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WORKING AT HEIGHT AND THE LAW

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FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to the November 2025 issue of **Safety Solutions**, which includes a focus on height safety/confined spaces and PPE. In this issue, Working at Height Association CEO Scott Barber explains that true best practice means treating confined space work as a whole system of hazard management, rather than isolating issues in silos.

Also with us are lawyers Georgie Chapman and Fleur McKay-Calvert, offering a legal perspective on height safety. As Partner and Special Counsel, respectively, at HR Legal, they set out working at height primary duties, litigation trends and some key risk-mitigation to-dos.

While on the subjects of PPE and electrical safety, Anthony Leva, National Marketing Manager at TRu Brands, explains why flame-resistant workwear isn't just for high-voltage switching or fault repair — it's essential PPE for anyone involved in any live work, including testing.

We also have a suite of case studies, from a wall-mounted breathalyser driving traffic management compliance, to a wearable heat risk monitor prototype for the Australian Defence Force recently trialled by Army personnel in the Northern Territory, to a responder washdown system designed for on-scene protection.

Plus, we cover some recent technological safety solutions in development, including a human-robot collaboration designed to tackle manual handling challenges and a new virtual reality tool designed to help young people into work after mental ill-health — all from inside a VR headset.

And more — happy reading.

Dr Joseph Brennan, PhD

Interim Editor, Safety Solutions

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4.1-METRE FALL THROUGH UNGUARDED SKYLIGHT LANDS \$140K IN FINES

In Western Australia, an air conditioning company and a company director have been fined a total of \$140,000 (and ordered to pay \$5661 in costs) after a worker fell through an unguarded skylight. Located approximately 900 mm from where workers were installing the air conditioning unit, a worker stepped back onto the skylight and fell approximately 4.1 metres before his leg struck the balustrade of the internal staircase.

He was deflected onto the first-floor concrete landing when his left thigh struck the first-floor balustrade and suffered a large haematoma to his thigh that later required surgery, along with bruising to his head and right knee. The company director pleaded guilty to neglect with regard to the incident and was fined \$20,000 — the company was fined \$120,000.

Having visited the site prior to the start of work, the director failed to consider that the skylight was a hazard, which led to the company not putting measures in place to remove or mitigate the hazard. The director had, the court heard, told workers to “be careful” around the skylights, but, as WorkSafe WA Commissioner Sally North said, “that does not constitute a control measure and will not prevent falls”.

“This case is a reminder that it is the duty of anyone in charge of a workplace to eliminate the risk of falls where they can,” North added.

You can read WorkSafe WA’s Health and Safety Bulletin — published in December 2024 — in relation to falls through fragile roofs and roof openings at www.worksafe.wa.gov.au/publications/health-and-safety-bulletin-no-17-falls-through-fragile-roofs-and-roof-openings.



\$625K FINE AFTER WORKER STRUCK BY FORKLIFT SUFFERS DEGLOVING

In Western Australia, a transport and logistics company has been fined \$625,000 after a worker struck by a forklift suffered serious injuries, including the degloving of part of one leg.

The incident occurred in January 2021 at a Perth Airport premises. A worker employed as a forklift driver was on light duties following an injury.

On the morning of the incident, the worker was tasked with changing the stickers on the floor of the freight bays — some freight bays were marked with a sticker on the concrete floor that corresponded with an identical sticker placed on the freight.

Included in the area he was working were loading docks and freight bays where freight was delivered and sorted before being loaded onto road trains and transported to mine sites.

There were three forklifts operating in the area that morning, and while bending over changing a sticker, he was struck from behind by one of these forklifts reversing.

He suffered serious injuries to both legs, including the degloving of part of one leg, fractures and crush injuries. Since the incident, he has required five surgeries.



Having pleaded guilty to failing to provide and maintain a safe workplace and, by that failure, causing serious harm to the worker, the company was fined \$625,000 (and ordered to pay more than \$8000 in costs) in the Perth Magistrates Court on 3 October.

“In this case, the company was aware of the risks associated with the operation of forklifts in areas where interaction with other workers

might occur,” WorkSafe WA Commissioner Sally North said.

“Safe work procedures were in place that included being aware of pedestrians, maintaining a three-metre exclusion zone, and checking mirrors and over both shoulders before reversing a forklift.

“A guidance note on safe movement of vehicles at workplaces is available on WorkSafe’s website, and I urge managers at workplaces in which pedestrians and mobile plant can be in the same space to review this guidance and to consult workers to ensure that reliable and effective controls are in place.”

‘Safe movement of vehicles at workplaces: Guidance note’ is available at www.worksafe.wa.gov.au/publications/guidance-note-safe-movement-vehicles-workplaces.

WORKER'S FALL INTO UNFINISHED POOL LANDS COMPANY \$750,000 FINE

After a worker from another business fell into an unfinished concrete swimming pool, a construction company has been fined \$750,000 and a company director \$45,000.

The incident occurred at a private property in Wootatting, 69 km east of Perth, in December 2021, when a worker fell 2.2 m into an unfinished concrete swimming pool inside an undercover alfresco area that was under construction. While the pool had previously been protected by scaffolding, this had been removed to allow access for further work, leaving a serious fall risk for workers working around the pool.

Multiple injuries resulted from the fall, including a severe head injury requiring emergency surgery, and the worker has ongoing health issues as a result of his injuries.

The company pleaded guilty to failing to ensure workers were not exposed to hazards and, by that failure, causing serious harm to a worker.

A company director also pleaded guilty to neglect as a director. He was fined during the same court appearance and granted a spent conviction.

"Western Australia has had a Code of Practice for the Prevention of Falls at Workplaces since 2004, reissued in 2022. The code provides practical guidance to effectively manage fall risks and should be followed in all workplaces where a risk of falls exists," WorkSafe WA Commissioner Sally North said, noting that the incident should serve as a reminder of the importance of guarding against fall risks in workplaces.

"The incident is a timely reminder that it is the duty of anyone in charge of a workplace to conduct a thorough risk assessment before work begins and to put controls in place to reduce the risk of injury to workers and others.

"It's also a reminder of the sizeable penalties that can be faced by a person conducting a business or undertaking who fails to protect workers or other people at a workplace from risks to their health or safety."



SafeWork SA Executive Director Glenn Farrell with HSR of the Year Fiona Noble.

