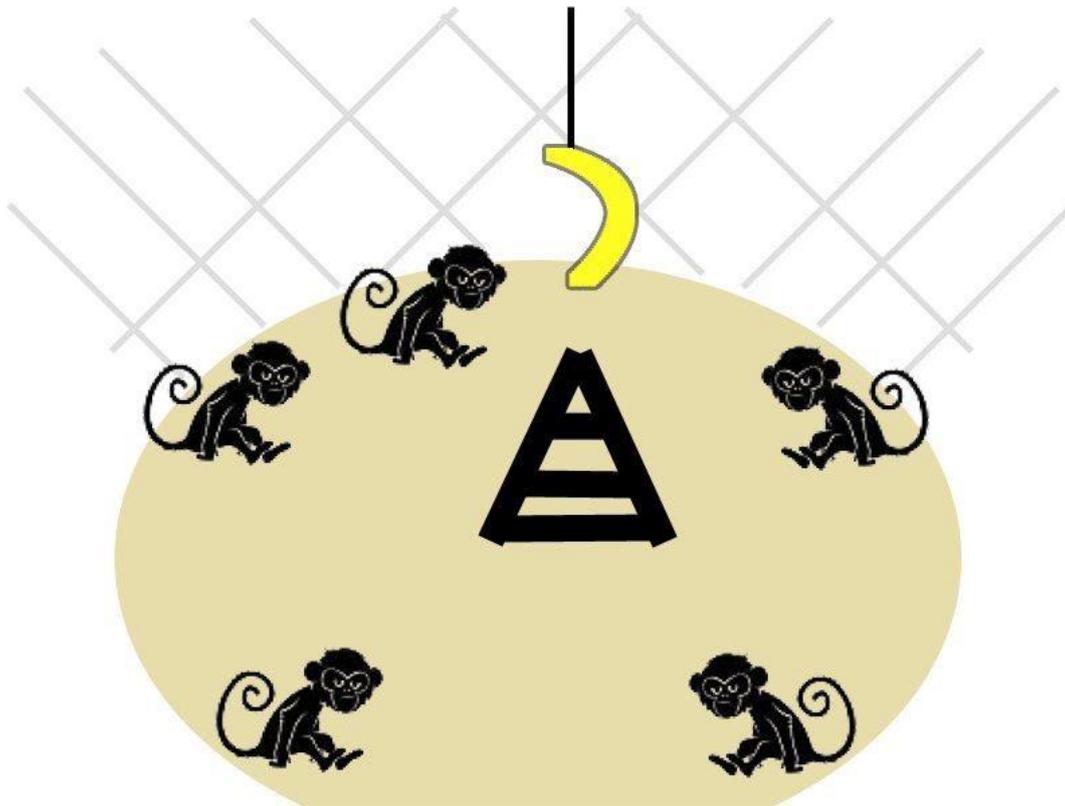




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Improving our on-farm Health and Safety Culture in Rural New Zealand

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Kellogg Rural Leadership Programme

Course 40 2019

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Executive Summary

New Zealand as a country has a proud farming history with our farming culture having been built on a can do, 'she'll be right' mindset. However, this same culture is killing our people. On a per capita basis New Zealand has some of the highest statistics in workplace fatalities with agriculture being the worst performing sector. This paper seeks to define culture in the health and safety context, and to understand where our current cultural level is on-farm in Rural New Zealand. It also seeks to understand where we should prioritise to improve this culture.

A review of the literature was completed, along with discussions with many of the key authors to develop a deeper understanding of their research. Additional research was also undertaken in the form of a survey completed by twenty New Zealand Young Farmers member's nationwide.

This paper explores the definition of culture including work from Edgar Schein, George Stevenson and Jess Berentson-Shaw. This paper establishes that culture involves multiple people, is based on assumptions to solve problems, and is learned and shared. Through the literature review this paper found our culture is risk tolerant and as a nation we have negative perceptions towards health and safety largely because of the associated compliance. This was validated through this paper's survey. However, it was found that compliance can have a positive impact on change. Recent work completed by Francois Barton and Gareth Chaplin suggest that culturally there are positive signals coming from the introduction of the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015. This was again validated in the survey as well as the fact that survey participants felt we are making progress. Al McCone suggested that health and safety was legislated because it's important, and it's not important just because it's legislated.

The following recommendations are made, based on the findings within the report:

- Change our 'she'll be right' mentality to one of 'do it right'
- Provide education to individuals on farm to drive ownership and accountability within the health and safety space.
- Promote the positive health and safety messages within the industry.
- Offer appropriate incentives to help drive a positive culture change.

Foreword

I am on a health and safety journey. Growing up on a sheep and beef farm in Southern Southland, I was very fortunate to have had a rural upbringing like many of our forefathers. During those times health and safety wasn't really part of our vocabulary or identity, and it hasn't really been until the past few years when I was employed by Farm Source as a sales representative that I became fascinated in this field. Five years ago, I drew the short straw and was nominated as the team representative on our health and safety committee (a job no-one wanted). During my first ever meeting I sat dead quiet, unsure as to what the point of the meeting was or what we were trying to achieve. I have gone through all the emotions of confusion and denial through to acceptance and am currently working hard at providing health and safety leadership to my teams. I was promoted to the chair of the health and safety committee and more recently within my current management role health and safety has only increased in importance for me. I have experienced the good the bad and the ugly within this space and for me it is about identifying many small opportunities that are action orientated that help keep people safe. As part of this project I hope to better understand where our rural farmers are at on their health and safety journeys and how as an industry, we can make continuous improvement for the better.

Acknowledgements

I would like to personally thank my fellow cohort members for a great experience as part of this fantastic programme. The bond that we have formed as a team is special and the friendships, we have created has been the highlight of the programme.

I would also like to acknowledge Farm Source for their financial assistance which has enabled me to complete this programme which has been a goal of mine for many years. You have been a wonderful employer and your assistance is greatly appreciated.

