

WHY SAFETY AND RISK DASHBOARDS MATTER

Operators can improve safety by tracking and analyzing incidents; then leveraging that information to work with staff to reduce risks

By Brian Varner

There is so much data to review and understand when it comes to safety and health. As a laundry operator, when the data is obtained, it's important to understand what you're reviewing and what actions are needed to improve or maintain performance. A safety-and-risk dashboard is a great tool that leaders can refer to on a monthly basis for a snapshot of how the company's incident-prevention program is performing. The dashboard is often displayed in a graphical format (see example above), and in a few minutes, leadership can assess the staff's performance.

The starting point for developing a safety-and-risk dashboard is to determine the key performance indicators (KPIs) that your company monitors to ensure that performance targets are achieved and maintained. This tool is used to compare results, evaluate safety performance and track changes aimed

at improving outcomes. The KPIs are critical because they help align the program to achieve strategic goals, such as reducing claims and time lost due to work injuries. They also help operators set goals for increasing training participation and safety audit scores.

Is your organization measuring its safety performance? If not, you can't properly take action to improve and maintain incident-prevention efforts. Measuring safety performance is important for several reasons. First, you can use it as a navigational tool, an early warning sign and a behavior-alteration tool. Second, you can use it to implement strategies and policies, monitor trends, prioritize improvements and provide input for KPIs.

Third, measuring safety serves as an effective tool for tracking safety performance. In addition, a safety dashboard can draw the attention of executives and senior leadership to consider new safety and health initiatives. This makes it easier to get their buy-in for

these programs, while at the same time keeping them informed and involved in safety across the board. When it comes to safety metrics, there's no shortage of data to collect and analyze. The key to success is leveraging the data after you've collected it in order to continuously improve program performance and drive outcomes.

As noted, there are numerous metrics that you can include on a dashboard. The key is to monitor those metrics so that they can have the greatest impact on your business. Below are a few such metrics to consider when building your company's safety-and-risk dashboard:

TOTAL RECORDABLE INCIDENT RATE (TRIR):

One of the metrics that's most critical and can have the biggest impact on an organization's success is the TRIR. The TRIR is a metric used to evaluate safety performance. It's a great tool to compare each facility, region and company's performance. It measures the number of "recordable" incidents per 100 full-time workers during a one-year period. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) defines "recordable" incidents that include Death; Days away from work; Restricted work or transfer to another job; Medical treatment beyond first aid; Loss of consciousness; A significant injury or illness diagnosed by a physician. This metric can be compared to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) TRIR average for the linen or uniform industry. Both are updated annually. It's worth including on your dashboard because the higher your TRIR score, the higher the probability that you'll pay higher premiums. The formula is simple: Number of recordable incidents \times 200,000 / then divided by the total manhours worked in a year = TRIR. The number 200,000 is used because it's the total number of hours 100 employees would work in a year (100 \times 40 hours \times 50 weeks). To demonstrate on a dashboard: include last year's TRIR vs this year's TRIR. Also include the latest BLS TRIR average which is 4.1 (2022). The goal is to reduce TRIR

and ultimately score at or below the industry average.

DAYS AWAY, RESTRICTED, OR TRANSFERRED (DART):

Another critical metric that can have a huge impact on the company's annual premiums is the DART metric. Every company should do everything possible to get every injured worker back to work as soon as possible, even if the injured employee works modified duty (restricted or job transfer). The DART metric is used to show how many workplace injuries and illnesses caused the affected employee to remain away from work, restricted their work activities or resulted in a transfer to another job. The best way to reduce DART is to have an effective return-to-work program to prevent loss time. Ensuring that the workers' compensation clinics and claim adjusters know that your company has modified duties is key to reducing the DART rate. Failing to monitor DART and not having an effective return-to-work program can lead to a higher premium. You can compare this metric to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) TRIR average for the linen or uniform industry, which is updated annually. Like TRIR, the DART formula is simple: Number of OSHA Recordable injuries and illnesses that resulted in Days Away; Restricted; Transferred \times 200,000 / Employee hours worked = Days Away Restricted Transferred (DART) Rate. The goal is to lower the DART and ultimately score below industry average.

