



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT BY EVOLUTION THE INTERFLOW SAFETY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Chris Campion, Executive Manager HSE
John Monro, Technical Support Manager
Interflow Pty Limited, Sydney Australia

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Interflow's business activity requires its 450 site personnel to work in small crews, carrying out a diverse range of tasks simultaneously at locations throughout Australia and New Zealand. The nature of the work frequently requires entry into confined spaces, in deteriorated underground structures, often in live sewer conditions. Safety is therefore a fundamental consideration in all work processes.

Interflow's Safety Leadership Program aims to ensure consistency of implementation of safe work processes for all tasks and by all crews, concentrating on individual responsibility of crew supervisors. It involves a training program that continuously evolves through inputs from course participants.

INTRODUCTION

Interflow's principal business activity is the rehabilitation of deteriorated underground sewers, water mains and stormwater conduits that are reaching the end of their effective life. Mostly these services are needed in built up areas, so work methods must require minimal excavation and community disruption. Crews typically comprise 2 to 6 personnel who work self-sufficiently on projects throughout Australia and New Zealand on a wide range of tasks.

The challenge for Interflow is to ensure that all work crews apply consistent work processes. Safety is fundamental as often employees are required to enter confined spaces, often in deteriorated pipes carrying live sewage that gives off hydrogen sulphide gas.

YEAR CASE STUDY WAS IMPLEMENTED 2015 - 2017

CASE STUDY DETAIL

Interflow progressively developed and implemented its "Supersafe" Safety Leadership Program, focussing on increasing its employees' personal commitment to working safely individually and as part of a Delivery Team. The unique nature of Interflow's work means that many of the work processes must be developed internally by the Company.

The specific issue recognised by the Company was how to engage employees at all levels in the business in understanding and giving practical effect to their moral and legal obligation to ensure the safety of themselves and of people they work with and others they could potentially affect as a result of carrying out their work.

The Program comprises two stages:

Stage1: When employees are considered to be ready for responsibility for the safety of not only themselves but at least one other person, they can become a Site Nominated Responsible Person. This requires completion of training and formal accreditation for competency in Interflow's Standard Operating Procedures for Site Management.



Standard Operating Procedures describe the process for each work activity undertaken by the Company. Safe Work Method Statements are then incorporated which give step-by-step guidance to the safe completion of each work activity.

Stage 2: The next level is "Supersafe" Safety Leadership training, undertaken when employees are deemed ready to be responsible to safely supervise work crews or safely manage teams.

"Supersafe" training is carried out on a programmed basis throughout Australia and New Zealand. Training is delivered by the qualified HSE Manager responsible for development of the program and training material. Of necessity, it is mostly specific to Interflow's unique work processes.

The participants are Crew Leaders, Foremen, Project Engineers and Managers, in groups of 15 to 25 people. Small groups at each course look at different risk scenarios and develop unified and agreed positions as to what suitable safety should look like. The program was developed to give guidance to this key group on how to best mitigate safety risks on projects under their control.

The importance of the program is emphasized by the attendance and participation at each course by the Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer.

As part of the training, each participant is required to document and commit to:

- Three things they will STOP doing that could negatively affect safety outcomes
- Three things that they will CONTINUE to do that positively affects safety outcomes and,
- Three things they will START doing that will improve safety outcomes

These commitments are then followed up in a supportive manner over time up by the participants direct supervisor or manager to realise the full potential of the commitments being made.

At the end of each Supersafe course, participants complete a feedback survey and are invited to suggest improvements of both the course and of the safe way work can be carried out. All suggestions are considered by the HSE subcommittee of the Interflow Board. If appropriate, improvements are incorporated in subsequent training courses.

"Supersafe" therefore continuously improves by evolution, through ideas supplied by the actual on-site practitioners.

Nominated employee groups will subsequently go through a refresher cycle of "Supersafe" every two years to further embed safety lessons learned and be appraised of new developments.

