

International Transport Workers' Federation and ITF Seafarers' Trust

occupational safety and health in ports App to help port workers to be safer and healthier at work, whilst strongly promoting worker participation in all occupational safety and health activities

the challenge

Port workers in the Arab World region were experiencing a high level of serious accidents and fatalities due to poor infrastructure, working with old or damaged equipment, a lack of health and safety policy and training. There was also a lack of consultation on these matters between the management and the workers. The ITF Seafarers' Trust were initially contacted by the ITF affiliated unions in the region for assistance and, together with the ITF Dockers' Section, met to discuss a way forward. The outcome was to develop a course that would train workers on the fundamental principles of occupational safety and health in a port environment. Following evaluation of the initial project, and given the enthusiasm of participating unions, a second iteration of the training was developed; this time an app-based approach with a clear focus on the port environment.

Plans to hold workshops in the region were derailed by Covid-19, instead we shifted our attention to creating new language versions for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Whilst the circumstances in this region are very different, in many ways they share the same challenges around occupational safety and health and had a similar desire to address them from the 'shop floor'. Learning from the Arab World experience, we developed an accompanying Trainers' Manual and rolled out the project during the first quarter of 2024 holding a series of three Training the Trainer (TtT) workshops for representatives from 19 countries from the region.



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Occupational Safety and Health in Ports

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the innovation

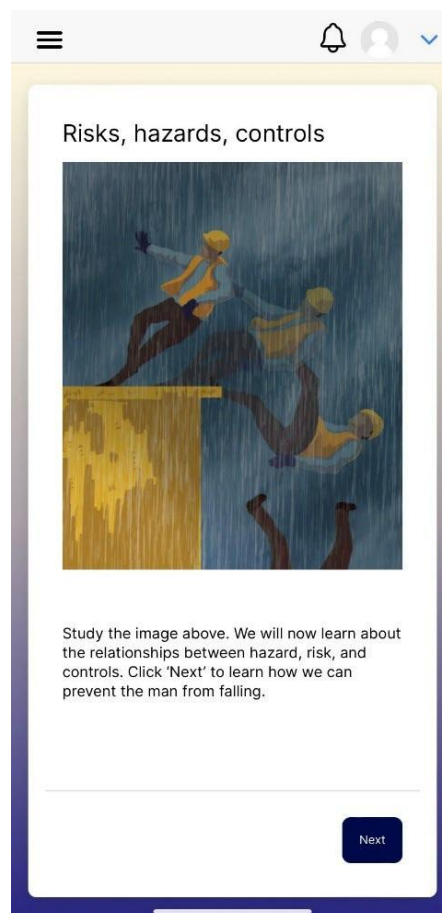
The OSH Ports App aims to help port workers to be safer and healthier at work and strongly promotes worker participation in all occupational safety and health activities.

The overall goal is fewer injuries and fatalities and an increase in worker participation in OSH activities at all levels in ports and terminals.

Written by a leading industry expert, it was reviewed and revised by the ITF Dockers' Occupational Safety & Health Working Group (DOSH) of leading trade union OSH specialists from across the globe. It is based on the best industry research and practice and can also support existing workplace training initiatives.

It consists of 5 Modules:

- Module 1: Introduction to OSH Ports.
- Module 2: How and Why Things go Wrong.
- Module 3: Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment.
- Module 4: How to Control Risk.
- Module 5: Information and Communication.



Participants must successfully complete assessments at the end of each module to progress through the app and pass a final assessment to receive a certificate on completion.

The course is supported by the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organisation (ITCILO).

As well as the training modules, there is a link to videos of workers' personal experiences of health and safety incidents in their workplaces within their regions.

It is aimed at all port workers, not just health and safety representatives, and is available in English, Arabic, Spanish and Portuguese. The project includes a Trainers' Manual, publicity material, support with stakeholder engagement and TtT workshops.

how it was implemented

The OSH Ports App was originally developed to be used individually on a mobile phone or laptop. It was launched through participating unions in the Arab World in February 2020 where it reached over 1,400 registered users, of which some 300 went on to complete at least one module and 66 completed the training and received certificates. We were able to actively monitor and report on participation which led us to conclude that more support around delivery was needed – hence the trainers' manual and TtT workshops.

We asked our unions in the region to select certain individuals with a responsibility for health and safety and the capacity to train their co-workers to receive the training via a workshop where upon completion they would receive a certificate supported by the ILO Training Centre in Turin.

From January 2024 the training in Latin America and the Caribbean was delivered via workshops in Barbados, Argentina, Brazil and Panama by staff from the Dockers' Section and Seafarers' Trust.



This face to face training allowed for more in depth engagement on the subject as well as support with technical problems. This approach has resulted in a much higher activity and certification rate relative to registration

result

The initial result in the Arab World was that a large number of participants used the app and this has led to an increase in awareness of health and safety and a basic understanding of identifying hazards and risk in the workplace.

The result of our training workshops in Latin America and the Caribbean was that all 59 participants successfully completed the course and received their certificates.

Several of our participants have now completed training of other workers in their ports or have presented the training to their local management with a view of implementing the training in the coming weeks. One success story is in Barbados where the Barbados Workers Union have delivered 5 training workshops in the port of Bridgetown to 49 port workers from all categories of staff, including management.



Before the training the port workers had little or no involvement in assessing risk and implementing control measures at the port but since the training workshops the participants are working together with management to identify hazards, assess risk and implement effective control measures. This has led to a closer working relationship between the port workers and management and a change of culture in the workplace with workers being more confident to raise issues of health and safety and report hazards and near misses.

conclusion

The OSH App was successfully launched in the Arab World in 2020 and since then we have expanded the offer to Latin America and Caribbean with Spanish and Portuguese versions along with a trainers' manual and training workshops. The latter were delivered in the Latin America/Caribbean region where we continue to support our unions in these regions to train other workers in their ports. In total we have directly trained 59 workers from 19 countries from the 4 workshops held across the Latin America and Caribbean region and we are seeing some really great results and a real change in improving the working conditions and attitudes of our affiliates towards health and safety in their ports.

Whilst holding the training sessions we also developed network groups between the participants where they can share ideas, experiences and incidents that have occurred at their ports and also ask questions of each other and the ITF.

In 2025 we will be going back to the Arab World region to deliver 3 training workshops to further develop and support our unions there after the success we had in Latin America.

In 2026 we plan to expand the project to Africa and in 2027-28 will take the training to Turkey. This will mean translating the app into new languages and updating the app to take in some of the feedback we received from the participants during the training.

LINKS:

<https://oshports.org>

<https://www.itfglobal.org/en>

<https://www.seafarerstrust.org>

