



# Report of External Evaluation and Review

Site Safe New Zealand Incorporated

Highly Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 28 September 2010

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# Purpose of this Report

*The purpose of this external evaluation and review (EER) report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It forms part of the accountability process required by Government to inform investors, the public, students, prospective students, communities, employers, and other interested parties. It is also intended to be used by the TEO itself for quality improvement purposes.*

## Introduction

### 1. TEO in context

Location:	Head Office, Wellington
Type:	Private training establishment
First registered:	2007
Number of students:	Domestic: approximately 30,000-40,000 part-time International: Nil
Number of staff:	35 full-time equivalents, plus 45 contracted part-time
Scope of active accreditation:	No National Qualifications Framework accreditation or NZQA-approved courses.
Sites:	Permanent delivery sites at Penrose, Auckland; North Shore, Auckland; Wellington; and the central North Island via a mobile training unit.  Temporary delivery sites at a number of venues to suit demand.
Distinctive characteristics:	Site Safe Incorporated was established in 1999 by a group of large construction firms with the intention of developing a consistent approach to health and safety training for personnel working on construction sites. Site Safe offers a wide range of short health and safety courses, such as the Building Construction Passport, Working at Heights, Basic Fall Arrest, Height and Harness Safety, Civil Passport, Electrical Passport, Leadership in Safety, Supervisor Gold Card, and Maintenance Passport. Basic courses typically run for four hours, and higher-level courses such as supervisor courses run for one to two days. Site Safe has a memorandum of understanding with Unitec New

Zealand to deliver training towards the achievement of the Unitec Certificate in Construction Site Safety (Level 3), which comprises a combination of modules contained in the short courses. The majority of trainees enrol on the Building Construction Passport. By mutual agreement, the construction and civil engineering companies who are members of Site Safe Inc limit access to their sites to holders of a Site Safe safety “passport”. From time to time, Site Safe has facilitated safety training outside of New Zealand, predominantly in the Pacific Islands, but also including Dubai.

Recent significant changes:	A new chief executive was appointed in mid-2009.
Previous quality assurance history:	The most recent quality assurance visit by NZQA was a quality audit conducted in July 2008. Site Safe met all but four of the requirements for ongoing registration as a private training establishment at that time. The requirements not met related to governance and management, trainee information, and assessment and moderation, and all have been addressed at the time of this evaluation.
Other:	Site Safe is an incorporated society, owned by its member organisations.

## 2. Scope of external evaluation and review

This external evaluation and review included one mandatory focus area, governance, management, and strategy, and one course focus area, the Building Construction Passport (BCP). The BCP course was chosen because it included most trainees enrolled with Site Safe. Other areas of training were reviewed within this evaluation and contributed to the overall confidence ratings.

## 3. Conduct of external evaluation and review

*All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA’s published policies and procedures. The methodology used is described fully in the document Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/for-providers/docs/eer-policy-conduct.pdf>*

The EER team included two NZQA lead evaluators, and visits to the Penrose, Auckland site and the Wellington head office site over a total of two days. The team interviewed trainers, advisors, and students at each site and observed part of a Building Construction Passport course at each site. Interviews were conducted with the management team at Wellington,

including the chief executive, project managers, the training manager, and the strategic relationship manager. A sample of stakeholders was interviewed by telephone, including members of the Site Safe board, construction companies, and contract trainers.

Site Safe New Zealand Incorporated has had an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and submissions received have been fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

# Summary of Results

## Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Highly Confident** in the educational performance of **Site Safe New Zealand Incorporated**.

Site Safe's overall achievement rates are very high in the majority of courses. Achievement rates on the Building Construction Passport courses are approximately 99 per cent, with very few people not passing. This course comprises the largest group of trainees. The second largest group, which includes a range of other construction safety passport short courses, has an average achievement rate of 75 per cent. This is a very high achievement rate overall.

Site Safe collects extensive quantitative data across all courses and this is well analysed and reviewed for patterns and trends. While the Certificate in Construction Site Safety is one area of training achieving lower completion rates, the number of trainees on this course is also very low, and Site Safe is in the process of developing a plan for lifting achievement rates in this area.

