

Case Study.

Elecnor.

Spain.

Infrastrucure/renewable energy

Using the dss+ Risk Factor™ approach to improve safety

Elecnor, one of Spain's major players in the sectors of infrastructure, renewable energy and new technologies, was determined to improve its results and incorporate safety to its values to better face an increasingly demanding market. That is why, in 2016, the company reached out to dss+ for support. Elecnor relied on dss+'s expertise to identify opportunities for improvement and draw up a plan to help the company achieve its goal.

At that time, Elecnor's leadership had already demonstrated a strong commitment to safety and made clear its willingness to change course. The company had established a clear line of action with zero tolerance against any deviation that could compromise the safety of its workers. For dss+, the task was to carry out an in-depth diagnosis and analysis of the starting point of the company, followed by an action plan to be implemented and executed to reach their new objectives.

The project was planned for two years and focused on multiple aspects: from the purely organisational and motivational to detailed actions for improvement and learning processes... but above all, it based itself on individual safety awareness. By the nature of its activities, Elecnor has specific ways of working that



No restrictions are placed on investments in safety. Elecnor has always seen clearly that profitability in line with health and well-being is the best outcome."

JOSÉ JAIME RIBAS, DIRECTOR OF GENERAL SERVICES IN ELECNOR

mostly implicate individual workers or small teams. This is why the dss+ Risk Factor methodology was chosen as the main action plan for Elecnor to achieve its goals, implementing a personal approach to risk knowledge to help employees make safer decisions.

Project phases

The first step was for dss+ to conduct a diagnosis and evaluation of leadership and the development of the safety culture at Elecnor. dss+ reviewed the entire safety organisation and evaluated how it was integrated in all areas. To this end, 59 individual interviews were carried out with key employees from leadership and line management, as well as an exhaustive evaluation. It also included a "Safety Perception Survey", answered by almost 3,800 employees of all levels, and field visits to 6 Elecnor delegations in Spain (Bilbao, Madrid, Seville, Valladolid, Barcelona and Valencia), in addition to informal conversations with over 100 people.

Once the evaluation phase was complete, dss+ shared the diagnosis and results with Elecnor and prepared a draft action plan that incorporated the objectives and challenges of Elecnor, as well as the roadmap to achieve them.

The final aspect of the project consisted in the revision and fine-tuning of the plan, as well as the preparation of the transition towards the new safety business strategy. This included a set of concrete actions to carry out, and priorities and deadlines to achieve the objective in two years.

Evaluation and diagnosis

The analysis phase revealed that, although Elecnor had traditionally been very involved in the safety of its workers, therefore making it a pioneer in its sector, there were still some areas for improvement. Until then, Elecnor's safety culture was based on external supervision

and control largely led by safety professionals, and less on the internal motivation of workers. This had implications on the understanding and implementation of safety for the rest of the organisation, and among management in particular. José Jaime Ribas, Director of General Services in Elecnor, explained that "raising safety awareness at all levels of management has been key since they are the first who can change the safety culture and cascade it down."

At the time of the evaluation, it also appeared that operational discipline could be improved and made more solid and consistent. Throughout the entire organisation, the perception of safety – as shown by the survey – indicated an average gap of 25% in all areas compared to the best references.

This is how dss+ determined that the uneven losses observed in recent years were, to a large extent, due to the wearing out of their safety model – a normal phenomenon even for reference companies. This is confirmed by Marcelino García, Director of Business Development for the Iberian Peninsula at dss+: "Many companies look for fresh ideas and inspiration to revitalise safety practices based on behaviour." He insists that, to keep improving "it is essential to work towards maintaining the motivation and enthusiasm for safety among all individual team members in order to avoid accidents and incidents."

In the case of Elecnor, a series of critical improvement areas were identified:

1. Detecting and evaluating top risks;
2. Reinforcing the transfer of safety accountability to line management;
3. Working on individual safety awareness;
4. Encouraging incident reports to be learned from, identifying the root cause, implementing corrective measures to prevent recurrence, etc.;
5. Finding a balance between sanctions and recognition (fair perception);
6. Launching a continuous improvement approach in safety through programmes such as sharing ideas for improvement and 5S for better housekeeping.

... it is essential to work towards maintaining the motivation and enthusiasm for safety among all individual team members in order to avoid accidents and incidents."

MARCELINO GARCÍA, DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT FOR THE IBERIAN PENINSULA AT DSS+

The company welcomed this approach and was fully prepared for the change, as expressed by Ribas: "all of this has become part of our Safety Excellence Plan. No restrictions are placed on investments in safety. Elecnor has always seen clearly that profitability in line with health and well-being is the best outcome."

dss+ identified among Elecnor's biggest strengths, a strong team of professionals and a solid training system for each role.

