



2022 RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE WORKSHOP

Reinforcing the Stop Work Authority (SWA) Culture

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Stop Work Authority

Stop Work Authority establishes the responsibility and authority of any worker to stop work if unanticipated/unsafe conditions are identified or non-compliant practices are observed at the work site, workers shall be instructed to stop the work immediately and notify their supervisor(s), safety and health representative(s), and the site manager of this action.





How we learned the importance of SWA



SWA wasn't an original thought at AURA. It was a reaction to a serious accident that injured people and broke an important optical device.

In February 2012, AURA learned the importance of using SWA the hard way.

The f/8 secondary mirror of the 4M Victor Blanco telescope on Cerro Tololo presented a problem outside of the specifications, given this, it was decided to remove it from the telescope, the last time this activity had been carried out had been 9 years earlier in 2003.

- ❑ Scheduled plans were changed on the fly.
- ❑ The person responsible for the work at the site was not informed of this activity.
- ❑ At least two employees were instructed that the activity would be carried out outside the work plan.
- ❑ At least 4 employees were aware that the activity was being carried out in an unsafe manner, outside of the procedure.
- ❑ Only one of them objected to the procedure, however, he did not refuse to carry out the work.
- ❑ The f/8 mirror suffered considerable damage and an employee was diagnosed with three hairline fractures in his metatarsal toe bones.



More than three flags were raised, and none were seen

During the development previous activity and during this accident, more than three manifestly visible alerts could be identified, however no one made any attempt to stop the activity.

Why?

People did not feel empowered to stop these actions despite realizing that the actions were not the right ones.

One of the Lesson Learned was: ***“It is OK to say NO and to ask questions, so you can properly do your work”.***

And as a part of the immediate measures: ***Promote a culture that allows any staff member to ask questions or refuse work without retribution if there is a perceived risk to people or equipment.***



Reinforcing SWA key elements

Include SWA spirit as a core element of the Safety Policy.

Safety Policy Objective

Promote a work environment based on continuous improvement, employee involvement, ownership, teamwork, education, and leadership

Reinforce the need for people to care about the people they work with

Establish a culture where the safety and health of personnel and equipment is a paramount concern, and that individuals are empowered



Reinforcing SWA key elements

Management Motivates with Recognition, Not Fear

Management promotes positive recognition and rewards as a powerful element of a successful SWA implementation. Establishing a Stop Work Authority plan that is built on trust and is lead from the highest levels of management.





Leadership and SWA

The leadership of the organization is key to the success of the application of the SWA. The leaders of the organization should always:

- Recognize and promote that safety is a value and not a priority that can be rearranged, given that the application of the SWA represents the safety culture and must always be supported.
- Commit to the application of the SWA and the promotion and reward of those who apply it.
- Understand and embrace the idea that SWA is a management system tool that delivers benefits to the process and never consider it a delay or burden.





Reinforcing SWA key elements

It is not enough to just declare that Stop Work Authority now exists within an organization. Clear communication of the SWA process is crucial.

SHE plan must include a detailed SWA Process, definitions such as who has the authority to stop the work must be well defined.

**WHO HAS THE AUTHORITY
TO STOP THE WORK?**



Every person who is part of the organization (anyone at work site), has the responsibility to apply the authority to stop the work, when an action, omission, unsafe condition is identified or that the work area has not been evaluated in terms of safety.

Work may not resume until deficiencies are corrected and it is determined safe to continue.



