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NUCLEAR POWER:
hot topic at Africa Energy Indaba

INTERNET BILL
ruffles feathers

A black and white photograph of a worker in full safety gear, including a hard hat, high-visibility jacket, and trousers, standing on a gravel railway track. The worker is holding a walkie-talkie in their right hand and a power tool in their left. The image is split diagonally from the top left to the bottom right. The upper-left portion is a solid dark blue, while the lower-right portion shows the worker and the gravel track. The text is overlaid on the blue portion.

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COULD THE RICH BE OUR COUNTRY'S GREATEST RISK?

Our government needs some lessons in risk management. It is placing all its eggs in one, extremely risky, basket...



CHARLEEN CLARKE

Pravin Gordhan has one of the toughest jobs in the world, but, studying his Budget Speech last month (February), I could not help but think that he's taking a huge risk. It's almost as though he's playing roulette, but he's only betting on one number – and he's betting everything.



Allow me to explain. When you play roulette, you need to hedge your bets, so you play more than one number, or you bet on red, for instance – which means that you're betting on about half the table. Unfortunately, Gordhan isn't doing that. He's betting on a single number: that of the affluent and mega-rich South Africans.

We have a sorry state of affairs in our country, whereby only 13 percent of South Africans pay tax. Some people will blame this on apartheid. Others will say South Africans are dishonest. Others will say it's logical; after all, wealth in South Africa remains highly concentrated – 95 percent of wealth is in the hands of 10 percent of the population.

What does the government intend doing to change this situation? Well, nothing. In order to get more

people to pay tax, we need to create employment. This, in turn, means economic growth is required – and that's just not looking likely right now.

Be honest: if you were an entrepreneur and you were looking at setting up a new company, would you do it here in South Africa? I'm not sure I would. Our rand bounces around like a ping pong ball, our labour legislation is just plain ridiculous and our economy is in a bit of a pickle.

As Gordhan himself noted in his Budget Speech: "Our growth has been too slow – just one percent a year in real per capita terms over the past 25 years, well below that of countries such as Brazil, Turkey, Indonesia, India or China."

Sadly, the Budget Speech did nothing to change this situation. Instead, Gordhan decided to target the mega-rich (it is estimated that there are about 103 000 of those individuals in our country; they are expected to pay 26.3 percent of total individual income tax in 2017/18).

This is not the solution, as Ryan Ravens, CEO of Accelerate Cape Town, a business leader organisation, recently told *fin24.com*. "If we are to poke our heads above the herd of emerging economies, we need to get our people to work and the engine of our economy churning, and this won't be achieved by taxing 103 000 top-earning individuals four percent more."

Plus, there is a huge risk associated with taxing small numbers. What happens if the super-rich get *gatvol* and leave South Africa? Where will that leave our country? What happens if the tax base is so heavily eroded? I think we're in a terribly risky situation. And I'm not betting on a favourable outcome. **SM**

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Cirrus Research and Runrite Electronics are introducing the new doseBadge5 Noise Dosimeter to the South African market. It is sold exclusively by Runrite and has been developed from the popular doseBadge Noise Dosimeter, of which over 20 000 units have been sold worldwide.

The doseBadge5 has a "no cables, controls or display" design, and introduces a range of new features. It can be configured to meet any regulations, standards or guidelines worldwide.

It is multi-channelled with one-second data logging. The doseBadge5 provides up to four complete independent noise dosimeters along two peak channels, Lmax and Lmin values and user configurable upper-limit threshold (ULT) levels.

A key feature is the Bluetooth-wireless technology that allows the instrument to communicate with the doseBadge5 Wand and the dBLink App for Android and iOS devices. Individual doseBadge5 units can be controlled and configured remotely and can



view measurement data without being connected.

Scheduled timers can be used to control the device, allowing measurements to be started, paused and stopped automatically. This unique feature was developed to help customers easily manage complex working patterns and shifts, while allowing the doseBadge5 to be as flexible as possible.

Battery life is more than 20 hours. The device includes anti-tamper and vibration detection to cut down on measurement anomalies.



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CONTACT PERSON:

Mr NJF van Loggerenberg
Email: psmp@unisa.ac.za
Tel: 012 352 4357

PROGRAMME IN ADVANCED SAFETY MANAGEMENT (76914)

This programme investigates the advanced elements of safety management. These elements include the management of safety culture, the role and importance of safety supervisors, system safety engineering and the system safety programme plan; the importance of managers in safety and a more advanced understanding of hazards.

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- Safety Supervisor (APSM02M)
- Safety Systems (APSM03O)
- Design for Safety (APSM04P)

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FEE:

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COURSE DURATION:

12 Months
NQF level 7, Total 48 Credits

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

A senior Certificate, equivalent qualification or appropriate experience and completed Programme in Safety Management (PSMP) with the Centre for Business Management.

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DEMARCATIION REGULATIONS: WHAT DO THEY MEAN FOR YOUR HEALTHCARE PLANNING?

In December last year the National Treasury promulgated the latest version of the Demarcation Regulations (DR) in Parliament, for implementation on April 1. Although the regulations will have become effective on that date, existing health insurance products will need to comply with the regulations only by January 1, 2018.

The DR will provide much-needed clarity on the role of a medical scheme (regulated by the Medical Schemes Act of 1998) and health insurance products (regulated by the Long-term and Short-term Insurance Acts of 1998).

What is of significant benefit to South African consumers is that the DR gives the green light for the insurance industry to provide both gap cover and low-cost primary care products that co-exist with medical schemes.

"Newly developed gap policies will have to comply with the new regulation as from April 1, while clients with existing gap policy products can be assured that there will be no changes to their existing gap policies for this year," explains Jacqui Nel, healthcare business unit manager at Aon South Africa.

Aon highlights the following key changes under the DR:

- **Underwriting:** Gap cover will be aligned to the same underwriting requirements imposed by medical schemes, such as open enrolment and three-month and 12-month waiting periods for specified conditions.



- **Medical expense shortfall:** The gap benefit is limited to a maximum of R150 000 per annum and per insured life, which is applicable to any co-payment and medical expense shortfall.

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- **Hospital cash plans:** Pay-outs are limited to a daily limit of R3 000 and a maximum of R20 000 per insured life, per annum or per hospital stay.
- **Primary healthcare insurance products:** These will be outlawed and insurers have a two-year exemption period while the Department of Health rebuilds its Low-Cost Benefit Option (LCBO), which was stopped in 2015.
- **Broker commission:** This will work on a sliding scale starting at 20 percent down to a minimum of five percent aligned to the monthly member contribution.

"It will be interesting to see what will happen to occupational healthcare products, as they are clearly offering cover similar to that of an envisaged LCBO-type product, with the exception of in-hospital care offerings," explains Nel.

"However, it is important to remember that the LCBO framework is still being developed and, in order to accommodate LCBO products, it will require an amendment to the Medical Schemes Act, which is normally a process that could take years," he adds.

Aon views the changes in a positive light for consumers, as it demonstrates the government's realisation that it is crucial to bring necessary primary care to the uninsured population in a more regulated environment – which, in turn, provides greater consumer protection and balanced cover. Essentially the government is acting on its constitutional obligation to do as much as it can to make healthcare available to all citizens.

"The good news is that, regardless of whether or not future primary care products are delivered via the insurance industry or via the government's LCBO, primary care products are here to stay. Millions of South Africans who have previously been denied access to private-sector cover, because of affordability constraints, will now be able to enjoy private healthcare at an affordable price," says Nel.


"This is particularly good news for employer groups who found themselves hamstrung in providing healthcare benefits to lower-income employees due to the high cost of private healthcare."

The task of assessing your healthcare financial planning is a role best undertaken with the guidance of a professional healthcare broker, who can do a thorough needs-analysis and investigate the benefits options that are right for your budget and personal circumstances.

The 2017/18 Budget has the following impact on healthcare:

Tax credits on medical scheme contributions have been increased by six percent. The new tax credits are as follows:

- R303 each for the individual who paid the contributions and the first dependant on the medical scheme; and
- R204 for each additional dependant.

"It was noted that reducing this medical subsidy in future is being considered as part of the financing framework for National Health Insurance," concludes Nel. 

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IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

By the time you finish reading this article at least six workers will have suffered an eye injury requiring medical treatment. If we look at the bigger picture of human factors involved in workplace accidents, most of these accidents are preventable

In the United States (US), eye injuries happen at a rate of knots: more than 700 000 each year at a cost of around US\$ 300 million (R3.92 billion). That's an average of 2 000 every day, or an astonishing one every 43 seconds.

Here's a list of the main causes of eye injuries in the workplace:

- Chemical burns – splashes and fumes from industrial chemicals or cleaning products are common causes of chemical burns to eyes.
- Thermal burns to the eye also occur, often among welders. Burns can routinely damage workers' eyes and surrounding facial tissue.
- The majority of eye injuries result from small particles or objects striking or scraping the eye, such as dust and airborne particles, grit, metal swarf, glass fragments and wood chips. These materials are often ejected by tools or machinery, blown by the wind, or fall from above a worker.
- Large objects may also strike the eye or face, or a worker may run into an object causing blunt-force trauma to the eyeball or eye socket. Larger objects like staples, nails, or slivers of wood or metal can pierce the eyeball and result in a permanent loss of vision.
- Hazardous radiation caused by ultraviolet radiation, lasers, heat, infrared, and even visible light can cause damage to the eye.

Beyond the obvious safety hazards, it's worth thinking

about health issues, too. Eye diseases can be transmitted through the mucous membranes of the eye as a result of direct exposure to things like blood splashes, airborne droplets from coughing or sneezing, or from touching the eyes with a contaminated finger or object.

Eye diseases can result in a range of symptoms from minor reddening or soreness of the eye to life-threatening infections such as HIV, hepatitis B, or avian influenza.

AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

If the causes of eye injuries are so easily identified, why is it that so many occur? The American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) says it's because workers don't wear safety glasses. The AAO calculates that, of the 700 000 injuries in the US each year, over 90 percent could have been avoided through the selection and use of the correct safety eyewear.

Why don't workers wear their glasses? Well, now things get interesting... A research study by the Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety identified the array of factors that influence workers' decisions to wear personal protective eyewear.

The Institute's conclusions in order of importance are:

1. Style, comfort and fit – our faces are different, so having a choice of styles can help improve comfort, which increase likelihood of use. If the eyewear looks cool, chances of use increase even further!

