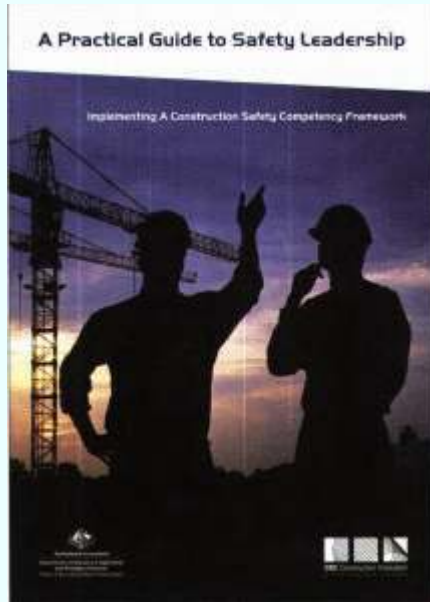


# Guide provides practical safety tools

THE Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Construction Innovation, with support of the Office of the Federal Safety Commissioner, has produced a new safety guide to improve safety on construction sites by providing a consistent, national approach to implementing safety leadership in large and small organisations.

Fatality rates in the building and construction industry are twice as high as the national average. "People are dying on the job," says Keith Hampson, CEO of the CRC for Construction Innovation. A *Practical Guide to Safety Leadership* has been developed as a step-by-step tool to implement the Construction Safety Competency Framework. The original framework, developed by a national industry, government and research CRC team led by Dean Cipolla, group safety manager of John Holland Group, promotes 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.

St Hilliers used the framework to audit position descriptions and site safety management plans within their company, to ensure that all appropriate safety management tasks were incorporated. The company developed a skills matrix with nine competency clusters. Bovis Lend Lease (BLL) customised the safety critical positions outlined in the framework to add in cost planners and contract or finance managers, which the company



considered critical to its safety performance. Laing O'Rourke used the framework as the basis of a training and development program for foremen/supervisors, junior engineers and site safety advisors. Baulderstone Hornibrook used the framework as a point of reference to undertake a 'gap' analysis of current training and staff development activities on a national level.

Martin Reid, construction manager of the Albury-based Joss Group which has an annual turnover of \$130 million and a workforce of 60 people, spoke at the launch of the guide from the perspective of how small to medium sized construction companies could utilise the guide

and implement the Construction Safety Competency Framework in their organisations. The Joss Group participated in industry focus groups, as part of the development of the guide.

Reid said Joss Group, and other medium sized companies, operate in an environment where they maintain all the pre-qualifications, accreditations and safety management systems that large companies maintain but without the same depth of resources. "We compete with builders working out of the back of their utes who have negligible overheads – and the large majors who have large turnovers to spread overhead costs across," remarked Reid. "The CRC's guide will assist our business by significantly reducing the level of resources spent on development and policy, and enable us to better focus on implementation and monitoring."

Reid said the involvement of industry leaders such as BLL, Hornibrook Baulderstone, John Holland Group and others in the development of the guide was a bonus for his organisation. "It means the information in the guide is peer-reviewed and the fact that these industry leaders have implemented the framework is a significant endorsement of its content," he says.

Joss Group would like to see the CRC's safety research taken to the next level. "We'd like to see the CRC for Construction Innovation go the next step and develop, or acquire from industry, training modules and assessment criteria for the 'priority' competencies," says Reid.