One of the unique attributes of this programme are the networks you form, the doors that are opened, and the leaders across the sector that you can meet. Through this project I have met some wonderful people who are passionate about health and safety. This report really doesn't do justice to the understanding and knowledge that I have developed through this process. It is something I will be eternally grateful for.

Thank you to the Rural Leaders Trust, and the programme facilitators Scott Champion, Lisa Rogers,

Anne Hindson and Patrick Aldwell. Your support with this project has been amazing. You all have a fantastic passion for rural agriculture and it's great to be able to have people of your calibre guiding our future Agri Leaders through Kellogg's. Finally, I wish to thank the Kellogg programme investing partners for their continued support, in making this programme possible:



Table of Contents

- Improving our on farm Health and Safety Culture in Rural New Zealand 1
- Executive Summary 2
- Foreword 4
- Acknowledgements 4
- Introduction 7
- Objectives 9
- Method 9
- 1. Literature Review 10
 - 1.1 Defining Culture, Edgar Schein 2014 10
 - 1.2 George Stevenson’s Wet Monkeys 1967 10
 - 1.4 When fact isn’t, Dr Berentson-Shaw 2018 11
 - 1.5 Independent taskforce report on Health and Safety 2013..... 12
 - 1.6 Current farmer attitudes and framework for changing the culture, Cam Brown 2015 13
 - 1.7 Business Leaders Health and Safety Forum, Francois Burton 2018 13
 - 1.8 NZIER report to the Employers and Manufacturers Association, Gareth Chaplin 2019 15
 - 1.9 Health and Safety, doing things right for your people, Al McCone 2017 15
 - 1.10 #Safer framing NZ, Tony Watson 2019 17
- 2. Findings and Discussion 17
 - 2.1 Current Perceptions towards Health and Safety 18
 - 2.2 As an agriculture industry how are we performing..... 18
 - 2.3 How much of a priority is Health and Safety on Farm..... 21
 - 2.4 How relevant is the ‘She’ll be right Culture’ on Farm Today..... 21
 - 2.5 Who needs to drive the change..... 22
 - 2.7 What changes are needed to improve health and safety culture on-farm 23
- Conclusions/Recommendations 24
- References 26
- 3. Appendices 27
 - 3.1 Understanding New Zealand Young Farmers On-Farm Health and Safety Culture: Survey Monkey Questionnaire..... 27

Introduction

New Zealand has a proud farming history and is the economic backbone of the New Zealand economy (Peden, 2008). Agricultural products have always been our country's greatest source of income. Since European settlement in the early 1800s the majority of New Zealand's wealth has been generated from selling products off shore from the farming sector (Peden, 2008). Being so isolated from the rest of the world our forefathers had to be resourceful, inventive and find solutions to problems to maintain productivity on farm. From our 'number eight wire can-do attitude' to our 'she'll be right' mentality, our culture is built on making things happen and not worrying about complications. This writer argues that this is particularly true behind the farm gate in rural New Zealand today. It has been built into our psyche, it's in our DNA and part of who we are.

However, it is this same culture that we must change as this behavior is killing our people. Worksafe data shows that over the past eight years there have been one hundred and sixty deaths in New Zealand's Agricultural Sector. This excludes eight fatalities in the 2019 year to date and is not shown in *Figure 1* below.

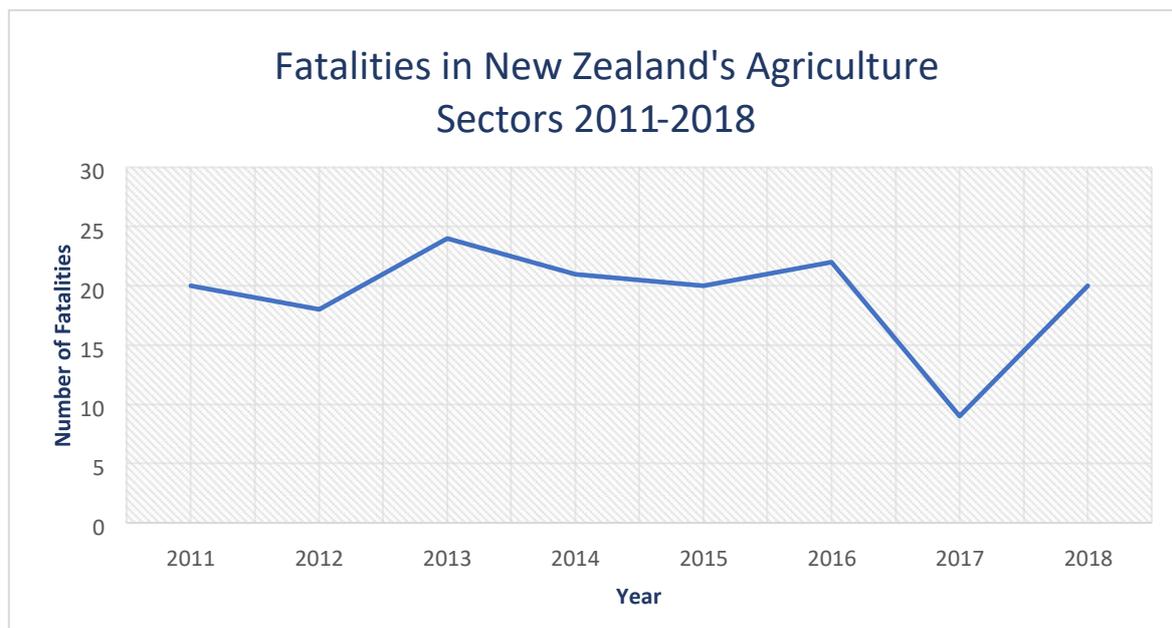


Figure 1: Data Sourced from Worksafe Fatalities; (Worksafe, 2019)

This data was sourced from Worksafe's new data center and includes the agriculture sector, as well as agriculture forestry and fishing support services but excludes all other industries from the data set. From a point of interest this author spoke with Worksafe regarding the lower number of fatalities in 2017. They have put this down to it being such a wet year, which resulted in less machinery usage on farm which meant less prevalence of on-farm vehicle accidents and ultimately a drop in fatalities.

