



## Hands are not tools

### Member Company Categories

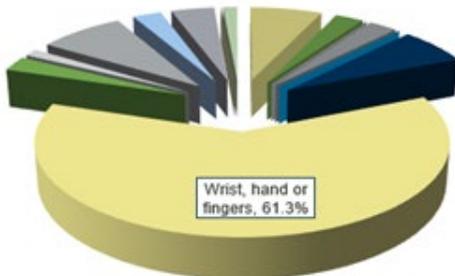
**Outokumpu**  
**workplace improvement; accident**  
**analysis; safety training**

### Challenge

After analysing our accident trends over many years it became apparent that Outokumpu's main injuries were to hands and fingers, with 61% of our total accidents relating to this body part. It was decided to focus on hand related initiatives and sites were asked to deliver ideas and plans to address this trend. The Outokumpu site at San Luis Potosi in Mexico had already started a journey of trying to reduce hand injuries in 2017 two years ago and by 2019 they had

developed some unique ways of promoting hand safety and, with the commitment from all levels of management, had succeeded in changing the behaviours and of its employees towards hand and finger hazards and risks.

Injured body part  
in case of TRIs, N=75  
Outokumpu Group 2019



### Action

The journey started in 2017 with the introduction of a “Hands off Policy” which was introduced to minimise the risk associated with being hit and caught between loads and fixed equipment when loading process equipment or moving material for loading and unloading.

To address the risk of injury from touching / guiding suspended loads and equipment being transported along with material which was being processed, simple hands-off devices were developed for tasks where the risk was not acceptable, these tools were simple inventions and bespoke to the task. Tools were created for guiding suspended coils in transportation and for cleaning activities during the process which meant that the task could be conducted from outside the danger area instead of stopping the process and applying Lock out procedures.

To supplement and kick start the initiative Posters were designed “No spare for your Hands” to try and get employees to think about the fact that you only get one pair of hands and if you injure them you could lose them forever and this initiative was communicated to the workforce. This was aligned to the introduction of Outokumpu's behavioural safety program Safestart which focusses on personal safety at work and at home and educates employees to think before they act and apply good habits and behaviours when working.

The first year saw a good improvement but, realising there was still room for improvement, in 2018 the message was reinforced with an extensive study on Hand, finger and wrist injuries and the required PPE which could improve the level of protection. This study gave enough data to make the decision to wear gloves and cut resistant sleeves mandatory in process areas.

To monitor this change other changes were made to drive interaction and discussion between employees and managers. The visibility of supervisors and managers was increased with safety behavioural observations becoming a key tool in the development of the new ways of working. Together with the Safestart

## Hands are not tools

“Rate your state” process, a positive safety discussion could be held between operators and supervisors, and any changes to procedures could be agreed and improved. Additionally, the significant changes to working with new tools and procedures could raise additional hazards and therefore the hazard reporting green card system was encouraged and promoted to identify new hazards and risks and ensure they were reduced or eradicated.

To also help the promotion of the initiative in 2018 and to try and prevent the error states occurring while working, a simple set of rules was introduced for all to follow - “10 rules to reduce hand injuries”.

In 2019 the Outokumpu theme for world safety day was Hand Safety. The local San Luis Potosi initiative was further expanded with themed safety walks which concentrated on activities involving hands and any risks that may be still evident. Practical examples

### Safety in Hands

1. Avoid pinch points
2. Check / Inspect your hand tools
3. Keep safety guards in position
4. Keep your hands off equipment in movement
5. Correctly apply LOTOTO
6. Keep your hands off hot spots
7. Use the correct gloves
8. Use the tools, not your hands
9. Avoid quick reactions
10. There are no spares for your hands

10 rules to reduce hand injuries



2019 San Luis Potosi Family Day



Hand prints in the locker area

of everyday tasks which people perform without even thinking were showcased using only three fingers or with just one hand to emphasise the difficulties which could be experienced if your hands or fingers were damaged or even missing. Operational and maintenance tasks were also analysed using the risk reduction event to drive the risk to even lower levels.

During the 2019 San Luis Potosi Family day, family members of our employees printed their own hands together with a quote about how hands and family life interact and these were erected in the locker changing facilities to remind them someone is waiting for them when they arrive home, which was a very strong message to all.

## Hands are not tools

### Outcome

Across the 3 years lost time injuries which were attributed to hands and fingers were eliminated with zero in 2019 and first aid treated hand and finger injuries reduced from 17 in 2017 to 2 in 2019.

To maintain this improvement, management safety walks are now mandatory and evident on Tuesdays and Thursdays and these have led to increased felt leadership and employee involvement in safety, especially around hand related issues. The addition of safestart and the rate your state tool has made employees more aware of complacency in their work and is helping them think about where they place their hands by working on good work habits.



Examples of "handoff Tools"