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New safety guide launched

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QUEENSLAND-based industry group the Cooperative Research Centre for Construction Innovation has produced a new safety guide designed to improve safety on construction sites.

The group says fatality rates in the building and construction industry are twice as high as the national workforce average, and with the support of the Office of the Federal Safety Commissioner it is aiming to provide a consistent, national approach to implementing safety leadership.

"Construction accounts for 9 percent of the Australian workforce, so it is critical that with such a large human investment, industry implements the highest standards of OHS to protect their workers," said CRC for Construction Innovation chief executive Keith Hampson.

The CRC said the guide, A Practical Guide to Safety Leadership, has been developed as a step-by-step tool to implement the award-winning Construction Safety Competency Framework.

This framework was originally developed by a national industry, government and research CRC team led by John Holland group safety manager Dean Cipolla.

Its purpose was to promote a consistent approach to improve OHS competency for key safety positions by outlining "who does what" and the competencies required to equip staff responsible for safety leadership in their organisations to perform these tasks.

The guide, which is available for free download, has been designed to be used in conjunction with the Construction Safety Competency Framework.

Federal Safety Commissioner Tom Fisher, who launched the guide in Canberra on June 24, said OHS initiatives such as the guide were vital to bring about sustainable cultural change in the industry.

"If senior managers can plan, implement and adopt good OHS practices as part of their business planning, it will set the wheels in motion for the change that is needed," Fisher said.

Hampson said that changing an organisation's safety beliefs, values and attitudes must occur from the top down to really make a difference onsite.

A Practical Guide to Safety Leadership can be downloaded at:
<http://www.construction-innovation.info/>

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