



TenneT Safety Top Onshore Germany

Safety needs our Energy!

Harvest



The 7 topics of our discussion

1. Safety Culture

We inspire each other to find ways of encouraging our organisation to share ideas and raise concerns.

2. Contractor Management

How do we reach all workers on site?

3. Moral versus legal responsibility

How do we create a safe social work environment in a hierarchically oriented corporate culture?

4. Adherence to Life-Saving Rules

How can we improve our employees' compliance with Life-Saving Rules (on site) in order to protect their health?

5. Unlock learning potential

How can we learn from incidents?

6. Mental health

7. TenneT as a safety partner

A brutally honest conversation.

1. Safety culture

We inspire each other to find ways of encouraging our organisation to share ideas and raise concerns

Important insights and ideas:

- It should come from bottom up, directly voiced from operational level.
- During the tender phase, discuss with TenneT what needs to be done/prepared.
- On the basis of encouragement.
- Discuss the LMRA with technicians, so they feel empowered to speak up.
- Train.
- What's in it for them?
- Execute pilot projects.
- Introduce a culture of praise.
- Circulate information, find other means of communicating.
- CARE for each other.
- Small steps make big differences.
- Learn what other companies are doing to promote a culture of safety
- Inputs from the team.

2. Contractor management

How do we reach all workers on site?

Challenges:

- Time pressure.
- Price.
- Language used by own employees.
- Bureaucracy.
- Crew changes, little consistency.

Incentive(s) for a step forward:

- Bring in subcontractors.
- Establish long-term supply chains; contractors can then position themselves with a broader range of products (for the long term).
- Better position for increased effort? (e.g. certified SCL).
- Information for subs.
- Long-term framework agreements with scope for special activities.

This requires TenneT to:

- Discuss HSE with small subcontractors.
- Provide training for specific levels (also at operational level) (in a pragmatic manner).
- Allocate resources for specific activities.



3a. Moral versus legal responsibility

How can a socially safe working environment be created in a hierarchically oriented corporate culture?

Context:

Caring for our employees goes beyond observing and complying with rules and regulations.

To motivate employees to proactively comply with safety regulations, managers must recognise that they are working in a hierarchically oriented corporate culture, one that poses additional challenges when it comes to approaching workers at their own level and persuading them to take the initiative.

To create a work culture characterised by solidarity, proactive demeanour, welcoming and caring, managers do need to understand the needs of their employees and lead by example in reflecting on their own failures and weaknesses.

Ideas on ways to get employees to speak up and proactively advocate safety culture

- Set a good example by communicating your own mistakes, concerns or experiences.
- Actively address employees' fears, such as the fear of making mistakes or losing one's job, or desire to impress by hastening work procedures.
- Provide financial incentives or supermarket vouchers to reward good safety behaviour.
- Celebrate the safe construction of sites.
- Highlight well-executed safety behaviours.

Reflect on your own management role and mentality

- Make sure your employees are not just telling you what they think you want to hear.
- Site visits at your own initiative (without middle management etc.).
- Show up regularly on site.
- Adopt a participatory approach: Solve problems together with employees and consider them as experts who contribute to the process and the final product. Mentality: In my role as a manager, I have no idea of their expertise.
- You know that trust takes months to build, but you can destroy it in seconds.

Reflect on your own unconscious prejudices

- "What goes around, comes around".
- Acknowledge that there is a hierarchical culture and deviate from it by, for example, wearing the same colour helmet on site.
- Rethink rigid opinions about foreign workers on site. Approach them with openness instead of assumptions and prejudice.

3b. What measures can we take to establish, invite and maintain contacts?

Involve employee families

- Talk to family members about making sure their partner, parent or sibling gets home safely every day.
- Invite families to company parties where safety discussions are encouraged or examples of tragic incidents are shared.

Ideas for dealing with safety routines on sites

- Safety walk as occasion for dialogue: I am not the expert here! What can I learn from you today? What can I do for you? What do you need?
- Remain attentive to ways of interacting with employees without pigeon-holing them.
- Positive assessment.
- Verbal encouragement for more desirable safety behaviour.
- Reflect on the German way of complimenting: Compliments about general matters, critical feedback on specific issues - consider that this is not always a helpful way to encourage safety behaviour in employees.
- Lead by example.

Remain attentive to cultural differences and other ways of working

- Example: Sit down with some of the employees who are not fluent in German (bring a translator) and ask them what they have noticed and how the safety situation on site might be improved. Follow-up with feedback on the use of employee input.



- Example: Provide a meal and sit down with employees, especially those from the Turkish community, who would normally disappear quickly whenever management shows up. Sharing a meal is a connecting point, helping to create openness and facilitate attentive listening.
- Example: A small company organised its company party in Poland (from where many of its guest workers come). I.e. German employees took part in a gathering set in the cultural context of fellow (non-German) employees, met their families, demonstrated their appreciation of and curiosity about their co-workers' "homeland".
- Example: Speak-up sessions for people from cultures where there is heightened respect for authority, e.g. Indian employees on site.