INTENSIVE CARE NURSE NAMED INAUGURAL SAFEWORK SA HSR OF THE YEAR

From more than 200 health and safety representatives (HSRs) across South Australia, senior clinical nurse Fiona Noble has been named the inaugural SafeWork SA HSR of the Year. The announcement was made at the 2025 HSR Forum at Adelaide Pavilion on 2 October — hosted by SafeWork SA in conjunction with SA Unions, the South Australia Business Chamber and ReturnToWorkSA. Across all industries, there are about 5000 HSRs in South Australia.

When Fiona took on the HSR role at the Royal Adelaide Hospital (RAH) in 2022, she was the only HSR in the ICU and represented 500 nurses. Now into her second three-year term as a HSR, Fiona has helped build a team of seven HSRs and deputy HSRs and still represents 110 nurses in her work group.

"Now we've got a really good team and we collaborate really well together. It's about making things easier rather than harder when issues come up," Fiona said.

"It can be a high-stress environment and that's when it can become rewarding — because when people are busy, that's when mistakes can happen. So it's just a matter of reminding people to slow it down sometimes and it could be the difference between having an incident and avoiding one."

Fiona has been nursing for more than 20 years, and has worked at both the old and new RAH since 2015.

The primary role of a HSR is to represent a work group — through ongoing consultation and cooperation between workers and management — on WHS matters. While a voluntary role within a workplace, HSRs and deputy HSRs are entitled to undertake training and perform their functions within work time.

"These are things I never thought I would be doing as a nurse. As a HSR you are using a different form of communication and I have learnt so much," Fiona said. "It excites me, the broad range of things you do. It's different in every scenario you deal with and approaching people.

"You can get a lot out of it but you also have to be dedicated — you have to really want to do it," Fiona added. "It's rewarding and it's so special to be able to make a positive difference."

Presented with the award by SafeWork SA Executive Director Glenn Farrell, Fiona was among nine finalists.

VICTORIA AWARDS OVER \$1.7M TO TACKLE OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE AND ILLNESS

Victoria has awarded \$1.7 million to six organisations to help to tackle occupational disease and illness — the funding coming through the latest round of WorkSafe Victoria's grants program to help reduce workplace harm and support injured workers.

As they often take a long time to show symptoms after exposure, occupational diseases and illnesses can be difficult to deal with; the delay making them harder to detect and manage than other health and safety risks.

Providing up to \$300,000 in funding for successful applicants to deliver improved risk management practices, increased education and awareness, or better support for those impacted or at risk of harm, funded projects include:

- The Australian Workers' Union — raising awareness and improving how occupational diseases such as asbestosis and silicosis are managed in high-risk industries, especially in regional areas and among migrant workers.
- Brickies Network — to run programs educating residential bricklayers about the dangers of crystalline silica exposure.
- GippsDairy — to provide targeted education to dairy workers to reduce Q fever cases in the Gippsland region.



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- Master Plumbers — to address health risks and disease prevention in the plumbing industry by looking at how work environments impact long-term health.
- Monash University — aiming to identify key strategies for educating migrant workers about occupational health and safety risks by leading a research project studying Vietnamese stonemasons who developed silicosis.
- The United Workers Union — focusing on better education around disease risks in commercial laundries.

"These grants will help each project successfully leverage expert knowledge to implement new resources and innovative practices — each improving the health, safety and wellbeing of workers across a number of industries," WorkSafe Victoria CEO Ash West said.

Application details for the 2025-26 funding round will be announced on the WorkSafe Victoria website in the coming months.

FAKE SAFEWORK SA INSPECTOR PROMPTS REGULATOR WARNING

After a man impersonated a SafeWork SA Inspector and subjected two workers to a roadside drug and alcohol test, the regulator has issued a warning.

The incident occurred at 1.30 am on 19 July 2025, when a man who claimed to be a SafeWork SA Inspector approached two workers carrying out earthworks at Victor Harbor.

Having produced fake identification and wearing high visibility clothing, the man impersonating an Inspector conducted an alcotest and saliva test on the unsuspecting pair. Speaking to the pair briefly, the man then walked a short distance and drove off in a car.



All SafeWork SA Inspectors wear a uniform with SafeWork SA branding. Source: SafeWork SA

SafeWork SA was notified about the incident by the workers' employer, and it has been referred to SA Police.

"This is a concerning incident and we commend the workers and their employer for reporting it promptly," SafeWork SA Acting Executive Director Rob Templeton said. "SafeWork SA Inspectors always carry official photographic ID and wear branded uniforms — anyone unsure should contact us immediately to verify."

It is illegal to impersonate an Inspector under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012*, with the maximum penalty being a \$10,000 fine.

In a statement, SafeWork SA said that although it was an isolated incident, employers and employees are urged to be vigilant for anyone posing as an Inspector.

"Impersonating a government official is a serious offence and we are working closely with SA Police to identify the perpetrator," Templeton said.

SafeWork SA also said that it does not conduct random night-time audits of this type or conduct drug and alcohol or other biological tests. The regulator also welcomed employers and workers to call SafeWork SA on 1300 365 255 if they have any doubts about the bona fides of an Inspector.

The man who impersonated an Inspector is described as aged in his late 30s, slim build, with short light-coloured hair and a beard. Anyone with information is asked to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.



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ATMOSPHERE, ACCESS AND RESCUE

— CONFINED SPACE SAFETY
BEYOND COMPLIANCE



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Working at Height Association CEO **SCOTT BARBER** explains the importance of a whole system of hazard management approach to confined space.

Confined space entry remains one of the most hazardous tasks across industries, whether in utilities, construction, manufacturing or heavy industry. Workers may need to enter tanks, silos, pipelines, culverts, pits or process vessels. These spaces are inherently dangerous, combining atmospheric risks with the challenges of restricted access, difficult rescue and potential for falls.

Among the hazards, airborne contaminants like dust, particulates, fumes and gases often receive justified attention. But in many cases, the greater immediate risks arise from falls, difficult entry/exit and the ability to remove a worker quickly in an emergency. True best practice means addressing both streams of risk together, treating confined space work as a whole system of hazard management, rather than isolating issues in silos.

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Beyond minimum standards

Standards such as AS 2865 (Confined Spaces) and the model WHS Regulations set essential requirements, but too often incidents occur because organisations plan for compliance rather than for consequences.

