to extract information to prevent a reoccurrence. A near-miss incident receives an added amount of scrutiny because it is not far from a serious injury. We encourage employees to report near-miss incidents so that we can improve safety at our construction sites together.”

—J.D. Slaughter, president, S & B Engineers and Constructors Ltd., Houston, STEP Diamond member
Site Safety Committee/Principals’ Council

Regular meetings coordinated by the general contractor or construction manager that include representatives from site employees, subcontractors, vendors/suppliers and the client.

Companies that participated in site safety committee meetings had 23 percent to 25 percent fewer incidents. These information- and idea-sharing sessions:

- **Serve as a communications hub to enhance jobsite safety**
- **Meet at least weekly to raise and correct safety concerns**
- **Are comprised of volunteers or members selected by peers**
- **Represent all subcontractors on site**

“Establishing a Site Safety Committee on our projects has spread the responsibility of safety to all companies on our construction sites. Weekly meetings establishing proactive planning of the following week’s events and the risks to all tradespeople has significantly reduced injuries and safety violations.”

—Tony Roussey, chief operating officer, Elzinga & Volkers Inc., Holland, Mich., STEP Diamond member
Site Safety Committee/Principals’ Council

Weekly jobsite inspections by the site supervisor are a critical information input to the site safety committee. Frequent inspections, corrections and learnings lead to a 66 percent reduction in TRIR rates and a 69 percent reduction in DART rates.

- Inspections are made by the supervisor and are documented.
- Potentially serious safety issues are corrected immediately.
- Less serious safety issues are corrected promptly.
- Follow-up processes ensure that corrective actions produce expected results.

**FREQUENT INSPECTIONS, CORRECTIONS AND LEARNINGS: LOW SCORE VS. HIGH SCORE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Low Score</th>
<th>High Score</th>
<th>Reduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRIR</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DART</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Benchmarking STEP Member Safety Performance Improvement, 2011-2017

### Total Recordable Incident Rate (TRIR): STEP vs. the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Industry Average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>BLS</th>
<th>STEP Average</th>
<th>STEP Platinum</th>
<th>STEP Diamond</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

670% SAFER

Total Recordable Incident Rate (TRIR): STEP vs. the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Industry Average
Glossary of Common Terms

ABC – Associated Builders and Contractors Inc., a construction trade association representing nearly 21,000 merit shop contractors and affiliated firms nationwide.


CII – Construction Industry Institute, a consortium of owners, engineering-construction firms and suppliers focused on the effectiveness and sustainability of the capital facility life cycle through research and industry initiatives.

CCDAFW – Construction Coalition for a Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace, established in 2012 by construction trade associations to develop resources in the campaign to eliminate substance abuse in the industry (drugfreeconstruction.org).

CURT – The Construction Users Roundtable represents many owners, users and clients that hire construction industry firms.

DART Rate – Days Away, Restricted or Transferred rate. Measures the number of cases per 100 full-time employees where an injury or illness causes an employee to be restricted or transferred based on inability to perform normal job functions.

Disrupted Life/Lives – Non-statistical term used to describe the impact on the employee, friends and family when a life has been disrupted because of an injury suffered during work hours.

Experience Modification Rate (EMR) – Also referred to as “mod factor.” Calculation normally performed by the insurance industry (National Council on Compensation Insurance or state-level agency) reflecting percentage of workers’ compensation payouts by a company compared to a company of similar size and type.

FTE – Full-time employee as defined by BLS and captured on a company’s OSHA Form 300A, which tracks the number of full-time employees that a company employs in the course of a calendar year.

Lagging Indicators – Metrics used by industry to measure safety performance based on historical data (i.e. incident rate, DART rate, etc.).

Leading Indicators – Metrics used by industry to measure the use and effectiveness of incident prevention (e.g. near-miss reporting, use of substance abuse programs, site safety orientation programs, etc.).

Lost Life/Lives – Non-statistical term used to describe a fatality caused by an injury suffered during work hours and the long-term impact, beyond the lost life, on family and friends.

Near-miss Tracking – Observations made and recorded of cases where, had conditions been different, an OSHA recordable incident would have occurred. Also referred to as “near-hits.”
OSHA – The Occupational Safety and Health Administration, a U.S. government agency tasked with establishing workplace safety and health requirements and enforcement of existing rules. Operates under the scope of the U.S. Department of Labor.

OSHA Form 300A – The “Summary of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses” required by OSHA for all companies with 11 or more employees and is created using information gathered from a company’s OSHA Form 300, the “Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses.”

Safety Portion of a Company’s New-Hire Orientation – Amount of time, in minutes, a company devotes to covering safety-related topics during orientation for all new employees.

