

Contractor Safety Context

A supplemental brief to the research study *Multiskilling in the U.S. Construction Industry*

This companion brief examines safety-related context from the broader nationwide study of multiskilling in U.S. construction.

The nationwide study was designed to investigate multiskilling's relationship to productivity, workforce utilization, and crew-level performance. It was not a formal safety audit or a causal comparison of injury outcomes between staffing approaches. The safety context in which the dataset was collected is nonetheless valuable to consider, and participating contractors emphasized that safety should never be treated as secondary when interpreting multiskilling. This brief draws on three sources of supplemental evidence: contractor-reported safety data, site-visit observations, and the potential safety relevance of reduced work-area density and crew handoffs.

1 CONTRACTOR-REPORTED SAFETY DATA

15 contractors · ≈33.2M employee-hours · ≈16,587 FTE workers

57%

below the NAICS-weighted TRIR benchmark
sample 0.74 vs benchmark 1.72

66%

below the NAICS-weighted DART benchmark
sample 0.35 vs benchmark 1.03

40%

below the 1.00 EMR baseline
hours-weighted average EMR of 0.60

123 total recordable cases · 58 DART cases · 0 reported fatalities · contractor-reported annual records, not independently audited

2 SAFETY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Contractors reporting the highest available score, or use of the practice:

Safety pre-planning	14/15
Digital safety tracking	14/15
New-employee orientation	13/15
Incident investigation	13/15
Task-specific planning	11/15
Safety training	11/15

All 15 hold toolbox safety meetings: 6 daily, 9 weekly. Many firms also track leading and lagging indicators.

3 FIELD OBSERVATIONS ON SITE

- Access controls, orientations, PPE, task planning, and supervision were in routine use
- Sites appeared comparable to other well-managed construction environments
- No visible signs of uncontrolled or informal task switching
- Many projects served transportation, data center, industrial, power, institutional, and commercial owners known for stringent safety expectations

Qualitative researcher impressions, not formal safety audits

4 SITE DENSITY AND CREW HANDOFFS

Reports 1, 2, and 3 of this series each showed the potential to reduce site density through a multiskilled labor strategy.

Fewer workers and fewer crew-to-crew handoffs in a constrained work area may reduce congestion, trade stacking, and supervisory coordination burden.

Consistent with crowding and trade-stacking research (Hanna et al. 2007; ELECTRI 2007, 2018)

A potential safety mechanism, not a demonstrated outcome

KEY TAKEAWAY

The contractors in this study were generally high safety performers, based on available data and researcher observations.

FUTURE RESEARCH Make safety an explicit primary endpoint of multiskilling research.

Worker hazard awareness across trades

Work-area density and hazard exposure

Task qualification and controls at trade boundaries

Direct worker input and leading indicators

Contractor Safety Context: A Companion Brief

Report 6 of the *Multiskilling in the U.S. Construction Industry* research series

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