

- the level of entitlement claims (dollar value per employee in respect of sick leave, rehabilitation, lump sum payments, etc). Information on these KPIs will be obtained directly from ACC each year in order to ensure the industry's statistics are independent and robust.

**Improvement plans.** Contractors whose KPIs fall below the industry average will need to have work plans in place to improve them.

**Collective approach.** Self-governance gives the civil contracting industry the ability to determine and enforce its own standards and to provide for continuous improvement. By developing self-governance best practice documents — or validating existing documents — in partnership with DoL, ACC, ERMA and our industry clients, we are assured of recognition of our standards as industry-wide best practice.

#### How to become accredited

To become an Operate Safe Accredited Contractor you will need to complete three stages within dates to be agreed on acceptance of your registration.

#### Stage 1 (generally completed within 3 - 6 months)

- ✓ Register your company to achieve ACC Secondary Accreditation or higher under the Workplace Safety Management Practices (WSMP) programme.
- ✓ Provide Operate Safe with a completed Information Form and authorise ACC to provide the company's claims statistics to Operate Safe.
- ✓ Certify a successful internal audit to the ACC Self Assessment Guide, including the Operate Safe Industry Specific Audit Tool.
- ✓ Certify that all operational employees (those performing non-office duties and with service longer than 3 months over the past 12 months) have achieved and been issued with Induction Cards (red).

#### Stage 2 (generally to be completed within 12 months of achieving Stage 1)

Certify that all relevant operational employees who have held an Induction (redRed) Card for more than 6 months have been assessed as competent to the operations level (Bronze Card) and where applicable the supervision level (Silver Card). Also certify that

these employees have attended the most recently held bi-annual Operate Safe Update Course (OSUC).

#### Stage 3 (generally to be completed about 6 months after achieving Stage 2)

- ✓ Company to achieve ACC WSMP programme, secondary level or higher.
- ✓ Certify that all employees have taken the most recently held bi-annual Operate Safe Update Course.
- ✓ The company becomes an Operate Safe Accredited Contractor.
- ✓ If the company's ACC claims history is above industry average (too many claims per employee), demonstrate that work plans are in place to bring claims to within or below industry average.

Employee training and recognition of new competencies will be an ongoing activity following accreditation as an Operate Safe Accredited Contractor. Participating companies are expected to set objectives relating to employee holders of the Operations (bronze), Supervision (silver) and Management (gold) cards.

#### Training

Training is a key component of Operate Safe. It is a core function that shows how member companies are meeting their legal obligations and complying with health & safety and other employment legislation.

The training regime consists of four levels of competency — induction level (Red Card), operations level (Bronze Card), supervisory level (Silver Card) and management level (Gold Card).

All employees who visit work sites are required to hold the Induction (Red Card) level of competency, a pre-requisite of which is to complete the Site Safe Civil Passport course.

Employees who operate plant or machinery, supervise the health & safety of one or two other employees, or work alone or on remote sites are required to obtain Operations (Bronze Card) competency.

Employees with responsibilities in supervision or management are required to obtain competency to the appropriate Supervision (Silver Card) or Management (Gold Card) level.

In addition to the training necessary to obtain the above competencies, all employees are required to undertake a short on-site Operate Safe Update Course (OSUC) every two years, based on current areas of concern for H&S and injury prevention within the wider civil contracting industry.

Full details of training components for all levels of cardholder may be obtained from Operate Safe, ph. 04 471 1184, email [membership@operatesafe.org.nz](mailto:membership@operatesafe.org.nz)

#### Who runs Operate Safe?

Operate Safe is administered by Roothing New Zealand and is supported by the NZ Contractors' Federation (NZCF), the New Zealand Roadmarkers Association, the Department of Labour (DoL), Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC), InfraTrain New Zealand, Transit New Zealand, and Land Transport New Zealand.

#### How to register

You can register online at [www.operatesafe.org.nz](http://www.operatesafe.org.nz). Click on Register, complete the form and submit it automatically. On acceptance of your application you will be sent an Operate Safe Manual and will be invoiced the registration fee of \$200 inc. GST. If you prefer, contact us and we will post you a form.

