





**AVETRA 2011 - Melbourne**

# **Introducing mandatory training systems?**

**Investigating the introduction of compulsory pre-site  
construction training**

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# AVETRA 2011 - Melbourne

## Introducing mandatory training systems

## Does mandatory training work?

## Investigating compulsory pre-site training in the WA construction industry

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# Where we are going....

- What is it about? – Mandatory v Voluntary training
- Setting the scene of the study
- What we did and how we did it
- What the statistics said
- What the people said – on paper and in person
- Conclusion - what it tells the industry
  - what does it tell us about changing policy and practice?

# What it is about ....

- Construction 11% WA - One of the highest accident rates
- Incidents on site — truck reversing – manual handling
- Learning as a voluntary activity?
- How do we change behaviour?
- Embed instinctive reactions

– for saving lives





# Setting the scene....

- Green Card    — ~~Blue Card~~    — ~~White Card~~
- Unit of competency – AQTF
- Mandatory induction - before entering a construction site
- Delivered face-to-face or online
- 1, 2, 4, or 8 hour delivery times
- Multiple choice assessment
- Funded up to 80% by Construction Training Fund



# What we focused on....

- Pilot study – commercial sector (Civil/Housing)
- The study collected industry perceptions of the:
  - ....*value and effectiveness* of the training
  - ....the associated *relevance* of the training activity
  - ....and the subsequent *workplace impact*.
- Recommendations that can improve the effectiveness of the training.



## 3 key research questions

- How effective has the Construction Induction Training certification system been for the industry?
- How effective have the Construction Induction Training practices been for the industry?
- How has the Construction Induction Training system impacted upon organisations and safety in the industry?





# What we did – mixed mode

- Literature review
- Accident/incident statistics segregated for the commercial sector by Worksafe WA
- Online Questionnaire – distributed twice to 669 managers
- Telephone and face to face interviews – 23 managers/supervisors/employees; 7 key stakeholders - focus group with certifiers



# The Statistics....days lost WA commercial construction

- ↗ 2003 – 10,700
- ↗ 2004 – 12,000
- ↗ 2005 – 12,800
- ↗ 2006 – 13,300
- ↗ 2007 – 16,500
- ↗ 2008 – 13,690

**Lost time in days**

**(Injuries and disease)**

# Incident and fatality statistics

➤ Workers in the construction industry are becoming injured more frequently and are sustaining injuries that require longer recovery time than in previous years.

But the Perth sky line indicates.....





# Worksafe WA interpretation....

- Western Australia is in a construction boom
- Significant increase in construction projects
- With new workers - large and complex projects – high & remote sites
- Worksafe expected a greater increase



