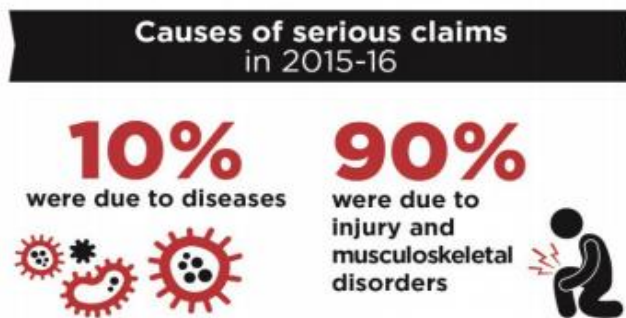


**Greetings all. Today's topic is about Muscular Skeletal health.**

The Crane Industry can be a challenging environment to maintain good health in general due to the physical nature of the work, the long hours, the high stress and numerous onsite hazards and the sheer unpredictability of the job. To perform at our optimal, we need to have a healthy body and mind. As I mentioned in Bulletin 233, 50% of all crane licence holders are over the age of 50. This puts added pressure on the lost time due to injury or illness statistic because as we age, our health starts to have more of an impact. Crane drivers and operators spend large amounts of time sitting and driving while riggers and dogmen spend large amounts of time on their feet doing physical work.



The manual labour needed can sometimes put the body in awkward, unnatural positions and when push comes to shove you have to lift, push, and pull repetitively all day, it puts a lot of strain on the body, especially if the body has not been properly prepared. In the most recent [report done by SafeWork Australia](#) on our Workers' Compensation rates, it found that 90% of serious claims were musculoskeletal and 10% diseases. Of the musculoskeletal claims, 43% were traumatic injuries to the joint, ligament, tendon, and muscles, followed by 16% made up of wounds, lacerations, etc.

*Never has there been a better time to focus on some preventative health measures that will not only benefit the crane industry but improve the quality of life of many of the workers.*

How can we eliminate or reduce this risk of injury on site? We can't eliminate the risk, but we can significantly reduce it. The key is education. We need to educate employees on how to look after their bodies whilst at work and at home.

It's crucial to activate the muscles before any type of activity and warm the body up correctly. It's also important to know that this needs to be an everyday routine, not just a one-off special event on site.

If companies want to reduce the risk of injury on site, they need to consider a strategy to educate their employees in injury prevention and the necessary steps needed to facilitate this culture change.

Recently at the CICA Vic/Tas Regional meeting, we had the pleasure of hearing from Dr Sarah Curtis and leaders in industry workplace preventative health, [Vitality Works](#). They offer a range of programs including everything from Flu-shots to the exercise programs mentioned above, to Mental health/wellbeing.



In the photo above you are seeing the SafeSpine™ program in action. It integrates 'at work' conditioning and injury prevention practices, until they become second nature. It aims to:

- Reduce incidence & severity of soft tissue injuries.
- Create a healthier, fitter and safer workforce.
- Integrate assessment, education and coaching.
- Promote improved self-awareness and knowledge.
- Improve site morale & team cohesion.
- Improve perception of employee value.
- Engage management through the provision of regular quality statistical reporting.

Vitality Works is one of many companies out there if you would like more information. A company's greatest asset is its people. Especially with the highly specialised skillsets and knowledge base that crane operators and riggers possess, so why not invest in the health and wellbeing of your people for their sake as well as the sake of the company they work so hard for? It will no doubt reward all in the long run.

[Stay Safe -CICA](#)