The Site Safe passports are highly valued by trainees and the construction industry, and are seen to be significantly contributing to increased safety awareness and reduced accident rates. This is supported by two recent pieces of research, one conducted by Research New Zealand commissioned by the Accident Compensation Corporation and the other through the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research commissioned by Site Safe, indicating Site Safe training has contributed to a lower accident rate in the construction and civil engineering industries. This in turn has been a factor in reducing lost time, thus contributing to improved productivity as well as reducing the negative impacts of accidents on families and the wider community.

Current training practice has moved from a primary focus on health and safety legislation and compliance, to encompass the concept of engaging trainees' "hearts and minds" through discussion and activities exploring the personal and whānau consequences of accidents. The evaluation team is confident that the robust and ongoing course developments will continue to lead to the high level of understanding of personal safety, and will continue to be valued by individuals and construction and civil engineering companies.

## Statement of confidence on capability in self-assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Site Safe New Zealand Incorporated**.

While Site Safe has well-established and comprehensive collection and analysis of quantitative data, such as course participation, completion, and achievement statistics, qualitative data, such as comments and stories from trainees and employers regarding their thoughts and perceptions of the quality of the training delivered, is not able to be analysed as it is not systematically collected and documented. However, this evaluation found that

there was a good level of understanding across the staff interviewed of how well training is delivered and how well the passports are valued by member organisations.

The organisation's self-assessment practices have identified some variations in tutor performance across the employed and contracted tutors, and there is some analysis of reasons or causes using assessment results and trainee satisfaction surveys. However, this is not yet as complete as the organisation would like. Performance appraisals and professional development opportunities are well established, regular, and focused on important areas.

Self-assessment activities are reasonably well established across many areas of Site Safe's activities, and there is evidence of ongoing and worthwhile improvements in many areas. However, not all aspects of these improvements are well documented, and the evaluation team considers this to be a potential weakness should key staff members leave the organisation.

## TEO response

Site Safe New Zealand Incorporated has confirmed the accuracy of this report.

# Findings<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 How well do learners achieve?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

Trainee achievement rates on the Building Construction Passport are excellent, close to 100 per cent, with very few people not achieving this passport. Where trainees are not meeting the standard, which involves correctly answering 16 out of 20 questions, appropriate extra support and time is provided to ensure success. Trainees are highly motivated to achieve this passport, primarily because it is a mandatory requirement for entry on to their employers' work sites.

This evaluation took an overview of the other passport short courses offered as well as higher-level supervisor short courses. In the main, completion and achievement rates are approximately 60-80 per cent, which is commendable.

Site Safe collects and maintains achievement data across all of its programmes. This data is comprehensive and complete and is analysed to review relevant factors appropriately, for example analysing data related to each tutor, across each course as well as by each question in order to identify any performance issues. Quantitative data collection and analysis is a particular strength of Site Safe.

## 1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Site Safe was originally set up by several commercial construction companies to conduct research into construction health and safety and to deliver training to meet the needs of the members. The organisation continues to experience growth in members and growth in the number of trainees attending passport courses. These two factors indicate that the outcomes are highly valued by learners and other stakeholders. Similarly, Site Safe's member companies require all personnel entering their sites to hold a current passport. Workers on the sites value the passports highly because they cannot work without one, but beyond this fact, employees and employers indicated at this evaluation that improved safety awareness and reduced accident rates are the primary positive outcome that is valued.

Many trainers are also health and safety advisors and auditors. The organisation notes this as one of its strengths, where those delivering training have a direct contact in the field with

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<sup>1</sup> The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

construction and civil engineering companies, helping them stay up to date with current issues.

Two pieces of research have been commissioned in 2008, one by Research New Zealand, and the other by the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research (NZIER). These explored the value added by Site Safe through the passport programmes, and concluded that the perception in the construction industry is that the passport training has added value, has reduced accidents, and has increased safety awareness in the industry.