2. Fogging/misting – in warm weather or hot work environments there may be a chance that workers get hot and sweaty or humidity builds up around the glasses.
3. Accessibility/availability in workplace – 80 percent of workers in the research study said a major factor was where the personal protective equipment (PPE) was kept – no-one wants to take a long walk to access PPE.
4. Scratching – 85 percent of workers said that a barrier to wearing glasses is if they scratch easily.
5. Interference with workers' prescription spectacles – linked to the first point, it is important that there are alternatives for those with prescription eyewear.



6. Task suitability – a large proportion of eye injuries occur when safety glasses are being worn, with particles entering the eye from around the glasses. Take care to match PPE to the task – one size won't fit all.

Benjamin Franklin once said: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Nowadays there's such a great range of eye protection available that choosing the right type for specific work situations is easier than ever before.

The nature and extent of the hazard, the circumstances of exposure, other protective equipment used, and personal vision needs should be considered during the assessment. Remember that eye protection should fit an individual properly, or be adjustable to provide appropriate coverage.

Now that we've considered the immediate risks to our eyes, let's broaden our thinking by considering some of the other human factors related to using our eyes at work.

INATTENTIONAL BLINDNESS

Have you ever visited one of those all-you-can-eat buffet restaurants where there seems to be an endless array of delicious-looking food? If you're anything like me you may begin by having a look at what's on offer and then filling your plate with things you love or those that look especially appetising.

When you join your friends back at the table, you notice that they seem to have one of your favourite dishes on their plate. You ask where they got it, only to be told that it was at the buffet bar right in front of you, yet you missed it.

The classic example demonstrating inattentional blindness is that video clip with the gorilla. Psychologists Daniel Simons and Chris Chabris recreated the original study undertaken in 1975 by Ulric Neisser where two basketball teams pass the ball around.

A person wearing a gorilla suit wanders onto the court, thumps his chest and wanders off.

In trials conducted by the team at Harvard University, typically around 60 percent of viewers do not see the gorilla. How could this be possible? Before the clip is played, the viewers are asked to count how many times the ball is passed within a certain team. They expect to see the ball moving between players and focus on this task so intently that they do not notice the gorilla.

Inattentional blindness is not a cognitive or visual defect. It's essentially an issue of awareness – principally the failure to notice an entirely visible, though unexpected, object because our brains are otherwise engaged.

There's a limit to what our brains can cope with. In deciding where to focus, our brain scans around 30 to 40 pieces of data (sights, sounds, smells) every second until something grabs its attention. It then filters out what it feels is important and the rest gets left behind.

The gorilla video excited so many people that Simons and Chabris produced a sequel in 2010. This time we were ready and expecting the gorilla to appear. Sure enough it did, but viewers were so intent on looking for it that they missed several other unexpected events, such as the curtain in the background changing colour.

How can it be that we continue to miss so many significant events? When choosing where to focus its energy, the brain applies four filters:



- **Capacity** – our capacity to pay attention is essentially down to our mental aptitude and is influenced by a range of factors including age, education, distraction, fatigue and drug or alcohol consumption.
- **Expectation** – our past experiences shape our future expectations. As an example, on a recent visit to one of our client's factories, when I asked why employees did not respond to the warning alarms on a production line, they told me that because the alarms go off with such regularity, and are usually "false alarms", the workers have stopped noticing them.
- **Mental workload** – the perceptual loading of the brain increases the likelihood of inattentional blindness. Chances increase when our attention is diverted to a secondary task, for example filling in an online form while holding a conversation about an important subject.
- **Conspicuity** refers to the degree to which an object or information jumps out to command our attention. Our brains are drawn to sensory conspicuity – the contrast of an object against its background – like a bright red car on a sunny day on the highway. They are also drawn to cognitive conspicuity – where we are more likely to notice something particularly relevant to us, for example a car that is the same as the one we are driving on the highway.

These filters can bring benefits, such as blocking out distractions to allow us to concentrate on a task at hand, but, because most of us tend to be unaware of the limits of our attention, we take on other activities while engaged in primary tasks. It is this multi-tasking that poses the real risk when it comes to safety.

Many people are convinced that, when talking on a cellphone while driving, they would notice a sudden event occurring, but don't notice the bright red flash of brake lights. One in every four road crashes involves a driver who is talking on a cellphone.

The next time an accident investigation shows

that the individual involved was negligent, careless or "not paying attention", take a step back. Studies have shown that even the most attentive, intelligent and vigilant people would suffer the same degree of inattentional blindness in similar situations. So consider the four brain filters carefully and see whether you notice any gorillas.

SALIENT POINTS


The Salience Effect is a phenomenon that ensures that we pay more attention to certain things than they may actually deserve. As humans, we always recall the undesirable exceptions more easily: they're particularly salient.

Nobel Prize winner Daniel Kahneman and his pal Amos Tversky realised that we place (often unnecessarily) heavier emphasis on salient information. This explains why boards are as averse to news of a spate of lost-time injuries as they are to financial dips, and why, when a really serious accident occurs, it's "all-hands-on-deck" as everyone scrambles to "prevent this happening again". In summary, salient data has the ability to run rampage over what we think, how we behave and what we say.

What's more, as the Salience Effect kicks in and switches our attention to those explicit "unsafe behaviours" in the workplace, we tend to overlook hidden, slow-to-develop, subtle factors or less-easy-to-spot behaviours as our attention is drawn sharply to what our mind tells us is most important.

IN CLOSING

Our ability to see and understand the risks we face in the workplace is subject to a range of psychological filters that can mask the information we really need.

Don't be blind-sided by the unusual and irregular. Push back against the obvious and dig a little deeper into what's going on around you right now; there just may be something even more worthwhile to which you could be paying attention. 



Sharman on Safety is based on ideas and concepts from Andrew Sharman's new book: *From Accidents to Zero: a practical guide to improving your workplace safety culture*. Andrew is an international member of the South African Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (SAIOSH) and the Chief Executive of RMS – consultants on leadership and cultural excellence to a wide range of blue-chip corporates and non-government organisations globally. More at www.RMSswitzerland.com.

From Accidents to Zero

A practical guide to improving your workplace safety culture

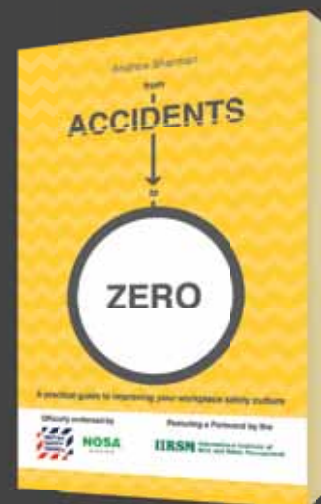
Thought-provoking and insightful. From Accidents to Zero progressively pushed me to see new connections, and new ways to address organisations' safety culture and risk management challenges.

Mieke Jacobs, Global Practice Leader – Employee Safety, DuPont

This A to Z of safety represents an eminently practical knowledge toolbox, one filled with tools which will add value to the CEO and the front line Safety Practitioner in equal measures. Relevant, accessible and applicable, this is safety distilled and a 'must-read'.

Steven Brown, Brewery Manager, Heineken

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Eleven people lost their lives as a result of the Deepwater Horizon explosion. This disaster ultimately cost BP US\$ 54 billion (R714,8 billion) in damages. BRETT SOLOMON cannot help wondering if some of the executives grieve more over the loss of revenue than the tragic loss of lives

Please forgive my cynicism. In the last few months, two particular experiences have compelled me to re-evaluate how much I value people.

The first was when a colleague, who is the safety manager of a large mining company, fell off his ladder while doing some home repairs. He was badly hurt and needed surgery. During his stay in the hospital, the mine sent him a gift pack and a card with everyone's wishes for a speedy recovery. He was booked off work for several weeks to recover. Throughout this ordeal, his leaders were very understanding, supportive and sympathetic.

It wasn't long after this that a mine worker also fell from a ladder. He suffered a broken arm and he, too, was rushed to hospital. The mine's response was the complete antithesis of its response to the safety manager's injury. It immediately launched an investigation to find out what went wrong and who was at fault. Watching from the sidelines, it was obvious that there was no real intent to learn from this unfortunate incident.

The senior managers were looking for a "fall guy" to blame for their tarnished safety record. No gift

hamper was sent. No get-well-soon card. No hospital visits. He didn't receive any expression of concern for his well-being.

Having insight into both situations, the main difference was one happened at work and the other at home. One blemished the company's safety record, and the other didn't. If we were one of the leaders in this story, would our first thought be to hope that everyone was okay, or to find the culprit?

I am not arguing that incidents shouldn't be investigated, nor I am advocating that safety transgressions should be overlooked. My concern is that, in our endeavour to reach demanding production targets and quest for zero harm, we may sometimes forget that our workers are humans.

They are not robots. They have feelings, personal challenges and ambitions to succeed, while also wanting to provide for their families. The way we interact and treat our teams has a tremendous influence on their performance and dedication to safety.

I recently saw this first-hand while conducting a culture survey. While sitting in the comfort of air-conditioned offices, I was inspired by the senior

manager's aspiration to having a resilient safety culture. My optimism soon dissipated into a deep sense of disappointment, however. The morale among the workforce was discouraging. As I engaged them, I quickly found out why.

One by one they told me how they wanted to do a good job, but over the years their commitment had dwindled. Surprisingly, the repeated source of contention was over basic issues that could easily have been addressed.

Two main complaints surfaced during the interviews. The first had to do with the working conditions. There was a consistent lack of durable overalls and welders not having fire-resistant aprons.

Artisans were unhappy because they didn't have arch screwdrivers. The "straw that broke the camel's back" was that the crew had been working on a project for over a year while not having access to water or ablution facilities.

Both companies have value statements declaring their care for their personnel. Posters with common slogans like "people are our greatest asset" are visible throughout the mine. This is reiterated by others claiming "safety first" or "safety is our number one priority".

Now, I am not talking about splurging money on every whim and desire, yet, when mining houses are posting million-dollar profits, but aren't willing to spend a few thousand dollars on portable toilets, necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) and tools, the message is clear: it is only about the money.

The second complaint was that the workers felt they weren't appreciated. Their opinions didn't matter. They weren't given opportunities to give input into critical tasks they perform. When they did offer suggestions, they were quickly shot down. No wonder their enthusiasm had waned.

