

HOW TOUGH WILL A RESILIENT SAFETY CULTURE BE?

The Western Australian resources industry is renowned for being tough, but how does that perception of toughness influence safety in the industry?

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This was one of the workshop questions posed to over 400 attendees at the 2010 Mines Safety Roadshow series in the Pilbara, South West, Goldfields and Perth in October, and 2010 Exploration Safety Roadshow in Kalgoorlie and Perth in December.

Dr Dean Laplonge, a leading researcher in gender and safety culture, ran the regional workshops and presented interim findings at the Perth Mines Safety Roadshow.

The roadshows presented a unique opportunity to discuss workplace and management perspectives on safety, and determine what resources and commitments are required to support a positive cultural change.

The workshops focussed on gathering evidence about the nature and extent of risk-taking tough behaviour, and how it might vary between regions, companies and even within sites, and discussing what might be done about it at both personal and industry levels.

There is a lot of research into gender, toughness and other issues, but it is important to go out and talk to people actually in the industry — to gather stories and

ideas from those involved in the culture. This brings life to the research and the opportunity to develop strategies for the workplace, by the workplace.

In particular, the roadshow workshops gave an insight into what those in the mining industry think about being tough, how toughness affects their safety performance and their visions for a safer working environment.

The findings might cause some boards and managers to rethink their safety strategies and how they are applied, and all of us in mining and exploration to think about our own role in determining safety culture.

Dr Laplonge's findings and recommendations will be submitted in early 2011. After consideration, the report will be available on the Resources Safety website, and the key messages published in the next issue of *MineSafe* magazine.

Using Dr Laplonge's report as the blueprint, Resources Safety will develop resources to support industry as it moves towards resilient safety cultures being the norm. Some 185 roadshow participants have offered to provide input and feedback on this guidance material. Their commitment to making a difference is appreciated. This extended "working group" will be contacted early in the New Year to continue the consultation process.

BUNBURY



KALGOORLIE



KARRATHA



MinesSafety 10 Roadshow

NEWMAN



PERTH



All photos TYC

TOM PRICE



KALGOORLIE



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EXPLORATION SAFETY ROADSHOW

10

PERTH



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