Best practice requires integrating atmospheric monitoring, fall prevention, safe access and egress, and emergency rescue capability into one system. Permits and procedures should demonstrate not only that hazards have been controlled, but that workers can enter, work and, if needed, be rescued safely.

Confined spaces: dual hazards of atmosphere and access

Every confined space presents a two-part challenge:

- Atmospheric risks: oxygen deficiency, toxic gases and respirable dust.
- Physical risks: falls during vertical entry, slips in wet or uneven spaces, entrapment, or injury during rescue.

These risks amplify each other. For example, a fall in a space with poor air quality complicates rescue, while delayed retrieval exposes the injured worker to atmospheric hazards for longer.

A multi-layered control strategy

Best practice confined space management demands a holistic approach:

- Risk assessment and planning that considers atmosphere, access and rescue equally.
- Engineering controls such as dust suppression, fixed ladders, secure anchor points and retrieval systems.

- Continuous atmospheric monitoring for oxygen, dust and gases before and during entry.
- Fall protection and retrieval systems matched to the space and the task.
- Emergency planning that assumes retrieval will be necessary and designs for it from the start.

Safe access and egress

Planning for entry is not just about opening a hatch. It means ensuring the following:

- Vertical entries have suitable tripods, davit arms and man-rated winches.
- Horizontal or restricted entries are wide enough for a worker in PPE and RPE, and suitable for retrieval if an incident occurs.
- Fall arrest or restraint systems are in place where there is a risk of descent, climb or working near an edge during access.
- Systems and PPE are designed/selected to easily integrate with a rescue capability.

Without a safe way in and out, even the best ventilation and PPE offer little protection.

Respiratory protection in balance

Where particulates, fumes or vapours cannot be engineered out, respiratory protective equipment (RPE) is vital. But RPE must be matched to both the hazard and the work method:

- P2 or P3 filters for most dust hazards.



STANDARDS SUCH AS AS 2865 (CONFINED SPACES) AND THE MODEL WHS REGULATIONS SET ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS, BUT TOO OFTEN INCIDENTS OCCUR BECAUSE ORGANISATIONS PLAN FOR COMPLIANCE RATHER THAN FOR CONSEQUENCES.

- Powered air-purifying respirators (PAPRs) for longer-duration tasks.
- Supplied air or SCBA for oxygen-deficient or unknown atmospheres.

However, RPE is only effective when supported by fit testing, training and program management. Importantly, RPE cannot become the sole focus; falls and rescue readiness must be given equal weight in the entry plan.

Rescue planning: the critical test

Rescue planning is often where confined space safety breaks down. Too many organisations rely on “call the fire brigade” without ensuring the following:

- Rescue can be initiated immediately by trained, equipped personnel on site.
- Rescuers are protected from the same hazards (atmospheric and fall-related) as the entrant.
- Equipment is appropriate: retrieval winches, breathing apparatus, stretchers and anchor systems must be in place and compatible with the entry method.

- Rescue drills are practised and validated under realistic conditions. Permits and risk assessments should not be approved unless a credible, executable rescue plan is documented and validated.

Culture and competence

Confined space work should never be considered routine. Best practice is built on the following:

- Training that covers both respiratory and fall hazards.
- Supervisors empowered to delay or redesign work if access or rescue is unsafe.
- Investment in equipment that reduces risk without overcomplicating tasks.
- A safety culture that treats every entry as a unique event requiring thoughtful planning.

Leading a safer future

Managing confined space risk is more than meeting regulations; it is a measure of safety maturity. A best-practice approach balances respiratory protection with fall prevention, safe access and effective rescue capability.

By embedding these controls into work systems, industries across utilities, manufacturing, construction and heavy industry can build resilience, protect workers and strengthen operational performance.

Confined space management is not simply about entry; it is about ensuring workers can always come out safely.

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LOCKOUT EQUIPMENT

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WORKING AT HEIGHT AND THE LAW:

PRIMARY DUTIES, LITIGATION TRENDS AND RISK-MITIGATION TO-DOS



Lawyers **GEORGIE CHAPMAN** and **FLEUR McKAY-CALVERT** — Partner and Special Counsel at HR Legal, respectively — set out working at height primary duties, litigation trends and some key risk-mitigation to-dos.

Falls from height remain one of Australia's leading causes of workplace serious injury and death in the construction and industrial sector, and the legal stakes have never been higher. The human costs associated with such incidents, for both the worker and others in the workplace, cannot be overstated. Additionally, with industrial manslaughter offences now in force across every jurisdiction, a fatal fall can expose businesses and officers to multimillion-dollar penalties and even prison terms, where risks were not reasonably controlled.

If your business engages employees or contractors to work at height or supervise crews, it is critical that you are aware of your obligations and are proactively implementing measures to mitigate risks associated with working at height.

What are a business's primary safety duties?

Under work health and safety (WHS) legislation, employers or persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBUs) must provide and maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and free from risks to health.

In a nutshell, this requires employers and PCBUs to, among other things:

- identify the hazards (such as working from height);
- assess the risks to health and safety associated with those hazards;
- implement the highest reasonably practicable controls;
- ensure such controls are implemented under competent supervision; and
- review and verify that the controls work in practice.

Further, company officers must exercise all due diligence to ensure the PCBU is meet- >



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ing its safety obligations — or face personal liability for the company's failures.

As WHS is state and territory based, there are some differences in obligations depending on the jurisdiction. For national operators, this means the same type of failure/incident can attract varying penalties depending on location. As such, national operators are encouraged to align their safety standards to the highest requirements applicable in any jurisdiction in which they operate.

What trends are we seeing with falls from height?

Safe Work Australia data from 2023 reveals that falls from height in that year was the second highest contributor of worker fatalities across Australia. Further, cases over recent years have demonstrated a clear nationwide emphasis on preventing falls from heights, and in particular safety regulators' increased appetite to prosecute for companies' failure to implement basic safety controls.

In 2024, a Victorian transport company was fined \$350,000 after an employee died after falling 3.9 metres due to defective guardrails. In its sentencing remarks, the court noted that an employer is required under safety legislation "to be proactive and imaginative in the identification of hazards in the workplace. In this case, the risks of a fall from height are well known. The risk of falling from the top of a trailer while inspecting the hatches is obvious." The court further found that the employer never properly turned its mind to the issue of effective guardrails and "fell into something of a blind spot". Had the employer

not pleaded guilty to the charges, the court indicated that it would have imposed a fine of \$500,000.

