



White Paper

DEKRA's Methodology for Assessing Safety

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Executive Summary

Heightened scrutiny of health and safety performance means organizations face increasing pressure to effectively address changing safety concerns. For 100 years, DEKRA has been chosen to partner in proactively keeping organizations safe around the world as the largest safety company in the world. To accomplish best-in-class safety performance it is common for organizations to begin improvement by assessing current state across several key focus areas shown to drive performance.

DEKRA's holistic approach to achieving and sustaining safety improvements starts with a Holistic Safety Assessment. The assessment offers profound insights into an organization's safety dynamics and paves the way for meaningful safety enhancements, considering the organization's risk profile, resources, and business environment. A holistic view on safety allows for a custom-designed assessment that maps to current organizational risk and designs a science-based path that keeps teams and the community safe to a benchmarked standard.

DEKRA's methodology revolves around examining seven critical risk elements — leadership, culture, governance, safety management system, performance management, Human Organizational Performance (working with precision) and how all of these manifest and are executed at the frontline.

Organizations that effectively leverage these elements are able to achieve world-class results in controlling risk and exposure to harm.

The seven elements provide a framework for identifying vulnerabilities in an organization's systems and processes that impact its ability to recognize and control risks. The assessment process collects and analyzes quantitative and qualitative data in each element to form a comprehensive view of an organization's safety performance. It identifies barriers to improvement and equips leaders with practical recommendations and an implementation road map to operationalizing the path forward.

DEKRA's holistic approach to safety assessments enables organizations to reduce risk; achieve sustained, transformative safety performance improvement; and establish a robust safety culture to protect people, property, and communities.

A Road Map for Long-Term Safety Improvement

Many stakeholders, including the Board of Directors, are becoming increasingly concerned with organizational holistic safety performance. They may cite repeated safety incidents stemming from similar causes, inadequate or plateaued performance against safety metrics, critical decision errors in the evolving workplace, and unaddressed merger and divestiture influences on team and community risks.

These are valid concerns that can't be adequately addressed by piecemeal solutions. Based on decades of experience in organizational safety, high reliability, and process safety, understanding these factors in the larger organizational context enables the development of a true story, and a road map for long-term improvement.

Approach

In helping organizations improve their overall safety performance, DEKRA approaches assessment by capturing quantitative survey data, providing...on the key elements driving safety performance. Desktop review of safety performance data is the first step and provides insight around trends in safety outcomes and how Serious Injury and Fatality potential and actual events have been addressed within the system. DEKRA survey data then provides a contrast between how the workforce answers questions as compared to high performing organizations.

Survey results, on their own, don't provide answers as to why team members said what they said. For this reason a sampling of locations with DEKRA led focus groups helps to complete the full company safety picture. Speaking with a sampling of leaders and teams further paint the picture of safety at each location and generally. While on site DEKRA consultants glean important information during work task observations, interactions amongst teams and leaders, and note themes from each site and overall.

Review

These seven elements, illustrated in Figure 1, provide the levers that may be used to systematically identify system vulnerabilities. They influence the organization's effectiveness in recognizing and controlling risk, as well as its exposure to adverse consequences emanating from operations. Organizations that are robust in executing within the elements display world-class results in controlling risk and exposure to harm.

DEKRA's approach evaluates cultural, organizational, and system performance in the EHS and reliability aspects of the organization through the lens of these seven elements. This evaluation enables a holistic understanding of the full range of exposures and risks that may originate from an operation or process. Using this information, DEKRA is able to provide:

- Quantitative measures of organizational safety performance
- A diagnosis of the problems and barriers preventing higher performance
- Where performance is already high, a pressure test to uncover blind spots or help protect and accelerate gains
- Most importantly, 3-5 strategic recommendations to reduce risk and drive sustained transformative performance improvement

