

PRM Website Article:

Time to re-think TRIR as an effective KPI?

Its 2021 - and yet so many organizations still seem to be content in measuring safety performance in terms of injury rates. Even on LinkedIn, there are frequent posts for achieving injury-based milestones.

But are such things as the Total Recordable Injury Rate (TRIR) still the best way to establish a reliable and accurate picture of safety performance? Consider this...

Two contractor companies are operating in the same industry with the same operating conditions and a similar size / competent workforce.

We can call them Contractor A and Contractor B.

Contractor A maintained a TRIR of 0.85 and Contractor B has a rate of 0.65. For many, this alone would be sufficient to indicate that Contractor B probably had a better safety performance than Contractor A.

But on closer inspection the actions and behaviors inside Contractor A were mostly compliant - meaning employees adhered to their documented operating procedures.

However, Contractor B effectively had a “casual-compliant” operating culture meaning that documented operating procedures were routinely by-passed in order to save time and / or money.

Now look through a lens of risk. It works out that 60% of Contractor A’s injuries were low-risk (meaning the worst outcome was actually realized) whereas 60% of Contractor B’s injuries were high-risk (meaning that they could have resulted in a disabling injury or even a fatality).

Still want to employ Contractor B?

We can and must do better than this...

Determining high-risk actions and behaviors and then measuring their level of compliance to documented operating procedures might be a good first step.

In other words, if organizations want to reliably assess their performance and better predict what comes next, then they probably ought to rely less on what happened yesterday and pay more attention to the harsh reality of today.