Case Study

# Autopact

Building safety around
the people who use it



# How Autopact transformed frontline safety participation across 52 sites with Donesafe




When Stuart Rawlins joined Autopact as Chief of Safety, he quickly realised there was a difference between the safety processes the business had in place and how they were being used.

The existing system was difficult to access, difficult to use and didn't fit the way people worked in Autopact's workshops.

That mattered. Technicians are Autopact's highest-risk workers, with more than 600 vehicle hoists inspected every day across a national network of 52 sites and almost 2,000 employees.

Stuart spent time working alongside teams in the workshops to understand what was getting in the way. The answer wasn't to add more process. It was to make the process simpler.

"I think the misconception in the safety world is that we get caught up making safety systems for safety people, when often it's not safety people using them. In our instance, our highest-risk workers are our technicians."

That thinking shaped the way Autopact approached Donesafe. Workers were involved in testing and refining the system, processes were stripped back to what people actually needed to do, and information that didn't need to be captured at the frontline was moved elsewhere.

The result was a safety system that people could use seamlessly as part of their working day.

# Start with the people at the highest risk

Autopact operates across a national network of automotive businesses, with technicians working every day around vehicles, equipment and more than 600 vehicle hoists.

For those technicians, safety needs to fit into the reality of a working day. It can't become an administrative exercise that competes with getting the job done.

Stuart took that principle seriously from the beginning.

"When I came into Autopact, I spent a number of days actually working at sites as a worker, washing cars, working with mechanics just to get a feel of the land of what it was like."

That time on the ground gave him a much clearer picture of where the existing system was falling short.

"It was pretty easy to get the information from the workers about the challenges they were having with our existing software."

There wasn't a lack of safety activity. The issue was that the system wasn't sufficiently connected to the people expected to use it.

Stuart and the team identified the core functions that mattered most, then brought workers into the build process to test the developing system and provide feedback.

"We actually went out to a number of sites and invited those workers in to actually have a play with the system to tell us what they liked, what they didn't like, right down to the actual wording that was in some of the sections within Donesafe on what resonated with them."

Stuart Rawlins
Chief of Safety



That consultation became a fundamental part of the implementation. Rather than asking frontline workers to adapt to a predetermined system, Autopact adapted the system around the way its people worked.

# 130 questions became 18

**130** Questions → **18** Questions

The clearest example of that thinking can be seen in Autopact's workshop inspections.

Before Donesafe, the workshop inspection contained around 130 questions.

For technicians working in busy workshops, that level of complexity created unnecessary friction.

Through four or five iterations, Autopact worked with its workforce to identify what genuinely needed to be captured at the frontline and what could be handled elsewhere.

The inspection reduced to around 18 questions.

The objective was to make sure the right information was captured by the right person at the right point in the process.

Information that wasn't essential at the point of inspection was moved into a second phase, reducing the amount technicians needed to enter at the front end.

"For our high-risk workers, it means that they're inputting less at the front end and it was easier and quicker for them. That was a big thing for us because breaking down barriers is a big thing if you're wanting people to use the system."

Donesafe's configurability has allowed Autopact to keep refining the experience as the team learns more about what works.



"Like anything, it evolves. And the more you use it, the more you work out things that work and don't work in it. We're always changing the process or tweaking it to make it better and more effective for everybody."

Dean Paterson
Service Manager at Volkswagen Sunshine Coast

The result is a frontline process that is simpler without losing the information the organisation needs.

# Making safety part of the working day

The difference is visible in Autopact's workshops.

More than 600 vehicle hoists need to be inspected before work begins each day. With Donesafe, technicians can complete the check from their phone at their workstation.

Every hoist has its own QR code, giving workers a direct route into the relevant inspection or reporting process.

Dean Paterson describes the experience simply:

> "Most of the guys do the hoist check before they even start work. It's very simple. The hoist check itself takes less than a minute because they can just do it on their phone while they're sitting at their bay."




The same principle applies when something needs attention.

"Every hoist has a QR code. Every piece of equipment has a QR code. If there's something going on with a hoist or a bit of equipment, it's pretty easy to just scan it and straight away throw something on the website and then it will get sent to upper management so they can get on it straight away."

- Juan, Volkswagen Sunshine Coast

Safety participation is built into the environment where the work happens.

> "Since the introduction of an application like Donesafe, it's become part of our culture."

Stuart Rawlins
Chief Safety Officer

# 900% more hazards reported




Making reporting easier has had a measurable effect on the information coming back from the frontline.

In the first year following the introduction of Donesafe, Autopact saw:

**+900%**

Increase in hazard reporting in the first year

Importantly, Stuart says that increase has been maintained.

For a national organisation operating across 52 sites, the value isn't simply the number of reports. More information gives the safety team greater visibility into what is happening across the network, making it easier to identify recurring issues, hotspots and emerging trends.

"In the automotive industry, we do have a lot of similar hazards that will come in, but it does allow us to identify hotspots and when things are trending not in the right direction."

The system can also surface issues that may otherwise be difficult to identify across a distributed network.

Stuart points to occupational violence as one example, with Autopact seeing an increase in disagreements and challenging behaviour from customers.

