

# SAFE+

MAKING HEALTH AND SAFETY WORK

A GUIDE FOR BUSINESS

## Onsite Assessment and Advisory Service

A JOINT INITIATIVE DEVELOPED BY

**WORKSAFE**  
NEW ZEALAND | MAHI HAUMARU  
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**MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,  
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT**  
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# What is SafePlus?

*This guide provides information for businesses who are using or considering using the SafePlus Onsite Assessment and Advisory Service.*

SafePlus is a new, voluntary, health and safety performance improvement toolkit for businesses.

It defines what good health and safety looks like, above and beyond minimum compliance. SafePlus is a performance improvement initiative that is different from traditional compliance audit type products. It was jointly developed by WorkSafe New Zealand, ACC and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE). v

SafePlus aims to help lift the performance of workplace health and safety in New Zealand businesses. It can be used to assess how well a business is performing against good practice health and safety requirements and provide tailored advice and guidance on how to improve.

## Key Elements

SafePlus has three key elements: Leadership, Worker Engagement and Risk Management. Continuous improvement is integral to each.



### Leadership

Leaders in a business are in a unique position to have a major influence on health and safety. Leaders set the working conditions in their businesses, control the resources and have a large influence on the culture. All these components contribute to the level of health and safety in a business. Leadership is also an expectation of the legislation which includes a focus on 'Officer' responsibilities. For such reasons SafePlus has a strong focus on assessing the perceptions of workers to how well leaders display safety leadership in their business.

### Worker engagement

Research has consistently identified that worker engagement and participation in health and safety has a fundamental impact on the health and safety performance of a business. The more workers are able to participate in decisions impacting on health and safety, the better the outcomes. SafePlus focuses on the mechanisms in place for worker involvement in health and safety and the perceptions of those in the business on how those processes are working.

## Risk management

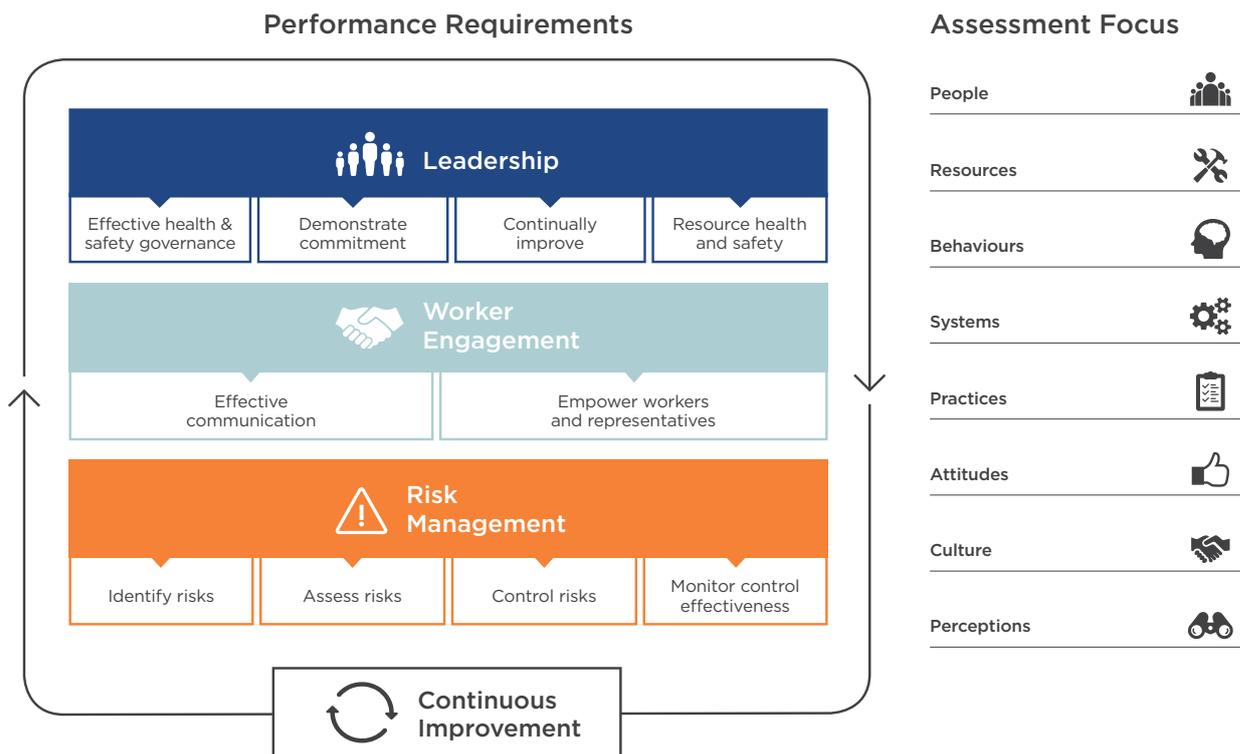
To protect workers from both short and long-term harm, a business needs to have effective processes in place to identify, assess and control both health and safety risks. SafePlus assesses how a business identifies and manages health and safety risks, by looking for evidence of risk management processes in place, knowledge of those processes within the business and by looking in depth at how three specific health and safety risks faced by workers are managed.

## Continuous Improvement

A successful business needs to be constantly assessing how well its systems and processes are operating, looking for what is working well, and what needs improvement. This is as important for health and safety as it is for other business processes. SafePlus specifically looks for evidence of continuous improvement processes in leadership, risk management and worker participation. It seeks feedback from managers and workers as to how well continuous improvement processes are working in practice.