The number of fatalities in our sector is a concern and it becomes even more worrying comparatively to other sectors in New Zealand, as seen in *Figure 2* below:

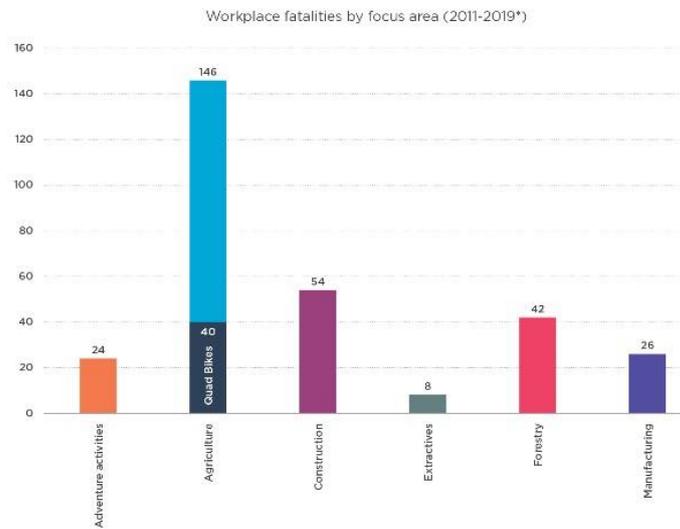


Figure 2: Workplace Fatalities by focus area. (Worksafe, 2019)

This paper found variation in Worksafe’s data depending on the classification of agriculture within their data centre; most of which is pulled from the Accident Compensation Corporation (commonly referred to as the ACC) and there are some identified gaps in classification. Hence there is some discrepancy in the data. However, the trend does not paint a great picture and more concerning is the fact that New Zealand has some of the worst statistics per capita when it comes to fatalities in the workplace (New Zealand Government, 2018), see *Figure 3* below.

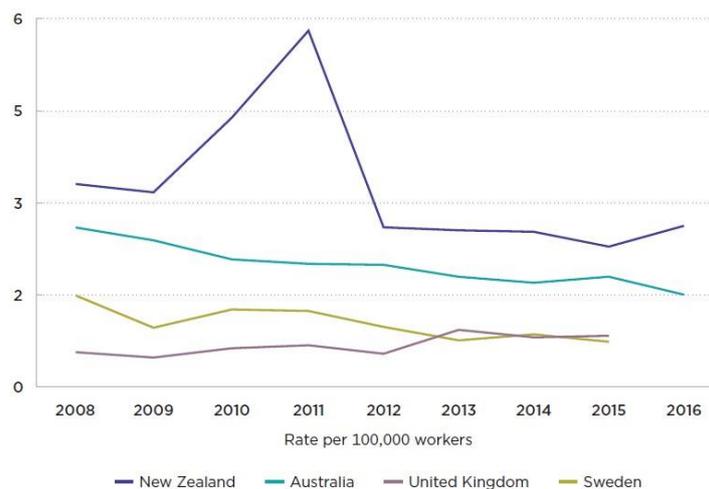


Figure 3: International comparison of fatal work-related injury rates (per 100,000 workers). (New Zealand Government, 2018).

Although there have been improvements made in some areas such as awareness and changes in the legislation, the sobering reality is that you are more likely to die at the workplace in New Zealand compared to many other countries with agriculture being the worst offender. This report seeks to understand the culture that contributes to these statistics as well as look at how we can improve it on farm in rural New Zealand.

Objectives

This paper has the following objectives:

- To define culture and apply this definition in the rural New Zealand context.
- To understand and discuss where our current cultural level is at on-farm particularly with our next generation of farmers entering the sector (New Zealand Young Farmers Members).
- Look at what areas we need to prioritize to improve this cultural level across the sector.

Method

To achieve the above objectives this paper completed a review of the literature from previous authors and academics, including relevant published reports. To draw a deeper understanding from the literature several key authors were contacted to discuss their findings and research. When interpreting the literature, this paper highlighted key findings from each author and used this information within section 1 of this report titled *Literature Review*.

Research for this report was also undertaken in the form of a survey monkey which specifically targeted the New Zealand Young Farmers organization. It was promoted and shared through their national channels including their fortnightly Hotwire newsletter as well as their social media platform. In total twenty members participated in this survey. Within section 2 titled *Findings and Discussion* quantitative responses from the survey were analysed using tools such as word cloud, star charts and bar graphs. To understand the qualitative data all responses were printed, and the data was reviewed. The data was then filtered using a key word search to understand the common themes within the survey. Several comments from the survey have been printed in this report to develop the key themes. The findings from the survey were then compared the key themes from the literature and discussed. Critical thinking principles were applied throughout this report.

1. Literature Review

1.1 Defining Culture, Edgar Schein 2014

Culture has many definitions, connotations and meanings. This paper researched many academics and found prolific researcher, writer, teacher and consultant Edgar Schein from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's definition of culture as the most credible in this field. He defines culture as a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems (Schein, 2004). This definition draws on several key themes: Culture involves multiple people, culture is based on assumptions to solve problems, and culture is learned and shared. This definition will be discussed and applied within the findings and recommendations of this report.

1.2 George Stevenson's Wet Monkeys 1967

To help understand Schein's definition this paper will discuss the 'Wet Monkeys' experiment that was inspired from the work of George Stevenson's publication '*Cultural Acquisition of a Specific Learned Response Among Rhesus Monkeys*' in 1967. (Stephenson, 1967) See *Image 1* below.

