



WHITE PAPER

Beyond Theory: Proof That DEKRA's Safety Leadership System Creates Safer Workplaces



Executive Summary

Workplace injuries are a critical safety concern, but meaningful and sustained progress is possible: Research confirms that DEKRA's Safe Align® System makes a measurable difference in injury reduction. In 2023, London Business School (LBS) conducted an independent study to evaluate the system's impact, and the results speak for themselves. Using a method called Difference-in-Differences (DiD), researchers showed that sites implementing Safe Align not only significantly reduced injuries initially but also continued to substantially reduce injuries over time.

Why is this important? Because it's proof that investing in proven leadership development for safety comes with meaningful and potentially lifesaving results, for the ultimate return on investment (ROI). Here's what the study uncovered.



What We Set Out to Answer

DEKRA has been committed to advancing workplace safety through data-driven science for more than 45 years. With this commitment in mind, DEKRA reached out to LBS to conduct an independent study to answer the question Does Safe Align—DEKRA’s most adopted safety leadership program—reduce workplace injuries? Professor Francisco Brahm at London Business School, aided by Chiara D’Ambrosio (PhD Student at LBS), used a decade of real-world data from a Safe Align implementation to investigate and answer this critical question.

Over the course of a one-year study, LBS’s research was meticulous, independent, and grounded in data. The team focused on:

- Measuring changes in injury rates at sites using Safe Align.
- Comparing those changes against control sites, taken from the same companies, that did not implement Safe Align.
- Making sure the analysis accounted for other factors such as hours worked or industry-wide trends.

How the Study Worked

The LBS team used the Difference-in-Differences (DiD) method, a frequently used method for causal analysis in the social sciences.

1. **What It Does:** DiD compares how outcomes change over

time for two groups—one that received the intervention (Safe Align) and one that didn’t (the control group). This method helps isolate the actual impact of Safe Align by factoring out trends that affect both groups equally.

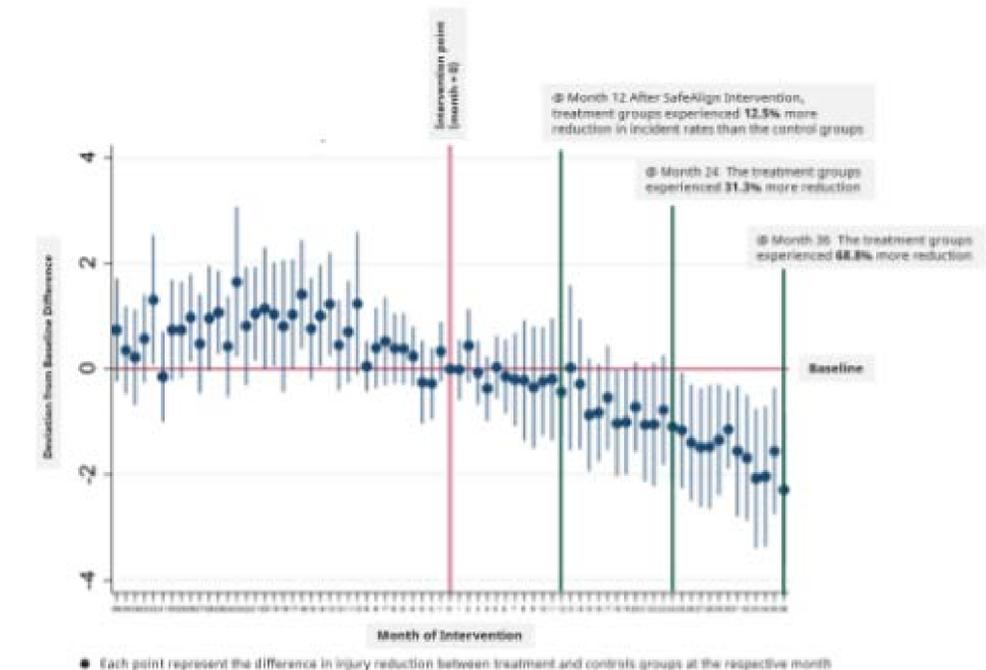
2. **Why It’s Reliable:** It’s not just a before-and-after comparison, which can be misleading. DiD digs deeper, ensuring the differences observed aren’t due to unrelated factors like seasonal shifts or economic changes.
3. **How It Was Done:** From a population of 819 companies across 27 industries, LBS was able to isolate a sample of 447 sites viable for difference-in-differences analysis including 126 Safe Align intervention sites and 321 control sites (with no Safe Align intervention) from the same companies. This design increases confidence that the results are driven by Safe Align rather than by chance or other organizational factors.

What the Study Found

1. Injury Rates Dropped:

- Safe Align sites saw significant reductions in OSHA recordable incident injuries.
- When compared to the control sites selected from the same companies, Safe Align sites experienced a 31.3% further reduction in injury rates 24 months after the intervention. With consistent implementation of Safe Align, the difference in reduction increased to 68%.

- Interestingly, the results did not change if, instead of sites within the same company, the control used sites within the same industry but in other companies.
2. **The Numbers Don’t Lie:** Negative coefficients in the analysis confirmed fewer injuries post-intervention. Confidence intervals consistently showed results well below the baseline difference at the start of the intervention.



Real-World Results Across the Board

1. **It’s About Culture:** Safe Align doesn’t just tweak processes—it transforms how leaders approach safety. It



builds leadership capabilities, systems, and a culture where proactive identification and mitigation of risk and exposure become operationalized.

2. **It's Proven to Work:** The LBS study isn't just theory. It's hard evidence that Safe Align delivers results that matter most: fewer injuries and safer workplaces. These are results that senior business leaders and board directors expect from investment and that EHS professionals can now confidently commit to and deliver.
3. **It's a Smart Investment:** Improved safety leadership, systems, and culture aren't just a cost—they are an opportunity to generate meaningful ROI. Senior executives using Safe Align often select the program because they know the benefits extend well beyond safety, improving overall operational excellence.

What Sets DEKRA and Safe Align Apart

1. **Independently Validated:** London Business School conducted this research—no internal bias, just credible results.
2. **Data-Driven:** The DiD method ensures findings are reliable, and importantly, actionable.
3. **Holistic Impact:** Safe Align empowers supervisors

and managers to lead with safety, addressing not just symptoms but root causes of workplace risks before accidents occur.

The Bottom Line

Safe Align isn't just another safety program. It's a proven, science-backed intervention that delivers real results. If you're serious about reducing workplace injuries and creating a culture of safety and operational excellence, Safe Align is the way forward. And now, thanks to independent validation from London Business School, you can be confident this isn't just a promise—it's a fact.





▶ References

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- Greene, W. (2004). The Behavior of the Maximum Likelihood Estimator of Limited Dependent Variable Models in the Presence of Fixed Effects. The Econometrics Journal. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1368-423X.2004.00123.x>

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