They weren't asking for exorbitant raises. They just wanted the essentials to be able to do their field of

jobs safely in a humane way and to be respected as experts in their work. With these basic requirements being ignored, the workers felt that the mine cared only about making a profit. They felt that their well-being was not a priority.

These are most probably extreme examples. However, companies should ask themselves whether, in smaller ways, they may be neglecting the welfare of their teams for greater profitability? Oh, before I forget, both mines had wellness programmes...

We want our people to care and take responsibility for their work and safety. We need them to be switched on and engaged, but if we treat them as mere machines, why should they? Besides looking after their personal safety, why should they care about the success of the company?

Gallup's study in 2016 found that companies that had high staff engagement had 70-percent fewer safety incidents compared to companies with low scores. Such employees feel their work is important and contributes to the success of the company. They believe their opinions count and can add value, especially when it comes to identifying hazards and preventing incidents in their areas.

The survey revealed that engaged workers are more committed to doing quality work. This includes adhering to best practices that prevent safety incidents.

The notion that leaders don't need to care and appreciate their people "because they are paid to do their jobs" is flawed. Little things go a long way. Remembering names, asking for opinions and suggestions, small acts of appreciation, listening and showing compassion can significantly improve the levels of engagement.

This, in turn, can have a considerable impact on a company's safety and production performance. Managers should be asking themselves in what ways they can tangibly show they care for their employees. SM



Brett Solomon is the CEO of The Kinetic Leadership Institute and is a recognised leader in combining neuroscience, change management and leadership theory to drive cultural transformation processes. Brett specialises in neuro-leadership, especially when it comes to understanding what drives human behaviour and how to influence it. He has been involved in numerous safety culture change initiatives in throughout South Africa, Australia, Canada and Saudi Arabia.

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FOCUSING ON THE TOP RISKS

Safety: it can be about ticking boxes and making the numbers, or caring about those working for the company

How often do we hear managers and safety professionals talking about the importance of achieving their targets for total recordable case rates, lost time injury frequency rates, and other safety milestones that have been set for operations and management teams?

Setting of the milestones has an important role to play in the drive for continuous improvement, however, when linked to bonuses it could result in managers and safety professionals managing safety for the wrong reasons.

Safety is not only about numbers, or about adherence to the relevant safety and health legislation. Safety is not a tick-box type of exercise where certain systems and controls are implemented with the main goal of achieving legal requirements, or a desired safety rating, which can be displayed at the entrance gate.

More importantly, safety management is about caring for each and every one of the employees and contractors employed to work on behalf of the company. It's about caring about those individuals who arrive on site each day to provide a service to the company and earn an honest day's wage.

During the past four years, I have been coaching

managers in "managing safety from the heart" and involved in changing the mindset and culture of managers to one of truly caring about those people who are employed in their organisations, departments or sections.

It's not unusual for employees and contractors to be observed conducting work in an "at risk" manner with a high probability for injury and which, at times, has life-altering or even fatal consequences.

What is even worse is that, in many instances, the tasks are conducted with the full knowledge of managers, supervisors and team leaders, who condone the behaviour. In my view, such managers and supervisors should question their ability and suitability to manage employees and contractors.

Managers and supervisors who manage safety "from the heart" do so because they care about those working for them. They are the ones that always ensure that employees and contractors are able to work in a safe and healthy manner, by making sure they have the required skills, knowledge, tools and means to conduct the work safely, and that they have been clearly instructed on the correct and safe manner to conduct the work and have a clear understanding of what is required.


Caring managers never compromise on the safety and health of their employees and contractors. They would never require their teams to use methods or work in conditions that they would consider unsuitable for their own family members.

Managers who manage safety from the heart:

- Demonstrate visible leadership and are seen on the shop floor talking to the teams about safety and health issues;
- Manage safety because they care about their teams and not only the numbers or safety ratings;
- Continuously drive for improved safety standards and zero harm at the workplace.
- Never compromise on safety standards and adherence thereof;
- Walk the talk and, by doing so, set high standards and lead by example in achieving them;

- Feel personally responsible when one of their team members is injured; and
- Make their employees believe that they are sincere about the safety and health of the teams.

It is, without doubt, those managers, supervisors and team leaders who manage safety from the heart who develop successful teams and, in turn, achieve the desired safety standards and performance. If a manager can manage the safety issues effectively and shows the caring aspect, he or she will probably also be successful in managing the other aspects of the business effectively.

It makes sense: managers who show their employees and contractors that they care about their safety and health – and develop this culture among their leadership teams – will have positive results. 



Brian Darlington is the group head of safety and health for the Mondi Group, based in Vienna, Austria. He has filled the role since 2012 and is responsible for safety and health in more than 30 countries. Brian started working at Iscor before joining Mondi in 1987, working in Gauteng. In 2000 he transferred to the Kraft Division in Richards Bay. During 2005, Brian transferred to Europe, taking up the position of business unit SHE manager, responsible for SHE in paper mills in Austria, Hungary, Israel, Slovakia, Poland, South Africa and Russia, as well as forests operations in South Africa and Russia.

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REGULATORY CAPTURE AND THE ROAD ACCIDENT FUND

One of the most interesting current debates in South Africa revolves around the question of whether or not the Road Accident Fund (RAF) is insolvent

At face value the answer to this question is simple. All that is needed is to check the published annual financial statements! The RAF is technically insolvent if its liabilities exceed its assets. According to *The Star*, October 22, 2016, it has a staggering deficit of R145 billion and it is unable to pay all its outstanding claims.

In terms of the legislation, an insurance company must at all times hold sufficient assets to cover its claims. In addition, under the current insurance legislation, the registrar of insurance should have applied decades ago to have the RAF liquidated.

On the other hand, a person or organisation is legally insolvent only when they are unable to discharge a legal obligation, such as paying a valid claim. Until recently, the RAF has paid claims on time, out of current cash flows. It has, until recently, not committed a legal act of insolvency. However, it appears that recently the RAF has failed to pay valid claims and, therefore, has committed an act of insolvency.

This year it was also reported that the Fund's bank accounts had been attached by order of a court. This attachment was later lifted. Some media reports have also indicated that some assets of the Fund have been attached in the past. So, given these circumstances, it seems obvious that the RAF is moving from being technically insolvent (which no insurance company is allowed to be) to being legally insolvent.

Interestingly, not everyone agrees that the RAF is, indeed, insolvent. Chief among the sceptics are lawyers, who, of all people, should know better. After all, the fund gets about R3 billion monthly through the fuel levy, which it is supposed to use to pay claims. It may, therefore, be difficult for a layman to see why an

institution with such a steady and guaranteed revenue inflow could become insolvent.

A group of lawyers, who call themselves the Association for the Protection of Road Accident Victims (APRAV), is contemptuously dismissive of any suggestion that the RAF is insolvent. It argues instead that such suggestions are fuelled by the RAF, itself, as a tactic to push through reforms in the form of the proposed Road Accident Fund Benefit Scheme (RABS).

This proposed scheme will see benefits paid by the RAF being clearly defined and capped. It is also important to point out that the same proposed reforms, if implemented, would effectively end the involvement of lawyers in the road accident personal injury compensation market.

This is because one of the proposed changes will see the system operating on a no-fault basis with the quantum payable being defined – unlike the current system where payment of compensation is based on proof of fault and quantum.

Once the need to prove fault or quantum is removed, the compensation system becomes non-adversarial making the need for lawyers virtually non-existent; as it becomes an administrative system.

There seems to be an argument between the RAF and lawyers – the former arguing that it is insolvent and the later arguing the opposite! This is where the discourse becomes interesting.

Let's assume that the lawyers are correct and the fund is solvent, but is claiming to be insolvent in order for it to be reformed. The question then is – why should the fund assume the responsibility of making a case of its bankruptcy to justify the need for reform?

After all, the RAF is an institution that was created by statute to serve a specific purpose deemed to be in the national interest. If it is no longer capable of fulfilling its mandate, which in all probability is correct, then government (as the creator of this entity) should reform it as it deems fit.

Whether the reforms are accepted by lawyers, or anyone else for that matter, is beside the point – the bottom line is that government must govern the fund in the national interest. It is incomprehensible that the RAF would have to prove that it is, indeed, bankrupt to bring about reform.

Therefore, the whole debate is rather bizarre. Instead, it is government, not the RAF, which should convey that message and, more importantly, inform the public about the reforms that are going to be made to remedy the situation.

This issue has dragged on for decades. Leaving the RAF to convey the message is perhaps what causes some sections of South African society to suspect that there could be some sinister motive behind the proposed reforms.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the whole debate is why the lawyers are so adamant that the fund is not insolvent when it has a published deficit of R145 billion and is operating contrary to the provisions of the insurance legislation.

Worldwide, the personal injury market is a fruitful source of income for lawyers and attempts to reform any system of this nature are usually fiercely resisted. A logical explanation for the resistance is for lawyers to argue that they are protecting the interests of victims of injuries.

What is often not said is what Adam Smith observed long ago in 1776, when he famously said:

It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their interest. We address ourselves not to their humanity, but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities, but of their advantages.

People act in their own interest, not the interest of the public. There is a great deal of empirical evidence showing that when action is taken that is claimed to be

in the public interest, it is rarely in the public interest.

When a state fund, such as the RAF, is, what some have said, "over-lawyered and over-doctored" its fate is almost predictable. The high transaction costs ultimately lead to unsustainability, then insolvency and the failure of the fund to fulfil its mandate. The RAF illustrates the principle. It cannot be rationally argued that the institution is currently capable of fulfilling its mandate.

If ten people have claims against the fund and only three are paid, and payment of the other seven is postponed indefinitely, because the fund can no longer afford the payments, it is difficult to see why this is not insolvency, unless the debtor is hiding assets somewhere else to avoid paying claims.

In the case of the RAF, the backlog of claims is getting larger and larger by the day and is exacerbated by a growing funding deficit. The situation is not getting any better.

George Stigler, Nobel Laureate, did pioneering work on statutory systems. It seems those set up for the public interest are inevitably captured by other parties who have an interest in the system – he gave the world the concept of regulatory capture. Stigler's insight can be applied to the RAF, which then suggests that the RAF has been captured by lawyers.

By comparison, historically workmen's compensation (another public policy area) has not been captured by lawyers to the same extent. Benefits paid are fixed and capped making litigation largely peripheral. There is no difference between losing one's leg because of an industrial accident, and losing a leg as a result of a motor vehicle accident, yet claims by lawyers that "interests of victims need to be protected" are louder in the road accident sphere compared to the workmen's compensation arena. Why?

