

# *Spotless Integrated Facilities Services*

## *Emerging Diversity and Inclusion*

In 2016 New Zealand Health and Safety legislation changed and Spotless Integrated Facilities Services realised it was vital all staff understood the new requirements.

Spotless provides maintenance services for Housing New Zealand Corporation (HNZ) residential properties in South Auckland, one of the most culturally diverse areas in New Zealand, with more than 55 different ethnic groups. More than 6,000 HNZ property sites are maintained by Spotless' workforce of 764 contractors, who come from a predominantly Polynesian background and for whom English is often the third or fourth spoken language.

The Spotless team began by developing a personal outreach programme, contacting external contractor managers to better understand the demographics of its employees.

The outreach programme highlighted a culturally and linguistically diverse employee base. Employees are predominantly Māori (18%), Samoan (27%), and Tongan (25%), while Pakeha, Hindi, European, Mandarin and Cantonese ethnic groups were also represented. English was often not the first spoken language. Other demographics captured indicated that the majority of contractors were also between the ages of 35 to 55 (68%) and male (63%).

In all, 376 contractor site visits were conducted, followed by training sessions on the new Work Health and Safety legislation changes and compliance. A risk profile was undertaken for each type of contract work (e.g. painting, carpentry) and contractors were educated on the hazards and benchmark controls through presentations and workshops. The training sessions reached 98.9 per cent compliance with 762 contractors and employees.

A comprehensive range of communication resources was created in up to eight different languages to address gaps in the knowledge and awareness of safety procedures. Translations were a collaborative effort by Spotless and the contractors, who worked closely together to accurately translate the materials and resources for employees to understand.

These resources included: a safety induction presentation translated into multiple languages; lanyard cards with the top 10 hazards based on injury/incident reporting; a safety newsletter; a site safety pack that included emergency management protocols and risk assessments and generic Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS).

The changes led to increased engagement that was clearly evident in the face-to-face meetings. Safety engagement across the business more than doubled compared to the previous year. This led to reduced lost time due to injury.

Contractors were reporting more hazards and incidents because they understood what they were looking for, and knew how to carry out safety assessments to track any potential issues. The



benchmarked reporting had a large effect on the business, as it highlighted new risks and issues for contractors. Having a more accurate and better understanding of the risks facing contractors meant that targeted and effective preventative safety procedures and actions could be implemented to improve safety.

Feedback on the programme was very positive. For example:

“What a fantastic presentation yesterday. That was my first time to know how to calculate risk using the risk calculator. The presentation added new skills to my knowledge of how important of H/S is whether you are at work or at any place, but the highlight of the presentation was everyone is responsible, not a sole party.” Sione Lavemai, Spotless employee.

“Without a doubt having Rachael (from the Spotless Koru team) helping us with our health and safety has made a huge difference to all of us here at Coin Total Upgrades. We have a better understanding of the policy and procedures.” Dianne Julian, Contractor, Coin Total Upgrades.



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