

## **Background on IHSA's collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development on risk assessment and root cause analysis workshops**

Collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD) has given health and safety associations (HSA) like IHSA deeper insight into the top health and safety concerns shared by workers and supervisors in selected high-risk industries.

### **How do the risk assessments work?**

Risk assessment and root cause analysis workshops are used by MLTSD to help industry sectors identify high-risk events and hazards in their workplaces. This enables the ministry, health and safety partners, and industry sectors to work together to reduce those risks and prevent workplace injury, illness and deaths.

These risk assessment workshops bring together experts — employers, workers, academics, enforcement, and HSA staff — to identify, discuss and analyze the leading risks in different sectors. While the ministry and HSAs lead the workshops, it is the workers and employers who have the final say in identifying and ranking the risks.

In the 2019-2020 fiscal year, for the sectors that IHSA serves, the ministry arranged risk assessment workshops for the transportation-general trucking-general freight sector, and a root cause analysis workshop for driver fatigue. In addition, phase one of a root-cause analysis for working at heights training was conducted for the roofing sector.

The risk assessment workshops require a volunteer group of diverse industry subject matter experts — including workers, supervisors, and employers from large and small companies — who submit their top health and safety concerns in advance of the workshop. During the workshop, the submitted concerns are discussed and ranked by the group using an anonymous electronic voting tool.

Based on the anonymous voting results, a ranked list of top ten risks for the sector is created. In the general trucking sector, the [top three identified risks](#) were distracted driving, driver fatigue, and careless driving among other drivers (other truck drivers, other motorists). In the residential construction sector, the [top three identified risks](#) were not having one hundred percent tie-off at all times, lack of random home renovations inspections by MLTSD, not having one hundred percent tie-off at all times until the first anchor point is installed.

### **Root cause analysis workshops**

The next step is to understand the root causes of each identified risk. The root cause analysis workshops also require a diverse group of industry subject matter experts, with both worker and supervisor points of view included. The group discusses and identifies the root causes of the risk in the workplace.

From there, the group identifies critical controls and specific activities that can be put in place to help mitigate the risk, with a critical five-point list of what should be focused on immediately to address the current systemic weaknesses for health and safety in the sector.

For example, in the general trucking sector, some of the top identified root causes of driver fatigue were traffic conditions, health conditions and unhealthy lifestyle, work-life balance, lack of rest stops, and lack of training and education to identify and manage driver fatigue. The five common mitigation actions to address current systemic weaknesses were found to be:

1. Classify truck driving as a skilled trade (Red Seal)
2. Review and address critical training gaps in mandatory entry-level training (MELT)
3. Mandatory graduated licensing for all truck drivers
4. Greater enforcement of non-compliant carriers
5. Promote mental health and wellness

### **Emphasizing sector engagement**

An important part of the risk assessment and root cause analysis workshop process is recognizing that one organization or person can't provide all the perspectives needed for an accurate understanding of risk. Engaging workers and employers from different workplaces lets them see and share different perspectives and agree on the top health and safety risks in the sector. This allows HSAs like IHSA to focus their resources on the highest risks.

These workshops have been widely recognized by industry and system partners as an effective way of collecting insight on workplace issues and as a best practice for engagement and collaboration. By coming together, system partners and workplaces can better understand the issues and develop better prevention strategies.

The success of these workshops has provincial health and safety associations like IHSA expanding their capacity to conduct further industry workshops on risk assessment and root cause analysis.

The ability to facilitate these assessments and analyses has become a capacity issue for the province, and new train-the-trainer training was developed by MLTSD and piloted in 2020.

Based on best practice risk assessment and root cause analysis that were led for various sectors, the training teaches health and safety specialists how to facilitate both a risk assessment and a root cause analysis with industry subject matter experts.

On October 20, 21, 22, 2020, the MLTSD conducted a Train the Trainer workshop for 10 of IHSA's selected staff to expand internal capacity to complete risk assessment and root cause analysis workshops.

### **About IHSA**

The Infrastructure Health and Safety Association (IHSA) is Ontario's trusted health and safety resource. Our goal is to improve the lives of Ontario workers. We provide the resources and training that control and eliminate safety hazards in work environments involving high-risk activities.

Our focus is on workplace parties and keeping our promise to provide them with the tools to Work Safe for Life.

For more information, please visit [IHSA.ca/driverfatigue](https://www.ihsa.ca/driverfatigue).