

**Greetings all. Today's topic talks about better delivery of safety information.**

We focus a lot in the Construction about what safety info is required but we do not focus on the optimal delivery methods. There are standard forms like SWMS, JSA's and Plant Risk Assessments which will always have a place in a safety management system however researchers at RMIT suggests workers may not even read these documents before they commence work. Also, no matter how complex they are, documents cannot cover all eventualities. There's a gap between the way work is described in formal health and safety documents and the way it is practised on site.

Construction workers have an average tertiary literacy level of year 10 with 54% below year 9 level. This is not a direct problem in itself, as a rigger or dogman doesn't need to know differential calculus to sling a load like a plumber does not need to recite Bernoulli's principals of fluid dynamics to do their jobs well. Intelligence has many different forms and school mostly covers just one of these.



What this does say is that we are all different, and with literacy levels of construction workers low relative to other industries, long and complicated safety documents might list everything they need to know, but what percentage will be retained?

Visual methods, including video, can overcome some of these difficulties and for a long time, have been used to communicate health and safety information to workers. But safety training videos are often produced by technical 'experts' or media companies and are too long or cram in too many messages. The workers are passive audiences and retention is limited. Construction companies are legally required to consult

workers on health and safety issues, but this is often done in a very formal top-down way, reducing effectiveness. It is the actual construction workers possess the real and complete knowledge based on their practical experience often gained over many years.

Research conducted at RMIT University (undertaken in partnership with Melbourne-based firm [CodeSafe Solutions](#)) examined the potential for digital and mobile technologies to be used to access, capture and share workers' health and safety knowledge.

In the research, construction workers were involved in making films about their everyday work practices. With some basic media training, the workers made their own digital videos on handheld devices about their work procedures. These videos were reviewed and analysed with management to better understand the reality of the tasks and what actually happens on site. Discrepancies between theory and practise could be discussed and collaboratively resolved.

In several instances work equipment, processes or procedures were redesigned to improve safety. The old paradigm of "this is how we've always done it" goes out the window. Both workers and managers indicated that the video footage provided a powerful real perspective and in sight to the way high risk work is performed. The revelation was the depth and detail of the experience possessed by knowledgeable workers, which is not easily captured or written down, but is now made usable through these participatory video activities. The videos can then be shared around using Quick Response Codes (QR), accessible via smartphones. They can be shared through different organisations, jobsites and levels of management.

The workers described video as being a powerful way to share "know how" as opposed to "know what."

Digital and mobile technologies are now an integral part of everyday life. Using a smartphone to capture and share knowledge, experiences and ideas in video format is not only possible, but now second nature to many. The research shows it can also improve construction workers' health and safety.

*Stay Safe -CICA*