Cases such as this one send a clear message: where foreseeable fall hazards exist, appropriate controls must be implemented and enforced. Failure to do so will not only expose employees to very real risks to health and safety, it will also likely attract severe penalties, particularly where employees are injured or fatalities occur.

Further, with the introduction of industrial manslaughter in most jurisdictions, the potential penalties and potential risk of imprisonment of individuals is even greater.

To reduce the risks of imprisonment and heavy fines, it is essential that employers and PCBU's understand compliance with their health and safety obligations.

What about industrial manslaughter?

All Australian jurisdictions now have in place an offence of industrial manslaughter. While the specific definition of industrial manslaughter and the element of fault varies across Australian jurisdictions, industrial manslaughter is generally described as reckless or negligent conduct by an employer or business that causes the death of a worker or another person to whom a duty of care is owed.

Company officers can also be liable for workplace manslaughter.

Penalties can reach up to \$20 million for corporations and up to 25 years' imprisonment for individuals, depending on the jurisdiction.

Some key business to-dos

Where your business engages workers who work from height, there is no excuse for overlooking safety obligations — both the human and legal risks are far too great.

This means:

Plan and, where possible, eliminate the height task

✓ Challenge whether the job can be done from the ground or using prefabrication and mechanical aids. Elimination remains the most effective control.

Engineer out the risk

✓ Where elimination is not possible, install fixed edge protection, guardrails, and compliant scaffolds or platforms. Use safety mesh, certified anchor points and properly rated catch systems where prevention is not feasible. Courts repeatedly treat missing edge protection and defective guardrails as serious departures from duty.

Use a Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) that fits the actual task and enforce it

✓ Generic paperwork is not enough. The SWMS must identify site-specific fall hazards, such as voids or brittle surfaces, and must be enforced in real time. If your SWMS calls for an elevating work platform, supervisors must stop work if it is not used.

Verify competency and supervise the work

✓ Do not assume that workers or labour hire personnel are trained for heights. Check qualifications, induct on the task, and maintain competent supervision. Courts expect PCBU's to guard against foreseeable risks from inexperience or disobedience where high-consequence hazards are involved.

Maintain plant and safety systems

✓ Adopt hazard-specific inspection and maintenance regimes for guardrails, anchor points, scaffolds and EWP's. 'Assumed checks' or general inspections are not enough when a failure could be fatal. Document each inspection and remove non-conforming equipment from service.

Prepare for rescue and emergencies

✓ Where fall-arrest systems are used, you must have a realistic, rehearsed rescue plan, fit-for-purpose equipment, and clear communications. Time matters in a suspension or high-access incident.

Measure, monitor and correct

✓ Use pre-start checks, supervisor verifications and audits to verify controls are in place. Treat non-conformances as learning events with corrective actions. The absence of implementation evidence is a repeated theme in prosecutions and sentencing remarks.

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CAN HUMAN-ROBOT COLLABORATION

TACKLE MANUAL HANDLING CHALLENGES?

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Australian engineers have trialled a human-robot collaboration system designed to make construction faster, safer and less physically demanding.

Setting out to tackle a key challenge in construction robotics, a recent paper — published in *Automation in Construction* — sets out a human-robot collaboration system trialled by researchers from Monash University's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. The trial explored not only which tasks robots should handle and which should remain with human workers, but also incorporated human fatigue into the planning process.

The team, under the supervision of Dr Yihai Fang, simulated humans and robots assembling a timber floor frame for a three-bedroom unit, breaking the work into 71 tasks. Task completion time, productivity and physical fatigue were measured and, using real data from Monash's UR10e robotic arm and MiR100 mobile robot, carefully allocating tasks and sequencing workflows was found to make construction more efficient, while easing physical demands on human workers.

"Collaborating with robots in construction is no longer a distant vision — it's rapidly becoming a reality," Fang said. "Faced with ongoing challenges such as low productivity,

ACCORDING TO STUDY FIRST-AUTHOR DR WILL WANG, JOB SITES COULD BE TRANSFORMED BY MAKING THE MOVE TOWARDS AUTOMATION AND ROBOTICS.



labour shortages and high injury rates, the industry must embrace innovation by integrating automation and advanced robotic technologies."

According to study first-author Dr Will Wang, job sites could be transformed by

making the move towards automation and robotics. "The simulations really show how robots could take the strain off workers — they can handle the heavy lifting and repetitive jobs, while humans focus on planning, problem-solving and making sure everything fits perfectly," Wang said.

"It's exciting to see how off-site prefabrication and smart onsite collaboration could actually make construction safer and faster for workers," Wang added. "Figuring out which tasks should be done by humans and which by robots is a major hurdle. Our study lays the groundwork for a safer, more efficient and human-focused approach to integrating robotics into structural assembly."

As to future research directions, the team is now testing augmented reality guidance — to demonstrate how humans and machines could work together seamlessly. As part of this research, participants wear AR headsets that act like 'smart eyes', showing them the best route between storage and work zones and previewing the robots' movements — something that is designed to help workers coordinate with robots, speed up tasks, reduce mistakes and stay safer on site.

The paper on the human-robot collaboration system was published open access and you can read it at doi.org/10.1016/j.autcon.2025.106464.

Safety controller interface

The Pilz IO-Link Safety Master PDP 67 IOLS is a compact yet powerful solution designed to make machine safety smarter, more flexible and easier to implement, even in the most demanding industrial environments.

As the interface to the safety controller, the Pilz Master PDP 67 IOLS enables point-to-point communication up to the field level. IO-Link sensors and classic safety sensors alongside the IO-Link Safety devices can also be connected through this master device.

The product is notable for its safe communication, supporting IO-Link Safety — a special version of IO-Link designed for safety-critical tasks (meaning it can handle important safety messages without errors); flexible connections, with IO-Link Safety devices, regular IO-Link sensors and traditional safety sensors able to be connected all in one place; a field-ready design with its IP67/IP69K protection rating, meaning it's built to resist dust, dirt and water, and works in temperatures from -30 to +70°C, making it suitable for outdoor or harsh environments; and being compact and cabinet-free, meaning a control cabinet is not needed — the PDP 67 can be installed directly on the machine, saving space and simplifying wiring.

