

Environment Scan:



Health and Safety Matters, provides Tier Two (T2) Leaders with HSW responsibilities a snapshot of recent events and changes across health, safety, and wellbeing (HSW). It's designed to be a resource to be **shared, discussed, support conversation and discussion**, and prompt assurance and critical questions at governance level such as:

- "Are we confident our systems prevent harm?"
- "How do we know our controls are working?"
- "Where could failures occur in our system?"

The Scan highlights any new or useful guidance, resources, and tools to be aware of, such as the Safe-Gov app that keep your attention to health and safety active, informed, and ongoing—not passive or assumed.

TIER 2 HSW Leaders Programme Update

In August - Sharon Thompson, Chief Executive Officer, WorkSafe New Zealand, spoke about "WorkSafe's Role, Priorities and Strategic Direction for HSW Across New Zealand" and shared her insights around the significant role that the public sector agencies play in signalling expectations for other employers in New Zealand and how we could lift capability together.

The session was well received and attended with 21 senior leaders, highlighting the value of the Breakfasts as an opportunity to engage across agencies and to share the wealth of experience we all have. Attached are summary notes, however, if you want these slides, please contact [Debbie Bridge, GHSL](#).

Upcoming sessions:

- **22 October** - Breakfast with Dave Gawn, Chief Executive Officer, National Emergency Management Agency.
- Nov/Dec - Breakfast and Office Tour with Whaikaha/Ministry of Disabled People
- **1 December** - Webinar with Peter Landon-Lane, and Kim Ballenger, AsureQuality

Welcome to our New T2 HSW Champion

We are delighted that Lisa Hansen, Deputy Chief Executive, People and Culture at ACC will be one of our T2 HSW Leaders Champions. Lisa joins Janine Hearn, from Fire and Emergency NZ, who has been with us since the T2 Programme started in 2024. Our Champions are important to our programme as they provide us with direction and insights into key topics and learning opportunities for our T2 community.

Help Shape the 2027 T2 Programme - Share your insights

The collective experience of our T2 leadership cohort is one of our greatest assets.

From this our cohort can learn from each other the value of leadership, reflection and governance dialogue; whether it is navigating a significant event, leading cultural change, engaging governance boards and executives, implementing critical risk controls, or lessons learned through challenges and setbacks, your insights could provide valuable learnings.

Opportunities to support the programme include a short breakfast presentation (approximately 15 minutes) or participation in a webinar discussion. If you are interested in participating, please contact a T2 Champion or [Lance Goodall](#).

GHSL Annual Survey

The [annual GHSL Survey](#) is live and we need as many people as possible to complete it. We would greatly appreciate you taking five minutes to complete our survey so we can focus on areas of work, issues and initiatives that matter most to you and your agencies. Closing date for the survey is **Friday, 30 October**.



SAFE-GOV App

Early this year, we launched the SafeGov App, a practical online tool to support officers and executives across the public sector to demonstrate strong due diligence and leadership. We have authorised more than 350 executive and officers to access the Safe-Gov.

We would encourage all our T2 HSW Leaders to activate their profiles and look around the app and consider how this will assist you with your workplace site visits and leading your governance boards.

Please let [Lance Goodall](#) know if you would like the [GHSL to demo Safe-Gov at any leadership forum](#) or to discuss any aspect of the app.



AROUND THE SECTOR



An overview of recent cases, decisions, system weakness, gaps and industry issues from New Zealand, Australia and further abroad to support learning and reflection. Leaders are encouraged to consider how the lessons could be applied in the organisational context and what assurance they would expect to see.

Mount Maunganui Landslide Review was Preventable → Controls and Assurance

Six people lost their lives when a landslide occurred on 22 January 2026.

This article sets out that the independent review into the fatal Mount Maunganui Beachside Holiday Park landslide concluded that the tragedy was preventable and identified systemic failures in risk management, decision-making, and organisational processes within [Tauranga City Council](#).

A central finding of the review was that the landslide hazard was well known for more than two decades. Multiple expert consultants had repeatedly identified the risk, pinpointed the exact slope involved, and warned of the potentially severe consequences of a failure. Despite this, effective risk reduction measures were not implemented.

A reflection point: Could warnings or risk signals be getting lost within your organisational processes? Are the controls for catastrophic risks effective?

[Read the full article and report from Inside Government](#)

First Industrial Manslaughter charges laid in South Australia → Active oversight and assurance

SafeWork South Australia (SA) has laid its first industrial manslaughter charges, following the death of a 28-year-old worker at the Edwardstown manufacturing plant of Nylastex Tooling Pty Ltd. SafeWork SA has charged Nylastex Tooling Pty Ltd, Nylastex Holdings Pty Ltd, and the companies' directors after a two-year investigation into the July 2024 workplace fatality.

It is alleged the worker was operating a milling machine when he was struck by a metal object ejected from the machine and that a safety interlock designed to prevent such an incident had been disabled or bypassed, despite concerns being raised just two days earlier.

