

SAFE+

MAKING HEALTH AND SAFETY WORK



SafePlus Accredited Assessor Update - April 2018

The year is speeding by, it's April already!
We would like to take this opportunity to touch base.

Results from your feedback

We sought feedback from you about the uptake of the Onsite Assessment and Advisory Service to date. Thank you to those of you who responded, here are the results:

- Eighty percent of the 43 Assessors responded to our March request for an update.
- SafePlus Onsite Assessments have been undertaken with 28 different businesses.
- Assessors have received 213 enquiries from prospective clients, an average of six enquiries per assessor.
- The most common sectors seeking an onsite assessment are: aged care, construction, Government, and manufacturing, transport and agriculture.

These results are positive and show a growing level of awareness and uptake. To help promote the SafePlus Onsite Assessment and Advisory Service, we would like to know more about what it's like to be a SafePlus Assessor and your experiences; your findings, and what businesses are doing with your advice. We would like to start to develop some case studies to share the good news stories. If you are interested in participating, please email the team info@safepius.nz with your contact details and the subject line 'case study' and we will be in touch.

We have been busy promoting SafePlus

- In March, we attended the annual Safety360 conference in Auckland. We led a SafePlus presentation and Q&A with business leaders and health and safety practitioners.
- On average, we present SafePlus to 10 groups/events a month. Audiences include industry associations, health and safety practitioners, businesses and Government agencies and large employers. We were also pleased to be invited to join the ACC and WorkSafe roadshows where we presented to business relationship managers in their regional offices. The main focus of these engagements is to promote and raise awareness of the Onsite Assessment and Advisory

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Service and its value proposition. We will maintain this momentum in the coming months with an increased focus on large employers in high risk sectors.

- SafePlus is supporting a 'NZ Management' magazine health and safety feature in May 2018. This magazine is distributed nationally with a readership of over 21,700 and is available both online and in print.
- The SafePlus e-newsletter has over 700 subscribers! If you would like to subscribe, please email info@safepplus.nz with your name and subject line 'e-newsletter subscription'. If you have missed previous e-newsletters, you can find them on-line at www.safepplus.nz.
- In addition, the All of Government Health and Safety Lead continues to promote and support Safeplus with its 31 Government agency members.

Revised SafePlus Onsite Assessment and Advice Service Report template

We have reviewed the SafePlus Onsite Assessment Report template to make it easier to use. This review included developing an exemplar report based on the recent experiences of SafePlus assessors. They can also be sourced from the SafePlus Programme at info@safepplus.nz.

Accredited Assessor Register

The Assessor register is up to date with the contact details of the now 45 Accredited Assessors. We have received a number of requests to find Assessors by region and area of expertise. To assist enquiring businesses to the register, we will update it to include Assessor's business website and geographical location. We have updated the introduction on the register to clarify most Assessors cover a wide range of regions and practice areas.

2018 Assessor Training

Training sessions and competency assessments for additional SafePlus Assessors are continuing. March training has been completed with two more qualified Assessors, an additional training course is scheduled for May in Auckland.

We have produced a video to replace Malcolm MacMillian's (SafePlus Programme Manager) introduction presentation at future assessor training courses. The purpose of the video is to help reinforce SafePlus key points of difference, benefits and the assessment approach expectations for Assessors. For those of you who haven't seen it, you can hear more about critical assessment issues and the practice approach - watch it here.

New sector-specific SafePlus Performance Requirements

We have four new specific performance requirements documents for Emergency Services, Energy, Forestry and Transport sectors. A Healthcare Services sector version will be available in the coming month.

To assist businesses and Assessors, we have also developed Lead Indicator guidance. It includes examples of acute safety risks and work-related health harm lead indicators by sector.

Visit the 'Resources and Guidance' section of our website to view and download.



Changes afoot

To date, the SafePlus harm prevention initiative has been designed, built and implemented by a special cross agency (WorkSafe NZ, ACC and MBIE) programme. We are pleased to announce, the SafePlus initiative is now transitioning from its programme structure and approach into a business-as-usual function within WorkSafe, this will be completed by June 2018. This means there will be dedicated staff and resources to continue to support SafePlus in the years ahead. It is in the process of being transitioned to the Guidance and Education Development team within Worksafe with support from the wider WorkSafe teams. Please continue to use the info@safepius.nz as a means of contacting SafePlus.

Assessor guidance

In the months since the launch of the SafePlus Onsite Assessment and Advisory Service, the SafePlus Programme has started to receive feedback from both Accredited SafePlus Assessors and businesses engaging in the Safeplus initiative. Some of the recurring issues are discussed here and response guidance to support you.

The importance of your initial conversations and planning with businesses

It has become clear initial conversations between Accredited Assessors and businesses are an important part of SafePlus process. Such engagement and communication begins before any contract for services is agreed. This engagement can help position and inform quotes/proposals, subsequent contractual negotiations, and the final agreed scope of work to best meet clients' needs.

There should be a two-way exchange of information. Assessors should ask for and receive information about the business to understand its context and needs. This information will help Assessors understand how SafePlus can work for the business – whether this is a response to a general query, or a more formal proposal, or quote for services.

Assessors will need to provide businesses with information about themselves and SafePlus; how it works, what the assessment process involves, and how it can help businesses improve their health and safety. It is important for Assessors to be able to communicate the benefits of SafePlus, including:

- What good health and safety looks like through the 10 SafePlus Performance Requirements and their supporting indicators.
- A diagnostic and behavioural evaluative assessment does not primarily focus on a document review. The assessment approach involves interviews with workers and leaders in the business at different levels - observing people at work, their practices, the conditions they are working in, and reviewing business processes where applicable. SafePlus will help the business to understand the health and safety practices, behaviours, attitudes, perceptions, values, and culture.
- Performance improvement recommendations are based on the assessment findings and tailored to business improvement needs.
- Expert guidance and advice on how to implement the recommendations.
- An illustration of the business's current health and safety performance, including their strengths and what they need to do to improve.
- Greater confidence and knowledge on how to improve, and assurance they are on track.