"It allows us to get that information and look at it and work with the sites on how we can improve in making safety."

For the safety team, more reporting means a clearer picture of what is happening at the frontline.




# The increase hasn't been limited to hazard reporting.

**+201%**

Increase in actions raised in the first 12 months

In the first 12 months, the number of actions raised by workers increased by 201%.

These actions relate to things workers have identified that aren't quite right and need to be fixed.

"So that's actions of things that aren't quite right that they've raised to be fixed in that first 12 months."

- Stuart Rawlins, Chief Safety Officer

The combination is important. More hazards are being reported, while more actions are also being raised to address issues that need attention.

"So, we are seeing both the increase in hazard reporting which has been maintained but we're also seeing an increase in actions being raised of things that need to be fixed."

That creates a stronger connection between what workers see and what the organisation can act on.

# One source of truth across 52 sites

Autopact's scale makes visibility critical.

With almost 2,000 employees across 52 sites and three states, the safety team needs to be able to access reliable information without depending on individual people or disconnected records.

Donesafe provides a central source of safety information across the organisation.

"It is that single source of truth where people don't have different parts of information stored in a filing cabinet or on their own computer."

That becomes particularly valuable around Autopact's highest-risk equipment.

If a regulator visits a site and wants to inspect the history of a particular hoist, the team can access its inspection and servicing records directly. Stuart said,

"We're easily able to show them every single inspection that's been done on that hoist, along with the annual or six-monthly servicing."

The information is available when it is needed, regardless of who happens to be on site.

"If they're not there, we can access Donesafe and easily show the WorkSafe regulator, this is what's been happening with this high-risk equipment."

For a national operation, that accessibility provides a level of consistency and visibility that is difficult to achieve when information is spread across individual files and systems.



# The measure that matters: participation

**86%**

Safety satisfaction rating in the 2024 staff engagement survey
(12 months after implementation)



For Stuart, the strongest evidence that the approach is working is whether people actually participate in safety.

In Autopact's 2024 staff engagement survey, safety received an 86% satisfaction rating, a result that has been maintained around that level.

Stuart attributes a significant part of that result to the way Autopact approached the selection, configuration and rollout of Donesafe.

"I have no doubt that the 86% satisfaction rating we got in our first engagement survey, which has been maintained around that level, has a lot to do with the selection of Donesafe, how it was configured, how we engaged the workers, how we communicated with them, how we trained them and how easy it is for them to use and access."

For someone with 15 years of experience working in safety across three industries, the level of frontline uptake stands out.

"The uptake we saw with Donesafe - and I've been in safety for 15 years across three different industries - would have to be one of the best we've seen of a safety software solution with workers."

That uptake is reflected in the everyday experience across Autopact's sites: technicians completing inspections, workers reporting hazards, actions being raised and safety information flowing back to the people responsible for acting on it.

# Technology that supports the way people work

Autopact's experience shows what is possible when safety technology is designed around the people using it.

The transformation came from combining frontline consultation with deliberate simplification, continuous improvement and technology that could be configured around the organisation's needs.

Donesafe has given Autopact the flexibility to keep refining its processes while providing the central visibility needed to manage safety across a national network.



## Technicians

For technicians, that means completing a hoist inspection in less than a minute from their phone.



## Workers

For workers, it means being able to report a hazard or raise an action while they're standing beside the issue.



## Safety leaders

For safety leaders, it means being able to see what is happening across 52 sites, identify trends and access the information needed to act.



## Organisation

For the organisation, it means safety information is captured in a consistent, accessible system rather than being fragmented across spreadsheets, files and individual records.

The result is a safety model that connects participation at the frontline with visibility at the organisational level.

# Keep it simple. Get people involved.




For Autopact, the lessons are straightforward.

> "When you're implementing it for the first time, get the team involved in the process. Because they feel involved, you're going to get more engagement from them and they're going to buy in. Keep it simple. I think simplicity is key for Donesafe."
>
> Brendan Maher
> Safety Advisor, Autopact

That thinking has shaped the way Autopact approaches safety across its national network.

The organisation didn't start with what a safety system should look like. It started with the people who needed to use it.

Autopact worked directly with technicians to test and refine the system, cutting its workshop inspection from 130 questions to 18 and making it much easier for people to report issues from the workshop floor. The team has continued to tweak and improve the processes as they've seen what works in practice.

The result is a safety system built for participation, supported by data and capable of providing visibility across a large, distributed workforce.

For Autopact, Donesafe has become part of the way safety operates.

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And the principle behind it remains simple:

Make safety work for the people who need to use it.

## About HSI Donesafe

Our simple-to-use software is built to make your EHS program successful. HSI Donesafe is the only software that provides complete Health, Safety, Injury, Environmental, Quality, Risk, and Compliance Management in one integrated cloud-based platform.

Simple for workers. Simple for admins. Simple for you.

HSI Donesafe is a division of HSI, a global single-source partner for EHSQ, ESG, training, compliance and professional development solutions. We support thousands of organisations across the globe, ranging from mid to enterprise private companies, listed companies, NFPs and councils. Nearly half of the top 100 ASX listed companies and many Fortune 500 companies rely on our software to keep their people safe.