Key features include: four IO-Link Safety ports and four configurable digital I/O ports (can be used as inputs or outputs); standard M12 connectors for easy plug-and-play set-up; support for high safety levels PL e (EN ISO 13849-1) and SIL 3 (IEC 61508/62061); compatibility with Profinet and Profibus networks, making it easy to integrate into existing systems; and automatic device recognition and parameter set-up, which reduces downtime during maintenance or replacement.

Pilz aims to offer a complete IO-Link Safety System, including both the master and compatible sensors, along with expert support to help clients integrate IO-Link Safety seamlessly into their application.

Pilz Australia Industrial Automation LP

www.pilz.com.au



Bespoke glove service

The Graphex bespoke glove service partners with clients to engineer protection that reflects the real conditions of the workplace, reflecting the site, the risks and the workers.

The service is designed to deliver precision-built solutions through collaboration, from high-risk tactical missions to demanding industrial operations. It also aims to create gloves that are purpose-designed to meet exacting performance requirements and where generic PPE is not up to the task.

Gloves combine high-performance yarn, advanced grip coatings, thermal barriers and task-specific features tailored to the environment.

Certified by BSI Group and with regular third-party audits, these measures aim to build a foundation of trust and testing, validate mechanical claims and ensure Graphex gloves deliver on safety, visibility and compliance.

Private Brands Pty Ltd

www.privatebrands.com.au



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Isolator check and phase indicator

The Remlive RL-24i Isolator Check alerts users to the presence of voltage, enabling the visual indication of supply in electrical isolation procedures. A user can see live indication immediately before isolating and see no indication immediately after isolating.

While the Isolator Check focuses on isolation, the RL-24i Phase Indicator addresses phase rotation by confirming the correct sequencing of electrical phases. It is a permanently mounted device and helps reduce the requirement for live testing of phase rotation with portable multimeter tester leads.

Both devices feature a DIN rail module and a door unit display that fits through the front of a control panel. The display provides status indicators for the three phases L1, L2 and L3, as well as N. The LED illumination sequence is designed to provide an intuitive method of indicating presence of voltage or phase rotation.

Fortress Systems Pty Ltd

www.fortressinterlocks.com



Temperature transmitter

Emerson's Rosemount 3144S Temperature Transmitter is engineered to provide 0.05°C of accuracy and is available with an optional 20-year stability specification and a 20-year limited warranty. Emerson's ReadyConnect Technology is designed to allow ease of use by enabling plug-and-play sensor configuration with the push of a button, eliminating

the need to manually input sensor information and Callendar-Van Dusen coefficients, saving configuration and commissioning time.

Other ease-of-use features include an operator interface with a simplified, task-based menu and common navigation structure across host and configuration tools. Quick Service Buttons provide local access to basic commissioning and maintenance tasks, such as viewing the current configuration, performing a loop test and rotating the display. Bluetooth wireless technology provides remote access to the device at distances up to 15 m for increased productivity and safety.

Emerson

www.emerson.com/au/automation



Remote monitoring gateway

The MSA Safety FieldServer ProtoNode Gateway provides remote monitoring capabilities via cloud communications to various fixed detection monitoring systems, including all MSA Safety Modbus and BACNet protocol Fixed Gas and Flame Detectors in the field, as well as devices from other manufacturers. The gateways are designed to be versatile, cyber-secure, easy-to-configure devices that serve as entry points to the cloud for data communication and processing between internet-connected products and network protocols.

Available connectivity options for the gateway are Modbus RTU (serial) and Modbus TCP (Ethernet) protocols and BACNet IP protocols. Connectivity enables remote monitoring and control; cloud-based alarm notifications via email for faults or alarms; and data visualisation through MSA Grid dashboards.

Key features include: enhanced site safety with secure remote access for diagnostics, monitoring, alarming and configuration of products in the field; support for remote access and monitoring of MSA Safety detectors and controllers and third-party products/systems for a concise understanding of each device's function and status; and the ability to streamline inspections at a glance with calibration audits and functional verifications.

MSA Safety detection solutions compatible with the gateway include the General Monitors FL500/FL500-H2 Flame Detector, General Monitors FL5000 Flame Detector, General Monitors S5000 Gas Detector, Observer i Ultrasonic Gas Leak Detector, Senscient ELDS Laser Based Open Path Gas Detector (OPGD), SENTRY io Fire and Gas Detection Controller, SUPREMATouch, and ULTIMA X5000 Gas Detector.

MSA Australia Pty Ltd

au.msasafety.com

Army aims to combat heat risk with wearable monitor prototype



A wearable heat risk monitor prototype for the Australian Defence Force is being trialled by Army personnel in the Northern Territory this month, with the prototype developed by GME — a manufacturer of radio frequency communication technology products.

With heat risk — a significant issue for workplace safety and force preservation — currently being mitigated with activity cycles informed by specialised thermal monitoring equipment, the Army engaged GME to develop wearable environmental monitoring technology that is capable of continuous, real-time personal heat stress monitoring without manual input.

Combining environmental sensors and real-time data analytics, the portable device provides local commanders and soldiers with live insights that facilitate timely action to minimise heat risk. The Wearable Heat Stress Monitor works by continuous environment monitoring and tracking workforce activity patterns to flag potential heat-related incidents.

“Trialling innovative solutions like this allows us to better manage heat-related risks and maintain operational readiness wherever we are working, including tropical areas such as the Northern Territory,” Head of Army Safety Colonel Brendan Robinson said.

The field trial will assess the prototype’s performance, including wearability and ease of use for soldiers. A final product for the Army and the wider community will be informed by the results of the trial.

GME Pty Ltd
www.gme.net.au



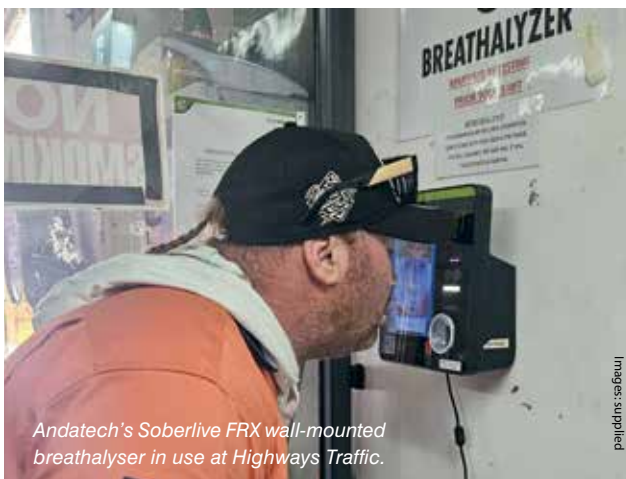
Wall-mounted breathalyser drives traffic management compliance



Seeking to improve its alcohol testing compliance and efficiency, Highways Traffic — an Australian traffic management provider — adopted Andatech's Soberlive FRX wall-mounted breathalyser.