The answer to these questions partly lies in Adam Smith's famous observation: self interest in some cases allows the system to be captured. Other systems are less amenable to capture. So, the debate on whether the RAF is insolvent or not must be seen in this broader context. SM



Legally Speaking is a regular column by Albert Mushai from the school of Economics and Business Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand. Mushai holds a master's degree from the City University, London, and was the head of the insurance department at the National University of Science and Technology in Zimbabwe before joining the University of the Witwatersrand as a lecturer in insurance.

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WATCH OUT!

EMERGING RISKS AROUND THE CORNER!

Organisations that are risk resilient continuously look out for early warning signals

Imagine coming across a road-safety sign while driving that states: "Slippery when wet". The signage is alerting us to potential driving-related incidents that might arise should wet road conditions prevail. The same applies in our organisations – we should continuously watch out for signs of emerging risks.

These risks could be spread out in different spheres of any business. However, should the emerging risks materialise, what kinds of questions should one ask?

As risk practitioners we need to pay more attention to those risks that could be imminent. Quality practitioners may recall one of the famous Dr Deming's 14 Points: "Drive out fear, so that everyone may work effectively for the company".

Wouldn't it be appropriate to apply the same mindset when we assess the fear of the unknown? Navigating into an environment of emerging risks requires different perspectives. Let us look at some of them.

UNDERSTAND THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

I have always believed that at some point all risks could be characterised either as "emerging" or as "unlikely to happen". Risk practitioners need to pay attention to those drivers that are changing the way we work. The business environment is not constant, it is always changing. It is likely some of these potential disruptive changes may not be spotted.

PAY ATTENTION TO THAT WHICH IS "UNLIKELY TO HAPPEN"

It is a reality that risks rated "unlikely to happen" tend to be dismissed. There is less interest in allocating

resources or getting top management to keep them under surveillance.

However, taking our focus off emerging or potential risks makes risk management frameworks "like trying to find a needle in a haystack".


PricewaterhouseCoopers states: "The speed and impact of these risks are further exacerbated by their interdependence on other risks, which requires a profound understanding not only of the underlying risk factors, but also of other events that may be triggered."

DO NOT NEGLECT EARLY WARNING SIGNALS

Organisations that are risk resilient continuously look out for early warning signals. Look out for scenarios where some colleagues make statements such as: "I have been working in this environment for a long time and nothing has ever happened." This should be a wake-up call. Hence, it is important to constantly identify potential opportunities that will minimise the impact should emerging risks materialise.

LOOKING AHEAD

When managing risk, one needs to keep asking the question: What if? There is no doubt that emerging risks pose significant challenges to any organisation. The Allianz Risk Barometer Top Business Risks 2017 affords us the opportunity to pay attention to those risks that are likely to be of ongoing concern for any business.

It is also good to remember the statement by former United States President John F Kennedy: "Change is the law of life, and those who look only to the past are certain to miss the future." 



Hope Mugagga Kiwekete is a managing consultant at the Centre for Enterprise Sustainability. He has practiced as a management systems consultant, trainer and auditor in different multicultural environments, which entailed environmental, occupational health and safety and quality management in various industry sectors in east and southern Africa and Asia. He is a Certified ISO 9001 Lead Auditor with the Southern African Auditors Training Certification Authority (SAATCA) and a member of the SABS Technical Committees for Quality Assurance, Environmental Management and Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems.



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NEVER STOP EVOLVING

The proposed ergonomic regulations, which require the full attention of management, show how the occupational health and safety (OHS) profession is constantly evolving



ROBIN W JONES

Some time back I did a presentation to a large group of National Diploma in Safety Management students. I asked them how they felt about the end of their third year of study. A fair number expressed the view that it "was all over now". By this they meant no more studying!

I told them that, unfortunately, their studies were just starting and would continue for the rest of their careers.

Think back to the days when Heinrich's Domino Theory was the greatest "light in the sky". It was current and it was relevant! Then along came Frank Bird Jnr with a new triangle and we started all over again.

Those who have been around for some time will recall the Factories, Machinery and Building Work Act, which morphed into the Machinery and Occupational Safety Act. This was later reborn as the Occupational Health and Safety Act. We now work with this Act (and the Amendments). Each change was subtle, or a fine-tuning, or introduced some new aspect.

As the world around us changes, so, too, we need to adapt. Back in 1973, the Noise Reduction Regulations were introduced. Today, we accept the full implications of that Regulation without any hesitation.

The introduction of the Asbestos Regulations was recognised as a wise and necessary improvement. The Construction Regulations have also had their share of tweaking and fine tuning.

Now, instead of a fine-tuning, the Department of Labour has published a new topic. By the time you read this article, the period for comment will have passed.

I'm talking about the proposed Ergonomics Regulations. The Regulations cover (among other topics): What is ergonomics? What does it entail? What does management have to do about this subject?

Who is allowed to inspect and report on the subject of ergonomics?

This is a huge change requiring a serious inspection by all management levels. This is not intended to be a lecture on ergonomics. There are practitioners more qualified and experienced than I am to discuss the ins and outs of the subject. It is just an example of how our OHS working environment is continually changing around us.

It could be new legislation, new techniques, or new approaches to the ongoing efforts of ensuring our workplaces and employees are free from harm.

I'm going to be bold and mention a few simple examples of how I think we will be involved in the new regulations. Remember the draft regulations were released for comment. The purpose was to give everyone an opportunity to see what is intended and how it is to be implemented.

Some might say that ergonomics is just "common sense". The same could be said for the entire occupational health and safety profession, but we realise there is more to the subject and the work undertaken by our profession. So, ergonomics has its own levels of expertise.

Take lifting a heavy weight as an example. As practitioners, we know how the worker should lift the weight (back straight, grasp firmly and then lift using the leg muscles and not the back muscles).

The qualified ergonomist (now to be required by law), while examining the "man-machine interface", would look a lot further into the weight of the load, and whether it could be moved more safely, easily or productively.

Remember that every change (ergonomics, for example) is just another tool in the tool box for OHS practitioners and management. **SM**

Check out our report on the new ergonomics regulation on page 42 – ed.

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A-OSH EXPO 2017:

CALLING ALL OSH PROFESSIONALS

A-OSH Expo 2017, Africa's leading occupational safety and health exhibition, takes place between May 30 and June 1, at the Gallagher Convention Centre in Midrand, Johannesburg

"Now in its seventh year, A-OSH has an established history of consistently bringing together eager industry professionals with the suppliers of best-of-breed occupational health and safety products and services," says Joshua Low, event director at Specialised Exhibitions Montgomery. A-OSH is co-located with the industry's top security and fire exhibition, Securex South Africa 2017.

Low adds that the 2016 expo saw visitor attendance increase 9,16 percent to 2 669 attendees, with more than 80 percent of visitors hailing from Gauteng. In addition, there was a 226-percent increase in African visitors last year, with the highest attendance from Botswana and Mozambique.

"The show drew in quality attendees, of which 18 percent were MDs, and 17,7 percent health and safety managers, advisors and officers. Almost 30 percent of visitors manage the health and safety requirements of their company, while close to 17 percent are involved in risk assessment. More than 70 percent of A-OSH visitors either make or influence purchasing decisions.

"A-OSH provides an ideal platform for visitors to discover and trial the latest innovations, products and services from more than 80 market-leading companies, including those involved in personal protective equipment (PPE), gas detection and monitoring equipment, environmental management, noise control, monitoring equipment and services, and more," Low notes.

"We're also pleased to announce that ten percent of our exhibitors will be on show at A-OSH Expo 2017 for the very first time this year, as Pienaar Bros North, Select PPE, Vanguard Fire & Safety, Interceptor/ Magnum, Dekra Solutions, Health|Insite, NOSA Action Training Academy, H.A.S.S Industrial, The Federated Employers Mutual (FEM) Assurance Company, and Deftoscan are welcomed to the A-OSH family."

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SHOW

Visitor attractions include Occu|Fit's Wellness Zone, a company under Health|Insite's group of companies, where delegates are able to undergo a full occupational health medical on site in the hall.

One of South Africa's leading corporate wellness and occupational health service providers, Health|Insite, will be showcasing its mobile unit. It will be providing a full physical exam in addition to audiometry and spirometry testing, as well as a full visual screening with keystone, to A-OSH Expo attendees – at no cost.

Each medical test takes from 45 minutes to an hour, and visitors will receive a "certificate of fitness to work" signed by an occupational health practitioner (OHP), indicating validity for a year.

"Furthermore, Markeza Marketing Solutions is providing two one-and-a-half-day training sessions; the first on basic first aid for all employees involved in risk and occupational safety and health (OSH), which is presented by a qualified first-aid trainer. The second, given by a certified OSH specialist, is aimed at helping risk and OSH managers to get to grips with the intricacies of the Act," Low explains.

Markeza Marketing Solutions' first session takes place from 08:00 to 16:00 on May 30, and from 08:00 to 12:00 on May 31, while the second will be run on May 31 from 13:00 to 16:00.

From a content point of view, a wealth of information will be available via the South African Institute of Occupational Safety and Health's (Saioh's) South

Hygiene (SAIOH), Saioh, the National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (Nebosh), the South African Protective Equipment Marketing Association (Sapema), the National Occupational Safety, Health and Environment Board (Noshebo), the Fire Protection Association of Southern Africa and the Italian-South African Chamber of Trade and Industries," he continues.



LEFT AND ABOVE:

A-OSH 2016 was a runaway success and the organisers expect a repeat performance in 2017.

"We're also pleased to announce that the South African Society of Occupational Health Nursing Practitioners (Sasohn) has also been added to our list of supporters."


PRE-REGISTER FREE ONLINE

"By visiting www.aosh.co.za and completing the required details, industry professionals interested in looking for the latest in OSH products and services will be able to gain entrance to experience all A-OSH Expo 2017 has to offer – at no cost.

"A-OSH has rightfully earned its title as the foremost African show within the OSH space by consistently shining a spotlight on the sector's most relevant

topics, as well as its latest products and services, and providing an opportunity for face-to-face dialogue between industry specialists and best-of-breed solution and services providers," Low concludes.

Interested parties are invited to visit the A-OSH Expo 2017 *Twitter* and *Facebook* profiles, with the chance of winning three prizes over the months of March, April and May. Winners will be able to claim their prizes at A-OSH Expo 2017.