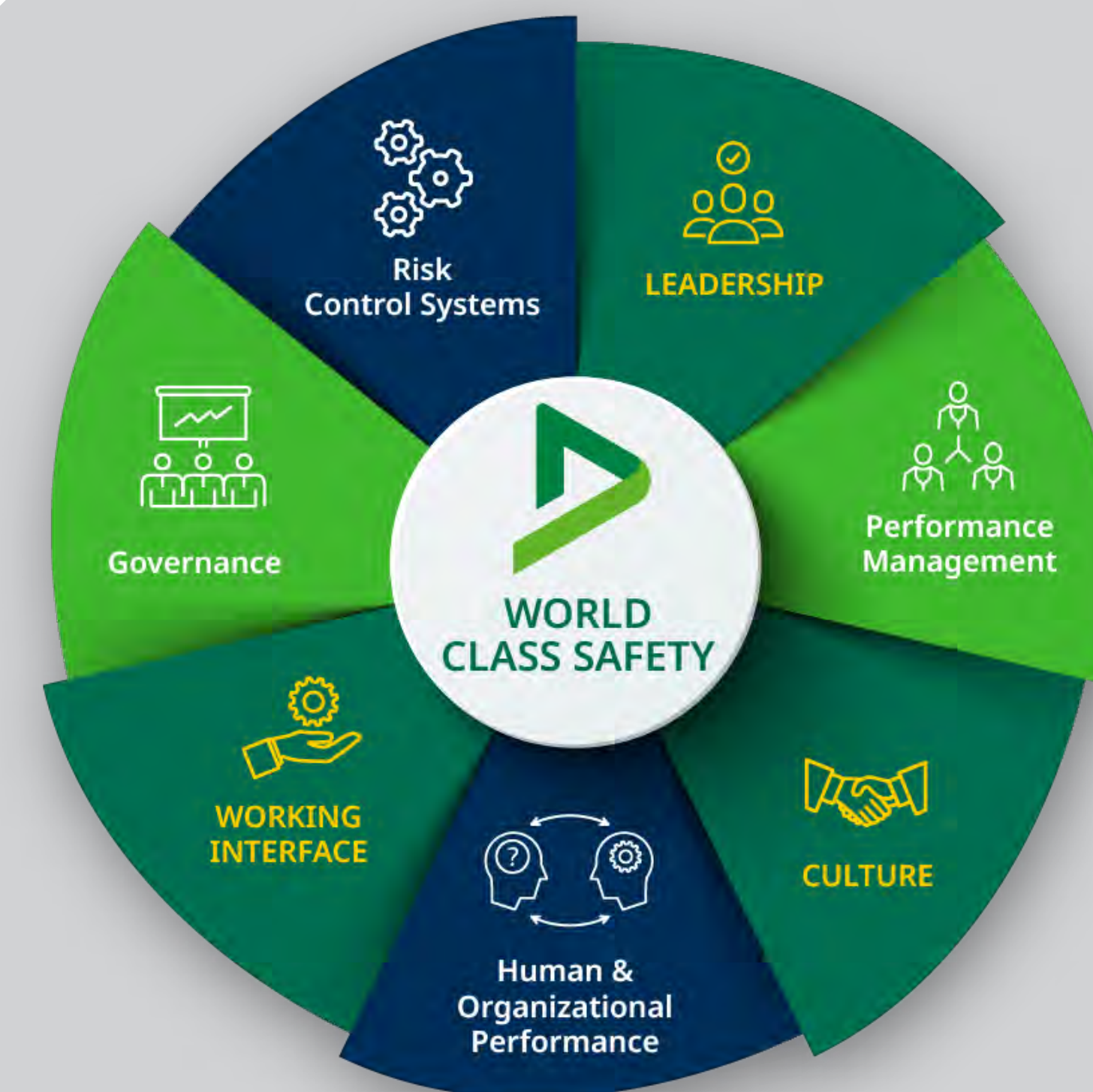


Figure 1: Five Domains of World-Class Performance

By understanding how an organization operates across five key domains, scientifically based and actionable insights into its EHS ecosystem can be identified, enabling development of a framework for world-class EHS performance. As a group, these five domains frame an organization's perspective on risk and its exposure to potential incidents - and how it chooses to manage them.

Assessment Inputs — Quantitative and Qualitative

In turn, the results of this assessment indicate the organization's level of safety performance (its maturity) relative to its teams, stakeholders, and the community. These data inputs include quantitative data on incidents and near incidents; investigative, audit, and inspection reports; and core policies and programs.

Each is examined to understand the organization's safety systems and performance. Additional quantitative data is gathered from people across the organization by using DEKRA's Organizational Culture Diagnostic Instrument (OCDI) survey and follow on focus groups for a more intensive look at possible gaps areas.

To get to the why behind the what of the quantitative data analysis, qualitative data is gathered through individual interviews with a sampling of executive team members; focus groups that include interviews with plant leaders, supervisors, and line workers. Additional qualitative data is gathered through direct observation and discussion with workers engaged in real-time activities and validation of system and process implementation.

How the Seven Elements of Risk Reduction Drive Transformational Change

Element 1 & 2: Leadership and Culture

As Figure 2 demonstrates, leadership's influence is felt throughout the organization. Leaders drive performance

and culture by their actions (and inactions) and by the messages they convey. Through culture, leadership exerts a powerful and sustained influence on both behavior and the overall functioning of the organization. Knowing this, we assess the effectiveness of culture and leadership around safety, workforce engagement, and stakeholder outreach.

Leadership's skill and action establish the level of importance that people in the organization assign to safety. These include the value placed on rules and procedures, reporting near misses, engagement, and performing safely or not at all.

