

▶ customer story



Industry
Government

Business Issue

A need to more accurately assess where risks occur in workplaces so safety programs can be devised.

Solution

SAS® Visual Analytics

Benefits

Within six weeks staff were able to drill down in the data to identify key risk areas.

WorkSafe tackles New Zealand's health and safety problems with an intelligence-led approach

The need to transform New Zealand's poor workplace health and safety performance was the impetus for the establishment of WorkSafe New Zealand in 2013. With a target of achieving a 25 per cent reduction in the workplace death and injury toll by 2020, it found itself on a journey to be an intelligence-led organisation.

John Munro, WorkSafe's manager of operational intelligence, says workplace health and safety in the country has been largely a reactive process. "We've had an ad hoc regulatory regime and there is an absolute information gap that needs to be addressed," he says. "To do this, we need an environment where we can use our data in a way that we will be more intelligence-led rather than intelligence-fed."

Minimising risk of workplace accidents

WorkSafe has two key roles: being proactive and working with organisations on implementing programmes that minimise the risk of workplace accidents; and a regulatory role – investigating events and their causes and determining disciplinary and preventative actions.

Risk analytics and management specialist Navigatus Consulting was engaged to recommend areas it should focus on to help improve employee and workplace safety. SAS® Visual Analytics was chosen as a way to assist with WorkSafe's aim to be more intelligence-led and put the information in the hands of those closest to workplace safety.

One of the benefits of Visual Analytics is that it allows staff to see at a glance where more focus is required. Navigatus director Kevin Oldham says this helps WorkSafe know what type of areas it should be targeting for interventions to achieve improved work-practice development.

"It might be that in the building sector, they see that a high number of accidents are due to falling objects," Oldham says. "Therefore WorkSafe will work with the sector on educational programmes around safely securing tools or objects in a way they don't cause someone cause an injury."

The same applies where staff can generate reports that might indicate that a high percentage of injuries are from foreign objects in the eye caused by grinding machines in certain industries, such as manufacturing. "Inspectors can identify the types of sites to go to and check what organisations are doing to make sure that the grinding wheels have covers and safety glasses are used," Oldham says.

The enablement of Visual Analytics at WorkSafe was over six weeks following installation. Within this timeframe, staff were able to prepare and load the data, generate reports, as well as build a customised training course and user manual for field users.



Collaboration key driver of success

Part of the success of the rollout was the involvement of New Zealand's government personal injury insurer, the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC).

Collaboration between Navigatus, ACC and WorkSafe has been excellent. "Having ACC as a partner has helped make the project seamless and fluid. It's been a collegial approach to deliver this project and it's worked really well," he says.

The new solution has also made staff proactive about addressing workplace safety concerns. "We have the ability to look at national data but we can also develop programmes for regional offices," Munro says. "The interactivity of the solution lets staff dig deeper. This will be useful when trying to hone in on specific areas."

Meeting the aim of being intelligence-led

Staff feedback on the new solution has been very positive. "People were extremely excited by what they saw and were practically banging down the door to use the data straight away," Munro says. "There is also so much more we can do and the potential has captured everyone's imagination."

Munro says there will always be an element of reactive work within WorkSafe but it is well down the path of meeting its aim of becoming an intelligence-led organisation.

"We want to be in a position where we know what's coming over the horizon rather than always playing catch-up," Munro says. "WorkSafe also needs to be as transparent as possible. So while the information is good for the business we are in, we are also happy to share it with other organisations and agencies."

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John Munro
Manager of Operational Intelligence



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