

ROADS REVIEW

THIS MONTH, WE ASKED THE INDUSTRY'S DECISION-MAKERS, 'WHAT MORE CAN THE INDUSTRY BE DOING TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF WORKERS ON INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS?'



SARAH BACHMANN, CEO – NATIONAL PRECAST

Taking works offsite and into a controlled factory environment is a sure-fire way to improve site safety. When exact, quality tested elements are delivered to site – as opposed to fabricating elements on site – there is less site activity with less construction works and fewer materials' deliveries, less dust and waste, less disruption to surrounding businesses and site safety for workers is improved. Infrastructure elements manufactured by National Precast Master Precasters deliver all the benefits of offsite manufactured products. Unlike many other delivered structural elements, every precast installation on a civil or infrastructure site is required by Part 3 Civil construction of AS 3850.3:2015 Prefabricated concrete elements to have a written 'erection design', that has been approved by a certified engineer.



SHAN RUPRAI, GROUP EXECUTIVE INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS AND ACCREDITATIONS – COLAS AUSTRALIA

Infrastructure projects fall into a high-risk category for the safety of our workers. It is collective responsibility of the PCBU, employees and other interested parties to work together for safer outcomes. We need to be proactive rather than reactive. Below are some of my key thoughts: Get all interested parties (Customers, Regulators, Policy Makers, Industry stakeholders/Associations, Employee Representatives, Police etc) under one roof to address breaches, including the speeding vehicles through the road construction sites. Agree on key risks and a publish a guideline to manage and train, as well as media briefings, worker of foot mandatory training via AfPA and mandatory workers health checks.



ANDREW WILLIAM, MAJOR ROAD PROJECTS VICTORIA – ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Workplace health and safety is about so much more than what happens on site. We work in the country's most male dominated industry – at the same time, more women are entering Victoria's construction sector than ever before. We're helping to disrupt this gender imbalance as we implement the state's Building Equality Policy (BEP) through our projects, and our construction partners to increase female representation from trade roles through to management. A power of work is underway to make women aware that construction is an attractive and viable career option from primary school age to career changers. But workplaces must be adaptive and inclusive to ensure that women stay in our industry. Greater representation of women in construction makes workplaces stronger and will benefit everyone in the construction industry.



JAMES BENNETT, GENERAL MANAGER – TRANSPORT TECHNOLOGY AND RAIL SERVICES

Industry needs to work together to go above the minimum compliant safety standards. Together we've identified several initiatives to improve safety and need to work together to make these higher safety measures the norm for our industry. The focus on price during procurement can lead to contractors including the minimum compliant safety solutions, not the optimum one. There is opportunity to reframe major procurement such that investments in safety are separated from other bid costs – and instead evaluated separately. Crucial to this pivot is an understanding that companies will not be penalised for proposing a higher investment in safety.

If you or someone at your organisation is an industry leader and would like to be a part of this monthly column in 2023, please get in touch with Editor, Tom O'Keane: tom.okeane@primecreative.com.au