# Performance requirements

SafePlus is based on a framework of ten Performance Requirements, which are organised under the three key elements described above. Each Performance Requirement then has four or five indicators, which explore how a business performs against the requirements in more detail. Each Performance Requirement has a three level maturity scale applied to it.



The Performance Requirements, and their associated Indicators are described in more detail in the SafePlus Performance Requirements document available on the Safeplus website ([safepplus.nz](https://safepplus.nz)).

# Three levels of performance

Businesses will receive feedback against each Performance Requirement during their Onsite Assessment. Businesses will also receive an overall SafePlus Performance illustration.

Three levels of performance are used to measure and illustrate performance against each Performance Requirement and to provide an overall performance illustration: Developing, Performing and Leading.



## Developing

A **Developing** business is one that does not show enough evidence of performance to meet the **Performing level**. A business at the Developing level may be aware of the need to improve their practices and performance to support better health and safety outcomes for workers. Risk management requirements may not yet be fully identified or addressed. Workers may be involved in some health and safety activities. PPE and administrative controls may be selected as the main form of control for risks. Health and safety processes may be largely informal and there may be lower levels of strategic planning to better manage health and safety risks. A developing business may tend to respond reactively to address issues as they occur. As 'Developing' encompasses such a wide range of health and safety performance from very poor performance, to performing well in some areas and understanding the need to improve in others, this document will not attempt to describe what 'Developing' looks like for every Indicator.

## Performing

A **Performing** business is one where you can see alignment and practice with the requirements. It will have proactive and visible leadership and governance and will be actively reviewing and monitoring performance to support continual improvement. It will actively seek information on its health and safety risks and implement and monitor actions to sustainably manage identified health and safety risks. Workers are involved in all activities and empowered to take action. There is a shared understanding from workers at all levels of the commitment to support good health and safety outcomes.

## Leading

A **Leading** business is one that is consistently exceeding the **Performing** level in all areas.

The business may actively seek opportunities to support the development of innovations that improve health and safety and address current and emerging health and safety risks for all in the sector. The business may take a leadership role in their industry to influence and assist others nationally or internationally to lift performance. Health and safety is integral in core business activities and a sense of corporate social responsibility can be demonstrated. The investment from the business is above (or beyond) job and legislative health and safety requirements. There is a strong sense of ownership from workers at all levels and the business actively supports workers to lead initiatives.

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# The Onsite Assessment and Advisory Service

## What does it involve?

The Onsite Assessment and Advisory Service is one component of the SafePlus toolkit. It is a market-delivered service where businesses can choose to commission an assessment (similar to how you would commission other professional service providers).

During the Onsite Assessment independent Accredited SafePlus Assessors visit your business to assess how you are managing your health and safety risks. Assessors focus on at least three key risks that you agree are relevant to your specific business. At least one of these is always a work-related health risk. They trace each risk through the layers of your business, from governance and senior leaders down to frontline workers.

Many factors contribute to a healthy and safe workplace. These include the strength of your leadership, how engaged your workers are and their level of participation in health and safety matters, and how well you manage risks all play their part. For each of your three key risks, assessors will look at these factors in detail.

## The benefits

You will receive expert and independent assessment and advice on your business's health and safety performance against a set of good practice Performance Requirements. Your Assessor(s) will identify your business's strengths and weaknesses in your health and safety performance. You will receive performance recommendations on what your business needs to do to improve. A key benefit from a SafePlus assessment is that you will get tailored guidance and advice on how you can implement the performance recommendations. Your SafePlus Accredited Assessor will provide you with a written report that documents this information.

You can use the feedback from the Accredited Assessors to make step changes or incremental improvements. The assessment can also give you improved confidence that your current health and safety systems, practices, and measures are working well, or that you know what to do to make meaningful improvements.

SafePlus will help improve productivity by creating a safer and healthier workplace. It will provide a degree of business confidence about your performance and boost your business's reputation as an employer of choice. By focusing on improved workplace health and safety, businesses can be assured you are focusing your efforts and costs in the right places.

For workers, it'll help reduce the likelihood of workplace accidents and illness and provide a safer and healthier place to work.

### **Choose a SafePlus onsite assessment to make the biggest difference**

You are already aiming for excellence in health and safety by considering SafePlus. The Onsite Assessment and Advisory Service is a thorough, robust way to support this.

The Onsite Assessment will clearly identify what you're doing well, the key things you need to improve, and help you focus on what's important so you can invest wisely and make the biggest difference for your people and your business.

### **Fresh eyes help spot what you can't**

Because the Onsite Assessment is entirely independent, and uses highly skilled and experienced assessors, it will reveal things that you might not be able to spot. For example, interviews with your people can uncover attitudes, concerns, culture, behaviours or practices that might not be apparent to senior management.

## **It will improve your business confidence**

The assessment will provide a degree of business confidence about your organisation's current performance, confirming you are doing the right things, investing your health and safety dollar wisely, or identify where opportunities for improvement exist. It's also a good risk management exercise.

## **Onsite assessment proves your commitment to health and safety**

Onsite Assessment is very visible to your workers. Because workers at all levels see and take part in the activity, they will feel more confident that you have their health and safety in mind, and it will show your peers that you are committed to health and safety. In the long term, improved health and safety helps reduce costs, increase productivity, and create a more desirable place to work. It also sets an excellent example for other business in your industry.

