

RR1089 – Leadership and Worker Engagement in the Ports Industry

HSE's 2014 Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) on Safety in Docks (L148) was developed through close consultation with employer and employee representatives. It is designed to address both the larger end of the industry and those working in small harbours and highlights the importance of leadership and full workforce involvement. Worker engagement goes beyond consultation and refers to the extent to which workers contribute to decisions that affect their health and safety. Leaders play an important role by engaging the workforce to achieve safe and healthy conditions.

This qualitative study explored how leadership and worker engagement practices were implemented in GB ports. Findings revealed several good leadership practices including leading by example, challenging unsafe practices and being visible. Listening to and acting on workers' concerns and ensuring that feedback is provided on issues raised was also important in facilitating and/or sustaining worker engagement. Study participants considered that use of a variety of communication methods is essential to engage workers. Health and safety representatives played an important role in increasing attention to health and safety and were generally supported in their role. Worker attitude to health and safety and generational issues in particular were perceived as a potential barrier to worker engagement.

Assistance in the use of Adobe Acrobat PDF files is available on our [FAQs](#) page.