As noted, Site Safe staff are in regular contact with construction and civil engineering companies and hear anecdotal information confirming the value of long-term outcomes. However, the organisation does not currently collect this information in a coordinated or structured manner, in order to track patterns or trends over time or across specific passport programmes.

### 1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of learners and other stakeholders?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

Site Safe offers a wide range of construction industry health and safety passport courses. The content and purpose of these courses is to provide participants with the knowledge of related legislation and compliance issues and an understanding of the consequences of injuries caused by accidents in the construction industry. In recent years, the focus on these short courses has shifted from a primary focus on legislation and compliance to facilitating a deeper understanding of the consequences of accidents. The evaluation team interviewed trainers, trainees, and construction industry managers, among others, and anecdotes included references to significant increases in staff awareness and ability to discuss and be proactive about safety issues. For example, “[staff are] seeing the relevance [of health and safety training], not just work related, but they are seeing the relevance to their personal lives, at home as well”.

Site Safe has well-developed trainer manuals which are reviewed every two years. These reviews include industry input and consider the results of learner evaluations; new manuals are piloted before being formally commissioned. This ongoing renewal of programme material and the close involvement of industry and end-users has ensured the material is up to date and includes current good practice in adult teaching techniques. The Building Construction Passport programme version six is currently in development and due to be trialled shortly. The start of two training sessions were observed during this evaluation, one in Auckland and one in Wellington, and these indicated that teaching strategies and support material were well matched to learners’ and industry needs.

Site Safe runs passport programmes for learners who have English as a second language. The programmes have included, for example, delivery in the learners’ first language and the use of interpreters, in order to best match learners’ needs.

Learners complete satisfaction surveys at the end of each short course, and these indicate a high level of satisfaction, both over time and across courses.

As already noted, Site Safe has changed the way courses are delivered in recent years, to focus more on “hearts and minds”, to engage learners at a personal level, and to reflect on the consequences of poor safety practice. Learners’ comments during this evaluation included reference to this hearts and minds approach, noting that it has made the training more meaningful and applicable to them. Learners noted that they can apply what they are learning not only to the workplace but also at home.

#### 1.4 How effective is the teaching?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Site Safe has a detailed and in-depth process to select tutoring staff based on industry experience, knowledge of health and safety, and experience as a facilitator of adult learning. New staff are well prepared by completing passport courses themselves, observing more experienced staff, and being actively supported during their first few sessions. This is a strong and robust process.

Site Safe has a well developed process which monitors course performance across tutors and across learner achievement in the “reviews of understanding” or assessments, and the statistics gathered by this process are reviewed regularly. However, where inconsistencies are noted, analysis of the underlying problem and actions to remedy the same are not yet as full or as complete as they could be.

Staff performance appraisals involve observations of course sessions and a review of learner satisfaction surveys. While the review of satisfaction surveys is conducted consistently, Site Safe is aware that the survey itself needs to be strengthened and it has started to develop a more robust survey tool. Tutor observations are not always conducted annually, indicating that the quality of the tutoring is not always being consistently monitored or confirmed.

As Site Safe has developed and changed, the documented management systems have not been kept fully up to date with current business processes. This has had the effect of weakening the organisation’s consistency and capability in self-assessment, as noted above for performance appraisals.

## 1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Site Safe's passport courses are all short courses, running for between four hours and two days, and learners are provided with an appropriate level of support for this context. For example, learners on the one to two-day courses are provided with a contact number for help outside of course times, and literacy issues are identified by self-identification and on-course observation. Materials are written appropriately to accommodate learner demographics and prior educational levels. Learners interviewed at this evaluation confirmed satisfaction with the training materials.

Where learners have not achieved the minimum at the course, extra time and opportunities are provided to ensure reasonable opportunities for success, such as offering oral assessment. Staff interviewed at this evaluation were able to discuss situations where they have taken specific actions to help challenged learners, or have been able to reduce learners' anxieties. However, the organisation has few documented or undocumented processes in place to monitor the effectiveness of the support it provides to learners with identified learning needs, such as significant literacy language or learning barriers to success.