## **Collaborate with your people and your Assessors for the best results**

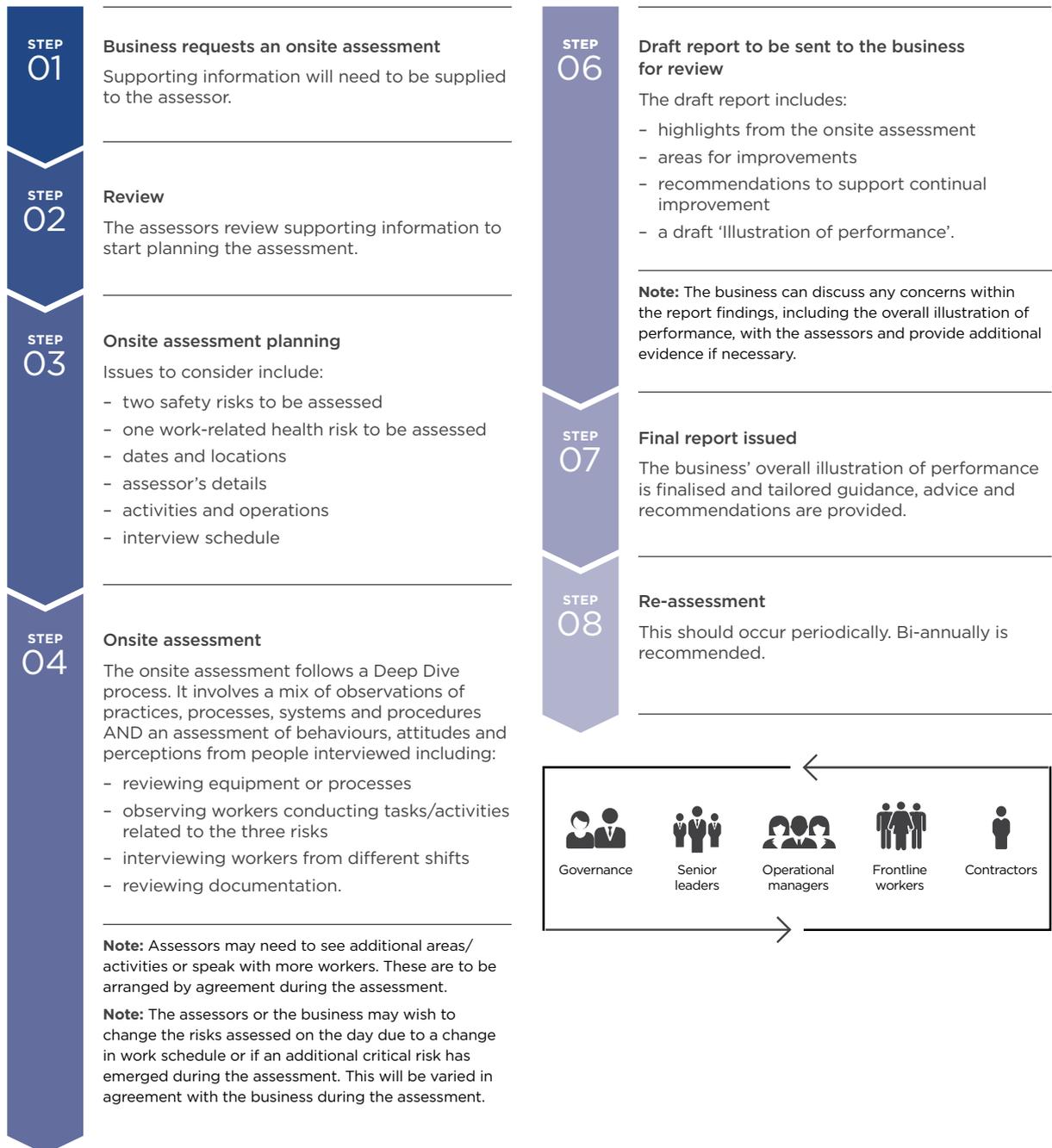
Assessments are successful when everyone is available, committed and honest. From the leadership team to front line workers, everyone needs to understand what you are doing and why. Everyone needs to trust the process and the Assessors — success means finding any problems, not getting away with the status quo. Everyone needs to commit time and energy to the assessment process.

## **SafePlus is different from other products on the market**

SafePlus is a voluntary performance improvement toolkit. Its primary value is the qualified, independent advice and guidance to businesses to support their continuous improvement. It uses a behavioural evaluative assessment with a heavy focus on observation and interviews with workers. It is not a rating scheme or a compliance audit product - however your business will receive an illustration of its current performance as part of the assessment process, so you can have confidence about its current state and measure improvement over time.

# Onsite Assessment Process

An overview of the Onsite Assessment process is provided in the diagram below. Further information about key steps in the process follows the diagram, and the Q&As at the back of this guide contain more detail.



## Your initial conversations and planning with an Accredited SafePlus Assessor

After reading this guide and information about SafePlus you should contact one or more Accredited SafePlus Assessors if you are thinking about using the SafePlus Onsite Assessment and Advisory Service.

Initial conversations between Accredited Assessors and businesses are an important part of the SafePlus process. Such engagement and communication usually begins before any contract for services is agreed. This engagement can help the Assessor to better position and inform their quotes/proposals and this can help smooth subsequent contractual negotiations, and help ensure that the final agreed scope of work best meets your needs.