For more information, or to pre-register for A-OSH Expo 2017, visit the A-OSH website or contact Leigh Miller on tel: +27 010 003 3060 or e-mail: leighm@specialised.com. 



Africa Health and Safety Conference, the PASMA Working at Height Theatre, the Fire Protection Association of South Africa's (FPASA's) InFIReS workshop, and the National Occupational Safety, Health and Environment Board (Noshebo) seminar theatre sponsored by BBF Safety Gear.

INDUSTRY BACKING FOR A-OSH 2017

Says Low: "The 2017 show is extremely well supported by additional relevant industry associations, including the Institute for Work at Height, the Institute of Safety Management (IOSM), the Safety First Association, the Masters Builders Association (MBA), the Southern African Institute for Occupational

MACADAMIAS

MAKING GROWTH POSSIBLE

Eastern Cape Macadamia (ECM) has played a massive role in making South Africa one of the top macadamia producers in the world. ANLERIE DE WET takes a look at ECM's latest project in Amajingqi and how it has benefited the local community

The Amajingqi Macadamia Farm (AMF), situated on the scenic Eastern Cape coast, was launched in October 2016. Mkululi Pakade, director at ECM, says the farm is run in partnership with the Amajingqi Traditional Council outside Willowvale, and its aim is to alleviate poverty prevalent in the community.

"With the vast hectares of fertile land and abundant water resources between the Shinxini and Jujura rivers, the macadamia project provides a real opportunity for the community," says Pakade. "Since its launch, approximately 200 ha of land have been planted and 300 ha will have been planted by the end of April."

This farm currently has 131 permanent employees, of which 118 are from the community. Another 13 people are employed seasonally. The employed community members first receive training at the world-class nursery at the Ncera Macadamia Farm – ECM's first successful community farming

project, situated outside Alice.

Employees then have the opportunity to further their education through the Macadamia Skills Academy (MSA) – ECM's educational programme. Through MSA employees can attain a National Certificate in New Venture Creation, Business Administration Services, Project Support Services and a Further Education and Training Certificate in Project Management.

"The development of the macadamia industry at Amajingqi and Ncera has allowed for job creation, skills transfer, social upliftment and economic empowerment of previously disadvantaged communities. The quality of life in the communities has also improved for the workers, especially previously unemployed women," says Pakade.

Lungiswa Ngoloza, a 48-year-old AMF employee, says the project has made a significant change in her life. Previously unemployed, she is now able to pay for her child's education and help her family financially. "Many households have benefited from

this project and without it life would be bleak for most of us," says Ngoloza.

Lwando Mnqweno, a 36-year-old AMF project leader, says having a guaranteed monthly salary has changed his life and he can now make long-term plans. "I have gained experience in farming and I am on my way to becoming an expert in macadamia nut farming as I have gained knowledge of the soil types," says Mnqweno.

"I can even tell at a glance if there is something wrong with a plant and immediately look for



billions, with China buying 36 percent of the country's total production. Pakade says AMF is hoping to harvest the first 100 ha of macadamia trees between 2018 and 2019, while the full 300 ha should be ready to be harvested by 2021.

He notes that production should increase significantly as a result of the recent rains and South Africa should be back in the number one position by the end of 2017. Although it will be a while before Amajingqi's first harvest, the farm has already made a massive difference to the lives of many people in the community. SM

solutions. I have also gained leadership skills as we deal with people from about 12 villages situated near the plantation."

South Africa is one of the largest macadamia producers in the world, having dethroned Australia for the number one position between 2011 and 2014. However, the recent drought resulted in South Africa's macadamia production decreasing from 46 000 t in 2015 to 38 000 t in 2016.

The country's macadamia industry is worth more than R4



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IS THE NEW INTERNET BILL CAUSE FOR CONCERN?



A recent cybersecurity bill has not received any fanfare, just criticism and concern

The new Cybercrimes and Cybersecurity Bill 2017 has been given the go-ahead by Cabinet, which has internet users, businesses and supporters of freedom of speech up in arms.

The Bill was put together to address cybersecurity issues that plague South Africa, and to regulate both internet usage and the protection of sensitive commercial and personal information.

In the Bill, several acts have been added as criminal offences, including hacking, unlawful data interception, electronic forgery and using delicate financial information to defraud a person or system. In addition, it mentions and regulates the distribution of pornography, private information and other "harmful" data.

The offences carry prison sentences of up to ten years, and hefty fines of up to R10 million.

Private internet and computer users are concerned about the effect that this Bill will have on the right to privacy and freedom of speech.

According to the Bill, the South African Police Service (SAPS), State Security Agency (SSA) and any other authorised people or agency have the permission "to use or obtain and use any instrument, device, equipment, password, decryption key, data, computer program, computer data storage medium or computer system, or other information that is believed, on reasonable grounds, to be necessary to search for, access or seize an article identified in the warrant to the extent set out in the warrants".

With abilities like this being bestowed, it is inevitable



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that protests by privacy groups and freedom of speech campaigners began in response to the Bill, which, if misused, could lead to catastrophic invasions of privacy and potentially harmful leaks of personal information.

In addition, the Bill could have a negative effect by restricting the amount of information shared online. If people or businesses feel their information might be compromised by sending it electronically, this could lead to alternate forms of encrypted communication cropping up, which could pose additional problems.

Freedom of expression is in the spotlight in relation to chapter 3 of the Bill, titled: Malicious Communications. This chapter addresses issues of malicious distribution of private images, damaging information, intentionally false and hurtful accusations and the like, but also extends to the possession of potentially harmful data.

In application, this could mean that someone in possession of or found to be distributing damaging data regarding a corrupt official, or a governmental process, could be fined or imprisoned.

The business sector is also concerned by the Bill,

as are operations such as "white-hat" hackers, who exploit security flaws to alert the owners as a paid service, and cybersecurity firms that may not be able to protect their clients' entrusted information if compelled to provide it by a court.

However, it may not be as radical as feared, as the Deputy Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, John Jeffery, explained in a statement earlier this year. He spoke about the backlash to the Bill, saying that it is important to note that the Bill is not "an extension of surveillance powers", as it falls under the existing laws surrounding internet usage and data distribution.

He explained: "Neither the Bill nor the National Cybersecurity Policy Framework (NCPF) gives the SSA any powers to censor or suppress what can be accessed, published, or viewed on the internet, or to monitor communications without judicial sanctioning."

In addition, he reminded South Africans that the country runs according to the Constitution, and as such, if any section of the Bill is found to be "wanting", the court will rule it as unconstitutional. SM



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CHALLENGE NUMBER ONE

KPMG recently released its annual Global Audit Committee Pulse survey, which shows that audit committee members around the world perceive risk management as the top challenge and concern for businesses in 2017

KPMG's Audit Committee Institute (ACI) surveyed more than 800 audit committee members from 42 countries around the world. The purpose of the survey was to offer insights that audit committees worldwide can use to sharpen their focus and oversight; and benchmark responsibilities and practices.

The audit committees have expressed confidence in financial reporting and audit quality, as they have done in the past, however, their concern about risk management is also not something new. As technology develops and becomes more engrained in the way companies do business, there are more risks that need to be taken into account.

"It's hardly surprising that risk is top of mind for audit committees – and very likely, the full board – given expectations for slow growth and economic uncertainty, advances in technology and business model disruption, cyber threats, greater regulatory scrutiny and investor demands for transparency," states the survey report.

Surveyed audit committee members identified the effectiveness of risk management programmes as the biggest challenge within the companies they serve. More than 40 percent of surveyed respondents believe their risk management programme and processes "require substantial work", and a similar number believe "it is increasingly difficult to oversee those major risks".

The survey further states: "There is an increased focus by boards on key operational risks across the extended global organisation." These risks include legal and regulatory compliance risk, cybersecurity risk, and managing the control environment risk.


Cybersecurity and technology-related risks were very much the hottest topics in the survey and received a lot of responses, especially within

the United States (US). US respondents identified cybersecurity risk as the top risk to their companies. The survey notes that US respondents seem to be more concerned about dealing with a cyber attack than preventing one.

“Boards should change their mindset on cybersecurity and create awareness at an enterprise-wide level.

US respondents have identified loopholes in their cybersecurity risk management processes: vulnerability from third parties and keeping technology systems up to date. The survey advised that boards should change their mindset on cybersecurity and create awareness at an enterprise-wide level, rather than just treating it as an IT-level problem.

The survey reveals that companies need to put more focus into their risk management programmes as only 34 percent of audit committees worldwide are satisfied with the effectiveness of their programmes. From the countries surveyed, Singapore (63 percent) is the most satisfied and Korea (0 percent) the least satisfied.

Overall, the KPMG survey report suggests that audit committees should focus more on certain areas to increase the effectiveness of their risk management. One way that committees could do this is to get a better understanding of the business and its risks. It also notes that an internal audit can maximise the value of risk management to the company by focusing on key areas of risk and the adequacy of the company's risk management processes generally. 