#### Contact details

Operate Safe, PO Box 12-412, Wellington, ph 04 471 1184, Fax 04 471 1185. Direct Dial: Tim Warren 04 471 1183. Email: [tim@operatesafe.org.nz](mailto:tim@operatesafe.org.nz)  
Internet: [www.operatesafe.org.nz](http://www.operatesafe.org.nz)

**DISCLAIMER** - Operate Safe provides a framework to assist in the implementation of robust health and safety programmes. It should not be relied on as guaranteeing acceptable levels of health and safety or complying with the Act — those who control places of work remain responsible for all accidents and injuries in their workplace.



# Health and Safety self-governance for the Roothing & Civil Contracting industry

COVER PHOTO: INFRACON LTD



# OPERATE safe

ACCREDITED INFRASTRUCTURE CONTRACTOR

## What is Operate Safe?

Operate Safe is an approved accreditation regime enabling New Zealand roading and civil contractors to improve their health and safety record and to demonstrate their compliance with the requirements of the Health & Safety in Employment Act, 2003. It provides for self-governance using industry best practice.

By registering with Operate Safe and completing the accreditation process, road controlling authorities (RCAs) and contractors are assured of a systematic approach to managing health and safety in their businesses, as required by the Act. The regime also helps contractors to meet the Act's requirement that they have "current and specific industry training".

## Benefits

The benefits of registering with Operate Safe are as follows:

- For industry workers and the general public, safety is improved and the risks of injury or death are significantly reduced.



PHOTO: TRANSIT NEW ZEALAND

- Member companies gain ACC Secondary Accreditation.
- An industry-specific framework is provided for health & safety management.
- ACC levies of member companies are reduced by up to 15%.
- ACC audits are free to member companies.
- The roading industry, in consultation with its stakeholders, can set and enforce its own standards.
- The industry can develop and control its own system.
- Operate Safe accredited contractors are approved for client pre-qualification by Transit New Zealand. Operate Safe is working with other road controlling authorities with the aim of meeting their pre-qualification requirements. Some authorities, e.g. Manukau City Council, have already approved Operate Safe members for pre-qualification.
- Operate Safe provides contractors and clients with a strong defence against the penalties contained in the Health & Safety in Employment Act.
- Operate Safe gives effect to the Government's Workplace Health & Safety Strategy and its Injury Prevention Strategy.
- As required by legislation, Operate Safe helps principals take "all practical steps" to ensure contractors have implemented a systematic approach to safety management practices.

## Why is Operate Safe necessary?

Health & Safety regulations have been increasingly imposed on all NZ industries in order to improve health & safety and reduce accidents. In some industries regulatory bodies have imposed standards that in some cases cover a number of industries, but which may be irrelevant for some.

Under the Health and Safety in Employment Act employers are responsible and accountable for the proper training of their workers, and must have a systematic approach to managing health and safety in their business. Most road controlling authorities today demand evidence of appropriate H&S standards from tendering contractors.



PHOTO: DOWNREDWORKS

*Roading maintenance and construction work involves industry-specific risks that call for industry-specific health & safety training.*

The Department of Labour (DoL) encouraged the civil contracting industry to take control of its own health & safety standards. Industry self-governance gives the contracting industry the ability to determine and enforce its own standards, in consultation with DoL and other stakeholders.

## Key elements of Operate Safe

**An approved health & safety regime.** Operate Safe provides an industry specific audit tool for establishing or where necessary improving a company's health & safety management programme to meet ACC Secondary Accreditation requirements.

**Internal and external (ACC) audits.** Operate Safe enables contractors to achieve accreditation using an evidence-based approach. This shows they are:

- applying good practice H&S systems in the field

- managing their health, safety and operational training and using only staff who are appropriately trained
- accountable for their health & safety record against key performance indicators.

**Employee training.** Competency-based mandatory health & safety training, based on agreed industry requirements, for all employees, forms part of the Operate Safe programme (see Training).

**Benchmarking.** A key element of the industry self-governance regime is the development of measurable key performance indicators (KPIs) in three categories:

- the number of contractors accredited under the industry scheme
- the level of actual ACC claims (by dollar value of injury claims per employee) **(over)** ▶