



CICA – Vic / Tas Branch Crane Safety Bulletin #294 November 2021



Greetings all. Today's Bulletin is about challenging the way we analyse data and make decisions.

Data is increasingly being used to inform decision-making and to validate a course of action. Our capability to collect, measure and analyse useful data has increased rapidly over the last 5 years.

This trend raises some issues around privacy and ethics, but it also requires some robust analysis and evaluation.

Collecting the data is the easy part, the challenge lies with applying the findings appropriately, to genuinely improve efficiency and outcomes.

The examples below, all impact the crane industry one way or another, and require more conversation, appetite for change and research.

COVID Data

At this stage of the COVID journey, our day may start positively or negatively based on case numbers.

Our governments have been grappling with strategies to roll out vaccines, reduce spread of the virus, prevent overwhelming the hospitals, against a backdrop of virus mutations and economic fallout. Striking the balance is never easy, and in these times of social media platforms and lack of respect for authority – everyone has an opinion and a megaphone.

As we have had to adapt to a model of living with the virus, decision makers and media seem to be moving from a 'daily case' update to a metric of measuring hospitalisations and death rate.

[There is research underway as to whether this is a more indicative measure of the load being borne by hospital and ICU resources](#), and if so, the question will be whether shutting down an entire State for case numbers alone is an appropriate measure?

Measuring safety – LTI's?

Early this year, David Solomon, Master Builders Association Executive Officer- Safety and Risk (NSW) and CICA Board Member wrote an article for *Cranes and Lifting* magazine called [The LTI Fallacy](#).

With over thirty years in the safety industry, David challenges the notion of using current method for reporting injuries as a measure for safety. Currently, the use of a mathematical calculation contained within an Australian Standard, commonly referred to

as Lost Time Injuries (LTI's) and the metric Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate (LTIFR) are utilised to determine how safe a workplace is.

Solomon and others have questioned whether this 'pointy end' metric is open to manipulation and can cover for major risks which are present for an extended period without causing injury. The LTIFR metric is not useful for detecting the 'we've just always done it that way' type of unsafe activities. Unfortunately, reliance on the LTIFR metric means that these safety concerns are not detected until the outcome is catastrophic.

Solomon points to statistics already gathered by ISO, which reflect an improvement of workplace safety processes because of the adoption of ISO Standards when they are implemented as intended. He also makes a claim for reducing the administrative burden on employers by reducing the number, length and complexity of Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS) for High-Risk Construction Work (HRCW). More paperwork does not equate to safer workplaces.

This is an important conversation and debate that needs to be had, another is the 10-year inspection measure for crane wear and tear.

Major Inspections

The [10-year major inspection](#) for cranes is easy to monitor, but if crane owners can demonstrate a willingness to fulfil requirements of a system that bases maintenance on usage, can we eliminate the need for expensive inspections?

[CICA has maintained](#) the position that a crane used once a month, should not be subjected to the same threshold as a crane used daily, and that a combination of Condition Monitoring and Manufacturer's Recommendations are the best approach to crane maintenance.

CICA is working toward empowering crane owners to follow the maintenance regime outlined by the manufacturer and to easily maintain records of crane operation, service, and maintenance.

Programs such as [CraneSafe](#) and [StartSafe](#), e-log books and the CICA Member Portal which will house crane specific data are important pieces of the puzzle.

We should continuously question why we are collecting data. Is it just a tick box or will it lead to



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measurable safety improvements? CICA is keen to keep this conversation on the table.

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