There should be a two-way exchange of information. You should provide the Assessor with information about your business such as what it does, its size, complexity, and critical health and safety risks. Such factors will influence how the Assessor provides advice on what a SafePlus assessment could involve and how SafePlus can benefit your business – whether this is a response to a general query, or a more formal proposal, or quote for services, that you have asked them to provide. This exchange of information is essential to help define and agree the scope of a SafePlus assessment (discussed further below).

## Agreeing the scope of a SafePlus Onsite Assessment with your Accredited Assessor

As with any professional services, agreeing the scope of the assessment is something that you will need to do upfront with your SafePlus Accredited Assessor. This will also be specific to each business's context and its needs. The scope will depend on a range of factors, explored through discussions with a potential Assessor. Some key considerations include:

- The nature of your business – what it actually does?
- The size and complexity of the business – for example, does it span multiple locations, or is it comprised of different business units that undertake a range of different functions and activities?
- Its specific risk profile (which will likely vary across the business depending on which parts you are considering).
- Your specific client priorities.
- Budget and timeframes.
- Other issues discovered in initial interactions and engagements with Assessor(s).

For a larger business with multiple sites or locations some form of sampling across sites is required. However, there is no defined minimum sampling rules - it is a matter of the Assessor's professional judgement after scoping discussions with your business. The assessment will be tailored to the nature and type of your business and the key risks that are relevant. You should agree with your Assessor issues such as:

- The Deep Dive risks that will be traced through your organisation as part of the assessment – two safety risks and at least one work-related health risk (see below).
- The people to be interviewed – workers and management from all levels.
- An assessment schedule – including the dates that sites are to be visited and the schedule for observations/interviews/focus groups.
- Timeframes for undertaking the Onsite Assessment.

Every onsite assessment will need to consider performance against all ten SafePlus Performance Requirements (summarised on page 4 of this Guide). Further information the Performance Requirements, and their indicators, is available at: [www.safeplus.nz](http://www.safeplus.nz)

SafePlus assessments involve observing practices, processes, plant, people, an environment, and assessing behaviours, attitudes, perceptions, values and health and safety culture through interviews and interactions. Assessors conduct behavioural observations onsite, interview people within the business and review practices and processes to understand how key risks are managed. Assessments will involve a Deep Dive assessment process that traces risks through the different layers of the business.

## What is meant by the terms 'perceptions', 'attitudes', 'behaviours' and 'culture' in this context?

A 'perception' can be considered as the way in which something is regarded, understood or interpreted by a person. A person's perceptions can influence their attitudes and behaviours. A perception can sometimes be wrong, but is based on how a person interprets something.

An 'attitude' can be regarded as a more settled way of thinking or feeling about something, or a person's view point on something. Attitudes can drive behaviours and practices. Attitudes can be a frame of mind.

A 'Behaviour' is more about the way in which someone actually acts or conducts themselves in a given situation or in response to certain stimulus. This could include how a person behaves towards other people.

'Culture' is a term that includes customs, beliefs and social behaviours in a business or of a particular group of people in a business. Culture can change from group to group, or over time. It can be a way of doing something or a way of working that exists in an organisation. Culture is usually a shared system of assumptions, values and beliefs that govern or influence how people behave.

## **Choose your deep dive risks with the Accredited Assessor's help**

Choosing the most appropriate health and safety risks is essential for getting the most out of the assessment. Two of the risks must be about physical safety (for example, working at height or moving plant or machinery) and one must be about health (for example, exposure to cancer forming substances, musculoskeletal or excessive workload causing stress or fatigue).

You probably have a fairly good sense of what your key risks are. For example, if your business is a logistics company, you will know that key risks can include traffic movements, racking and stacking, and noise. However, you may also identify other risks specific to how your particular business works day-to-day.

To identify all possible risks, consider:

- The risk profile for your industry (look for risks with high frequency or high consequence).
- Your health and safety monitoring reports (look for trends).
- Board/executive leadership papers (which may have incident reports).
- Worker engagement surveys (look for issues your workers have highlighted).

The risks you and the Assessors choose will influence the scope of an assessment, including which sites the Assessors visits, which activities and processes they observe, and who they interview. For example, if you select electric shock as a key risk, the Assessors will want to speak to people most exposed to this, such as electricians.

## **Plan the details to ensure the assessment goes smoothly**

You will tell your employees which three risks will be assessed in depth. Use the communication material provided by the Assessors, such as the staff noticeboard template, to help communicate to your workers. You will explain to workers that they can trust the Assessors and speak freely to them - in complete confidence.

Agree visit dates with the Assessors. Set aside time for the assessment and arrange suitable locations — work locations to observe risks, practices and behaviours, and private space for interviews. You can expect Assessors to be onsite for at least two to three days. You will need to book time with staff and be prepared for the amount of time the assessment will take — avoid holding the assessment when you are at your busiest.

## **The Accredited Assessors will carry out the assessment with your help**

You will need to have someone available to host the Assessors while onsite, to meet them, answer any questions, and accompany them where necessary. You won't need to be, and should not be, at the interviews or informal discussions with workers. Arrange for an induction and any safety briefings or administrative processes that Assessors will need to follow.

Assessors will observe, interview, and may also photograph your business in action to learn about your three key risks. 'Behaviour-based' evaluative assessment is about helping improve health and safety in the workplace through changing behaviour and attitudes. The Assessors are more interested in how you 'do' health and safety at your business than any policies and procedures you have on paper.