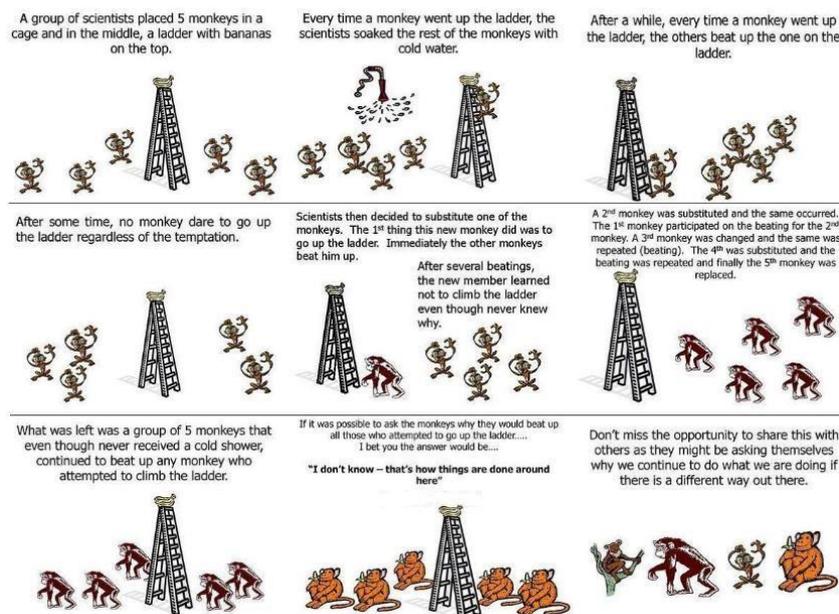


Image 1: The five wet monkeys experiment, inspired by George Stevenson's 1967 Study (Buys, 2012)

To explain this example: Five monkeys were placed in a cage with a ladder in the middle of the cage and with a banana on the top of the ladder. Naturally the monkeys were drawn to the banana and of course one of the monkey's tried to climb the ladder to retrieve the banana. However, when the monkey climbed the ladder the other four monkeys were sprayed with cold water for ten minutes, which they didn't enjoy. After this experience another monkey tried to climb the ladder to gather the banana; and the same thing happened to the other four monkeys, they got wet and cold for ten minutes. The monkey's cottoned on that whenever one of their fellow monkeys tried to climb the ladder they were going to get sprayed with cold water. To prevent this from happening the monkeys needed to stop anyone who tried to climb the ladder by jumping on them.

The scenario changes as the scientists then turned off the hose, and not surprisingly the monkeys continued to be fearful of getting wet never made another attempt to climb ladder to retrieve the banana. The scenario then changes again as scientists then swapped out one of the original five monkeys for a new member. Naturally the new monkey tried to climb the ladder to retrieve the banana and the original four monkeys jumped on it fearful they would get wet. Over time more of the original monkeys were swapped out and new ones introduced. The same pattern of events occurred; including new monkeys jumping on new monkeys to stop them climbing the ladder. When understanding why this behaviour occurred Schein's definition can be applied. It's because the culture within the group was based on assumptions (that they would get wet), and this culture was both learned and shared with all the monkeys.

1.4 When fact isn't, Dr Berentson-Shaw 2018

Dr Jess Berentson-Shaw published a book titled 'A Matter of Fact, talking truth in a post truth world'. (Berentson-Shaw, 2018). Dr Berentson-Shaw is an academic who became 'rigid about scientific truth' having been ingrained in her through the medical system as a doctorate. She built her career around believing in the truth of science, data and facts. However, through her career she began to establish that there were gaps in the evidence. She found herself being told what to do by others who were unwilling to consider her evidence or experiences. Berentson-Shaw asked herself why and established that individuals had their own examples and experiences to draw from that formed their opinions. Just like the five-wet monkey's example even if the evidence suggested to the new monkey's entering the cage that the banana was safe to retrieve the other monkeys had already formed their own option that it wasn't. What Berentson-Shaw suggests is that we must listen to and understand our audience, their values and opinions before that audience is willing to change.

1.5 Independent taskforce report on Health and Safety 2013

Following the Pike River Tragedy in 2010, New Zealand's Health and Safety system went through a massive change. The Independent Taskforce on Workplace Health and Safety was established by the Minister of Labour in June 2012. Its aim was to research and evaluate critically the workplace health and safety system in New Zealand, and to recommend practical strategies for reducing the high rate of workplace fatalities and serious injuries by 2020. (Independent Taskforce on Workplace Health and Safety, 2013)

This paper has captured some of the key points from the report below (Independent Taskforce on Workplace Health and safety, 2013):

- New Zealand has a risk tolerant culture.
- New Zealand has negative perceptions towards health and safety.
- Our values and norms conflict with a safety conscious and compliant based health and safety system; phrases such as 'It's only minor', 'it won't happen to me' and 'it's all part of the work we do' were recorded in the report.
- New Zealanders are stoic by nature and fear that health and safety considerations may make us look like a 'sook', or that we need to 'harden up'.
- We are complacent; our 'laid back', 'she'll be right', 'won't happen to me' attitudes to health and safety were also key comments documented in the report.

There were several other key insights into the New Zealand psyche around health and safety. New Zealanders generally dislike red tape, bureaucracy, and show defiance to authority. New Zealanders perceive health and safety as a compliance cost and culturally are resistant to unnecessary regulations. We have a productivity-focused 'number 8 wire', 'give it a go', 'get on with it' mentality and will take shortcuts and adapt or use inappropriate equipment to get the job done quickly. Businesses and workplaces accept and defend low standards, dangerous practices, and inadequate systems when they fail to recognize or support health and safety. (Independent Taskforce on Workplace Health and Safety, 2013)

In terms of harm prevention measures it was identified in the report many programmes have been ineffective in reducing harm outcomes. In part, this is because they have failed to gain widespread support from the public for improved outcomes or failed to change attitudes to health and safety.

Typically, these programmes have focused on behaviors rather than the underlying reasons for the behaviors. (Independent Taskforce on Workplace Health and Safety, 2013)

1.6 Current farmer attitudes and framework for changing the culture, Cam Brown 2015

2015 Kellogg Cam Brown completed his project on changing perceptions of health and safety in agriculture, with the title '*Current farmer attitudes and framework for changing the culture*'. The key takeout from this report was that a lot of risk is normalized within the farming sector. With on-farm pressures to get everything done, the added risks associated with this behavior become the accepted norm. He argued that the main issues include farmers' perceptions of what good health and safety practices look like, and the perceptions around the current and future health and safety legislation (Brown, 2015).

