



## CASE STUDY

# Implementing BAPP® in a Heavily Unionised Environment

### The Situation

Operating a coal terminal in one of the busiest ports in Australia, our client realised significant barriers to creating a safe workplace and thus engaged DEKRA to assist.

Employing over 250 people, 40% of which were contractors, the culture at this site was very much one of “us and them”. This entrenched culture was continually reinforced by heavy union involvement in all safety related decisions and a long serving and aging workforce. Furthermore, at the time of the proposed intervention, an impending enterprise bargaining agreement and a planned restructure of key site and corporate safety management positions were both considered barriers to any significant cultural change initiative.

Other sites within the business, faced with similar obstacles and presented with a difficult economic climate (as a result of the 2008 Global Financial Crisis), were keen to delay proposed behaviour-based safety initiatives. However, despite apparent road blocks, our client, intensely dissatisfied with their existing safety performance, decided to proceed with an implementation to improve their safety practices.

The site already had a ‘Safe Act Observation’ process in place which involved Supervisors conducting observations. This process had been in place for some time with varying degrees

of success. The decision was made to design a safety culture change initiative which would integrate with this process rather than replace it.

The key objectives of this initiative were:

- Achieve a culture where all employees would be open and honest regarding safety and, in turn, would report and/or address exposures and hazards as they were identified
- Reduce injuries and improve the recordable case injury rate.

### The Solution

In 2009, the organisation engaged DEKRA to implement their Behavioural Accident Prevention Process (BAPP®), a behavioural-based peer-on-peer safety process. The objective of this operator/maintainer behavioural safety process is to create an interdependent safety culture characterised by employees and contractors who take on the initiative to discuss and solve exposures in real time, in the workplace, as well as contribute to the solution of more intractable safety problems.

Planning sessions were held in July 2009 with some key decisions made to influence the success of this project. The first was to select and support a Facilitator who had the passion,

self-motivation and tenacity to drive the Process during a very difficult period. The second was to ensure effective and consistent establishment of the proposed Process by engaging a DEKRA Consultant to run terminal-wide communication sessions for all employees and contractors. Thirdly, it was identified that it was critical to take time implementing the Process to give people a chance to not only adjust to the change, but also gain maximum buy-in at every stage.

Implementation design is critical to the success of any behavioural safety initiative ensuring a tailor-made solution is delivered with consideration given to potential barriers to success. During this process, it was identified that senior union representatives would need to be heavily involved in the design and roll out if any traction with the workforce was to occur. The union would also need to be involved in the Steering Committee to ensure the message to the workforce was delivered with their support. Limited resources on site also posed an issue particularly given site management wanted everyone on site trained to conduct observations.

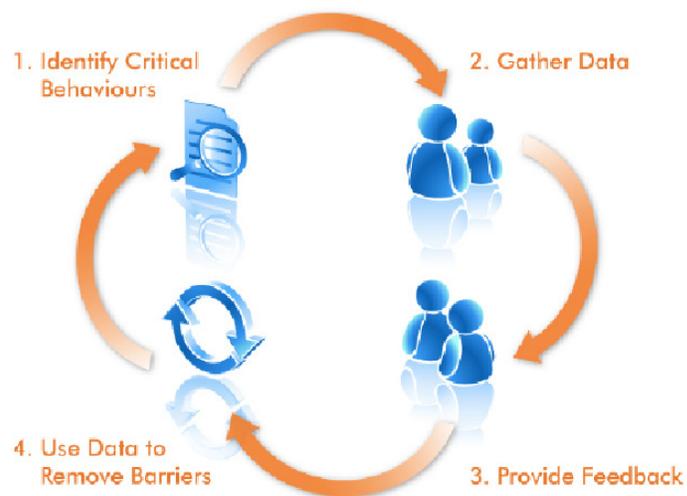
The four key elements to the peer on peer observation Process are:

- Identify Critical safety Behaviours for each business unit
- Gather Data by observing the work being performed in a non-threatening way
- Provide on the spot Feedback on behaviours
- Remove Barriers to safe behaviour.

## Results

This implementation delivered significant improvements at site:

- Injury rates have improved by 89.9% over an 18 month period during 2010-11
- Over the same 18 month period, 43 significant barriers to safe behaviour were removed
- 365 days without a recordable injury were achieved (which is a record for the business)



- Important data, captured during the observation process, was used to improve isolation standards that previously would have gone unnoticed
- The site was awarded ‘Most Improved Safety Performance’ across the business, two years running.

A Process sustainability review, conducted by DEKRA in 2011, showed very positive results. It showed that workers viewed Senior Management support of the Process as outstanding, resulting in significant barrier removal across the site. Worker confidence and willingness to participate in the Process improved largely due to the consistent and supportive approach by Senior Leaders. Supervisor support was also seen as positive. Supervisors had been allocating time for Observers to complete observations and had maintained the sanctity of the “no name, no blame, no sneak up” principles that are so important to building trust and promoting accurate and honest feedback.

BAPP provided a focussed approach to safety at the terminal. It increased active participation from all levels of the organisation, including contractors, thereby reducing exposure to risk. It also led to enhanced communication and trust between the employee/contractor groups and the management team assisting to bridge the gap of the ‘us and them’ culture that previously existed.