INCURRED COST OF CLAIMS: This metric shows the severity (financial) of the impact of workers' compensation claims. The total cost of the company's claims will have a direct impact on premiums. These costs are a result of medical bills, disability benefits, legal fees, etc. Working with your insurance company and properly managing claims can help reduce incurred costs. To obtain incurred-cost information, you must retrieve the information from the company's Loss Run Report that's issued by the insurance company. It will include the incurred cost for each claim and total costs for each employee. You can

total it by facility, region and for the company. You should review the Loss Run Report monthly and the total incurred cost included on the dashboard, comparing last year vs. this year. The goal is to manage open claims and work closely with the workers' compensation clinic and insurance adjuster.

LAG TIME: Studies indicate that a week's delay in reporting an injury to the

insurance carrier can increase the cost of a claim by 10%. You should not allow late reporting of incidents because it's more difficult to properly investigate a claim when it's reported days later. Lag Time refers to the period between the date of the injury and the date the claim is reported to the insurance company. There are two reasons this may occur: 1. The employee failed to report the injury immediately to a member

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of management. 2. The employee reported it immediately to management, but management failed to report it to the insurance company the day of injury. Either way, all work-related injuries should be reported to management immediately following an accident and reported promptly to the insurance carrier. The Loss Run Report will include lag time. The dashboard should show lag time for past 12 months vs. lag time for the prior 12-month period. You should seek to reduce lag time and ultimately have it at zero lag days.

SAFETY AUDIT SCORES: Employees deserve a safe work environment. Too often safety is “reactive” vs. “proactive.” An excellent tool to ensure that a workplace is safe is a well-developed and point-scored safety audit. Routine safety audits have great benefits in improving and sustaining a safe workplace. They can identify hazards and provide action to correct and maintain issues discovered. In addition, they can reduce accidents, injuries and illnesses, lower workers’ compensation costs and increase productivity and employee morale. This is a key metric that you must include on the dashboard and monitor closely. The key takeaways on this metric include: 1. Ensure that scores are improving; 2. Take and

maintain corrective action. 3. Improve and maintain high audit scores. You can obtain audit scores from an outside safety adviser or an in-house safety or HR department. Having high audit scores could have a favorable impact on the TRIR. The dashboard should show current vs previous audit scores. Your current score should be at 95% or better.

TRAINING PARTICIPATION PERCENTAGE:


Training is the foundation of a safe work environment. Employees deserve to know the safety hazards they may face in the facility and how to prevent an incident from occurring. You must conduct a safety orientation session prior to someone starting a job and have them review it annually as a refresher. You can document their participation through a sign-in sheet or a quiz on which the employee earns a passing score. The company’s human resource or learning-management system can provide this information. The goal should always be 100% participation.

LEVERAGE MEASURED MANAGEMENT FOR SAFETY

There are many other metrics that you can include on the safety and risk

dashboard, based on your company’s needs. You and your leadership team should collaborate and decide on which metrics you want to track; then set goals. You’ll need to share these with all managers and supervisors on a monthly basis. Another resource that can help you develop a safety and risk dashboard is TRSA’s Annual Safety Report. This document has great information that includes the latest TRIR and DART linen and uniform industry averages.

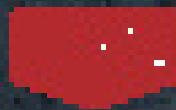
Safety and risk dashboards are important because they can provide a real-time snapshot of a company’s performance. They also can help companies improve their safety records by establishing actionable goals, holding teams accountable, improving team collaboration and more. By consolidating a company’s most important incident-prevention KPIs in one place, leaders can validate figures faster and drill more effectively into safety and risk metrics. Remember, what gets measured, gets done! **TS**

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