Assessors should not assume a business knows what it wants. In many cases they will not understand what SafePlus is and how it can help them. Some will be seeking advice on how SafePlus can be used or applied in their specific situation. There is not a one-size-fits-all approach;

it will depend on the Assessor getting to know the business - what it does, its size, complexity and critical risks. Such factors will influence how the Assessor provides advice on what a SafePlus assessment could entail and its potential scope (discussed further below).

To support Assessors' engagement with potential clients, the SafePlus Programme has developed some resources which can be provided to businesses to explain SafePlus. These include video clips about SafePlus, FAQs for Businesses, a guide for businesses etc, available at www.safeplus.nz

Recognising the nature of SafePlus – it is not a compliance audit service

To inform communications with prospective clients, Assessors need to be clear about what SafePlus is, and how it is different from other health and safety products.

Some Assessors have described SafePlus as an 'audit'. SafePlus is not a traditional compliance audit product, it is important not to confuse SafePlus as an audit product. The key purpose of SafePlus is to provide consultative guidance and advice to improve a business's health and safety performance.

SafePlus is an educational performance improvement tool, rather than a compliance or audit product. It is best seen as consultative and advisory service. Assessors provide good practice recommendations to improve and support businesses.

[A new video clip](#) explains the SafePlus approach. It was recently released by SafePlus for new assessors coming through the accreditation process. This is a useful refresher video because it was created after the initial round of assessor training courses.

Scope of the assessment

The scope of each assessment is specific to the business context and needs. It is worked through with each client and agreed at the outset. The scope will depend on a range of factors, explored through discussions with each business. Some key pointers:

- The nature of the business – what does it do?
- The size and complexity of the business – for example, does it span multiple locations, or is it comprised of different business units that undertake a range of different functions and activities?
- Its specific risk profile (which will likely vary across the business depending on which parts you are considering).
- Specific client priorities.
- Budget and timeframes.
- Other issues discovered in initial interactions and engagements with your clients.

For a larger business, with multiple sites or locations, it is likely that some form of sampling across sites is required. However, there is no defined minimum sampling rules - it is a matter of your professional judgement after scoping discussions with the business. It is important to take a business consultative approach, rather than relying on a traditional pre-set formula compliance audit approach to sampling. For example, questioning the business about its risk profile, and how this could vary throughout the organisation, could help you work out what seems a reasonable sampling approach.

We have found examples of excessive sampling based on traditional compliance audit approaches where a percentage formula is being used opposed to evaluating the businesses activities and health and safety risks. We are reminding assessors that this is a business consulting advisory service, not a standards and conformance scheme.

Some parts of assessments are 'non-negotiable' and must be included. In particular, the three elements: Leadership, Worker Engagement, and Risk Management, and the 10 Performance Requirements. There may be times when a business asks if you can assess it against some of the performance requirements (but not all of them). For example, a business may be particularly interested in its risk management system and ask you to focus on the four SafePlus risk management performance requirements.

While there may be valid reasons for this, it is important to discuss the implications with the business. A business cannot claim it had a full SafePlus Assessment and Advisory service if it has not been assessed against, and met, all ten Performance Requirements. All the Performance Requirements are fundamental to good health and safety - it is not a case of picking or choosing between them. It is also important for national consistency, quality, integrity and the reputability of the SafePlus brand to ensure all businesses are consistently assessed against the same requirements.

Revisiting scope

You may need to revisit the assessment scope with your client as you work through the assessment. This is a routine occurrence for most professional advisory services, and SafePlus is no different.

For example, it may become apparent that an issue or risk was not initially identified, or was considered a minor issue, so further assessment and consideration is required. Another example is where you find consistent feedback or themes from some sites, so going to another similar site will not be of additional value (eg, you have reached data saturation). In this case, it could be more valuable to direct time and effort to another part of the assessment.

A range of scenarios will likely arise as you provide services to different organisations. The key is to have open communication with your client; raise potential scope changes as soon as possible, discuss the implications on the assessment, and agree a way forward.

Documenting the scope of the assessment

It is important to accurately describe the agreed assessment scope within the assessment report, including any changes agreed during the assessment.

A new version of the SafePlus assessment report template has been produced, it includes a sub-heading on the introduction page for Assessors to document the agreed scope of each assessment. This can be used to describe any scoping limitations up front. For example, was the assessment restricted to specific sections, offices, locations, sites or business unit; or did it only focus specific operations?

A clear scoping statement sets the context for your report and advice, as well as supporting your findings/recommendations in the performance illustration (ie, whether you have assessed them as being at the SafePlus 'developing', 'Performing', or 'Leading' performance levels).

It is important to take a balanced approach about how your findings, recommendations, and performance judgments can be extrapolated to parts of the business that you may not have thoroughly assessed (or not assessed at all). There will be some situations where you feel comfortable extrapolating or generalising your findings across the business. For example, if you find that there are consistent themes recurring across some sites; and it is reasonable to believe that they are likely to be apparent in other sites, or across the wider business. However, there may be good reason to restrict your findings, recommendations or judgements to particular sites, locations, or activities within the business (eg, a particular risk may only exist in one location, or there may be factors at play in a location that influence a risk management control that may not be as relevant to other locations, etc).

Assessors may also describe the scope of each assessment in the disclaimer section at the back of their reports, this will ensure the assessment scope is clear.

Thank you for choosing to be a SafePlus Accredited Assessor, you play a key role in lifting health and safety performance and culture in the New Zealand workplace.

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