



**PREVENTING SUICIDE IN THE
MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY**



MATES is a suicide prevention charity that was established in partnership with the Australian Construction industry in 2008, and has since grown to include divisions in Mining, Energy and Manufacturing. The MATES program focuses on raising awareness and preventing suicide within industry. At MATES we work closely with industry to make mental health awareness and suicide prevention a natural part of the onsite culture.

MATES in Manufacturing delivers an integrated program of workforce capacity building and support, utilising training as a tool to raise awareness about suicide and mental health. MATES works from the fundamental principle that increasing the capacity of individuals and communities to better recognise and respond to suicide related behaviours, is essential to reducing suicides.

The MATES Program has been endorsed by the World Health Organisation as an example of Global Best Practise in Workplace Suicide Prevention (LIVE LIFE: An Implementation Guide for Suicide Prevention in Countries, 2021).



MATES VISION

To be Australia's leading industry suicide prevention organisation, focusing on raising awareness, building capacity, providing help and research.

MATES MISSION

Utilising the capacity of our members and franchises, we achieve our vision by focusing on:

RAISING AWARENESS

Open and direct communication with all levels of industry via: MATES training workshops, on-site support activities, MATES events, social media, MATES online and newsletters.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Actively engaging industry in sustainable programs including General Awareness Training, Connector, Re-Connector and ASIST workshops. All MATES programs contribute to building a peer network of workers who have the skills and capacity to offer help to a mate. Taking the emphasis off the individual to help-see and create a help-offering suicide safer community within industry.

PROVIDING SUPPORT

MATES Case Managers work with individuals to create a tailored plan connecting to existing support options, ensuring that supports are both practical and useful.

M THE PROBLEM WE ARE ADDRESSING



3,249 AUSTRALIANS
died by suicide in 2022.



65,000 AUSTRALIANS
on average, make a
suicide attempt each year.



#1 CAUSE OF DEATH
is suicide in people
aged 15-44, of which
75 percent are male.



\$10.9 BILLION PER YEAR
spent on untreated
mental health conditions
by Australian employers.

There are many protective factors that can build skills and resilience and aid in reducing suicide related behaviours.

Protective factors can include supportive social relationships, meaningful engagement of self-care activities, and positive connections to adequate health and support services.

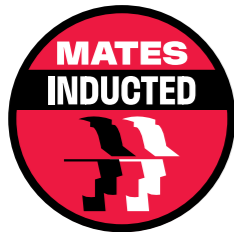
MATES in Manufacturing aims to build and strengthen these protective factors within the workplace.



M THE MATES MODEL

Workforce capacity building is provided through clear pathways of education, training and support – building a community of MATES who can look out for MATES. The program aims to engage the entire workforce in providing a mentally healthier, and suicide safer workplace.

The program includes:



GENERAL AWARENESS TALK (GAT) 45-60 MINUTES

Designed to be delivered to the entire workplace, GAT inducts the workforce to become aware of mental health and encourages questioning of established stigma. The training discusses the prevalence of suicide, mental health and common suicide contributory factors, recognition of invitations for support and ability to offer support to individuals experiencing thoughts of suicide.



CONNECTOR 3.5-4 HOURS

Aimed at workplace volunteers, Connector is a half day internationally certified workshop that provides the skills to identify when a mate may be thinking about suicide, and to keep that mate safe while connecting them to appropriate support.



APPLIED SUICIDE INTERVENTION SKILLS TRAINING (ASIST) 2 DAYS

ASIST is an interactive program designed to equip individuals with the skills to intervene and prevent suicide. Participants learn how to recognise when a mate might have thoughts of suicide, how to engage with them and provide immediate care whilst connecting into ongoing supports.

Connector training and ASIST courses are consistent with the LivingWorks model, the world leader in suicide intervention training.

CASE MANAGEMENT

Case management is provided by qualified professionals to further assist workers who may be struggling with life issues negatively affecting their mental health and/or thoughts of suicide. A 'brokerage' model of case management is used connecting the worker to appropriate services. Case managers do not provide clinical services but connect the worker to appropriate services in their industry or their community. These services include workplace EAPs, financial counselling, drug and alcohol counselling.

24/7 TELEPHONE SUPPORT LINE

The 24/7 telephone support line is a dedicated telephone support line for manufacturing workers and their families to access.

