

SAFETY TALK



ONNE PORT FINDS THE KEY TO ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT



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- 01 BROADER CONTEXT**
Risks or unsafe situations were reported during pre-start/toolbox meetings. By placing those situations in a broader context, we managed to raise safety awareness.
- 02 SMALLER TEAMS**
The group was split up into smaller teams that had open discussions about reducing risks and assuming personal responsibility.
- 03 LESS RETICENT**
The new approach with the safety meetings has led to improvements. The local staff are less reticent now when it comes to reporting dangerous situations.

Onne Port is a 'free zone' for the oil and gas industry. The project includes dredging and reclamation work using the cutter Jokra and the hopper Waterway, as well as other equipment, for the construction of a 180 hectare site where components for drilling platforms will be stored. The project was launched last year and it will continue early next year after a break. 'We have our own workshop on the site. At peak times, we had about 250 people working here,' recalls Bas Bijsterbosch, the relief project leader. 'All in all, that results in a mixed team with colleagues from NWDM (Nigeria Westminster Dredging Marine) and local staff who have less experience with our company culture. The challenge was to raise safety awareness and to introduce NINA in a multi-cultural context.'

DATABASE

The first step was to introduce a combination of tools like Safety Hazard Observation Cards (SHOCs), 'Take 5' and BBO (Behavior-Based Observation). 'We handed out pocket-

sized booklets (*safety toolkits*) to all employees. Everybody was asked to use the booklets to make notes about unsafe situations and hand in the pages with reports to us,' says Bas. 'You always have a booklet like that in your pocket and it helps you not to forget things. At the same time, during the first phase, we developed a database for registering and analyzing the reports. By, for example, including the results of our own weekly safety inspections as well, we were able to compare our action points with the incoming reports. So we could see not only how people assessed safety in their working environments but also how reliable their reports were: did the employees see the unsafe situations as well, or were there no incoming reports about them at all?'

NEW FORMULA

'SHOCs are for reporting unsafe situations, not for changing behavior. But they are a really useful tool. It can be very significant if reports come in suggesting that the number of safety officers on the site

Bringing safety awareness as close as possible to the workforce. That was the challenge facing the Onne project team in Nigeria. The team introduced a new approach that resulted in a practical way of implementing the Boskalis NINA philosophy.

'THE CHALLENGE WAS TO RAISE SAFETY AWARENESS AND TO INTRODUCE NINA IN A MULTI-CULTURAL CONTEXT.'

BAS BIJSTERBOSCH, RELIEF PROJECT LEADER

should be increased. Observations like that were a good starting point for discussions about the NINA values & rules,' recalls Bas. 'We introduced a new formula for the safety meetings. In Nigeria, we used to organize frequent meetings with all people working on site. Which actually meant talking to hundreds of passive listeners. That didn't generate much enthusiasm. The general attitude was more or less: safety is a management thing. To get through that barrier, we opted for a *workshop* approach.'

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

The group was split up into smaller teams that had open discussions every week about reducing risks and assuming personal responsibility. 'One of the things that emerged from discussions and a survey was that people found it difficult to report given situations or to talk to colleagues about unsafe conduct. For example because they were worried that they, or a colleague, might lose their job as a result. So we took the opportunity to explain the NINA philosophy, and to point out that the idea is precisely that we want to learn from each other by teaming up to improve safety,' says Bas. 'Then we asked the teams to draw up lists of the safety risks they encountered. They were also asked to think about possible solutions and who could put the solutions into practice. In this way, we encouraged the members of the teams to take action themselves. After all,

that is one of the core NINA values. We were very pragmatic in our approach. When teams identified an unsafe situation, we talked to them about the possible options they could find to make things safer. In that way, we encouraged the teams to find solutions and preferably to implement them themselves.'

INSIGHT

Supervisor Godwin Ekeocha: 'It is extremely useful to report risks or unsafe situations during pre-start or toolbox meetings. By placing those situations in a broader context, we managed to enhance general safety awareness.' Jan van der Molen, site foreman: 'The new approach with the safety meetings has certainly led to improvements. Our local employees are less reluctant now about reporting dangerous situations. And people who had stayed a little bit in the background so far came up with good solutions, too.' 'The workshops made people realize that safety is something you can talk about and create,' recalls Bas. 'That message gets across, but the trick is to keep the topic alive. Shortly after safety meetings, there are a lot



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of reports, but then the reports tail off. If the management commitment is clear, and if you talk people's language, they often come up with ways of making contributions themselves. I think other projects could benefit from this approach, too.'

> Questions about NINA?
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