Key Observation: This case will be closely watched as it tests South Australia's industrial manslaughter provisions and reinforces the importance of maintaining critical safety controls and responding promptly to identified risks. If successful if this could potentially have a future impact for New Zealand.

[Read the full SafeWork article](#)

New Resources from WorkSafe New Zealand

WorkSafe has published new fact sheets and guidance on the amendments that comes into effect from 1 April 2027:

- [Main changes for persons conducting a business or undertaking \(PCBUs\)](#)
- [Guidance on Officer Duties](#)
- [Working with other businesses to manage work risks](#)

TAIC Investigation into rail incident → Due Diligence expectations

A Transport Accident Investigation Commission (TAIC) investigation into a near-collision between a freight train and a hi-rail vehicle near the Kaimai Tunnel found that multiple communication failures and unclear procedures resulted in track workers operating without protection, while Train Control was unaware they remained on the rail corridor. Although no one was injured, the event had the potential for a fatal outcome.

The investigation identified three key contributing factors:

- ambiguous safety procedures,
- ineffective communication methods, and
- inadequate challenge-and-check behaviours.

KiwiRail has since improved radio coverage and is reviewing its procedures and safety-critical communication requirement. The investigation reinforces a key executive-level health and safety lesson: systems can fail when critical information is not formally communicated, verified, and shared across all relevant parties.

A reflection point: How effectively do our teams practise "check-and-challenge" when information is unclear or assumptions are being made? Are we investing sufficiently in non-technical safety skills such as communication, situational awareness, and decision-making.

[Read the full TAIC article](#)



INSIGHTS AND RESOURCES



Current resources and insights from experts on health and safety.

State of a Thriving Nation 2026: Progress with More to Do

The Business Leaders Health and Safety Forum fourth State of a Thriving Nation report produced by Shamubeel Eaqub, economist. New Zealand is making encouraging progress in workplace health and safety, with workplace injury claims decreasing by 28% over the past decade, including significant improvements in traditionally high-risk industries.

Francois Barton states "Good safety and good business go hand in hand. Better alignment across the system would help, but business leaders have the most influence when it comes to creating safer, healthier and more productive workplaces".

However, preventable workplace harm continues to have a substantial impact, costing an estimated \$5.5 billion in 2025. Occupational ill health remains the largest contributor at \$3.1 billion (57%), followed by fatalities (\$1.1 billion) and injuries (\$1.3 billion).

[Read State of a Thriving Nation Full Report](#)

ShopCare Results Released - Nationwide Aggression Survey

Results from the first nationwide survey prepared by KPMG. Of the 2,538 customer facing workers, including public sector, the survey shows 91% experienced some form of customer aggression over the last 12 months. The report highlighted significant under reporting with a quarter of incidents not being reported as workers felt it was not worth reporting.

[Read ShopCare Full Report](#)

Due Diligence Index - Safety : The six legislative elements of due diligence

The Due Diligence Index – Safety (DDI-S) is an open-source governance tool developed to help Boards and Executives understand the strength of safety assurance, capability, and organisational resilience within their organisation.

The index was developed by Sydney Dekker, a leading health and safety scholar, with his colleagues at Griffith University, drawing on contemporary Safety II principles.

The DDI-S incorporates concepts such as safety in the presence of capacity and operational learning teams, translating these ideas into the six legislative elements of due diligence to provide richer governance conversations and more meaningful indicators of organisational health and safety performance.

[Go to the \(DDI-S\) website to read more](#)
[Read Moni Hogg, Be Safe article on practicalities of the methodology.](#)

Directors: Getting More From A Workplace Visit

Written by Dan Davis, HSE Global for the Institute of Directors. Dan recommends that a board should designate a single director to spend dedicated, unmanaged time on site, prior to a scheduled board meeting.

Unaccompanied visits minimize operational disruption and management staging, allowing the director to gain a genuine, "rough-around-the-edges" view of everyday operations.

[View the video and article by Dan Davis](#)

Strengthening New Zealand's Health and Safety Workforce: Deploying Capability

This Health and Safety Association of New Zealand (HASANZ) report shows that the number of health and safety generalists has exceeded the workforce targets identified in the Building the Professions 2019 report.

Whilst the growth is encouraging, numbers alone will not reduce workplace harm. The research identifies opportunities to improve outcomes by strengthening organisational capability, better utilising senior health and safety expertise, and addressing workforce shortages. It highlights the importance of effectively deploying health and safety professionals to influence leadership, performance and risk management.

With a growing health and safety workforce, the key question is: how do we ensure this capability is effectively deployed to deliver meaningful reductions in workplace harm?

[Read the full HASANZ Report](#)

Concerning Health15 Blood Pressure Results

At the 2026 GHSL H&S Reps Conference, 97 participants took part in voluntary blood pressure checks. The results showed 80% had elevated or high blood pressure levels.

More than half of those tested fell within the high blood pressure category, and 7% recorded readings consistent with a hypertensive crisis, requiring immediate follow-up.

Each year, 2,000 New Zealanders die of a stroke – if you would like to explore getting Health 15 to one of your sites go to [their website](#).

[View the Full Conference Results](#)