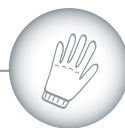
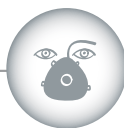


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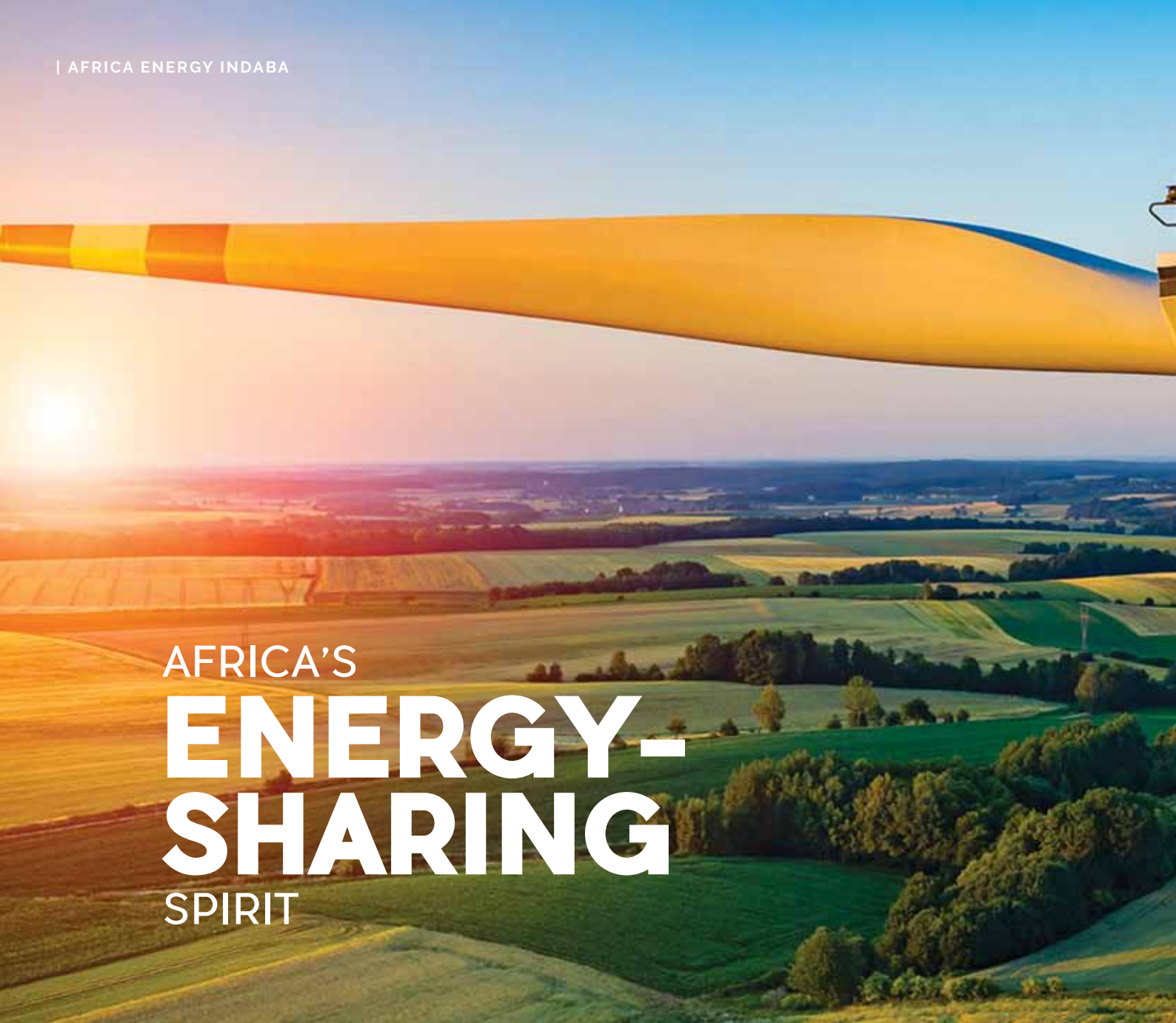
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AFRICA'S ENERGY- SHARING SPIRIT

At the 2017 Africa Energy Indaba – the World Energy Council's (WEC's) ninth annual regional event – hundreds of energy experts gathered to discuss a way forward for the continent's energy industry. ANLERIE DE WET reports

The Indaba, which was held at the Sandton Convention Centre on February 21 and 22, saw more than ten African energy ministers and more than 60 CEOs from the private sector advocate for a variety of sustainable energy, policy and trade solutions for the imminent rise of Africa in the energy industry.

Karl Rose, senior director of scenarios and policies at the WEC, said Africa has everything it needs to produce sustainable energy, including the money. "Africa needs to speed up decision-making and needs the courage to try new things. Only when it faces these challenges will it unlock better trade and economic growth," he said.

Kornelia Shilunga, Namibia's deputy minister of energy, and Samuel Undenge, Zimbabwe's minister

of energy and power development, agreed with Rose that policy decision-making and implementation is not taking place as fast as it should, but this is not because of a lack of trying.

"We have the policies, instruments and institutions for regional integration, but each country has its own unique challenges that slow down the process," said Shilunga.

The panellists from the discussion on Africa's future energy mix indicated that policies will be the key driving factor to get countries to adopt a more sustainable energy mix.

"Africa's energy mix has to adapt. It will do so, because it is necessary for the continent's economic stability. Each country needs to have sufficient self-sustainable domestic energy before looking at



trading its energy with the rest of the continent," said Louis Schaffer, distributed energy segment manager at Eaton Electric for Europe, Middle East and African regions.

The Indaba had a few sessions where renewable energy access, security and opportunities were discussed. Nuclear energy had its own one-day programme, however, at which the panellists for each discussion were all experts in the field.

Rob Jeffrey, senior economist and managing consultant at Econometrix, said nuclear is expensive compared to renewable energy, but a nuclear plant's life expectancy is longer. "A nuclear plant will be able to produce energy for at least 60 years, where renewable energy plants, such as wind and solar, produce energy for only about 30 to 40 years. If they had the same lifespan, the costs would be very similar," said Jeffrey.

Prof Dawid Serfontein, from the University of the North-West's School of Mechanical and Nuclear Engineering, said the local media is reporting that a nuclear build programme will "bankrupt" South

Africa, but he believes this is not necessarily the case. "Since I compiled a report on the cost and necessity for a nuclear programme in 2012, the rand has lost half of its value. So to build a nuclear plant will now cost a lot more, but if we work smart it won't bankrupt us," said Serfontein.

He explained: "If we buy a plant from Europe or America, we will have to pay in dollars or pounds. However, if we buy from the Chinese or Russians and they don't ask the dollar price, then we will be able to make nuclear work."

Mike Peo, head of infrastructure, energy and telecommunications at Nedbank Capital, says the country's politics play a big role in getting investment for the nuclear programme. "The cost of nuclear becomes higher if there is no trust in our political leaders. If there is no trust in the country, we won't get the investment mix that we need to fund the programme," said Peo.

Another hot topic in the Indaba's nuclear programme, was how to change the negative perception South Africans have about nuclear





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| AFRICA ENERGY INDABA

energy. This is in part due to the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster that occurred in Japan in 2011 – which led to chemical explosions after the Tōhoku earthquake and the tsunami that followed.

Reports showed that the plant operator, Tokyo Electric Power Company, had failed to meet basic safety requirements. In the meantime, however, new technology has been developed to prevent a similar incident from occurring.

Phumzile Tselane, CEO of the South African Nuclear Energy Corporation (Necsa), said: People generally think of bombs when they hear the word 'nuclear'. We need to educate South Africans to accept nuclear and get them to mobilise behind the programme and learn the necessary skills to run a nuclear plant for its 60-year lifespan."

The Indaba included side events, such as the Africa Gas Forum and the Women in Energy Conference, but the new kid on the block was the first-ever African Youth Energy Innovator Awards. This has created a much-needed platform for talented African youth to showcase their important work.

The top five innovators had to pitch their products to a panel of judges and endure a question and answer session before the winner was chosen. Patrick Akpan, a PhD mechanical engineering student at the University of Cape Town, won the first place for his energy-efficient fruit palm steriliser.

The Indaba also showcased an exciting exhibition, where a varied range of energy companies displayed their products or services to influential people in the industry.

The African Energy Indaba team and its strategic partners – South African National Energy Association (Sanea), the New Economic Partnership for African Development (Nepad) Agency and the South African Electrotechnical Export Council – thanked all those who played their part to make the Indaba another runaway success. The team is already gearing up for the next event in 2018. 

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SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FOR AFRICA



Energy experts at the 2017 Africa Energy Indaba noted that sustainable energy is vital to the future of the African continent. Sustainable energy experts in the public and private sectors gathered at the World Energy Council's (WEC's) ninth annual regional event to discuss energy access, security and opportunities in Africa

According to the Afrobarometer report (entitled Powerless: Lack of grid access, unreliable electricity supply still plague majority of Africans) published in March 2016, a majority of Africans are still in the dark, either intermittently or constantly. Based on nearly 54 000 interviews in 36 African countries in 2014/15, just two out of five people have access to a reliable supply of energy throughout the day.

The report found that roughly 625-million people (68 percent of the population) in sub-Saharan Africa are without power and that the 48 countries that make up sub-Saharan Africa generate roughly the same amount of power as Spain.

Barry Bredenkamp, senior manager of energy

efficiency and corporate communications at the South African National Energy Development Institute (Sanedi), said Africa accounts for 13 percent of the world population, but only four percent of the energy demand.

"Africa has more than enough sustainable energy resources to replace traditional carbon-intensive energy, but its countries are struggling to keep the lights on. This could be because the energy industry is a very much a political environment and revolves around policies that are established and implemented by governments," said Bredenkamp.

Sebastian Noethlichs, founder and CEO of Nvision Energy, said it is difficult to sell his company's solar panels in most African countries as the government

policies and procedures require international companies to jump through many hoops.

Eugén Ranft, operations manager at Eaton Electric, said the political environment in Africa poses a big risk for investors and keeps renewable energy costs high, even though the market has become more competitive. "We need to align policies in such a way that political change doesn't affect investment in renewable energy," said Ranft.

Janek Winand, vice president of Siemens Wind Power, said manufacturers need to help investors and governments carry the risk. "Manufacturers need to get more involved in projects and help find funding, while carrying some of the risk for clients," he said.

Noethlichs also noted that there are other reasons for the slow growth of renewable energy in Africa. "African countries don't have much knowledge about renewable energy and are not yet comfortable with it. Governments and investors also don't like investing in something from which they won't see returns within three to four years," said Noethlichs.

Winand added that his company has established programmes to help train the communities close to where its projects are based, so that they can operate the plants. Through the programmes governments are also mentored to implement renewable energy

programmes more quickly. He believes other companies should do this, too, instead of getting angry with governments and other key role players.

Delegates at the Indaba agreed that there are many opportunities for renewable energy in Africa, but they were specifically very happy about the support that South African President Jacob Zuma showed the renewable energy sector in his State of the Nation Address on February 9.

This has made the South African Renewable Energy Council (Sarec) confident that the country's Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP) – which aims to put more renewable energy on the grid – will soon be back up to speed after being stalled since the beginning of 2016.

Monica Maduekwe, programme coordinator at the Economic Community of West African States Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, said the private sector needs to take into account the needs of end users – which are mostly people from rural and poor population groups.

"Companies can't just push their own agendas. They need to listen to the users. They are living in conditions with no electricity, so they know what their needs are," said Maduekwe. SAI

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What are the causes?

Contaminants on floor surfaces are very often the culprit. This can be **water, ice, oil, grease, chemical spillage**, etc. It is not just spilt liquids that make floor surfaces dangerous. **Swarf, powders** and other **dry debris** can act like marbles on a floor surface. Uneven and poorly maintained floor surfaces can also cause both slips and trips.