Be aware that one or more of your Deep Dive risks could change during the assessment. If your Assessors change or add to the risks they are investigating, they will let you know why and get your agreement.

## **The debrief meeting**

The assessment typically finishes with a debrief meeting, giving you initial feedback on what works well, what could be improved, and any areas of concern. This will include any immediate changes needed and your Assessors will discuss opportunities for continuous improvement.

You will need to be ready to work around any problems that crop up during the assessment, such as business or logistical problems or illness. Assessors cannot ignore situations where a person may be in imminent danger of injury or death. They may identify the issue with you and you will need to respond appropriately.

### **The Assessors will evaluate the findings**

The Assessors will use the information they have gathered to make a robust assessment of your business's strengths and opportunities to improve. The assessment will cover leadership, worker engagement, and risk management.

The Assessors will use responses to scheduled interviews and observations, and also other 'incidental' information they picked up around the site(s). They will consider the behaviours, attitudes and perceptions of people who work with or in the business, as well as their own observations of practices and interactions between workers. They will look for themes and stories rather than numbers. For example, they will check whether responses are consistent, and whether workers appear reticent or unsure when answering questions.

### **The Assessment report**

Your SafePlus Accredited Assessor will provide you with a written report that documents their findings. You will receive an expert and independent assessment and advice on your business's health and safety performance against the good practice Performance Requirements. The Assessor will identify your strengths and weakness and make recommendations on what you need to do to improve. You will also get tailored guidance and advice on how you can implement the recommendations and improve your health and safety performance.

### **Follow up on the results to improve your health and safety**

The report completes the formal assessment process, but should give you plenty of food for thought for follow-up activities. For example, you should:

- Consider and implement the recommendations.
- Investigate other areas of interest or concern (that you identify or the Assessors notices).
- Repeat the SafePlus Onsite Assessment after a period of time as part of ongoing monitoring and continuous improvement. We recommend biannually.

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# Getting started

When you are ready, contact an Accredited SafePlus Assessor to talk about the option of using the SafePlus Onsite Assessment and Advisory Service.

As with any professional service you may want to talk to a number of potential Assessors before choosing an Assessor that is right for you. Independent Accredited Assessors have been assessed as meeting certain competency requirements and have been trained in how to use the SafePlus tool. They have different backgrounds and focus on specific industries and work environments. Assessors also come from a range of company types and sizes, which shapes their approach.

Picking the right assessors will help you identify the most important risks and get the most useful feedback.

A list of assessors, and their contact details are available on the SafePlus website ([safeplus.nz](https://safeplus.nz)).

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# Appendix 1 – Questions and answers

## Deciding whether to use SafePlus

### **Why has SafePlus been introduced?**

New Zealand has an unacceptably high rate of serious workplace injury, illness and fatality. The social and economic cost of people being killed and hurt in New Zealand workplaces is conservatively estimated at \$3.5 billion each year and inflicts an enormous emotional toll on the people affected. SafePlus will contribute to the Government's target of reducing the workplace death and injury toll by 25 percent by 2020.

### **Do I have to use SafePlus to meet my business's health and safety requirements under the law?**

No. SafePlus is a voluntary toolkit, which businesses can elect to use. It focuses on best practice health and safety performance, and this goes beyond minimum legal compliance.

### **How do I know if SafePlus is right for my business?**

You should first understand what SafePlus is, and then make a decision if it is right for your business. Some components of SafePlus are freely available for anyone to use. A business might want to incorporate SafePlus into their own approach to managing health and safety.

Once the Online Self-Assessment tool is available (mid 2018) businesses can use this to undertake their own self-assessment of their performance and receive free guidance and advice based on the findings of their assessment. This will be a good first step for some businesses, but it will not provide an independent verification of performance from a qualified and Accredited SafePlus Assessor. The first version of the online self-assessment tool will be targeted at small to medium sized businesses. Future versions will be customised to larger businesses and key risk sectors.

If you want to use the Onsite Assessment and Advisory Service, you can commission an independent SafePlus Accredited Assessor. This part of the SafePlus toolkit is designed for medium to larger sized business that are committed to achieving good health and safety practice. However, it could also be suitable for some smaller businesses. For example, when SafePlus was piloted a 14-person business used it and got benefit and value from it.

### **How much will using the SafePlus Onsite Assessment and Advisory Service cost?**

The fee charged is a commercial matter between your business and the SafePlus Accredited Assessors that you commission, similar to hiring any health and safety service provider or professional in the market. The fee is one of the factors that you will need to consider when selecting your Assessor.

## Accredited Assessors

### **Why should I use SafePlus Accredited Assessors?**

WorkSafe and ACC strongly recommends that businesses wanting to use the independent Onsite Assessment and Advisory Service should always use a SafePlus Accredited Assessor (rather than a generic health and safety consultant). This will give you greater certainty that your Accredited Assessor is trained in the use and application of SafePlus, has the capability and competency to do a good job, and can give you the best value from a SafePlus onsite assessment. Accredited SafePlus Assessors have had their competency to use the SafePlus Onsite Assessment and Advisory Service verified by the independent Accreditation Body.

