



CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY INSTITUTE®

TARGETED SAFETY PROGRAMS

Construction Industry Institute

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Targeted Safety Programs

**Prepared by
Construction Industry Institute
Target Safety Research Team**

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Executive Summary

Construction firms are realizing that the initial investment and the continuous efforts to maintain a good safety record do pay off by not only reducing injuries on the job site, but by also contributing to an “on time” and “within budget” project delivery. Conscientious construction companies generally have well developed safety programs. These companies devote financial resources to maintain the health of their work force and to prevent high medical and insurance costs. Progressive organizations, like those who make up the membership of CII, are setting their goals at not only reducing injuries, but eliminating them. This expectation is called the “zero-incident” objective.

Target safety programs are techniques or approaches employed to reduce or eliminate specific types of hazards. These programs are generally implemented by firms that are proactive about construction safety.

CII decided to go beyond simply finding good corporate programs in its latest research into safety. Having already examined safety programs to see how overall safety management has been used to pursue the zero injury objective, CII wanted to investigate implementation details of programs that are designed to prevent specific types of injuries — target safety programs. To do that, it formed the Target Safety Research Team.

The research team’s goal was to answer a fundamental question, “How do construction firms and projects develop, structure, and successfully implement effective programs to prevent or to address specific types of jobsite hazards?” The study primarily focused on the procedures utilized to ensure successful development, implementation, and management of target safety programs that have effectively been implemented on commercial and industrial projects. This publication summarizes the research team’s investigation and findings.

Introduction

When organizations begin to address safety in a formal manner, they generally implement programs designed to improve overall safety performance such as safety toolbox meetings, jobsite safety inspections, drug testing, new worker orientation, and incident investigations. It is only after an organization has established a solid foundation for its safety program that attention might focus on specific hazards. Thus, organizations that implement target safety programs are generally those with a strong safety commitment and a relatively mature safety culture.

Objective of the Study

Various research studies have examined safety programs in the construction industry to see how overall safety management is used to pursue the zero injury objective. These studies, however, have not examined the details of how specific programs are developed or successfully implemented to reduce specific types of hazards.

The focus of a target safety program can vary. A program might be focused on preventing struck-by injuries or trench cave-in accidents. Others might be focused on preventing injuries to the back, eyes, hands, or feet or those that result from falls or fatigue. Clearly, the focus can be quite diverse and is largely determined by the nature of the specific hazards that appear to be plaguing a particular project. It was the objective of this research effort to examine various target programs and identify some common elements that existed among them. If a consistent pattern could be identified, the goal was to develop a model or template by which other target safety programs could be developed and implemented.

Surveys on Target Safety Programs

The first step of this research consisted of a survey that was used to obtain information about target safety programs. The questionnaire asked a variety of questions about target safety programs familiar to the respondents. The questionnaire asked that the specific focus of the target safety program be described, followed by questions related to the position of the individual who championed the program. Questions were then asked about the means by which the program was developed and how it was ultimately implemented on a project site. These questionnaires were mailed to several contractors, e-mailed to others, and hand-delivered to others by members of the CII Target Safety Research Team.

Because of the active involvement of the research team in soliciting participation in the research, a total of 225 questionnaires was received in this step of the study. Upon closer examination of the responses, it was evident that some respondents did not fully understand the specific focus of the research endeavor. For example, some respondents stated that the company had recently begun to conduct weekly toolbox safety meetings, implemented an incentive program, or that drug testing was implemented. While these are generally regarded as worthwhile endeavors, it was determined that some of these replies were not responsive to the questions being asked. To maintain a focus on the features of the target safety programs, it was decided to discard responses that were not consistent with the definition that had been developed for target safety. Thus, the data analysis discarded those replies that related to programs that did not satisfy the research definition of a target safety program. This reduced the viable survey responses to 120 replies.

Prior safety studies have not examined the details of how programs are developed or successfully implemented to reduce specific types of hazards. While the safety culture of a project might be well established,