"Supersafe" is a sustainable and cost effective approach that personalises safety for each person as well as giving understanding of working in teams to achieve safe outcomes.

The most important lesson learned is the value of direct, honest discussion and consultation with its employees resulting in a shared understanding of why being safe is important.

Critical to the success of Interflow's Safety Leadership Program is the continued presence and contribution of the senior executive managers of the company.

The success of the program is confirmed by the continual reduction in measurements such as the Total Recordable Incident Frequency Rate (TRI-FR) since its commencement.



Supersafe Training in ACT – pictured the Canberra leaders with Interflow’s MD – Geoff Weaver (Back far left)



Interflow employee working on Northern Suburbs Ocean Outfall Sewer in live flow.



Interflow employee working with Rotaloc pipeline in live flow.

'SUPERSAFE' SAFETY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM



CONTINUOUSLY EVOLVING IMPROVEMENT

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Interflow's principle business activity is the rehabilitation of deteriorated underground sewer mains, water mains, stormwater conduits and associated infrastructure.

The work frequently requires Interflow's site personnel to enter confined spaces inside deteriorated pipelines and structures, often in live sewer conditions.

So safety can't merely be a priority. It must be a fundamental consideration in all work processes. It must be part of the Company's culture.

Interflow's work is done by autonomous crews typically comprising two to six personnel, who work on a diverse range of tasks at locations spread throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Due to the nature of the work, many of the work processes are unique to Interflow.

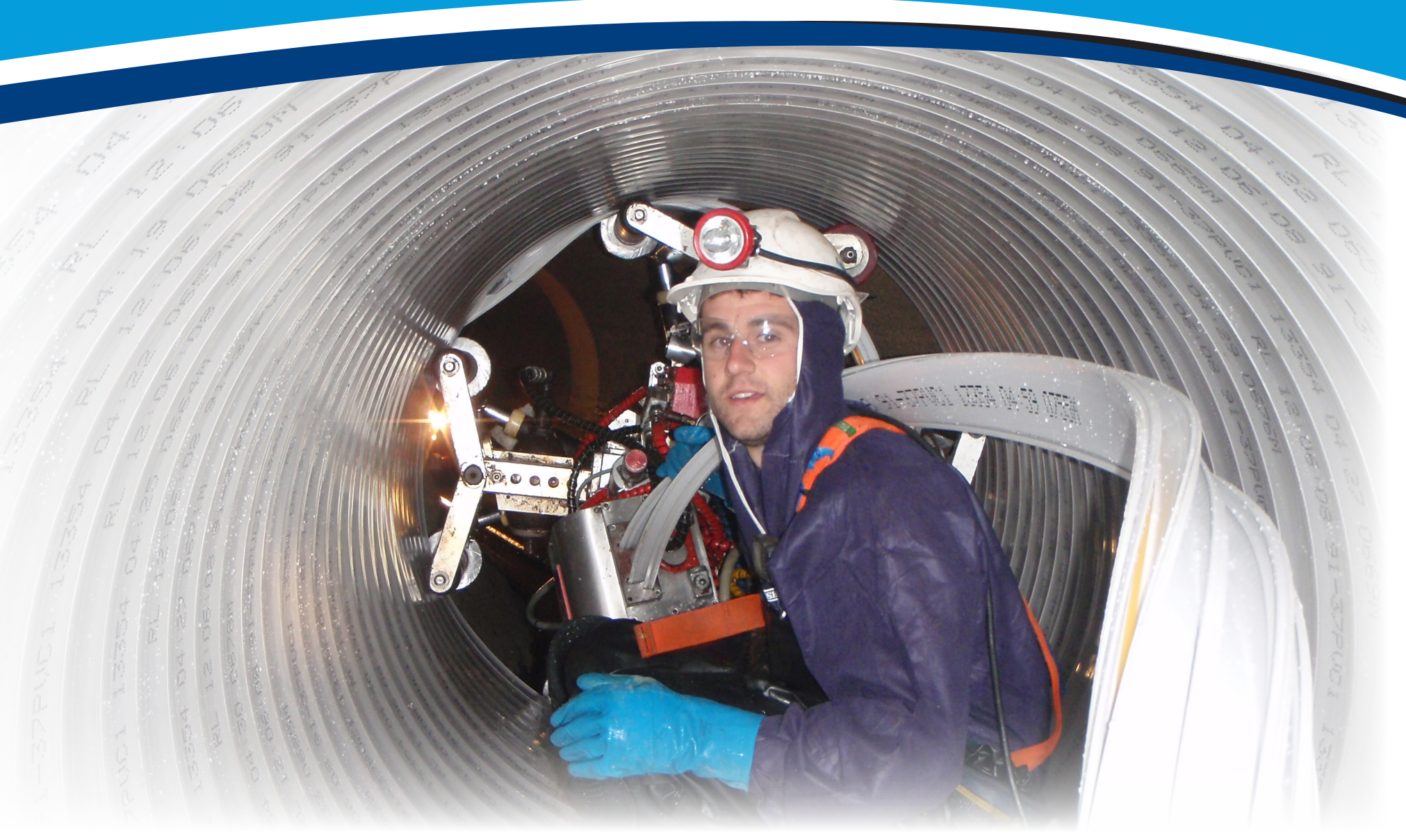
So direct supervision by senior management is not possible. Implementing safety measures must be the responsibility of individual crew supervisors.