To become accredited, applicants have to demonstrate they meet the set of core competencies developed by WorkSafe. These are considered essential to be able to use SafePlus. They are set out in the Assessor Competency Specification available at [www.safeplus.nz/assessors](http://www.safeplus.nz/assessors). The accreditation process also requires candidates to undertake and pass a SafePlus training course run by an independent training provider. The Accreditation Body undertakes referee checks for each assessor candidate and considers a range of evidence when assessing the competence of each applicant.

To get accredited assessor must also have attained a certain level of membership with one of the member organisations of the Health and safety Association of New Zealand (HASANZ). HASANZ is the umbrella organisation representing workplace health and safety professions in New Zealand. HASANZ aims to raise professional standards across the sector to provide healthier and safer workplaces for New Zealanders.

SafePlus Accredited Assessors also have to go through a re-evaluation process every three years to ensure that their competency has been maintained.

### **Are there different grades or types of SafePlus Accredited Assessors?**

No. There is only one type of SafePlus Accredited Assessor. Only a SafePlus Accredited Assessor can undertake a SafePlus assessment. However, assessments may involve other Accredited Assessors or technical subject matter experts. The specialist technical support person(s) do not need to be SafePlus Accredited Assessors. Other assessors performing on the same assessment to help bolster capacity needs do need to be accredited.

### **Can SafePlus Onsite Assessments be done by one assessor, or are more than one required?**

A key part of the Accredited Assessor's role is to consider whether they have the necessary range of skills, experience and necessary capacity for each specific SafePlus Onsite Assessment and Advisory Service, or whether they need to involve one or more supporting assessors or other sector or specialist experts.

Most assessments should involve more than one Accredited Assessor to provide the quality assurance of a peer review and second set of eyes - both onsite and afterwards when collating assessment findings and formulating the tailored guidance and advice to the business. This also provides additional resource to manage the sampling work necessary to form evidence-based conclusions, and to complete the assessment in a reasonable timeframe. Finally, it provides additional capacity to provide a greater level of advice and guidance to workers onsite during an assessment of a business, or for assessments at larger businesses with multiple sites. More than one Accredited Assessor is recommended for most assessments.

### **How do I find and select a SafePlus Accredited Assessor?**

There is a public register that lists all of the SafePlus Accredited Assessors and contains their contact details. This can be found on the SafePlus website ([safeplus.nz](http://safeplus.nz)). Accredited Assessors will also be able advertise and promote their services. As with any professional services provider you may want to seek quotes or written proposals from multiple assessors to help you select an appropriate Accredited Assessor.

## **Additional process information**

### **How long will a SafePlus Onsite Assessment take?**

This depends on the size and complexity of your business, the parts of your business to be included in the assessment (eg. sites chosen), the scope of the assessment and specific risks being considered, the issues found during the assessment, how well prepared for the assessment your business is, and your business's existing performance in health and safety, etc.

Experience from the SafePlus pilot suggested the minimum time for an onsite assessment for a medium sized business, using two assessors, is approximately 2 days. Larger or more complex businesses will likely take 3-4 days. Assessors will write their reports after the onsite visit is complete, and there will be an opportunity for businesses to provide comments on their Assessor's draft report.

## **What resource and commitment do I have to put into a SafePlus Onsite Assessment?**

This depends on the size and complexity of your business, the scope of the assessment, and the level of preparedness and familiarity that your people have with SafePlus. To get the best value out of the onsite assessment your business will need to work with their Accredited Assessors during the assessment, but the benefit you get out of your SafePlus assessment will outweigh the effort and commitment that you put in.

## **Will the agreed scope be documented?**

Yes. This should be documented at the start of the assessment so there is clarity between the Assessor and the business. The Assessor will also need to accurately describe the agreed assessment scope within their assessment report, including any changes agreed during the assessment. Assessors may also describe the scope of each assessment in the disclaimer section at the back of their reports, this will ensure the assessment scope is clear.

## **Can the scope be revisited?**

Yes. The Assessor may need to revisit the Onsite Assessment scope with you as they work through the assessment. For example, it may become apparent that an issue or risk was not initially identified, or was considered a minor issue, so further assessment and consideration is required. Another example is where there is consistent feedback or themes from some sites, so going to another similar site will not be of additional value (eg, you have reached data saturation).

If the scope needs to be revisited, there will need to be open communication between you and the Assessor to raise potential scope changes as soon as possible, discuss the implications on the assessment, and agree a way forward.

## **Will I get a score or performance illustration following my Onsite Assessment?**

Yes. Your report will include a performance illustration, as well as a detailed description of your business's performance and the key issues found during the assessment (along with recommendations, guidance and advice). The performance illustration will provide you with an understanding at a glance of how well your business is performing across the SafePlus Performance Requirements and your areas of strengths and weaknesses. It should also give your business greater confidence and assurance about how you are performing right now and help you to track improvements over time (when you get a re-assessment).

## **How does the scoring work?**

There are ten Performance Requirements that make up SafePlus. Each requirement has a set of four or five indicators that are fundamental to achieving good health and safety. Performance is measured against each requirement using a three-level maturity scale to illustrate the business's health and safety strengths and areas for improvement. Each of the ten Performance Requirements is given a performance level outcome of either: Developing, Performing or Leading.

The performance levels achieved for each of the ten Performance Requirements then determines the business's overall performance outcome. You will receive a performance illustration level for each of the ten Performance Requirements and also an overall performance illustration that is either Developing, Performing, or Leading.