4. Adherence to Life-Saving Rules

How can we improve our employees' compliance with Life-Saving Rules (on site) in order to protect their health?

Context:

- The work group talked specifically about factors that positively or negatively influence the observance of rules.
- The incentive or reward and punishment system was also discussed. Another workshop would be useful for this topic in order to explore it in depth.

A few concrete ideas:

- Check whether every employee understands the rules and establish a common understanding / awareness (through dialogue/exchange).
- Model rule-following behaviour / act as a role model (management automatically exemplifies adherence to rules).
- Open dialogue / seek dialogue on equal level.
- Communicate rules in different languages on site / visually represent rules so that they are easy to understand.
- Demonstrate the added value / benefit of the rules for the individual employees.
- Involve employees directly in the creation of new rules.
- Allow time during work preparation to go over the applicable rules in detail.

5. Unlocking learning potential How can we learn from incidents?

Context:

- Participants in this discussion group all mentioned the value of working safely. Many of them have strict safety rules that they follow in their own company.
- They not only react to accidents that happen, but also try to be as proactive as possible.

A few concrete ideas:

- Clear discussions and clarification of expectations at the beginning of a contract greatly help to establish a common language on the subject of safety at work.
- Safety should be one of the main concerns when concluding business with a contractor. Not at the bottom of the agenda, but as high as possible on the agenda.
- All stakeholders should prioritise safety over costs and delays.
- Using the contractors' safety knowledge and skills could also be an opportunity for TenneT to stay in learning mode.
- Safety should be a topic of ongoing discussion. Constantly raising the issue will keep everyone on their toes.
- Do not delay in addressing people whenever safety is at stake.
- Hierarchical standing should never be a excuse for talking to someone when safety is concerned.

6. Mental health

What are the best practices to promote the mental health of our colleagues on the construction site? How do we encourage colleagues to speak up when they are not feeling well?

Context:

- Time pressure has increased, rest has decreased, and the strain on mental health has grown.
- The complexity of the skilled work has increased; we expect much more from each individual.



- Mental health is hardly ever systematically assessed, and when it is, the assessment is only superficial.
- We usually regard ‘health’ as a product of ‘safety’, but safety depends heavily on mental health.
- Above all, people need recognition and appreciation, and this is crucial for mental health.

A few concrete ideas:

- Mindset.
- As men, we tend to tell each other that we are always doing well. It is essential to share your own struggles in order to create a sense that others can do the same.
- We are often unable to relieve the pressure, but we have considerable capacity to influence stress factors. Find out what the stress factors are. This requires us to talk to our employees and find out what is on their minds.
- We need to treat each other with respect and find a different way of communicating.

Organising the organisational structure

- Use surveys to monitor the mental well-being of your employees.
- Arrange a system of confidants in your organisation with whom people can share their problems confidentially.

Encourage openness in team processes

- In team meetings, ask fellow employees to talk openly about how they are doing (and not just talk about content) - simple question: “How is everyone doing?”.
- We need to create a culture of feedback. Contractors already organise some feedback culture courses. Shouldn’t we work more closely with TenneT to establish a standard? And shouldn’t TenneT also contribute financially to making this possible?

7. TenneT as a safety partner

A brutally honest conversation

Context:

- Together, we are successfully carrying out the task of implementing the energy transition. The distinction between client and contractor suggests a balance of power that weakens the idea of partnership.
- The German term for contractor “Fremdfirma” is actually an undesirable expression and suggests a two-tier association. We should also be careful in our use of language to ensure that we convey equal partnership.
- Continuous progress in partnership is certainly envisioned.

A few concrete ideas:

- It would be good for the industry to agree on a safety standard. One contractor described how working for 15 clients made it necessary to meet 15 different safety standards. Its employees were confused and overwhelmed. The contractor has resorted to simply imposing the highest standard on all construction sites, thus creating its own standard.
- Safety by design. Construction machinery often involves safety risks (e.g. jumping out of the cab because there are not enough steps to climb out). We need a strong industry representative like TenneT to enter into discussions with other members of the industry and to demand improvements.

Uniformity

- The HSE management system is not the same in the North and South: this causes inconsistency.
- Lack of clarity at contractors working in both locations.
- Create clarity without going overboard - Inspiration ‘Clear Line’ from Vattenfall.
- Lack of clear security measures for subcontractors / sub-subcontractors.



Openness

- Proposal: Introduce basic rules / procedures and allow contractors to come up with ideas for additional rules / procedures to improve mutual learning.
- It is important that safety issues can be discussed with TenneT.
- Understand that TenneT occasionally puts pressure on contractors, even if this is not intended. When TenneT fails to set a good example, it is difficult to follow.

Proactive partnership

- TenneT gives the impression that the safety risks are mainly borne by the contractor.
- As managers, we (together with TenneT and the contractor) have an important role and can set the tone from the beginning of the project that we want to build safely for everyone involved.