



MONITOR WHAT MATTERS

– What helps me

Grady Cameron, CEO Delta

Every week my executive team has a stand-up safety meeting in what we call the Operations Room. The walls are covered with whiteboards, which in turn are full of graphs, notes, spreadsheets and lists. For 15-30 minutes the team examine safety indicators pinned on the walls – visible, physical evidence of what's being measured and reported around health and safety by staff, management and contractors within the organisation. Then we use that data to make decisions.

The meeting is part of the Delta operating model. We identify key areas we need to be measuring and monitoring, and put that into tangible form – bits of paper stuck to the wall. On the health and safety side we go through the data weekly – safety alerts, for example, KPIs or near misses – and we identify key areas of risk or trends going in the wrong direction. Then we try to understand what's going on and make an intervention.

Similar models are replicated in operating areas around the organisation, with employees in the field often having a health and safety board where they are monitoring and measuring their own performance. Then the data is cascaded up to the Operations Room when priority attention is required.

Delta's approach to health and safety began to change in 2013. We focused our harm prevention programme on significant non-injury incidents which had a high potential to cause serious harm. We identified five critical risks – contact with live electricity, falls from height, crush from above, heavy machinery, and working in confined spaces – and formally adopted risk management thinking and tools, based on process safety.

At the same time Delta increased its investment in safety leadership skills, including training 50 staff in incident cause analysis method (ICAM) investigations to help the company work out what is going on with near miss and other incidents, and how to fix the root cause of problems before they occur.

We want management to be visibly leading safety conversations, to be prepared to listen, to be more accountable, and to take action when issues are raised.

It hasn't been easy. The introduction of new measuring and monitoring systems, and training staff has taken at least two years to become ingrained. And we're constantly refining and reviewing what information we need, to ensure we're getting the right signals.

We are always checking to ensure we get the right information, and we get it early enough. We also want to be sure red flag issues show up clearly and are acted on.

Delta is a South Island-based electricity and infrastructure services provider that employs 620 staff.