Your Accredited Assessor can explain how the scoring system works. While the performance illustration will provide a snapshot of performance, the key value for businesses will be the Accredited Assessors' findings, recommendations, and tailored guidance and advice on how to improve your health and safety performance.

## **What happens if my business does not meet one or more of the SafePlus Performance Requirement(s)?**

You will be given a performance outcome of Developing for any performance requirements that you do not meet. Your SafePlus Accredited Assessor will set out their findings in their report and explain why the business didn't meet the performance requirement(s) in question, and what you could do to improve.

## **Do I get the opportunity to action a recommendation or make changes before the Assessor finalises their report?**

Yes. In many cases this will be a viable option and if the necessary action is undertaken by the business, then this could influence their performance level for a given Performance Requirement (or in some cases even their overall performance level).

For example, if a business successfully actions one or more of your recommendations during or soon after your on-site assessment, then this could be sufficient for your Assessor to consider moving the business from the 'developing' level to the 'performing' level.

The SafePlus tool design allows for a three-month period from the end of the assessment visit to be a reasonable timeframe to give the business the opportunity to action those recommendations made by the Assessors that can be practically achieved following the assessment. Three months has been selected to account for contingencies such as peak seasonal issues and key personnel being on leave and is seen as the maximum timeframe. In practice, it is recommended that the business and Assessor aim to finish in 6-8 weeks.

Each case needs to be considered in its own context and will come down to a professional judgement by the Assessor in discussion with the business to consider what is reasonable in the circumstances. Relevant factors will include:

- The nature and complexity of the recommendation(s) and action(s) required.
- The likely time it will take to action the recommendation(s).
- Whether there is the opportunity for the Assessor to verify that their recommendation(s) has/have been appropriately actioned.
- Cost or logistical implications for any verification needed or implications of delay on being able finalise the assessment report.
- Whether actioning the recommendation(s) would likely change the performance level (or whether a range of other actions are also needed).

If the change is a relatively quick and simple fix that the business can action during or shortly after the assessment visit, and can be readily verified, then this may be an option. In contrast if the recommendation will take longer to implement and would necessitate the Assessor needing to come back to spend time verifying it has been appropriately actioned, then the best course may be for the business to work on all of its recommendations and seek a reassessment at a future date.

## **How long is my SafePlus Onsite Assessment likely to be valid for? When should I get a reassessment?**

SafePlus emphasises the need for continuous improvement. The outcome of your onsite assessment will not remain valid indefinitely. There will always be new issues arising and opportunities for you to improve your performance. Even for Leading businesses, there is always room for improvement.

For most business, getting a SafePlus reassessment approximately every two years will likely be appropriate. SafePlus Accredited Assessors will advise you on when they think you should be re-assessed and this will depend on a range of factors specific to your business including: the risk factors your workers face, the specific findings of your SafePlus Onsite Assessment, the nature of any performance recommendation made by your Assessors (and how long they will take to implement), and your level of health and safety performance.

If you wish to portray your business as a 'SafePlus Business' and or use the SafePlus brand and visual identity you must:

- Have completed an independent assessment by a SafePlus Accredited Assessor within the last two years.
- Have met the performance level of Performing or Leading, as judged by the accredited assessor.

If the overall outcome of your assessment is Developing, as it is expected to be for many businesses in New Zealand, then you may want to spend time implementing the recommendations, guidance and advice provided by your Assessors with a view to getting reassessed to move into the Performing level when you are ready. Likewise, if you are assessed as Performing, you may decide to make the necessary improvements and seek reassessment to achieve Leading status at the appropriate time.

If you have no intention of using the SafePlus brand and visual identity and portraying your business as using the SafePlus initiative then you can choose if and when you might like another assessment and advisory service.

# Roles and responsibilities

## What are my roles and responsibilities as a user business of SafePlus?

SafePlus is a voluntary toolkit. First, find out about SafePlus and decide whether or not it is right for your business. This could include using any of SafePlus' components, tools, or resources – individually or in combination.

For example, if you decide to commission an independent Onsite Assessment, you will be responsible for selecting a SafePlus Accredited Assessor, agreeing the services to be provided, contracting them to provide such services, and monitoring progress.

To get the best value out of your Onsite Assessment and Advisory Service you will need to work with your SafePlus Accredited Assessor(s) during the assessment process. This will include ensuring that all levels of the business participate in the assessment as needed (governance, senior managers, line managers, workers, contractors, etc.), and ensure that Assessors have access to the areas of the business and information they need that is within the scope of the assessment.

Once you receive your assessment report you will need to consider the recommendations that your Assessor has made and the guidance and advice they have provided and decide what improvements you will implement.

A comprehensive list of roles and responsibilities for SafePlus Partners and Users is available at [www.safeplus.nz](http://www.safeplus.nz).

## Who are the other parties involved with SafePlus and what do they do?

The other key parties include:

- SafePlus Accredited Assessors – independent health and safety practitioners can be hired to provide Onsite Assessment and Advisory Services.
- The SafePlus Accreditation Body – a private sector organisation appointed by WorkSafe to undertake competency assessments of assessor candidates and accredit those that meet a set of key competencies and have passed the required training.
- The SafePlus Training Provider – a private sector organisation appointed by WorkSafe to run SafePlus training courses for assessor applicants.
- Government agencies including WorkSafe and ACC – led the development of SafePlus in collaboration with private sector health and safety experts and other sector stakeholders. WorkSafe and ACC will have an ongoing role during SafePlus' implementation.
- A service provider to develop, test, and host the Online Self-Assessment tool has been appointed following a contestable public tender process run by WorkSafe.