Delivering services for a broad spectrum of projects — from major state infrastructure works to smaller local upgrades — and with a workforce of around 100 employees working across day and night shifts, Highways Traffic upholds a strict zero-tolerance policy on drugs and alcohol, aligned with client expectations and legal obligations.

Highways Traffic had previously implemented alcohol testing protocols using handheld breathalysers. However, the company found that traditional handheld breathalysers posed challenges, including downtime from offsite calibration and limited availability outside standard hours — meaning that ensuring consistent, reliable testing across all shifts became increasingly difficult.



Andatech's Soberlive FRX wall-mounted breathalyser in use at Highways Traffic.

In search of a more efficient, scalable solution, Highways Traffic turned to the Soberlive FRX. Features of the solution include onsite sensor replacement, automated reporting via the Andalink cloud portal, and SMS alerts for failed tests — designed to ensure rapid response even during after-hours shifts. The solution is also designed to further strengthen the integrity of the testing process through facial recognition technology, while the use of streamlined documentation is designed to simplify compliance management.

"This device has been a game changer for our company," said Nicole Murphy, Planning Manager at Highways Traffic. "It has increased compliance with our testing requirements, especially with the SMS alert feature which ensures failed tests are escalated immediately — even when management isn't onsite."

While in line with internal policies Highways Traffic still uses handheld devices during site audits, Soberlive FRX has become the company's primary alcohol testing tool — its team praising Andatech for its responsive support and training throughout the onboarding process.

"The Andatech Soberlive FRX is extremely user-friendly and easy to navigate," Murphy said. "Any questions we had were met with great support from the Andatech team to ensure we could fully utilise the device's capabilities."

As a result of using the solution, Highways Traffic said it observed reduced device downtime, faster incident response, higher staff compliance, and streamlined reporting and documentation. It also found that switching to wall-mounted alcohol testing strengthened its workplace safety culture and made compliance simpler and more efficient.

Andatech Pty Ltd
www.andatech.com.au

WHY FR WORKWEAR IS ESSENTIAL – EVEN WHEN YOU'RE JUST TESTING

As **ANTHONY LEVA**, National Marketing Manager at TRu Brands, explains, flame-resistant workwear isn't just for high-voltage switching or fault repair — it's essential PPE for anyone involved in any live work, including testing.

When it comes to electrical safety, testing for dead is a key procedure that every electrician, maintenance worker or engineer performs. It's a fundamental step to make sure a piece of equipment is de-energised and safe to work on. But it's a procedure that carries a hidden danger. The very moment you apply your tester; you're entering a hazardous boundary. If something has gone awry, a breaker has failed, a back feed is present, or there's a simple human oversight, you could be exposed to a dangerous arc flash in a fraction of a second.

This is why wearing certified flame-resistant (FR) workwear during testing for dead is not optional; it's essential.

This isn't just best practice — it's codified in Australian Standard AS/NZS 4836:2023 – Safe working on or near low-voltage electrical installations and equipment.

Testing is live work

A common misconception among workers is that testing doesn't count as working live. AS 4836 puts that assumption to rest:

"Testing to prove that conductors and electrical equipment are not live shall be treated as live work and appropriate control measures applied." — AS/NZS 4836:2023

That means when you're probing terminals with your multimeter to confirm zero voltage, you're engaging in live work under the standard. The risk of an arc flash event — whether from a faulty breaker, degraded insulation or simple human error — is still present. And if you're in street clothes or non-FR hi-vis, the outcome could be fatal.

Some workers become complacent, thinking "this is a routine procedure" or "this piece of equipment should be de-energised", but accidents frequently happen when we let our guard down. An arc flash can be triggered by something as simple as a faulty breaker, a shared neutral, or a nearby back feed and you may not realise it's live until you make contact.

FR clothing: more than just compliance

AS/NZS 4836:2023 recommends arc-rated PPE for this exact reason:

"Arc-rated protective clothing and equipment shall be worn when working live or performing testing." — AS/NZS 4836:2023

The keyword here is "shall", which in the context of Australian Standards indicates a strong recommendation. It's a clear call to action — don't test or work live without the proper gear.

FR workwear is designed to self-extinguish when exposed to flames or arc flash. Unlike polyester or untreated cotton, which can melt or ignite, FR garments reduce the severity of burns and can be the difference between walking away or suffering life-altering injuries.

Cost vs catastrophe

An FR-rated shirt and pants set might cost \$150–\$300. That may seem steep for smaller operations or solo contractors — but compare that to the cost of an arc flash incident:

- Skin graft surgeries and months of rehabilitation: \$100,000+
- Lost income during recovery or permanent disability
- Fines for WHS breaches under safe work regulations
- The human cost: lifelong injury or fatality

FR clothing is a low-cost, high-impact investment in your safety — and your life.

Don't assume — protect yourself every time

Too often, electrical workers assume that "it'll be fine this time" or "I'm just testing". But AS/NZS 4836:2023 is clear: testing is live work. The risk is real, and preparation is mandatory.

FR workwear is your last line of defence. It won't stop the arc flash — but it might stop it from ending your life. If the standard recommends it, your procedures and policies should reflect it.

If you wouldn't work live without gloves or tools, don't do it without certified FR workwear.

Responder washdown system designed for on-scene protection



Firefighting is linked to elevated rates of cancers like breast, blood and oesophageal — with research highlighting the need for immediate washdown to lower risks to general population levels — and bacterial exposure and hyperthermia risk are significant concerns for emergency responders following a flood event. ResponderWash is a portable washdown system that aims to provide emergency responders with at-the-scene protection, including from cancer-causing contaminants and bacterial exposure, and to reduce hyperthermia risk.

The system was developed by Resilience Logistic Solutions (RLS), an Alkath Group company, after an RLS management team member witnessed multiple incidents where responders had no access to basic hygiene or privacy before returning to the station, highlighting a critical gap in on-scene support. ResponderWash, therefore, is intended to offer a fast, private way for emergency personnel to shed contaminated gear, wash down and redress in clean clothes. The system designed to be set up by two people and deployable in under 30 minutes.