Brown referenced from United State President John Kennedy's famous quote "The farmer is the only man in our economy who buys everything at retail, sells everything at wholesale, pays the freight both ways." - John F. Kennedy. Brown suggested that this contributed to farmers being resistant to many of the concepts being introduced to the sector and referenced compliance costs, as this was perceived as an additional cost within an already low margin industry (Brown, 2015). Other points Brown made were that evidence suggested inadequate leadership and poor worker engagement towards health and safety on farm, inadequate and insufficient understanding of hazards, risks and responsibilities and a lack of incentives (positive and negative) fails to foster behaviour and drive improvement (Brown, 2015).

This report spoke to Brown and he said, "People want to do well, and go home safe at the end of the day". However culturally because of the normalized risks, because of the perception of additional compliance cost and because of the lack of understanding further change is still required in the sector.

1.7 Business Leaders Health and Safety Forum, Francois Burton 2018

Executive Director of the Business Leaders Health and Safety Forum, Francois Barton published a report in 2018 that aimed to understand if the introduction of the Health and Safety at Work Act

2015 had made a difference. This report surveyed one hundred and thirty-eight chief executives, directors and health and safety executives with the aim to understand if the 2015 Health and Safety at Work Act had reformed. (Business Leaders Health and Safety Forum, 2018).

In this report it was clear that there are signs the Act had a positive impact on attitudes and practices in the workplace and half the people surveyed agreed they are now a safer business because of it, see *Figure 4* below.

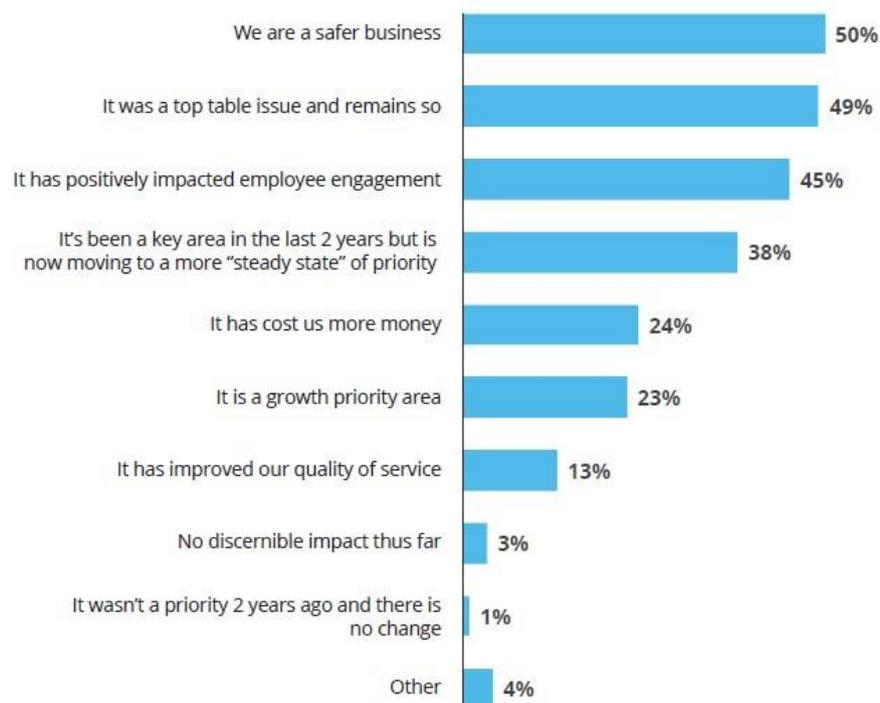


Figure 4: Results from 2018 Business Leaders Health and Safety Survey around the impact changes to the Health and Safety Act 2015 have had on their business's. (Business Leaders Health and Safety Forum, 2018)

This paper also spoke with Barton and he explained from a cultural point of view there has been positive signs of progress; namely growing membership numbers from senior business leaders, with these leaders being visible in the health and safety space at board and governance level. These business leaders are getting around the board table at ACC, and getting involved with groups such as Farm Strong. Barton said these businesses are acknowledging that “We have a role to play” in the Health and Safety space. However, at the same time conceding the reality that there has and is a spike in the headline statistics of deaths and serious injuries in the workplace that we haven’t yet cracked.

Barton argued that leadership drives culture and culture drives performance. He also suggested physical components such as old machinery on farm also play a part in culture and managing the physical components is as important as leadership among humans. People are human and do not always have their heads screwed on and humans make mistakes. Barton suggested that leadership is a function of mindset and practice. In the leaders survey it was compelling to see that business leaders are being proactive around having health and safety discussions, and the report argues that since the reforms there have been improved risk identification and controls put in place within businesses. (Business Leaders Health and Safety Forum, 2018).

When this paper spoke with Barton around this report, he discussed mindset and attitude and referenced the quad bike helmets as a topical example. He said not only is the helmet a safety mechanism to prevent injury, it's about putting on your thinking cap around risk management and most importantly it is a symbol of health and safety on farm. Safety isn't just another thing on the list, or a tick box, it's an outcome we want to achieve, therefore we need to adapt. Barton also spoke about the reforms and argued that we have a legal obligation, but more importantly we have a moral obligation to our people. Those who help farmers make money deserve protection and this can have huge cultural and engagement benefits and is a societal license to operate. He said health and safety is legislated because it's important, it's not important just because it's the law.