## 1.6 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The Site Safe board is elected by member organisations, providing a direct link with current trends and developments in the construction and civil engineering industries. One such development identified at this evaluation was the desire for sub-contractors and supply line companies to be gaining Site Safe passports, towards ensuring all persons entering a construction site are passport holders, and therefore reducing the risk of injury and accidents.

Meetings are scheduled regularly for safety advisors and trainers to facilitate discussion and promote consistency, and this was seen by staff as being effective and adding value to their roles. Similarly, regional managers meet monthly in Wellington, which has encouraged a good level of communication across all sites.

The evaluation team observed that Site Safe staff enjoyed an atmosphere of open and honest communication and there was evidence of free and frank exchange of ideas. This openness is a strength, and the challenge will be to ensure there is sufficient documentation of new developments to capture innovation without stifling the freshness of the challenge and debate.

The organisation has memoranda of understanding (MOU) with several key stakeholders, the principal MOU being with Unitec New Zealand, defining the arrangements of the

delivery, assessment, and quality assurance of the Unitec Certificate in Construction Site Safety. While this programme attracts a relatively small number of candidates from the total 30-40,000 passing through all passport courses, it is seen as a valuable, more advanced option for trainees. Site Safe is currently considering the benefits of gaining NZQA approval to be accredited for this certificate programme.

Site Safe has a current Strategic Plan 2010–2015 and an annual business plan, defining business targets for addressing stakeholder needs, promotion of construction site safety, and research into safety issues, and therefore indirectly focusing on trainee achievement. While the training functions of the organisation are well resourced, the strategic and business plans do not have a direct focus on trainee achievement.

Evidence presented at this evaluation supports the finding that Site Safe is having a positive impact on construction site personnel awareness and confidence to effect improvements in safety. The only area of low programme completions is with the Certificate in Construction Site Safety, and Site Safe training staff noted that there are plans being developed to improve these rates.

As already noted, Site Safe's documented policies and procedures do not fully reflect current practice, including procedures for internal evaluation and self-review.

# Focus Areas

*This section reports significant findings in each focus area, not already covered in Part 1.*

## 2.1 Focus area: Governance, management, and strategy

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

## 2.2 Focus area: Building Construction Passport

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Excellent**.

All but a few learners in these passport courses achieve success and gain their passport.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Excellent**.

Site Safe has a very good level of monitoring for this programme, such as the collection of achievement statistics and course reviews. The commissioned research noted above complements internal self-assessment and confirms the effectiveness of the training and the longer term benefits to individuals and communities.

# Recommendations

Recommendations will be included in the final report.

NZQA recommends that Site Safe consider the following:

- Explore the benefits of further strengthen the staff performance appraisal process through structured self-reviews, reflective journals, or similar processes.
- Explore options for collecting anecdotal and/or formal feedback on the long-term outcomes or benefits resulting from training.
- Further develop the organisation's management systems and documents to more fully capture current and developing business practices, such as performance appraisals and the evaluative approach to quality assurance.
- Explore the benefits of trainers completing a certificate in adult education, and continuing to remain up to date with current good practice and current developments in the training and development field.

## Further actions

The next external evaluation and review will take place in accordance with NZQA's policy and is likely to occur within four years of the date of this report.

# Appendix

## Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

*Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of course approval and accreditation (under sections 258 and 259 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the course approval and accreditation criteria and policies established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act.*

*In addition, for registered private training establishments, the criteria and policies for their registration require self-assessment and external evaluation and review at an organisational level in addition to the individual courses they own or provide. These criteria and policies are set by NZQA under section 253(1)(ca) of the Act.*

*NZQA is responsible for ensuring TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of courses and/or registration. The Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITP Quality) is responsible, under delegated authority from NZQA, for compliance by the polytechnic sector, and the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.*

*This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the policies and criteria approved by the NZQA Board.*

*The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.*

*External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.*

*External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website ([www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)).*

*Information relevant to the external evaluation and review process, including the publication Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review, is available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/for-providers/keydocs/index.html>*

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