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INVESTING IN SAFETY CAN SAVE BILLIONS

Corporate social responsibility does not refer only to environmental practices, but also to workplace safety. MARISKA MORRIS looks at the findings of Dakota Software's white paper on workplace safety

Most companies think of environmental practices when discussing corporate social responsibility (CSR). While this is important, it is not enough. Think of companies such as Apple Inc, which ranked 26th in *Newsweek's* 2016 Green Rankings, yet faces many controversies surrounding working conditions in its factories based in China.

Many companies are now developing strategies

which incorporate a more holistic approach – with safety being a key element.

"The top-down approach to safety is leading to cost savings and a host of other benefits," writes Jay Finegan, compliance service leader at Dakota Software and author of the white paper titled; *Safety: The Neglected Corporate Sustainability Metric*. The company produces software specifically designed to support safety, health and environmental compliance.



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Safety is important for the reputation of a company. A paper published by the United States (US) National Safety Council (NSC) – entitled: Does employee safety influence customer satisfaction? – found a link between higher rates of injury and illness and lower customer satisfaction. Fewer injuries led to happier customers.

The aluminium company Alcoa provides an example of the benefits a safety policy. Finegan explains: "When Paul O'Neill became CEO of Alcoa in 1987, its safety performance was a very respectable one-third of the US average. When O'Neill retired in 2000, Alcoa's safety performance had improved to 1/20th of the US average."

During this time the company's sales increased from US\$ 4.2 billion (R55,6 billion) to US\$ 22,9 billion (R303,6 billion) with profit rising from US\$ 264 million (R3,5 billion) to US\$ 1,5 billion (R19,8 billion). Profit isn't the only advantage, however.

The US Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) ran a Voluntary Protection Programme (VPP) initiative, which encourages companies to prevent workplace injuries by including worksite analysis and hazard prevention and control in their management strategy.

The New York State Department of Labour's (DoL's) fact sheet on the VPP initiative found that there was a 52-percent lower rate of injury among participating businesses. The average cost per work-related injury amounted to US\$ 43 000 (R570 000) in 2007, according to the DoL's fact sheet.

Milbank Quarterly, a peer-reviewed healthcare journal, argues that the cost of occupational injuries and illnesses amounted to US\$ 250 billion (R3,3 trillion) in 2011. "This is more than the cost of cancer, diabetes or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease: US\$ 67 billion (R888 billion) resulting from medical expenditures, and US\$ 183 billion (R2,4 trillion) from productivity losses," Finegan notes in his 2014 report.

A study by the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention found that injured workers were 43 percent more likely to suffer from depression than their non-injured peers. In 2003, Mental Health America reported a loss of US\$ 51 billion (R676 billion) in absenteeism and US\$ 26 billion (R344 billion) in direct treatment of depressed workers.

According to stats SA, absenteeism costs local companies more than R12 billion annually. Depression also tends to affect people in their prime working years, Mental Health America notes.

One strategy that improves safety and has been found effective is the behaviour-based safety (BBS) protocol.

BBS addresses the fundamental reasons for unsafe behaviour, rather than imposing disciplinary

consequences on the workers. "Root cause analysis can contribute to an improved safety culture by digging to the heart of the problem, rather than treating and diagnosing surface-level symptoms," Finegan writes.

BBS suggests, for example, that employees who fail to follow safety rules are possibly not responsible for workplace injuries. It might be that an employee, who continuously removes his personal protective equipment, could be doing so because he or she is uncomfortable in the equipment.

The American Psychological Association's figures show a 29-percent decrease in injuries after one year following the implementation of the BBS strategy. After five years, there was a 72-percent decrease and after seven or more years it was 79 percent.

Finegan concludes that a safety culture is as important as the company's overall culture. "For the long-term benefit of the employees and the company, for greater cost savings, and to avoid the damaging effects of injury and illness, safety must be improved across the board," he says.

"Changing and elevating the safety culture must be a collective effort," Finegan comments. Putting safety first not only saves money; it can actually make money. SM

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR LAYS DOWN **NEW RULES**

New regulations relating to ergonomics are being legislated. They're definitely good news for employees. Can the same be said for employers?

The Department of Labour (DoL) recently proposed new ergonomic regulations – as improvements in ergonomics throughout the workplace result in more productive workers and a better standard of work.

Milly Ruiters, director of the occupational health and hygiene department at the DoL, explains that a factor contributing greatly to the productivity is whether the company has endeavoured to match the work environment to the workers, as opposed to matching the workers to the work environment.

The Department refers to legislation regarding this matter, citing the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act, which regulates the labour market through a set of policies and programmes.

These policies are aimed at enhancing occupational health and safety awareness to improve compliance in the workplace and ensure safe, healthy workers and working environments. They also aim to improve economic efficiency and productivity, create employment and establish sound labour relations.

"In addition, they aim to: reduce inequality and discrimination in the workplace, alleviate poverty in employment, enhance occupational health and safety awareness, improve compliance in the workplace, and nurture the culture of acceptance that workers' rights are human rights," explains Ruiters.

A lack of ergonomic compliance within the work environment is characterised by a large number of work-related injuries and diseases, such as musculoskeletal disorders. Risk factors vary from design, safety of machinery and physical environment, to employees' physical and mental workload. This creates a need to legislate ergonomic risk factors.

"The current legislation, as stated in sections 8, 14 and 16 of the OHS Act, is very important. Ergonomic risk factors need to be identified with others as per section 8. Control measures must then be identified for these ergonomic risk factors. The DoL created an ergonomics risk process flowchart, detailing the steps required to correctly identify the factors," says Ruiters.

In accordance with section 14, employees must obey OHS rules and report unsafe situations. Ruiters explains: "There are already regulations governing office spaces, such as the 2004 Facilities Regulations and the 2014 Construction Regulations. In addition, the subject of ergonomics is addressed in the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (COIDA) – yet there has been no specific regulation governing ergonomics."

According to Ruiters the new regulations will set things out more clearly and give businesses a timeframe in which they must comply.

“ A lack of ergonomic compliance within the work environment is characterised by a large number of work-related injuries and diseases, such as musculoskeletal disorders.

In complying with the new regulations, businesses must include ergonomics in their health and safety manuals, and have a team dedicated to assessing ergonomic risk factors, which must be considered during the procurement of equipment.

Businesses are also duty bound to provide training and educational material for their workforce. They must ensure medical management and medical surveillance is up to scratch, and should refer staff members who experience problems to an occupational practitioner for work-related musculoskeletal disorders.

There are several meaningful benefits for a business that undertakes a dedicated ergonomics system. By modifying the workplace and creating an accommodating environment, there will be fewer illnesses and injuries, thereby effectively increasing the productivity of the workforce.

In addition, when employees claim workmen's compensation, their levies are increased. However, if they don't claim for a certain period they will receive a cash "bonus" or payment of sorts. Compliance to ergonomic regulations should, therefore, be seen as a vital and cost-efficient process.

Ruiters notes that the development of ergonomic regulations will be a programmed approach, so that they are straightforward and easy to implement. The regulations will encompass physical and cognitive ergonomics suitable for the identified needs of individual companies.

She explains that a technical committee was formally established in 2013. Regulations were developed in the 2013/14 period, and the draft regulations were published in March 2015. Permission was finally given for the DoL to put the regulations out for public comment at the end of September 2016.

"It received approval to create industry-specific guidelines, which provided a way forward for legal services to do last checks, get ministerial approval, and allow three months for public comment. A workshop was held at the national OHS conference in November 2016, which included the incorporation of public comment," Ruiters explains.


In preparation for implementation, 15 OHS officials have completed a six-module course on ergonomics at Rhodes University (NQF level 7). On completion of the course, the officials submitted a portfolio of evidence to the Ergonomics Society of South Africa to register as Certified Ergonomics Associates and work at a professional level.

A second group of 15 inspectors completed training in January. Rhodes is currently the only university that offers a course in ergonomics, which will be presented to industry during 2017.

However, there are concerns from organised business that there will now be a burden placed on them to train people.

"Businesses will have a period in which to adhere to the regulations, and a duty to train and provide for their staff. It has been recommended that the workshops and roadshows should be provided for free. This is, however, yet to be confirmed," Ruiters says.

The DoL is hoping that all businesses will comply by March 2018. SM



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PROTECTING FEMALE EMPLOYEES WITH THE RIGHT PPE

Specially designed personal protective equipment (PPE) for women is helping to protect female employees. MARISKA MORRIS takes a look at this increasingly popular trend

PPE is largely designed for the male physique, notes David Msiza, chief inspector of mines at the Department of Mineral Resources, in the guidelines for the provision of PPE for women.

This has resulted in many areas of work in the South African mining industry being unsuitable for women.

The guidelines, written in 2015, were developed after an independent study found that ill-fitting PPE posed health and safety risks. Female mine workers were at risk of work-related incidents with their comfort and performance compromised because of inadequate protective gear. This unsuitable gear led to various skin conditions such as chaffing, rashes and fungal infections.

"The situation is further exacerbated by the unique coping mechanisms that women in mining have been compelled to practise in order to adjust and correct the ill-fitting PPE (for example use of nylon tights and thick wool socks as undergarments)," Msiza explains. "PPE should not only protect a worker, but also provide comfort," he argues.

To address this concern, the guidelines under the Mine Health and Safety Act 29 of 1996 require

employers to provide each woman working in mining with PPE according to size and fit, among other regulations. More industries, such as construction, are looking to provide women with PPE suited to their body type. What PPE is available specifically for women?

British safety experts Arco launched a female range of high-visibility clothing for construction workers in June, 2016. The reflective band of the

“ More industries, are looking to provide women with PPE suited to their body type.

traditional polo shirts has been moved from the chest area to the stomach area for better comfort. Locally, Select PPE offers high-visibility clothing specifically designed for women.

"As a multi-branded supplier, Select PPE can supply most of the high-visibility jackets currently on

RIGHT:

PPE designed specifically for women is becoming an important priority in more and more industries.



the market," says marketing manager Marishka van der Schyff.


There is a wide range of high-visibility jackets from which to choose, which include solid and mesh material with fluorescent colours such as lime, orange, yellow, pink and royal blue. The colours allow for day-time visibility while reflective strips enhance visibility at night.

"The reflective strips can be placed on the front and back of the jacket with a strip or cross on the back of the vest," Van der Schyff explains.

"The option to add high-visibility sleeves to a vest is also available. Companies can add screen printing

or embroidery with their logo to the vests," she notes. Select PPE's range of high-visibility jackets ranges from a size small to 5XL.