1.8 NZIER report to the Employers and Manufacturers Association, Gareth Chaplin 2019

In June 2019 the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research published a report to the Employers and Manufacturers Association around compliance issues in the sector. In this report respondents surveyed felt that workplace safety plans had a positive impact on their businesses and that it sends a tangible message of care from management to employees about taking their people's safety seriously (New Zealand Institute of Economic Research, 2019). To further understand the report, this paper spoke with Gareth Chaplin co-author of the report. He said, "Business response to health and safety had been a real highlight, and when taking into consideration compliance costs associated with health and safety it yielded a net positive impact on business". The report highlighted that through Health and Safety compliance it demonstrated management cared about people and presented a unique selling point of difference in market.

1.9 Health and Safety, doing things right for your people, Al McCone 2017

Worksafe's Sector Lead for Agriculture Al McCone presented at the South Island Dairy Event in 2017. He referenced the work from the independent taskforce and argued that we need to change our safety culture on farm. McCone said the "she'll be right culture was a dangerous way to work, with incidents often happening because of that attitude, and it's costing farming at a time when New Zealand farming can't really afford the extra costs." (McCone, 2017). McCone's message was culture can change in agriculture, and that change is a lot easier at an on-farm level opposed to trying to change the whole sector. He said "Workplace culture change happens all the time, and there is no reason to believe a change can't happen in agriculture. In fact, changing culture in a small workplace is far easier than in one with multiple departments on multiple sites. Herein lies the first indication of how change must occur – we can't set out to change the sector as a whole – we must change every business within the sector" (McCone, 2017).

This paper spoke with McCone and discussed on farm vehicles. McCone spoke around quad bikes and shared that off-shore manufactures of these vehicles are shocked by the way they are operated on farm in New Zealand. He suggested this was down to individuals learning the capabilities of the vehicle (that aren't designed for the jobs they are used for), and this behavior becoming accepted. Quad bikes are prone to accidents with on average five roll overs per day, yet many don't see the need to do anything different.

McCone spoke around the culture on farm and suggested a mindset shift was required. He said, "If you ask farmers what their greatest asset is, most will say their land" he then said, "they are wrong, their greatest asset is the people running their business". McCone argued farmers need to change their focus from production towards having a better way of life.

McCone said humans make mistakes, we must acknowledge this and find ways to minimise the risk when mistakes inevitably occur. He gave some great insights into how he thought health and safety improvements could be made within the sector:

- **Talking about the risks before starting an activity:** This places triggers in the mind rather than making assumptions. By talking about the risks, it brings them to the surface.
- **Leadership:** Making health and safety part of a business's identity. McCone referenced Landcorp with their mission that 'people on their farms are going to be safe.'
- **Introducing technology:** As humans make mistakes, reducing the severity of these is paramount, and physical attributes play a part. Therefore, new machinery and tools for the job can help minimize the potential risk when a mistake occurs. He referenced emergency breaking assist technology to prevent vehicle crashes and the Farm Angel isolation device so

if a worker is working remotely on farm they can activate it if get in trouble and need assistance. These are examples of the types of technological change that can help to improve people's health and safety.

1.10 #Safer framing NZ, Tony Watson 2019

Tony Watson is employed to lead change in the health and safety space within the agricultural sector, and although technically not an expert his role is to drive leadership within Rural New Zealand. This paper attended one of his seminars and met him in person to understand where we are currently at as an industry. Watson referenced our "She'll be right" attitude and argued most of the time farmers are right so what's the fuss? However, he also argued they were right until they were dead. (Watson, 2019) Watson argued "Culture is behavior's repeated and to change culture you change behavior, and that's a decision". Watson argued that the majority of on-farm injuries and incidents were largely driven by unsafe acts rather than conditions. As you can see in the image below the cause of injuries and events are down to acts which suggests human decisions (or mistakes) play the biggest part.

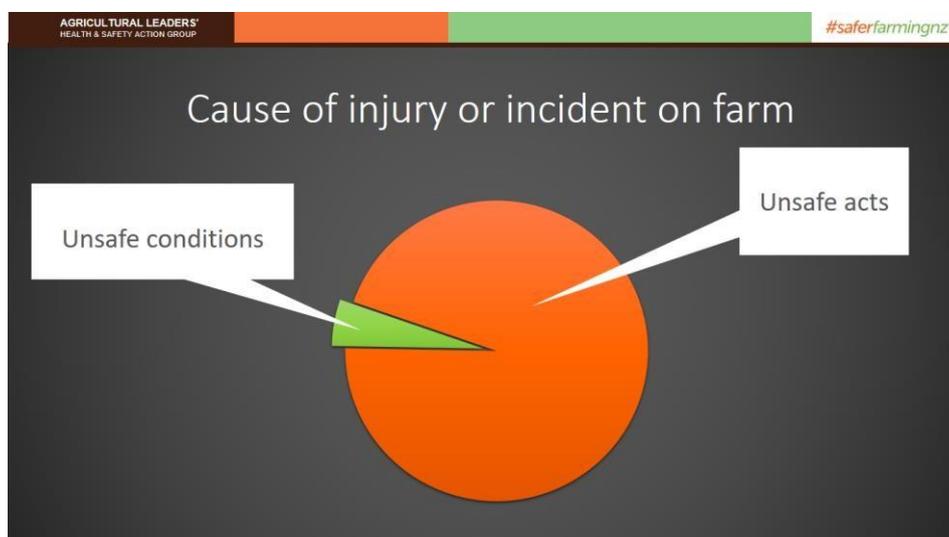


Figure 5: Agricultural Leaders Health and Safety Action Group illustration of on farm injury and incident causes (Watson, 2019)

2. Findings and Discussion



Image 3: Star Rating out of ten, from respondents when asked as an agriculture industry how are we performing in the health and safety space.

