

CASE STUDY

Arup AECOM | Health, Safety & Wellbeing Knowledge-Share Event
11 May 2026

Introduction

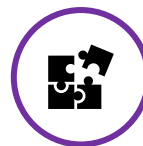
The Arup AECOM Consortium delivered a hybrid Health, Safety and Wellbeing annual briefing and knowledge-share event during Mental Health Awareness Week. The event brought together National Highways, supply chain partners and SPaTS3 framework organisations outside of the Arup AECOM supply chain to share practical safety learning, wellbeing tools and approaches that support the shared ambition of getting everyone home safe and well.



Overview

Hybrid event hosted at Arup Birmingham and on Microsoft Teams.

- Framework community in attendance: National Highways, Arup, AECOM, Costain, AtkinsRéalis, Amey, Ramboll, Oxera, Nicander, APEM and Mace.
- Focused on zero harm, safety culture, mental health, psychological safety and design risk management.
- Resources and recordings made available for continued learning.



Challenges

- Building a consistent HS&W message across a diverse framework community.
- Keeping both in-person and virtual attendees actively engaged.
- Turning strategic zero harm priorities into practical supplier action.
- Providing credible wellbeing support during Mental Health Awareness Week.



Safety is created moment by moment. Small actions prevent big consequences.

Key Sessions & Speakers

Opening Remarks

Melanie Clarke OBE, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Director, National Highways
Overview of National Highways' new Safety Strategy, emphasising the vision of zero harm and six strategic focus areas: capable people, effective risk management, insight-driven decision-making, health and wellbeing focus, engaged supply chain, and safer environments.

Morning Sessions

Kathy Wilson-Ellis, AECOM – *The Human: Both the Problem and the Solution*

Explored the dual role humans play in safety as both the source of risk and the key to mitigation. Highlighted that small actions prevent big consequences, and every individual has the power to reduce risk through conscious decision-making.

"Safety is created moment by moment. Small actions prevent big consequences."

Zechariah Olutoge, Arup – *Safety Learning from Practice: Reflections from an Early-Career Engineer*

Shared insights on the importance of site safety risk assessments (SSRA), lifecycle thinking in design, and the critical role of documentation and early escalation in creating a strong safety culture.

"Leaders play a large role in building safety culture for early-career professionals. Speak up and escalate when uncertain: that's professional judgement."

Afternoon Learning Bursts

Richard Paddey, Costain – *Personal Safety*

Comprehensive awareness session covering end-to-end journey safety, situational awareness, personal and corporate responsibilities, and safer working practices for lone workers and those exposed to public-facing risks.

Gary Oakes, AtkinsRéalis – *One Million Lives: Digital Mental Health Check-In Tool*

Introduction to the free, confidential mental health tool designed to encourage early intervention and regular self-assessment. Over 50,000 check-ins completed globally, available in seven languages.

Matthew Bithell, Amey – *Psychological Safety*

Presented Amey's approach to psychological safety as a managed safety risk using tools like ThinkSafe, mock trial immersive training, and human factors psychology to create speak-up cultures in design and delivery environments.

"Psychological safety lives in the moments we promote and reward: asking questions, admitting uncertainty, raising concerns early."

Adrian Shawcross, Ramboll – *Design Near Misses*

Discussed the importance of identifying "soft hazards" in design processes; issues that don't result in site incidents but have the potential to cause harm. Shared industry examples and introduced design near-miss reporting categories.

Tools & Resources Introduced

- One Million Lives – Free mental health check-in tool (www.oml.world)
- ThinkSafe – Psychological safety and human factors assessment tool
- National Highways Safety Strategy – Six-pillar framework for zero harm
- Highways Safety Hub – Platform for case studies, resources, and collaboration
- Costain Personal Safety Package – Awareness content for lone workers and public-facing roles

Impact

This event exemplifies best-in-class HSW practices through its collaborative, innovation-driven approach that directly supports National Highways' ambitious goal of zero harm. By bringing together industry leaders from major contractors and consultants, the event created a unique platform for sharing cutting-edge safety solutions, mental health interventions, and wellbeing initiatives that rise above competitive boundaries. The measurable impact is significant: attendees gained access to proven tools like the One Million Lives check-in tool, real-world case studies demonstrating fatality prevention through enhanced training, and practical mental health resources aligned with Mental Health Awareness Week. The hybrid format ensured maximum reach across the supply chain, with dedicated breakout sessions enabling direct knowledge transfer on critical topics including neurodiversity in the workplace, psychological safety, and innovative health monitoring technologies. This collective intelligence-sharing approach directly enhances National Highways' HSW performance by standardising best practice across the SPaTS3 framework, fostering a unified safety culture, and equipping project teams with actionable strategies to reduce incidents, improve mental wellbeing, and create safer working environments across the Strategic Road Network. The event's timing during Mental Health Awareness Week reinforced National Highways' commitment to holistic worker welfare, while the diverse speaker lineup ensured that innovations from across the framework, from Costain's training excellence to Ramboll's occupational health insights, are rapidly deployed across all SPaTS3 projects, creating a multiplier effect that elevates HSW standards industry-wide.



Action Taken

- Opened with National Highways' safety strategy and six focus areas: capable people, effective risk management, insight-led decisions, health and wellbeing, engaged supply chain and safer environments.
- Shared practice-based learning on human factors, early-career safety reflections, site safety risk assessments, lifecycle thinking and early escalation.
- Delivered supplier-led learning bursts on personal safety, One Million Lives, psychological safety and design near misses.
- Introduced practical tools including One Million Lives, ThinkSafe, Highways Safety Hub resources and personal safety awareness material.



Results

- 29% improvement in attendees' understanding of National Highways' HS&W priorities.
- 24% improvement in awareness of practical wellbeing tools.
- 92% of attendees committed to changing at least one HS&W behaviour in their workplace.
- Improved cross-organisational learning and shared access to resources after the event.



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home
safe
and well