The challenge for Interflow is to ensure that all work crews apply consistent work processes – wherever they are working and whatever task they are doing.

This is the aim of the Interflow's 2-stage 'Supersafe' Safety Leadership Program.

Interflow's 'Supersafe' safety leadership program focusses on its employees' personal commitment to working safely both individually and as part of a team.

It highlights the safety of themselves, the people they work with and others who could be affected by the work they carry out.



STAGE 1

For employees qualified to become a Site Nominated Responsible Person, who are responsible for the safety of themselves and at least one other person.

Stage 1 requires training and accreditation in Interflow's Standard Operating Procedures for Site Management. These describe the process and provide step-by-step guidance for each work activity.



STAGE 2

The next level is 'Supersafe' Safety Leadership Training.

'Supersafe' is for employees ready for the responsibility of safely supervising work teams: Crew Leaders, Foreman, Project Engineers, and Managers

Small groups at each course look at different risk scenarios on real projects and agree on what suitable safety would look like. Guidance is provided by HSE management.

The program and training material is mostly specific to the work processes that are unique to Interflow's pipeline renewal technologies.

The Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer participate at each course, emphasising its importance.

As part of the training, each participant is required to document and commit to:

- ✓ Three things they will STOP doing that could negatively affect safety outcomes
- ✓ Three things that they will CONTINUE to do that positively affects safety outcomes and,
- ✓ Three things they will START doing that will improve safety outcomes

These commitments are followed up in a supportive manner by supervisors and managers to realise their full potential.

At the end of each 'Supersafe' course, participants are invited to suggest improvements to both the course and to the way work can be safely carried out. All suggestions are considered by the HSE subcommittee of the Interflow Board. If appropriate, improvements are incorporated in subsequent training courses.

'Supersafe' therefore continuously improves by evolution, through ideas supplied by the actual on-site practitioners.

Refresher cycles of 'Supersafe' are conducted at 2-yearly intervals to teach participants about new developments and to further embed safety lessons.

'Supersafe' is a sustainable and cost-effective approach that personalises safety for each person as well as giving understanding of working in teams to achieve safe outcomes.

An important lesson learned is the value of direct, honest discussion and consultation with employees, resulting in a shared understanding of why being safe is important.

The success of the program is confirmed by the continual reduction in measurements such as Total Recordable Incident Frequency Rate.



www.interflow.com.au
mail@interflow.com.au

Come and meet our team at OzWater 18 - Stand Q16