This survey asked participants to rate how they felt our agriculture industry was performing in the health and safety space and as seen in *Image 3* above the mean score was 5.9 out of 10. Within the question, respondents were asked to comment why they scored the way they did, and several theme's emerged:

- **Improvements need to be made:** Comments included “We are still killing people and are over represented in the stats” and “There are still a lot of farmers out there that turn a blind eye to health and safety” were made. Data presented earlier in this report from Worksafe echoed the message from the survey.
- **We are making Improvements:** It was pleasing for respondents to acknowledge that we are making improvements with comments including “we have gotten a lot better over the past five years”, “Driving around the country side you see plenty of helmets and high vis whereas five years ago this wouldn't be the case”, and “It is improving but there's a long way to go”. This is similar to the report from the business leaders survey as well as the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research survey both presented earlier in this report where it was acknowledged that since the introduction of the health and safety legislation we are making progress.
- **Compliance can change behavior:** Although compliance was the main lens through which health and safety is perceived in the rural sector, compliance was found to influence changes in behavior. One of the respondents commented “Within the last few years a few big problems have been targeted, enforcing new behaviors”. This was an interesting insight in terms of driving cultural change however some respondents also commented that “Compliance is hard work”. This is consistent with the 2018 Business Leaders Survey presented earlier that compliance can drive change, however it's still perceived quite

negatively across the sector which was consistent with Cam Browns report published in 2015.

- **Individuals aren't owning the issues:** There was a clear negative generational bias from respondents towards the older generation; comments included "The older generation is still hesitant", "I feel it's more the older generation that let us down" and "I think over time with the younger generation stepping into leadership roles on farm and into ownership it will naturally improve as the older ones age out." This point wasn't evident in the literature review and this paper suggests because the survey was targeted towards young farmers as the audience, they had formed a perception that the older generation was to blame. This indicates a lack of understanding and ownership of the real issues when it comes to health and safety and this paper will use a later question from the survey to make this point, see *image 4* below:



Image 4: Respondents were asked to score their own business health and safety culture out of ten.

As seen in *image 4* above the score out of ten was a lot more favorable for respondents' individual businesses compared to the agriculture sector as a whole. The mean from the respondent's individual businesses was 7.4 out of ten compared with 5.9, as seen previously in *image 4*. This suggests individuals put their own health and safety culture on a pedestal compared to the entire sector. In the 2013 workplace health and safety report discussed earlier in this paper, it was recorded New Zealanders believe 'it won't happen to me'. One piece of verbatim from the survey stated, "People think they're good operators and accidents won't happen to them" and is consistent with the literature. This mindset suggests individuals aren't owning the issues.

- **'She'll be right' mentality is prevalent:** Respondents made specific comments around this culture which included "We still think, she'll be right" and "I think farmers are pretty lax and

have too much of a ‘she’ll be right attitude’ without thinking about what the risk actually is if things really go wrong”. This is consistent with the taskforce report, and more recently McCone and Watson’s literature that highlights the downfall of this culture. Interestingly it was the respondents who commented specifically around the “She’ll be right” culture without prompting from the survey. This was a specific question later in the survey (see *appendices*) and the way the survey was framed suggests respondent’s had a similar view on this culture to that of this author.

2.3 How much of a priority is Health and Safety on Farm



Image 5: Considering other on-farm/business priorities how much importance do you think we should be placing on health and safety as an agriculture industry?

Presently there are many pressures facing farmers and it’s not surprising to see that health and safety isn’t at the top of respondent’s priority list. Ideally this paper suggests we should lead a culture where health and safety is our top priority on farm where actually the reality is we aren’t there yet as an industry. From the literature McCone’s comments that “People are our greatest asset not the land or anything else” suggests a mindset shift is required to make health and safety the most important priority on-farm.

2.4 How relevant is the ‘She’ll be right Culture’ on Farm Today

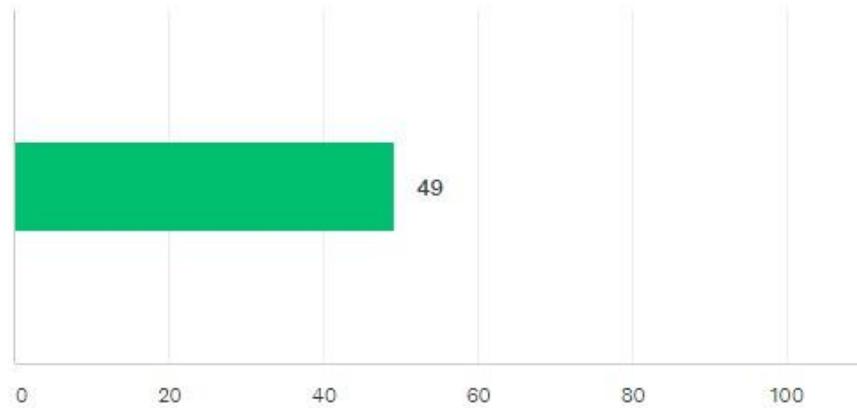


Image 5: In your opinion, how relevant is the "she'll be right" culture in the New Zealand agriculture industry today?

As previously discussed the “she’ll be right” culture still plays a part within the New Zealand agricultural sector with nearly half saying it’s still relevant today (see *Image 5*). Respondents were asked to comment why they scored the way they did with the key themes being captured below:

- **Normalised Risk:** Comments included “Farmers have done well getting stuff done their own way, and have often taken risks to get to where they are today”, “It still happens- so many tasks to be completed in one day, sometimes you just need to get the job done and get on to the next without stopping and thinking, actually, maybe she won’t be right”. This is consistent with Cam Browns 2015 report previously discussed.
- **It’s our Culture:** In contrast some respondents commented “It’s relevant because that’s the mindset we are programmed with”, “It’s part of our identity” and “It’s the attitude we grew up with and embraced”.
- **Change is needed regarding “she’ll be right”:** Participants commented “it’s somewhat outdated”, “It’s the standard attitude of farmers, I think it needs to change though”, “It’s used way too often”, “The culture needs to change. It exists, but it has no place in today’s workplace” and “It’s not needed we can do better”.

2.5 Who needs to drive the change



Image 6: Mentimeter word cloud where respondents were asked: To improve our on-farm health and safety culture who needs to drive this change?