FIELD OFFICERS

Field officers build a relationship with sites through regular site visits building a sense of community. In addition to training sessions, MATES endeavours to embed a positive wellbeing culture onsite via attendance at stop for safety initiatives, team gatherings, onsite celebrations, and significant calendar dates such as mental health week, work safety week, physical health days. These events are attended by MATES Field Officers on your site by invitation with the aim of building strong continuing relationships.

MATES Field Officers will provide ongoing care to Connector and ASIST trained workers, supporting those volunteers that are supporting their workmates. Where there is a critical incident MATES Field Officers can attend the site by invitation to support workers following a traumatic event.

MATES in Manufacturing is committed to working in collaboration with, and support of, existing Employee Assistance Programs and any other mental health or wellbeing initiatives provided in the workplace. Our aim is to encourage the workforce to link in with these existing initiatives and reduce the stigma which might be associated with accessing these existing support services.

MACHIEVE SITE ACCREDITATION

MATES accreditation shows you have completed the MATES benchmark, of training and engagement across your sites and or entire organisation. At MATES our aim is to accredit all partner sites, with the title of 'suicide safer workplace'. Based on an international best practice model for creating a suicide safer communities, MATES accreditation is the most effective way of keeping your site and or organisation safer from suicide.

To achieve site accreditation a site must reach the following benchmarks: GAT 80%, Connector 5%, and access to one ASIST worker at all times. While the minimum benchmark is highlighted here, MATES strongly encourages higher percentages to cover periods

of leave, and employee turnover and wellbeing.

To achieve organisational wide accreditation, 80% of sites must have been awarded MATES site accreditation status. MATES accreditation lasts for a period of 3 years, before review and renewal.

Reaching accreditation status not only acknowledges that your site is safer, more productive and more supportive of individuals, but as an industry partner, your organisation demonstrates a real commitment to workplace safety and prioritises the mental health and wellbeing of all your workers.

M RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE

MATES continually monitors best practice within the field of community-based suicide prevention and within the relevant industry and adjusts the program accordingly.

Collecting evidence of the program's efficacy through research is fundamental to the continued success of MATES, that is why we have a dedicated National Research Reference Group and National Research Manager overseeing our ongoing research initiatives.

As an organisation we are committed to ensure our work aligns with best practice and to share the learning from the MATES program with other like-minded organisations.



M BECOME AN INDUSTRY PARTNER

MATES in Manufacturing exists to strengthen the manufacturing industry by preventing suicide, because a life saved is one less family grieving, one less workplace impacted and one less community heartbroken.

A relationship with MATES demonstrates a commitment to raising the standard of mental health in the industry. Our aim is not just to reduce suicide and mental stress, but to eliminate it completely from our industry. But we can only do that by changing the overall culture of the industry, from the belief that suicide is just an individual problem, to something we all have a responsibility to look out for and prevent, which is why partnerships are so vital.

Our aim is to give businesses and their employees the tools to enable

good mental health. By supporting MATES in Manufacturing, partners are investing in the long-term future health of the industry. Embracing the MATES program makes sites safer, more productive and more supportive of individuals, and demonstrates a real commitment to workplace safety and mental health and well-being of all workers.

Industry partners will enter into an Industry Partnership Agreement with MATES in Manufacturing for an initial period of three years.

For more information on adopting the MATES in Manufacturing program and becoming an Industry partner, please contact:

MATES in Manufacturing
manufacturinginfo@mates.org.au
 07 3063 7054

FROM OUR WORKERS

“The fact that you are actually able to have discussions with people and they feel like you’re taking an interest in them as a person more so than there to do a role. It’s a two-pronged benefit. The fact that you both walk away from the situation feeling that things are in a better direction and the person’s gone “he cares about me, rather than just the name on the shirt”, is the biggest benefit out of it.”

“I’ve used it both in my personal life with good friends and people at work since. I’ve used it probably more times than I would have liked to have. So, it really does help you deal with that tough conversation and gives you a whole new tool bag on how to deal with suicide and suicide awareness and what have you. It’s pretty cool.”

“I had very old-fashioned views about suicide and people – probably not the most supportive. The training brought me right out of that... and really made me realise how in general terms someone would get to a position like that and how successful help could be at the right times if people were keeping an eye out for each other.”



MATES
IN MANUFACTURING

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Find us on   



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