Site Safety Committee – Group comprised of employees and site management representatives, usually selected from the general contractor and subcontractors operating on the jobsite, tasked with reviewing and establishing safety and health training and education, as well as reporting on the general well-being of employees onsite. Also may be referred to as a “Principals’ Council.”

Site-specific Safety Orientation – Jobsite-specific training conducted by a construction firm designed to orient employees recently hired or assigned to the jobsite with operational procedures and safety hazards specific to the work being performed, and location-specific safety and health information, such as emergency contacts, first response procedures, etc.

STEP – ABC’s Safety Training Evaluation Process, created in 1989 to gather data related to member safety performance and to evaluate the effectiveness of safety programs based on 20 Key Components of world-class safety programs.

Toolbox Talks – Topic-specific, short-format training, usually conducted before the workday or during lunch breaks, aimed at crews and site employees to educate on specific safety and health topics/hazards/policies and procedures.

TRIR – Total Recordable Incident Rate. Measures the number of cases per 100 full-time employees where an injury or illness caused a loss of life, situation where an employee is unable to work (days away), is restricted or transferred based on inability to perform normal job functions or any other injury that falls under the OSHA definition of a recordable incident.
You Can Achieve World-class Safety. Start Today.

A commitment to world-class safety takes tremendous effort and is fraught with leadership challenges.

Transforming a company is difficult. Transforming an industry is daunting. Once you resolve to make that transformation, ABC can help.

Whether your company is large or small, ABC’s Safety Training Evaluation Process (STEP) gives you an organized approach to analyze and develop your company’s safety and loss prevention program, wherever you are on the roadmap to world-class safety performance.

The STEP application is now online, making it faster and easier to complete your self-evaluation. You can also ask your ABC chapter to host an ABC STEP Plus Safety Excellence Academy.

I hope the 2018 ABC Safety Performance Report helps you discover how world-class results can be realized in your company. Please feel free to share the report widely.

If we choose to lead, if we choose to commit, if we choose to transform, together we will create the conditions for all to do their work without incident and go home safely every day.

Michael D. Bellaman
President and CEO
Associated Builders and Contractors

Founded in 1950, Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) is a national construction industry trade association representing more than 21,000 members. Founded on the merit shop philosophy, ABC and its 70 chapters help members develop people, win work and deliver that work safely, ethically and profitably for the betterment of the communities in which ABC and its members work. Visit us at abc.org.
ABC 2018 SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

Chair
Ryan Odendahl
President
Kwest Group

Executive Committee Liaison
Paul Lemley
Executive Vice President
BC Construction Group LLC

Chapter President Liaison
Angela Latino-Geier
President
ABC New Orleans/Bayou Chapter

Staff Liaison
Stephen Wiltshire
Director of Safety
ABC National
Cheyenne Wheeler
Manager of Workforce Development and Health Safety and Environment
ABC National
Karen Livingston
Senior Director of Government Affairs
ABC National

Committee Members
Kelly Tyroler
Manager of Labor & Employment Policy
ABC National
Troy Allen
Primoris Services Corp.
Vice President of HSE
Gary Clevenger, MS, CSP, RRE
National Risk Control Director – Construction
CNA
Paul Crivac
Safety Director
Three Rivers Corp.
Shane Davis
Safety Manager
Ivey Mechanical Co.
Chris Diaz
Vice President, Safety, Health & Environmental
Balfour Beatty Construction
Bob Fitzgerald
Eastern Regional Health, Safety and Environment Manager
PCL Construction Enterprises Inc.
Edwin Foulke Jr.
Attorney at Law
Fisher & Phillips LLP
Bill Goss
Risk Control Consultant
CNA
Daryl Guercio
HSE Compliance & Training Director
CB&I
Teresa Kee
Director, Environmental Systems & Sustainability
United Rentals Inc.
Ken Kyle
Executive Vice President, Risk Management & Safety
The Rinaldi Group
Melanie Laird
Executive Vice President FC Construction Services
Joe McAnulty
Safety Officer
Kencor Inc. Elevator Systems
Jeremy Miller
Environment, Health and Safety Director
Performance Contractors
Joel Pickering
Environment, Health and Safety Director, Senior Vice President, Lendlease (US) Construction LMB Inc.
Ralph Riley
Corporate Safety / Workforce Development Programs Manager S & B Engineers & Constructors, Ltd.
Tony Roussey
Chief Operating Officer
Elzinga & Volkers Inc.
Eric Simmons
Corporate Safety Director
Helix Electric
Shelley Sutton
Corporate Safety Director
hth companies
Jim Thompson
Corporate Environment, Health and Safety Director
Kwest Group
For more information, contact:

**Greg Sizemore**  
Vice President, Health, Safety, Environment and Workforce Development  
Associated Builders and Contractors  
440 First St., NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20001  
sizemore@abc.org