

VCI Innovation State of Play Survey 2014

– Theme #3 –

Safety is apparently not a direct focus of innovation for miners

Respondents to this year's survey indicated the mining industry is placing a relatively low priority on direct application of innovating to improve safety outcomes. However safety is undeniably a top priority for mining companies, with substantial resources invested in improving outcomes. We would like your views on this apparent disconnect?

Key points

- **0%** - of CEOs think safety will have a big impact on innovation in the next 15 years
- **2x** – industry leaders are twice as likely to see safety as high value compared to fast and slow followers
- **10%** - of frontline leader's energy is going into innovation in safety with 0% of CTO's energy
- **8x** – business unit heads are 8 times as likely to see value from safety as a driver of innovation over next 15 years

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<http://tinyurl.com/px7mztl>

Is this disconnect a function of respondent's proximity to operations? The responses seem to imply that safety becomes less of an innovation imperative the more managers are removed from the mine site. For example, less than 2% of CEOs say safety is a focus of innovation today and none say it will be over the next 15 years. In contrast, frontline leaders and business unit heads are twice as likely as all other respondents to list safety as a major focus for innovation.

Is the safety challenge seen more as behavioural issue, not a technological one? Many common industry safety improvement approaches are based on models of behavioural progression. Could it be that when asked about innovation, managers tended to associate their response with technology and not with safety improvement?

Is safety step change seen to be a consequence of innovation in automation and extraction technologies? As automation, robotics and low impact extraction techniques advance, their impact on safety could well be transformational – by removing people from exposure to high energy sources (out of harms way). Is this shift going to achieve its undeniable potential?

Which of the following industry trends will have the biggest impact on innovation in mining over the next 15 years?

