

## **ABSTRACT**

Johannesburg's construction sites provide a vast integration of cultural groups represented by different religions, languages, varying ages, experience and ability. Communication on these sites has proven significantly difficult. The construction industry is notorious for having one of the worst safety records amongst industries worldwide, partly attributable to breakdown in communication. This research report constructs a communication model across phases of construction with the aim of reducing accident rates and improving site health and safety.

The Case Study method formed the bulk of the methodology. Three construction companies were studied with the focus being placed on their communicative approaches to safety management. Some of the findings included the following: safety officers were fully aware of the magnitude of their role on site, however, without the support of management, these officers felt overwhelmed and ineffective; company managers felt that safety management was a non-value adding item thus its importance was not stressed; training was largely controlled by the human-resources department, which was oftentimes not site based. On the labour-front, labourers were not aware of their company's safety policies. Furthermore, labourers were largely semi-literate, however, felt the use of indigenous languages in safety management would be useful. These findings assisted in formulating a communication model applicable to most companies. The companies used similar yet different approaches concerning training, proactive management, across-the-board communication and creative signage innovations in order to rectify the breakdown. Resolving communication breakdown contributes to the successful delivery of construction projects.