Action plan

Once the analysis and diagnosis was conducted, dss+ proposed an action plan following the established objectives and targets. A working group was put together for its execution and the lines of work were determined based on: 1) identifying the main risks, 2) building individual awareness, 3) establishing an integrated organisation, 4) learning & development, 5) progressive motivation and 6) continuous improvement.

Specific actions were also recommended to implement and reinforce each action point, including work guidelines called Principal Risk Permits (PRP):

- Create guidelines to reach an acceptable level of operational discipline, avoiding shortcuts and ensuring that workers operate according to the established procedure;
- Improve the relation model with customers and contractors;
- Improve the internal alignment on safety issues in and out of the workplace, as a tool to share the safety evolution within the company;
- Learn from incidents and past accidents to prevent recurrence;
- Put the phrase "Safety is everyone's responsibility" into practice by clearly assigning by assigning clearly to each employee their share of responsibility;
- Review and improve the system for audits, inspections and observations, optimise the cost-benefit ratio and involve management as much as possible;
- For each safety-related objective, establish specific tasks for continuous improvement so as to stimulate and encourage initiatives and participation;
- Work on positive reinforcement and recognition of good safety actions to encourage safe behaviours;
- Ensure the disciplinary system promotes the desired behaviours and provides credibility and confidence in the organisation;
- Promote the sharing of improvement ideas among all Elecnor employees.

As the Director of General Services at Elecnor mentioned, "one of our main challenges comes from the scattered nature of our work. We have employees distributed throughout the territory: 13,500 in total, including 8,500 in Spain. That is the greatest difficulty. PRPs allow us to manage them and take control of the way they perform their tasks."

One of the key aspects of the whole initiative is the Risk Factor training: a dss+ risk awareness solution, brand new when this project was being rolled out. This new approach



Case Study.

Elecnor.

Spain.

Infrastructure/renewable energy

to safety management focuses on the human factor and helps employees recognise how feelings and emotions affect their decisions and actions. "Many of our employees had never followed a training that took this approach, and this methodology has made them aware of the decisions they make and why they make them" added Ribas.

The Risk Factor methodology, developed and tested in multiple operating environments, is a four-step capacity building solution: Own It, Choose It, Change It (for all employees), and Champion It (for leaders and those responsible for promoting change). In Elecnor, the training began with management, followed by many other sessions for smaller groups that were trained as trainers. This allowed for a wider reach, spreading to 57 trainers trained in the first phase. "Right now, 75% of Elecnor's workforce in Spain has been trained," says Ribas, "and the goal is to reach everyone in the next few years, including our employees outside the country."

Results

Two years after the start of the project, Elecnor is a satisfied dss+ customer, with safety results to prove it. The safety plateau seen in the company's 2015 figures was surpassed and to date, its Frequency Index (number of accidents per million hours worked) has fallen by almost 62%, making it a top performer in this field.

"dss+ has made us think about all aspects of safety, looking at it from all angles and taking action. Being proactive has allowed us to improve. There have been changes at all levels (in terms of organisation, logistics, media, communication, etc.), some more considerable than others, but they have all led us forward. The plan and the work carried out by dss+ has been outstanding and its methodology optimal. We are very satisfied and have results to show for it. Their experts and professionals are experienced and know what they are doing" states Ribas. "Their values are universal and fully applicable to all sectors, regardless of whether you are a logistics, chemical or construction company."



"Elecnor's goal for the future is to continue moving forward in line with the learnings from dss+ and to establish our new safety culture at all levels, including our employees abroad and all our subcontractors and collaborators through homologations, qualifications, trainings, etc." concludes Ribas. "We have achieved what we aimed for: to change the trend completely, because for us safety is also, in essence, a matter of ethics."



Assignment

Improve safety based risk perception in 2 years



Offering

Safety culture, Risk Factor



Impact

Frequency Index (number of accidents per million hours worked) reduced by 62%

75% of total workforce trained

dss+ has made us think about all aspects of safety, looking at it from all angles and taking action. Being proactive has allowed us to improve.

**JOSÉ JAIME RIBAS, DIRECTOR OF GENERAL SERVICES
IN ELECNOR**

dss+

Protect. Transform. Sustain.

[linkedin.com/company/consultdss](https://www.linkedin.com/company/consultdss)

twitter.com/consultdss

[youtube.com/consultdss](https://www.youtube.com/consultdss)

www.consultdss.com