Made in South Nowra, NSW, and officially launched on 9 July 2025, the system features a 3 m usable width and 3.3 m height, with three colour-coded compartments. The compartments include a 'hot zone' for removing and bagging contaminated clothing via privacy airlocks; a 'warm zone' with a LPG-powered warm shower using a standard 4 kg gas cylinder; and a 'cold zone' with an optional positive-pressure environment for redressing.

It is built to withstand harsh, remote environments and is also lightweight, with each component requiring no more than a two-person lift. While not built for large-scale emergencies, it is transportable on a ute, making it accessible for small units or strike teams. Water efficiency is another design consideration, with the system using



as little as 80 L (four 20 L containers) to wash down about eight responders — greywater being managed via collection containers, to ensure safe handling.

"Our vision is to ensure all first responders have access to private, in-field hygiene options at the scene — supporting their health and dignity as they work to protect lives and property," said Jason Chapman, Alkath Group's Director of Strategy & Business Development. "Just as catering is prioritised at major incidents, we believe hygiene support deserves equal focus as a vital element of responder health and wellbeing."

Alkath Group
alkath.group

COULD THIS VR HEADSET HOLD THE KEY TO VOCATIONAL RECOVERY?

Launched in August, a new virtual reality tool is designed to help young people into work after mental ill-health — all from inside a VR headset.

VR4VR (Virtual Reality for Vocational Recovery), which launched at Veritas House in Orange on 28 August, simulates real workplace scenarios using VR technology, giving young people engaged with supported employment programs an opportunity to practise and learn in a safe, controlled environment. Developed in the extended reality (XR) lab at Orygen and supported by TAL Community Foundation, a launch is also planned at Youth Focus in Perth in September — meaning VR4VR is expected to help around 20 young people in a pilot trial this year.

According to Senior Research Fellow Dr Jennifer Nicholas, who leads the project, the VR4VR program was a natural evolution of the Orygen XR lab's work using immersive technology in mental health settings. "Orygen's extended reality program is world-leading, and applying it to vocational recovery was an obvious next step," Nicholas said. "Employment is a crucial part of recovery for young people, and VR4VR helps them prepare for the realities of work, while supporting their wellbeing.

There are three VR4VR sessions that each come with a different scenario. They are: approaching potential employers — from what to wear to what to say; managing difficult situations — including how to navigate a difficult customer; and reasonable adjustments — how to advocate for yourself in the workplace to ensure best results for you and your employer. "Young people have told us they want more digital tools to support their mental health, and with TAL's support we have been able to create an innovative, evidence-informed program that will boost young people's skills for gaining and maintaining employment," Nicholas said.

Designed to complement the support already provided by employment specialists working in mental health services, following the pilot, the Orygen team intends to expand VR4VR — to enable more young people to access the program via other youth and community partners nationally. "Mental ill-health is a significant challenge facing a growing number of young Australians and it requires new approaches," said Alex Homer, TAL's Chief Executive Customer and Brand as well as Chair of TAL Community Foundation. "We're proud to back Orygen's innovative work using technology to help empower young people to build confidence, gain skills, and thrive in life and work."



VR4VR cafe scene.

Trying the new VR4VR headset.

Orygen and TAL

AI platform streamlines ergonomic and hazard assessments

Natural health products company Blackmores Group has integrated Soter Analytics' SoterAI platform into its safety processes — observing that the solution reduced aspects of its administrative workload by 50–70%, streamlined ergonomic and hazard assessments, and strengthened the safety culture across the company's operations. "We needed to automate tedious compliance checks," Blackmores Group Director of WHS Andrew Wilson said, noting that previously manual updates took excessive time and effort.

With SoterAI, safety documents are uploaded directly, the technology designed to enable compliance gaps to be instantly identified, ensuring that teams using it remain ahead of regulatory changes without being bogged down by manual research. "We now have absolute confidence that our compliance status is continually up to date, providing peace of mind for the whole organisation," Wilson said.

SoterAI is also designed to improve safety by streamlining ergonomic assessments. It works by teams capturing short video clips of manual handling tasks, which SoterAI then analyses, marking high-risk postures. "Workers could visually understand their risks immediately, which drastically sped up training and improvements," Blackmores Group Head of WHS Judd Lulich said.

The solution is also designed to be beneficial for hazard identification. Using smartphone technology, it is engineered to identify potential safety hazards from simple workplace images or video snippets, then suggesting practical corrective actions. "It's like having an expert alongside you, prompting you to consider risks you might overlook," Lulich said; with the solution also said to elevate frontline workers' safety engagement — empowering non-specialist staff to actively contribute to workplace safety.

Helping with the generation of safety training materials and communications is another benefit the team identified in using the technology. "We previously spent hours or days creating detailed



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safety talks; now the AI does the heavy lifting, allowing us to focus on finalising content and delivery," Wilson said.

Features of the technology include AI-generated visuals that clearly illustrate risks, making safety hazards easily comprehensible. "Workers and managers instantly grasped risk scenarios, making our safety conversations clearer and more impactful," Lulich said.

The team also noted that the technology was beneficial in the cultural acceptance of AI. "Seeing AI in action transformed skepticism into enthusiasm," Lulich said. "Employees now view AI as a powerful safety ally rather than a threat."

Soter Analytics
soter.com



Safer vehicle cabin structure

Isuzu's reimagined vehicle cabin structure has been designed to improve overall safety, dimensions, visibility and storage. These updated workspaces encompass a range of driver comfortability improvements, with operator wellness top of mind.

This includes not only a smart, new-look exterior but also a roomier, more accommodating interior space, helping to create an ergonomic, comfortable and safe environment for operators to spend their time on the road.

Driver seating has been closely considered to reduce fatigue, with Isuzu's ergonomic suspension seating added to a large selection of the range as standard. The driver's seating is designed to be more comfortable, while positioning has been

optimised to accommodate greater visibility, as well as easier access to driver controls, stalks and other dash functions.

Drivers will also appreciate a smaller diameter, more user-friendly steering wheel, assisting in safer overall operator handling and vehicle manoeuvrability, especially in busy urban applications.

Harmful ultraviolet (UV) and infrared (IR) rays can wreak havoc on the eyes and skin of those spending long stints behind the wheel of any vehicle. Isuzu's updated range features IR/UV cut glass, which uses a green glass inner layer, helping to reduce cut-through. This enhances visibility for the driver, helps to prevent sunburn and retina damage, and improves cabin insulation.