DEKRA uses its Organizational Cultural Diagnostic Instrument (OCDI) survey to delineate the organization's overall culture, as well as to provide an understanding of team members' relationships with one another and with their supervisors and managers. The OCDI data can provide comparisons between sites, departments, and levels of the organization (and other data cuts on request). DEKRA uses interviews and focus groups to probe for the issues and actions that explain the scores employees give on their OCDI (the why behind the what). The OCDI is unique as a survey tool in that it is predictive of organizational safety performance measures and indicative of of general team member satisfaction. Many organizations use the OCDI to replace or augment general engagement surveys due to its benchmarking capabilities.

Element 3: Safety Governance

Governance is how the organization deploys critical safety decisions at all levels, communicates them across the



Figure 2: Leadership Model for Influencing Culture

Strong leadership functions through rings of influence, where the leaders exhibit their personal beliefs and values (personal safety ethic) through their leadership style to those around them. This in turn impacts the individual leader's proficiency in the seven best practices and, when considered collectively across the leadership team, shapes the organizational culture.

organization, and implements them at appropriate levels of authority. Imagine, everyone has their hand on the 'safety and culture rope' and is pulling for safe work every day. At any level, on any day when distractions or business headwinds prevail a person or group may relax their pull on that rope. When this occurs everyone else feels that subtle detraction and often themselves follow suit not pulling for safety as they typically once did. When this lack of rigorous effort is allowed to continue, safety incidents occur when no one notices or addresses the lack of safety governance. Such drift from rigor can occur without incident but typically results in incidents when allowed to remain unaddressed. In assessing governance, we examine how management drives continuous improvement, leading and lagging predictive metrics functionality, and audit and incident investigation efficacy particularly in service of Serious Injury and Fatality prevention.

Element 4: Risk Control Systems

These are the systems that organizations use to identify and control risk. They typically include hazard identification and risk analysis, operating procedures, safe work practices, asset integrity and reliability, operational readiness, documentation management, contractor management, process knowledge management, and change management. DEKRA systematically reviews the presence and application of these systems in its assessment process.

The assessment provides insight into how safety systems

and programs are implemented, their quality, and how they actually add sustained protective value.

Direct observation and discussions with employees and leaders provide real-time understanding of any gaps that may exist between objectives and implementation. Field verification of systems determines the degree to which documented intentions are put to practice. The field experience normally surfaces best practices, as well as important opportunities for improvement.

Element 5: Performance Management

Performance management focuses the organization's attention on what truly matters:

selecting the right people for the needed role, providing them resources to be successful, including knowledge development, showing



appreciation for cultural contribution, creating accountability for safety, and recognizing individual and team successes. How well and how much safety is appropriately incorporated into these systems determine the sustainability of effective, reliable, and resilient performance.

DEKRA assesses training and performance assurance and safety competency, including the resources allocated to the development of safety skills and leadership, the motivation to continue to use them, and meaningful access to supervisors and mentors who guide workers to perform safely and effectively. Key to sustaining safety is clarity and consistency in policies, such as supervisor-to-subordinate ratio expectations, and working within capacity.

Element 6: Working Interface

The working interface is the point in the work process where people physically interact with equipment, facilities, and processes that enable work to get done to create value for the organization. This is the arena where risk is manifested and exposure to harm originates, and safety performance is (or is not) realized.

When exposure to harm is not well controlled, risk to people, assets, and brand is elevated. Teams skilled in behaviorally creating safe work are always backed by a system that has them set for success vs error.

Through formal field observations, process validations, and other engagements, we examine the tools, systems, and

behaviors employees have in the course of their work to recognize and mitigate exposures for themselves and others. Specific areas of review include conduct of operations and operational discipline including pausing of work and the presence of high levels of psychological safety, team relationships, compliance with standards, and emergency management.

At the working interface, all the influences of the other elements covered here, manifest themselves in the creation of safe work.

Summary of Assessment Process

The centerline flow of activities used to complete the assessment is outlined below in above. This sequence of steps enables collaboration and ongoing communication throughout the assessment process. It also provides for progressive sharing of results and opportunities, allowing for adjustments, if indicated. This process then flows beyond the final recommendations into the creation of a road map, enabling the organization to create sustained transformative change.

▶ Conclusion

Leaders need a thorough and sound understanding of the organization through the collective eyes of their workforce in order to provide superior safety leadership. They are responsible for understanding risk and identifying and controlling injury exposure throughout their organization, so understanding what actions they might take and which might be effective is paramount. As leaders reach for ever more challenging goals, DEKRA's holistic approach to safety assessments gives them a systematic process to understand critical elements affecting exposures across their organization. The DEKRA Holistic Safety Assessment gauges the organization's maturity across five key domains and provides an actionable road map, so leaders can tailor solutions to control risk; reduce workplace exposure; and improve the safety of their workers, their stakeholders, and even their community.

Let's talk Strategy:



[Learn More](#)

Interested in better understanding risk and identifying and controlling injury exposure throughout your organization?

Connect with Us:

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