

Newsletter

Safety & Suicide in Construction

In 1974, Health and Safety recorded 166 fatalities in construction due to workplace incidents. By March 2025, that number had reduced to 35. Now let me be clear, 35 deaths is still 35 too many but for an industry working in some of the most dangerous conditions imaginable, reducing fatalities by almost 79% is an incredible achievement.

We looked at the problems. We found solutions. We changed behaviours. We introduced systems, training, PPE, regulations, toolbox talks, inductions and accountability. We made health and safety part of construction culture and honestly? The industry deserves massive credit for that!

But now I think we need to ask ourselves another question.

Is it time we put that same level of energy into mental health?

Because while physical fatalities have reduced dramatically, another crisis has quietly grown in the background. The construction industry has a suicide rate 3.75 times higher than the UK national average. We sadly **lose two construction workers to suicide every working day.**

To put that into perspective, suicide deaths in construction are now more than **14 times higher** than fatalities caused by workplace accidents and to further put that into context that's more than **1445% times higher.**

Read that again!

We have become significantly safer physically but mentally many workers are still struggling in silence and if we continued at the same pace of improvement we achieved with physical safety over the last 50 years, we would still lose over 100 construction workers a year to suicide by 2075. That's simply not good enough.

The harsh truth is we need to do more.

Not because it improves company image or social impact reports but because these are real people. Real workers. Real families and without them, who's going to build for us?

Construction already faces a major skills shortage. We need around 47,800 new workers every year just to keep up with demand. At the same time, we lose experienced workers to stress, burnout, suicide, poor wellbeing and nearly 50% of apprentices leave before year four. On top of that, older workers with decades of knowledge and skills are retiring from the industry.

Mental wellbeing can no longer sit quietly in the background while we focus only on physical safety. It needs to become part of the culture in the same way health and safety did and we need to act on it quicker and move 10 times faster.

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Construction has already proven it can solve huge problems when it commits to them. We transformed physical safety in this industry. That shows what's possible.

Now imagine what could happen if we brought that same commitment, urgency and investment into mental health.

Because hard hats protect workers from what's falling around them but mental health support protects workers from what they're carrying inside them.

Both matter.

Question for you

If construction can reduce physical fatalities by 79%, what's stopping us doing the same for suicide?



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