# Use of Government branding

## Can I use the SafePlus logo and branding in my business's marketing and promotions?

Yes, but only in some circumstances. You can only promote your business as meeting the SafePlus performance requirements initiative if your business has:

- Completed the onsite assessment and advisory service within the last two years, and
- The assessment was undertaken by an Accredited SafePlus Assessor, and
- You scored an overall outcome of Performing or Leading.

You cannot use the SafePlus branding or logo or expressly state or imply that you meet the SafePlus performance requirements if you have been assessed at the Developing performance level for any one or more of the requirements (this will mean your overall performance level will also be Developing). The reason for this is that all 10 of the SafePlus performance requirements are considered essential for good health and safety. All must be met in order to use the SafePlus brand.

Advertising and promotion could include using the SafePlus logo on your print material and digital channels but not on permanent fixtures such as signage, equipment and vehicles.

When using the SafePlus branding and logo, businesses must comply with the SafePlus Style Guide, which is available by emailing [info@safepplus.nz](mailto:info@safepplus.nz).

Businesses that use the free SafePlus resources and tools themselves cannot expressly state or imply that they meet the SafePlus performance requirements. Such businesses have had no independent verification by a SafePlus Accredited Assessor so cannot use SafePlus logos or branding.

The online self-assessment tool (due for release in mid-2018) does not involve any independent verification of performance. As such, businesses cannot use the outcomes of their own internal self-assessments to expressly state or imply that they meet the SafePlus performance requirements.

## **Can I use the logos of the government agencies that created SafePlus in my business marketing or promotions?**

No. You cannot use WorkSafe or ACC's organisational logos. Some SafePlus resources include Government logos, because these documents were developed to support SafePlus. Accredited Assessors or businesses must not add Government logos to their own communications, or promotional material, reports or documents that they produce.

Assessors or businesses must not express or imply that the Government in any way endorses or supports the performance findings, recommendations, and advice contained in their specific assessment reports. Such reports are commercial transactions between the SafePlus Accredited Assessors and the businesses concerned. The Government has no involvement in, or visibility of, specific SafePlus Onsite Assessment and Advisory Services provided by Accredited Assessors to their client businesses.

# Complaints

## **What if I have a complaint or concern about the SafePlus Accredited Assessor I used?**

SafePlus is a voluntary toolkit that the Government has developed for the market. WorkSafe, ACC or any other government agency will not be involved in the specific SafePlus assessments that are commissioned by businesses. These are specific commercial transactions between the Assessor and business concerned.

If you wish to make a complaint against an Accredited Assessor that you have commissioned, this should be raised with the Assessor concerned in the first instance (as you will usually do with any service provider).

Businesses should only commission SafePlus Accredited Assessors to undertake SafePlus Onsite Assessment and Advisory Services. Only SafePlus Accredited Assessors have had their competency assessed by the SafePlus Accreditation Body and this process includes completing a training course on how to use SafePlus.

If you feel that your Accredited Assessor is not, or was not, sufficiently technically competent to undertake the assessment, you could raise such concerns with the SafePlus Accreditation Body, Tracecare Limited. More information about the complaints process is available on Tracecare's website [www.tracecare.co.nz](http://www.tracecare.co.nz) or you can write to:

The Manager

SafePlus Accreditation Body

PO Box 10138

Wellington

If you become aware of any practitioner that has been acting as a SafePlus Accredited Assessor when they have not been accredited, please notify the SafePlus Accreditation Body.

# Use of my information

## **Will any third-party be able to access information from my SafePlus Onsite Assessment and Advice?**

No, not without your approval. The findings and outcomes of any SafePlus Onsite Assessment and Advisory Services that your business commissions from an Accredited Assessor is a private commercial transaction between the two parties.

From time to time, WorkSafe may commission an independent research provider to survey businesses that have commissioned SafePlus Onsite Assessment and Advisory Services. Participation in such research is voluntary, and information will be aggregated and anonymised by the research provider so that individual business cannot be identified by the Government or any third-party.

This research helps to inform the Government's understanding of the health and safety needs of businesses and the performance issues facing businesses, and ensures that SafePlus is kept up-to-date and relevant to New Zealand businesses. Over time, good practice health and safety will evolve, and the critical performance issues facing businesses will also change. Obtaining appropriate market intelligence from businesses that use SafePlus will help maintain it and support businesses' continuous performance improvement over time.

Market intelligence is also important to support and inform other Government and industry health and safety initiatives e.g. informing future policy and injury prevention programmes, and developing guidance for the sector on key health and safety issues facing New Zealand businesses. For example, market intelligence from SafePlus could benefit ACC's insurance role as it can help ACC better understand the performance of their levy paying businesses.

## **Disclaimer**

WorkSafe New Zealand, Accident Compensation Corporation and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (“the agencies”) have made every effort to ensure the information contained in this publication is reliable, but makes no guarantee of its completeness. The agencies may change the contents of this document at any time without notice. Refer to website for latest version.

This document is a guideline only. It should not be used as a substitute for legislation or legal advice. The agencies are not responsible for the results of any action taken on the basis of information in this document, or for any errors or omissions.

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[www.safepius.nz](http://www.safepius.nz)

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You are free to copy, communicate and adapt the information within the SafePlus tool.