Isuzu Australia Limited
www.isuzu.com.au



SHIFT WORKERS SEE FATIGUE AS INEVITABLE, FACE 'SOLDIER THROUGH' CULTURE

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A recent systemic review of 28 eligible studies involving 1519 participants looked at shift workers' experiences of fatigue, healthy behaviours and sleep disturbance. Typically defined as any work schedule outside standard daytime hours — including early morning, evening, night and rotating shifts — shift work is common across many industries and poses significant risks to the health of shift workers; risks that are due, in part, to the disruption of healthy sleep-wake schedules.

Themes

Through their review, the researchers generated three analytical themes:

1. Inevitability of fatigue and tiredness
2. Balancing sleep needs with competing responsibilities
3. Obstacles to engaging in healthy behaviours

Through the first theme, the researchers outlined how, regardless of fatigue, shift workers experience a culture where they feel "peer pressure to soldier through" their shifts. "This perception of fatigue as normal, combined with the belief that admitting and discussing fatigue within the workplace shows weakness and a lack of camaraderie, appeared to perpetuate a detrimental workplace culture in which fatigue remains unacknowledged and untreated," the researchers wrote. "As a result, many workers expressed the belief that fatigue is something they must silently accept and endure rather than to seek support for."

The second theme highlighted how shift workers struggle to balance the need for daytime sleep with family, leisure and work responsibilities — where family needs are often prioritised over their own sleep. In the third, the researchers describe how, while shift workers often know which actions would benefit their health and reduce fatigue, they find it challenging — due to fatiguing and stressful work — to translate this knowledge into behaviour.

Conclusions

"This qualitative evidence synthesis found that shift workers perceive fatigue as inevitable and experience a workplace culture where fatigue remains unacknowledged, they struggle to balance daytime sleep with competing responsibilities, and they find it difficult to implement behaviors that would reduce fatigue and benefit their sleep and health," the researchers said in their concluding remarks.

"Behavioral sleep interventions should support shift workers to self-regulate their behavior, thoughts and emotions in fatiguing and stressful work environments, and provide behavioral and psychological support in addition to sleep education."

The review, titled 'Shift workers' experiences and views of sleep disturbance, fatigue and healthy behaviours: a systematic review and qualitative evidence synthesis' was published open access in *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment and Health* in July. You can read it at doi.org/10.5271/sjweh.4223.

COULD A 'PERCEIVED STIGMA' OF CONSTRUCTION WORK COST LIVES?

The study surveyed 243 construction workers, finding that perceptions of construction work as 'dirty' or 'low status' created a sense of 'occupational identity threat', reducing workers' motivation to engage in safe practices and eroding their commitment to workplace safety.

"When workers sense that society undervalues their role, it undermines their identity, erodes pride and self-esteem, and ultimately reduces their willingness to follow safety behaviours," said Dr Zhaobiao Zong, lead author and lecturer at Huaibei Normal University.

"We need to challenge negative stereotypes about construction work and promote its social value, strengthen workers' sense of identity through recognition and supportive workplace cultures, and incorporate wellbeing and resilience training into safety programs," Zong said. "By doing so, we not only protect workers' mental health but also create safer worksites."

One of the study's authors, Charles Darwin University Senior Lecturer in Business Dr Tianyi Long, said the findings have direct implications for Australia. "The construction sector has some of the highest accident rates in the world, including here in Australia," Long said.

"This research shows that how workers feel about their jobs, and how they believe others see them, can directly influence safety onsite. By building a culture of respect and self-compassion, we can improve wellbeing, reduce accidents and, ultimately, save lives."

The study, titled 'Relationship between perceived occupational stigma and safety behavior of construction workers: moderated mediation model', was published in the *Journal of Construction Engineering and Management*.



Dr Tianyi Long.



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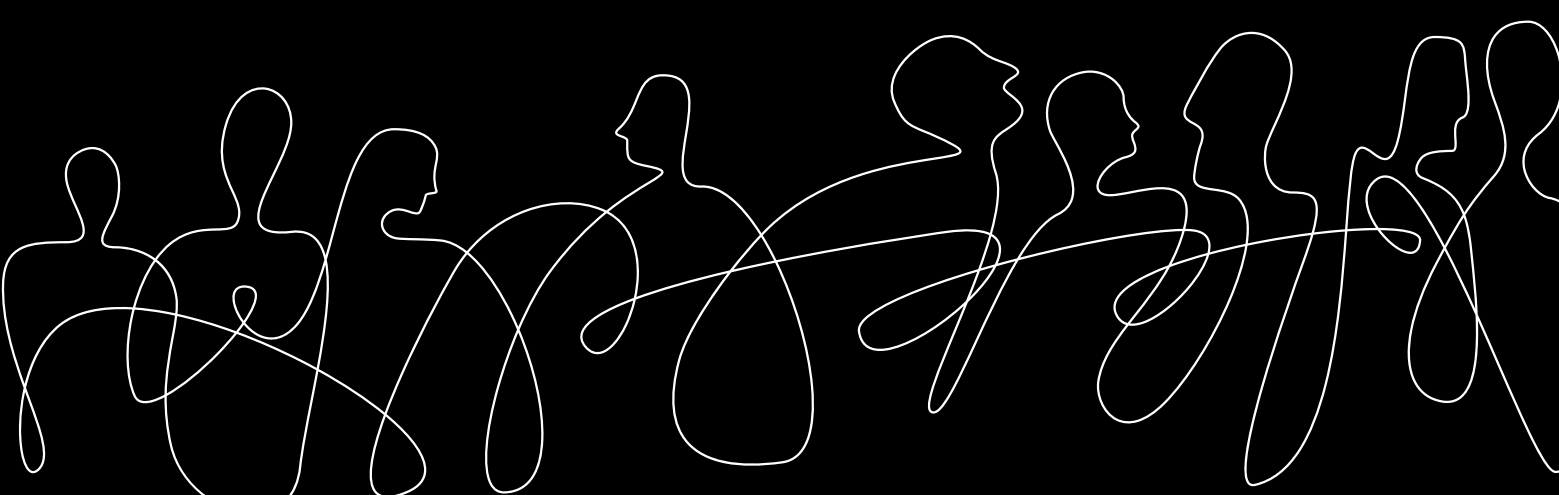
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