

# Safety Hour Discussion Pack

## Topic: Why Challenging Poor Safety Critical Communications is important

### Purpose of the discussion:

*This has been chosen as a Safety Hour topic as too many incidents happen that have safety critical communications as a major or contributory factor.*

*Challenging another person's poor safety critical communications can be an emotive thing to do.*

*Not doing though can lead to the misunderstanding of the message being passed between the parties involved in the safety critical communication.*

This safety hour focuses on discussing the need to challenge when appropriate and gives some tips on how to challenge a poor safety critical communication.

Discussion points: Use below to plan your facilitated discussion. Remember, you don't have to have all the answers – the role of the facilitator is to create an engaging discussion where everyone identifies and commits to solutions.

Discussion points	Supporting notes
<i>Question? Why do you think there may be a need to challenge poor Safety Critical Communication?</i>	<p>What is vital here is to be respectful of authority but not frightened by it.</p> <p>We need to be prepared to challenge an incorrect communication (not a person) politely and assertively, if we genuinely believe it to be wrong.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You have been told to work in an unsafe working location</li> <li>• You have been told you are going to work on the down line when you know it to be the up line</li> <li>• A signaller states they have protected your site of work but they quote the wrong signal</li> </ul>
<i>Question? What could be the affect of challenging a poor safety critical communication?</i>	<p>We appreciate that this is not going to be easy to do, that you may think if I challenge I will be thought of by my manager, COSS and peers as not being a team player, or worse.</p> <p>If you think of it this way though if you follow poor instructions and you or one of your group is seriously injured or killed how is your family or your colleagues then going to feel?</p> <p>There are ways to challenge so you do not come over as disruptive, disrespectful. We will cover these shortly.</p>

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**Topic:** *Why Challenging Poor Safety Critical Communications is important .*

Discussion points	Supporting notes
<p><i>Question? You may be thinking what if I got it wrong and not the person passing the message?</i></p>	<p>Lets think of it this way:</p> <p>Failing to listen could be why you are not heard an instruction, one of your group could have been doing something that made you lose concentration. So making sure that you understand what is required would be fair to confirm.</p> <p>There are ways to do this without embarrassing yourself or the person with leading the SCC.</p> <p>e.g. “Can I just clarify what you have just stated from...?”            “If I heard that correctly you said... is that correct?”            “for my understanding, if I get anything wrong stop me, we are going to...” “you need us too”</p>
<p><i>Why is being professional important in a SCC including changing?</i></p>	<p>We must all take personal responsibility for how we conduct ourselves at work, including how we communicate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We should not rely on one person to make sure we communicate well, we all must all take responsibility for our operational conversations.</li> </ul> <p>In this way, we will be doing our part to improve the way we have safety critical communications.</p> <p>This will help us achieve Home Safe Everyday</p>

## For further information:

Safety Central Page. Frontline Safety Critical Communications. More briefing materials are available and there is a communications manual that discusses with examples with ways to improve safety critical communications.

A Safety Critical Communications Key Points Booklet is available from Wilson’s the printers.