

Establishing Safety Excellence for Maritime Port

Redefining compliance to culture at the Port of Virginia

The challenge

For the Port of Virginia, safety excellence wasn't just a priority—it was mission-critical to keeping cargo moving and sustaining its position as America's most modern gateway. As a major global hub, it needed a stronger safety record. By 2024, performance was solid but had plateaued and existing programs focused on compliance rather than culture, lacking a shared safety mindset across all levels. To advance, the port needed to proactively identify risks and deeply engage its workforce to make safety an intentional part of every task.

The approach

The Port partnered with dss+ to elevate safety performance, starting with a Safety Perception Survey (SPS) to establish a clear baseline. Engagements with executive leadership followed to help define a vision for transformation. dss+ then supported the creation of a safety governance council and subcommittees to drive system-wide improvements and shift from reactive to preventative practices. Through hands-on workshops, leaders strengthened governance and reinforced a culture of care. The focus moved beyond compliance to actively engaging workers and addressing concerns in real time.

Impact on the ground

25%
Reduced Lost
Workday rate

Up to **63%**
reduction in high-
potential incidents

Target additional **50%**
reduction in injury rate
by **2030**



Discover more
Transportation cases

The inflection point

"Safety is our core value. We come together to protect what matters most—our people, labor partners, guests, and contractors. At the end of every shift, everyone should go home in the same condition they arrived."

Joseph P. "Joe" Ruddy
Chief Operations
Officer



"At the Port of Virginia, we prioritize everyone's safety—never ignoring risks, training our workforce to address hazards, and striving to achieve zero injuries as we work to become North America's safest port."

Solomon Egbe
Vice President HSE



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