

Using our brains to save and improve the lives of workers

Measuring safety culture across time



The Client

United Biscuits (UB) is a large international food manufacturing organisation.

The Problem

UB's logistics division completed a large behavioural safety campaign in Spring 2009 and were interested in exploring how the safety climate and safety performance had changed since their use of the original HSE Climate Survey Tool (CST) in 2003.

What we did

During the development of the new and revised HSL Safety Climate Tool, our researchers worked with staff at UB's distribution centre in the Midlands as they had been identified as being knowledgeable users of the previous version of the tool. Working in partnership with the logistics division, we undertook a safety culture evaluation to assess any changes in culture and safety performance between 2003 and 2009. This included:

- Converting old HSE CST data from 2003 and 2007 into the new HSL SCT tool to enable UB Logistics division to trend safety culture over time, and not lose any value from old collated data;
- Running a staff survey using the SCT to collect data on safety culture in 2009;
- Reviewing accident data over three time periods;
- Providing a presentation, and case study for HSE outlining the key findings.

Outcome/Benefits

The project had a number of significant benefits for UB Logistics division:

- Understanding the underlying safety culture within the Midlands Distribution centre in 2009;
- Trending clear improvement of safety climate scores between 2003 and the latest survey in 2009, indicating a more positive safety culture.

Accidents also showed a steady decline with the average accidents per month reducing from over 7.7 (2003) to approximately 3.2 (2009).

Since reviewing their SCT results UB Logistics have also changed the way they conduct accident investigations to include open discussions about investigations at monthly management meetings, which are cascaded down to employees via safety champions. Following conclusion of the investigation, direct feedback is also now provided to the relevant individuals.

"The HSL SCT was used to map changes in UB Logistics safety climate over time. This provided both the evidence to prioritise operational areas where improvements and development were required, and a measure for monitoring progress. We've moved forward in how we look at safety and this has been reflected in the change in SCT results."

John Johnstone, Health and Safety Manager, UB Logistics division.