Dromex, another supplier of PPE, which stocks various types of high-visibility garments (that conform to European standard EN 20471, which ensures the user is protected in any light condition), is another company eager to add PPE for women to its product range.

"PPE tailored to women is still largely 'under construction'. It is, however, a legitimate need and we expect to see much more development in this area within the next few years," says Lyndall Farrer, marketing executive at Dromex. 

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DROWNING IN WASTE

South African landfills are 94-percent full, while the country continues to produce about 53 425 t of waste per day. Recycling is a matter of life or death, as MARISKA MORRIS discovers

According to the World Bank's 2012 report, 1,3-billion tonnes of waste is produced globally every year, costing the world economy US\$ 205,4 billion (R2 trillion). Every minute, 2 473 t of waste is produced worldwide. South Africa contributes around 37 t of waste per minute. With landfills brimming, where will all this waste go?

"Landfill sites are around 94-percent full. Government (both on a national and provincial level) is frantically looking for suitable areas to use as the next landfill sites, but the communities surrounding the proposed sites keep shutting down the process," says Deldrian Jacobs, senior contract manager at Waste Plan, a waste management organisation.

The unavailability of land means landfills continue to stay open after being filled. "The Bellville South landfill site in Cape Town was due for closure four years ago, but it is still operating today to keep up with demand," Jacobs notes.

"The Vissershok landfill site in Cape Town will be full in just over a year or so, but it will

probably be forced to keep on taking in waste," he comments. According to Jacobs' estimation, landfills have enough space for only three years of waste, which is why recycling is so important. "It keeps waste out of the landfill sites," he argues.

Waste management companies prevent recyclable material from ending up in a landfill. According to Waste Plan's website, up to 90 percent of all waste is recyclable. Of these recyclable products, the most important is, arguably, organic waste, which can be burned to create bio-fuel.

Organic waste makes up 54 percent of waste produced in upper-middle income countries. The World Bank categorised South Africa among upper-middle income countries along with Fiji, Namibia, Russia and Mexico.

SWEDEN LEADS THE WAY

One country that has been successful in the waste-to-energy (WTE) movement is Sweden. It reported that only one percent of all household waste is sent to landfills. The rest is burned for fuel. The country has been so successful that it now needs to import around 700 000 t of waste from other countries in order to keep its WTE plants running at full capacity.

Not only is burning waste a cheap source of fuel, it is healthier for environment. Waste at landfills releases harmful emissions like methane into the air. Burning waste only releases non-toxic carbon dioxide and water, according to the website *Sweden Sverige*. In January, South Africa's very own WTE plant opened in Athlone, Cape Town.



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"The bio-methane gas produced by burning organic waste is harvested and bottled. The aim is to replace the gas we currently use in our homes with this methane," says Jacobs. The WTE plant is expected to start generating bio-fuel by mid-2017.

A single WTE plant won't, however, resolve the city's waste woes. Although WTE is a step in the right direction, more emphasis needs to be placed on recycling.

RECYCLING IS VITAL

One important recyclable material is used oil. The Recycling Oil Saves the Environment (Rose) Foundation is an organisation that manages oil recycling.

Workshops, mines and farms are the main generators of used lubricating oil, which is then bought by collectors that transport and sell it to processing plants.

"The processing plants subject the oil to a re-refining process of distillation and hydrogenation. They recycle it by changing the chemical composition to form different products," says Bubele Nyiba, CEO of the Rose Foundation.

Recycled oil is used to produce industrial heating fuel, asphalt extender and base oil.

Lubricating oil thus comes full circle in the recycling process, which can be repeated numerous times.

Recycling of lubricating oil is especially important as

it is classified as hazardous waste. By recycling oil, it does not enter our soil, which could result in it polluting fresh and underground resources, and water-based animals. "One litre of used oil can contaminate one million litres of water," Nyiba explains.


On the other hand, burning oil in open fires is dangerous to our health, as hazardous substances are released into the atmosphere and the air we breathe.

"The Rose Foundation places oil drop-off containers in municipal garden refuse sites throughout the major centres. Larger generators of used oil generally know what to do and where to go and the few that don't know usually contact us and we connect them with the nearest collector," says Nyiba.

Jacobs believes communities can assist with recycling by providing a space for recyclable products to be dropped off. "We can also arrange training for communities at these places," he says.

One of the most important benefits of recycling is that it creates jobs.

There are 60 000 to 90 000 waste pickers in the country. They save municipalities up to R750 million a year, the *Sunday Times* reported last year. Each picker diverts up to 24 t of packaging waste annually.

Jacobs notes that residents and companies can also make a difference and can contact Waste Plan to learn more about recycling. 

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GOING GLOBAL WITH OSH TRAINING

Considering a health and safety qualification for yourself or your staff? Understanding the importance of opting for an internationally accredited provider is essential, says BRENIG MOORE, technical director at Astutis

Nebosh is an internationally recognised independent body offering some of the most sought-after health and safety qualifications globally. The ultimate aim of Nebosh qualifications is to enable their holders to effectively discharge workplace health and safety responsibilities in any part of the world, thereby driving up standards.

Those who work for multi-national or global organisations, in particular, will benefit from an internationally accredited qualification where local laws and cultural factors also form part of the programme of study where appropriate or relevant.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Internationally recognised qualifications represent a commonality in standards of training to be delivered in companies with multiple locations around the world. As Nebosh qualifications are based on international standards, many organisations see this as key to setting corporate standards and raising competency levels.

Increased flexibility in teaching and mobility among workers are further benefits of an internationally recognised qualification – these students should have the freedom to establish themselves and work as a health and safety professional anywhere in the world.

WHAT LEARNING OPTIONS AND ASSESSMENTS ARE OFFERED?

Several different modes of study are available when

choosing a Nebosh course, including full-time block release, as well as distance, online and blended learning options.


All Nebosh assessment procedures (examinations, projects and practical assignments) have been developed in line with regulatory and educational best practice to ensure that the assessments are appropriate for the target audience.

WHAT REASSURANCE IS OFFERED?

All Nebosh course providers undergo a review of teaching expertise, course delivery and physical resources, and are formally accredited to offer the examination. Both the teaching of the qualification and the arrangements in place to ensure fairness and consistency are closely monitored so that standards are maintained across the board internationally.

WHY OPT FOR NEBOSH TRAINING?

Nebosh offers work-related qualifications for those who have workplace safety as part of their day-to-day responsibilities (Nebosh International General Certificate) and safety professionals (Nebosh International Diploma). These are also available through Astutis online.

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SPAWNING CHIPS

Only the best quality potatoes are selected for Lay's chips. That's what Simba, producer of these chips, claims. Alas, that's not strictly true – as one customer discovered. MARISKA MORRIS reports

Lay's believes "little moments can turn an ordinary day into a great day". For one customer, however, a moment turned into a nightmare!

On January 23, Carla Nunes bought a packet of Thai sweet chilli-flavoured Lay's chips. After eating a few chips, she noticed something grey on the contents. On closer inspection, she discovered moth eggs on her chips and a dead moth in the packet.

Nunes contacted Lay's via its *Facebook* page. She was told a consultant would be in contact with her. After hearing nothing for a week, she posted images of the chips and moth to *Facebook*.

"Very disappointed (to say the least) in Lay's South Africa. After informing them early this week to the fact that I've found a dead moth and eggs in my packet of chips, I've yet to have anyone contact me. Where is the quality control and customer service? This isn't a packet of stale chips I'm complaining about. Shocking," her post read.

Finally, by Saturday, January 28, Simba contacted Nunes. She was assured that an investigation was taking place and she would receive a written response in seven to 14 working days (at the time of going to print in mid-March she had yet to receive that response).

How could this have happened? Does Simba have adequate quality-control measures in place? We posed these questions to the chip manufacturer, and received a response from Michelle Berman from Atmosphere Communications, public relations firm for Simba. "The safety of consumers is always our number one priority and we take matters like this very seriously," said Berman, who added that Simba had

immediately conducted an investigation.

"Unfortunately, the bag and its contents had already been discarded, so we were unable to recover it for the investigation. However, we have carried out a thorough investigation at our production plant and can confirm there has been no deviation in our strict quality-control procedures," she told SHEQ MANAGEMENT.

Berman was unable to disclose the quality-control procedures in place "due to safety, proprietary and security reasons".

Nunes was surprised at the response. "I threw the packet of chips away. I regret doing this now, but didn't think at the time that I would need to preserve the evidence. How do they explain this incident? I fail to see how the moth got in there if there was nothing wrong with the company's quality control procedures," she pondered.

In an attempt to obtain answers, we turned to Nathalie Leblond, marketing communication manager at Rentokil Initial South Africa. We asked her how a moth could possibly get into a packet of chips. She emphasised that, without visiting the specific site, it was difficult to say exactly how this could occur.

"One would need to establish whether this was just a very unfortunate once-off incident – a 'casual intruder' – or a symptom of a more serious problem, an actual infestation," she explained. "The moth may have been unknowingly imported into the sterile



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RIGHT:

A dead moth was found by a SHEQ MANAGEMENT reader in a new pack of Lay's, along with eggs it had laid on the chips.



environment on a piece of machinery, or a worker's clothing.

"A full site inspection would need to be conducted and the possibility of a stored product insect (SPI) infestation eliminated," Leblond noted.

Despite the unfortunate event, she explained that all food facilities, such as Simba, comply with hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP) regulations and are audited accordingly.

Pest control is only one of the many HACCP prerequisites. Monitoring systems need to be in place specifically for SPI according to third-party auditors YUM! and the American Institute of Baking (AIB) standards. These companies make use of the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) standards established in 2000.

"The YUM! and AIB audits are meant to establish whether food manufacturers are fully compliant with

good manufacturing processes. GFSI requirements are very stringent in comparison to local standards. They are also very specific in terms of pest-control device quantities, visit frequencies and infestation management," Leblond explained.

"While every precaution is taken and the HACCP system helps to identify any potential risk to food safety, it is only a risk-management tool and is not fail-safe," she concluded.

Although Nunes felt ill for a few days, she is unsure whether it was because of the contaminated chips or psychological harm. She hasn't eaten any chips since the incident. When asked whether she would eat Lay's chips again, Nunes seemed doubtful.

"I still feel sick when I think about it. You really don't expect to find that sort of thing in a packet of chips. It's not exactly a cheap brand, so I expected the quality control to be much better," she concluded. **SM**



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