Image 6 captures respondent’s thoughts around stakeholders who they believe need to drive the change. Respondents in the survey stated comments such as “Everyone needs to be on the same page, and buy into it”, “We all have a part to play in helping each other out” and “Everyone needs to believe it/ buy into it. It’s needs to be the expectation for all involved with farming in New Zealand”.

Interestingly Internal stakeholders involved with farm businesses namely management, owners, and farmers came through a lot more strongly than external stakeholders such as governance, people at the top, and other external organisations. This is a similar theme to McCone’s comments that it’s a lot easier to change individual businesses rather than the sector. It also contradicts the current approach where Health and Safety is legislated to drive change. It could be argued that the current approach isn’t getting the results in terms of reducing the number of fatalities in our sector. Potentially internally driven change could be more effective in changing culture.

When analysing the qualitative survey responses, a similar theme emerged. Enforcing change isn’t always the best approach. Respondents commented “farmers work better by choosing to make change, instead of getting it enforced on them”, “Outside influence from those that don’t know or don’t really understand the industry only brings resentment” and “More liability from the government will just piss farmers off”.

2.7 What changes are needed to improve health and safety culture on-farm

Finally, this paper asked respondents what changes are needed to improve our health and safety culture with the key themes being captured below:

- **Offer Incentives:** Consistent with Cam Browns 2015 report incentives were shown to be a key driver of change. Comments included “Offer farmers the carrot, don’t beat them with the stick”, and “The incentives on safety gear like ACC’s roll over protection were a great step”.
- **Needs to be Simple and Practical:** This wasn’t overly evident in the literature however it makes sense when considering the target audience. Farmers are practically minded and as discussed earlier in this report farmers are reluctant to comply because it adds complexity and cost. Comments from this survey stated “It’s needs to be simple, user friendly, practical, relevant and EASY- both to understand, record and implement”, “Clear outlines of what is expected for farmers and on farm” “More common sense practical solutions for those there frequently”, and “Make it easier, making it simple to make a plan”.
- **Keep it Positive:** Within the current environment respondents view health and safety largely in a negative lens. Participants suggested we need to promote the positives and this will help drive engagement. Comments included “Positive/proactive actions to improve our culture” and “It needs to be shown in a positive light”.
- **Education:** Finally, respondents suggested greater education was needed in this space. Comments stated “Pre course education on farm” and “More education at farm working groups” was required to improve our on-farm culture.

Conclusions/Recommendations

Culture is a complex phenomenon, with this report applying Edgar Schein's definition along with the work from George Stevens and Jess Berentson-Shaw. This report concludes that culture requires multiple people, who have applied learnings from individual experiences to solve problems. These solutions are perceived to be correct and become part of a culture when shared with others, becoming established normal behavior. When applied to the rural New Zealand health and safety context our culture is based on our forefathers and our history that has been passed along from generation to generation. There was and still is a negative perception towards health and safety in rural New Zealand and this papers survey was consistent with the literature.

Compliance is perceived as the biggest aspect of health and safety in this papers research, and again was consistent with the literature. Although this has had a positive impact on change this paper argues it hasn't necessarily hit the mark from a cultural perspective. Farmers negatively perceive compliance as farming is run on tight margins and compliance is perceived as adding additional cost to the equation.

New Zealand has a risk tolerant culture where risks become normalized creating a dangerous culture on-farm. From operating machinery beyond their designed capabilities or pushing hard to finish that last job at the end of the day this culture becomes the norm, is accepted and passed on. Our 'She'll be right' mentality must and needs to change otherwise we will continue to harm the people who are our greatest asset in the industry. This was consistent in both the literature and in the survey.

Pleasingly we are making progress from an engagement perspective and this was acknowledged when speaking with Francios Barton and Gareth Chaplin. The results from the survey completed by this paper support this view. The rural agricultural sector must continue to make progress to prevent further fatalities within an industry where we are over represented on the global stage.

Based on the findings of this report, the following recommendations are made to help drive change in our industry:

- Change our 'She'll be right' on-farm culture to one in which we evaluate the risks before starting the job enabling us to safely get the job done. This paper suggests we should be using language such as 'Do it right' and this could potentially be delivered through a marketing campaign to the sector.
- Provide appropriate education to individuals and on-farm teams to drive personal ownership of health and safety. Every individual plays their part and supporting individuals on-farm will contribute to drive the required change at an industry wide level. Organizations such as Safer Farming New Zealand are a potential resource to support this change.

- Communicate positive health and safety messages within the sector. Having examples of practical solutions will only help drive the on-farm health and safety culture in a positive manner. Recently Worksafe published a series of advertisements with New Zealand Young Farmers highlighting good health and safety practices on farm, and is a good starting point of communicating positive messaging to the sector.
- Provide Incentives; the industry requires incentives to help support the required cultural change. Offering discounts on safety gear or rewards for following good health and safety practices could help drive the change required within the industry. This would need to be considered from an industry and government level.

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3. Appendices

3.1 Understanding New Zealand Young Farmers On-Farm Health and Safety Culture: Survey Monkey Questionnaire

Question Title

1. Use three words that best describe your sentiment towards health and safety

Question Title

2. As an agriculture Industry how do you think we are performing in the health and Safety space?



Question Title

3. Why do you think this?

Question Title

4. Considering other on-farm/business priorities how much importance do you think we should be placing on health and safety as an agriculture industry?



Question Title

5. In your opinion, how relevant is the "she'll be right" culture in the New Zealand agriculture industry today?

No relevance to our current farming culture Significantly relevant to our current Faming Culture

Question Title 6.

Why?

Question Title

7. To improve our on-farm health and safety culture who needs to drive this change?

Question Title 8.

Why?

An empty text input field with a light gray border. It features a vertical scrollbar on the right side and a horizontal scrollbar at the bottom, both with small arrowheads.

Question Title

9. Thinking about the business you are involved with, how would you score your health and safety culture out of 10?

A horizontal row of ten small, empty radio buttons, each consisting of a small circle with a dot in the center.

Question Title

10. In your opinion what changes are needed to improve health and safety culture on-farm?

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