Safety Capability (Fitness to Operate)
A Conceptual Framework and Practical Tool

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Safety Capability

A Conceptual Framework and Practical Tool

Creating a system that supports dynamic safety capability

The Fitness to Operate (FTO) model of safety capability was created as part of a joint project between UWA and NOPSEMA.

Safety capability involves two capabilities, the ability to deal with the day to day which we call “operational” capability and the ability to deal with the unpredictable and to adapt which we call “dynamic” capability.

How can organisations develop safety capability?
The FTO model specifies that safety capability is generated by enabling human, social and organisational capitals.

Safety capability is not achieved simply by high levels of enabling capitals. There needs to be a balance and a fit between these 3 enabling capitals.

The FTO model was presented to the International Regulators Forum two years ago.

A breakdown of the elements of the model

The Safety Capability Assessment Tool

- Developed by academic experts in Psychology, Engineering and Business, and in cooperation with chemical industry partner BASF.
- Validated by experts in OHS, process safety and HRM.
- 186 items that assess all elements of the Fitness to Operate model.
- Easy to use and transparent.
- Supports organisations to develop an understanding of their safety capability, factors impacting safety performance and areas for improvement, using a common language and framework.
- Supports a life cycle approach to maintaining safety capability.

An example of the framework applied to error management.

The Safety Capability Assessment Tool

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If you are interested in the safety capability assessment tool please contact the Centre for Safety

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