# The Statistics....days lost

## Lost time in days

WA commercial  
construction

↗ 2003 – 10,700

↗ 2004 – 12,000

↗ 2005 – 12,800

↗ 2006 – 13,300

↗ 2007 – 16,500

↗ 2008 – 13,690

## Employee Growth

ALL WA construction industry

- 85,000

– 88,000

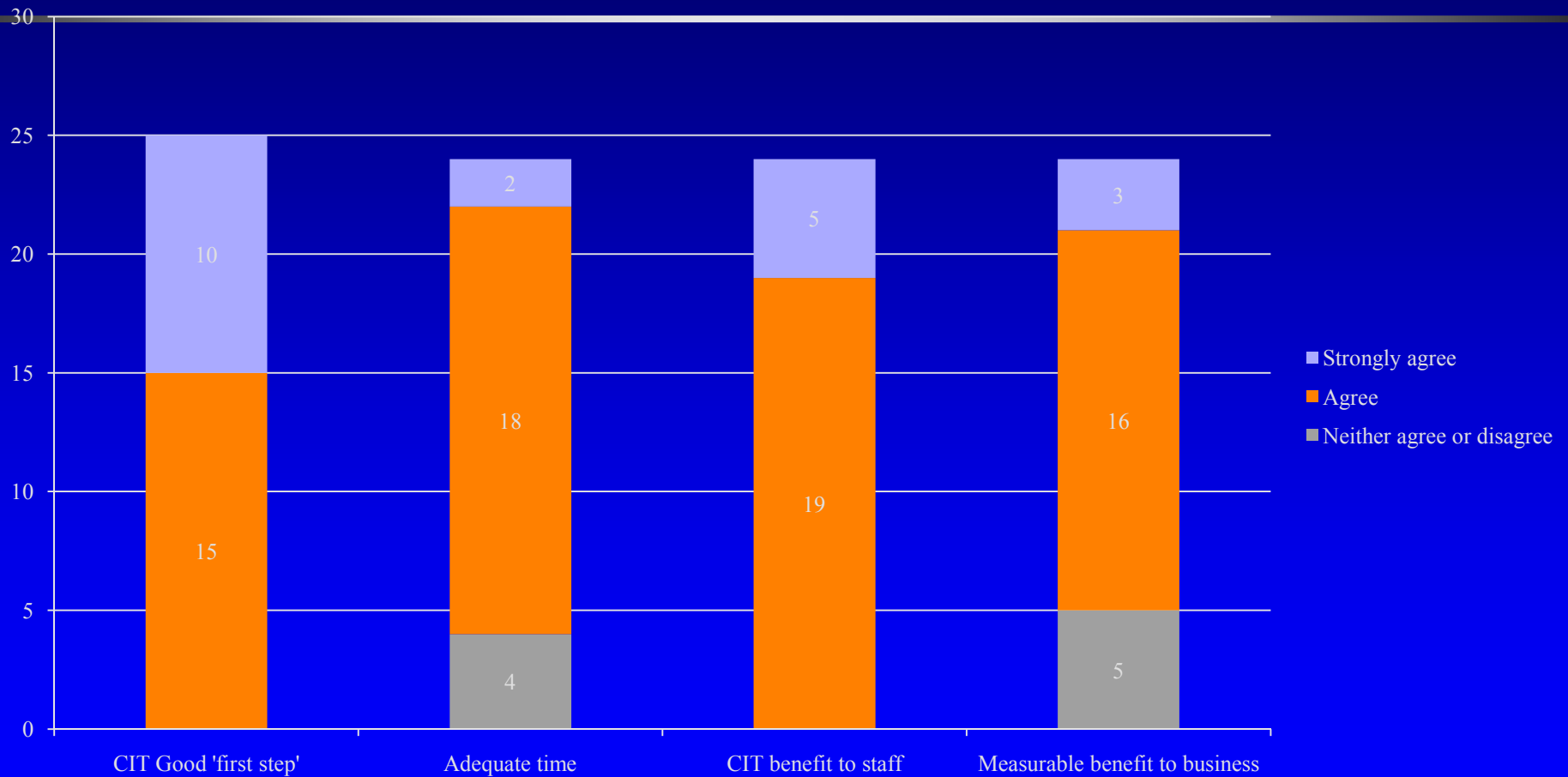
– 102,000

– 110,000

– 115,000

- 125,000

# Questionnaire findings





# Survey findings....

- 100% perceive the CIT to be of value to the safety awareness of their staff
- 79% report a measurable benefit to their business
- 96% believe the CIT assisted their business by reducing accident/incident rates
- But - 4% response rate



# Interview findings....

- “I found it to be a very **informative course** and I do honestly believe that it should be a minimum requirement for anyone working on a construction site”.
- “When it’s being delivered it is basically focussing on the **duties of care**. People often still don’t understand that”.
- “If I had any criticism of the Blue Card courses it’s I would say that the questions at the end are possibly just a little **bit too easy**. I don’t know of anybody who’s failed the Blue Card course”.
- “Most workers may just **want the card**, however RTOs also don’t understand what a statement of attainment is now that it’s a unit of competence. The Blue Card didn’t have a statement of attainment; it’s only with the White Card”.
- “The issue we have with **doing it online** is we don’t know the person holding the card actually went through the course online and answered all the questions”.





# Conclusions.... *For the industry*

- **Does mandatory training work?**
- Participants believed the mandatory CIT had made a positive effect on workplace safety – universal acceptance.
- Participants agreed that their workplace had increased safety awareness. Refresher training was essential for maintaining safer workplaces.
- The commercial construction sector values the CIT.
- Shift in safety culture since 2006 PHD study.



# Conclusions.... *For VET researchers*

- **Silver Bullet**
- **Traction >Support >Institutionalisation**
- **6 Conditions:**
- **Clear Target Group / Econ/Po receptivity**
- **Financial & Political support**
- **Through Existing Power Structures**
- **Pilots / Multi Agency approach**



## Conclusion.... *For activists*

- **Strategy matches Beer's (1993) change agency framework.**
- **Relational alignment may be more important than a great idea or evidence!**
- **Actor Network Theory – the golden rule.**





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## **Does mandatory training work?**

**Investigating compulsory pre-site training certification in  
the WA construction industry**

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