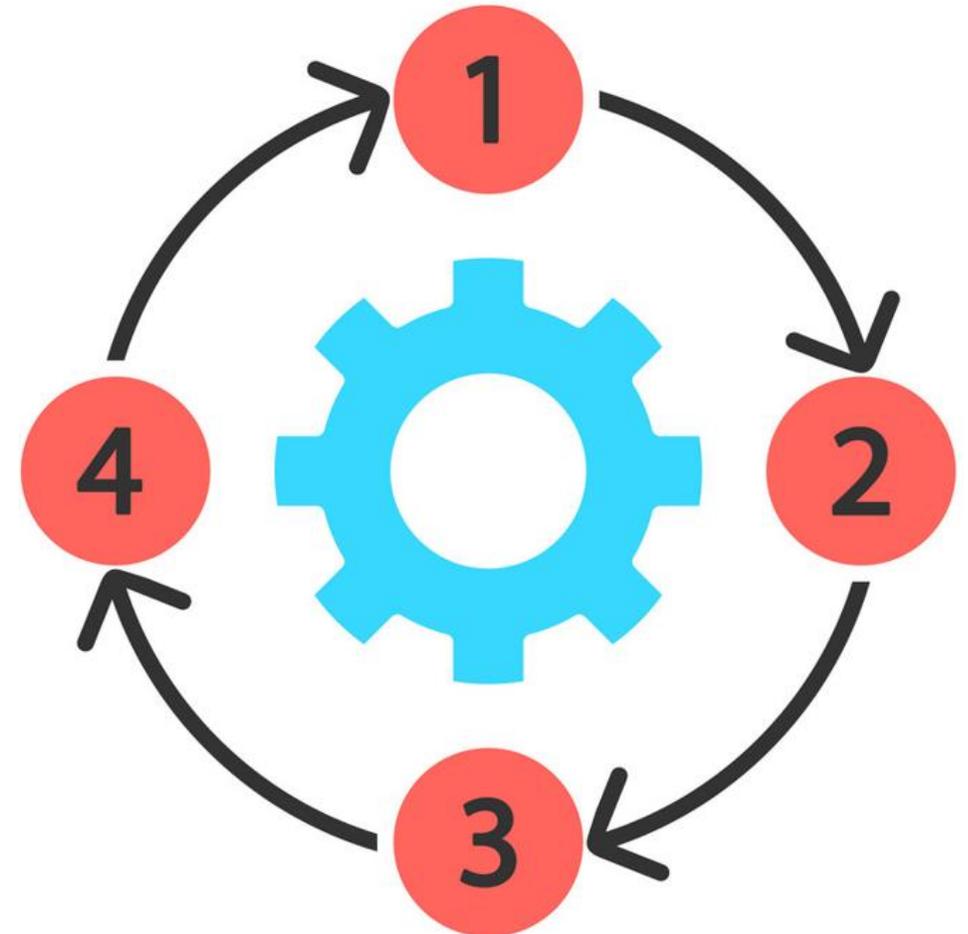
Stop Work Authority



Applying the SWA

SWA Implementation

- Include SWA as part of the Organizations core objectives.
- Define SWA as part of the organization (SHE plan).
- Include SWA process in Safety Orientation training.
- Constantly promote the application of SWA (use any opportunity available to talk about SWA).
- Support and acknowledge SWA application through Safety outstanding work recognition.
- Support the SWA application – always.





SWA



4. Agree

If it is determined that it is okay to proceed with the job as is (i.e., the person applying the work stoppage was unaware of certain facts or procedures), the affected workers should thank you for your concern and continue with the job. On the other hand, when the stoppage of work requires the analysis of the Site Manager and/or Safety Personnel of Rubin Obs. work will only resume after everyone is satisfied.

3. Discuss

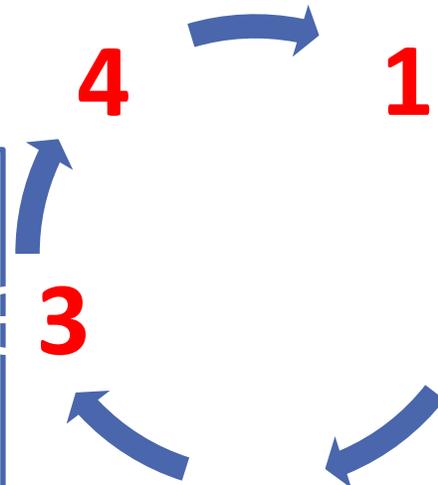
Affected parties should discuss enactment of authority to stop work and reach agreement. If the stop work enactment cannot be resolved immediately, work will be suspended until an appropriate resolution is achieved. When opinions differ as to the validity of the stop work enactment or the appropriateness of resolution actions, the Site Manager and Rubin Obs. Safety Coordinator, will make the final decision. Details regarding differences of opinion and resolution actions should be included in a report.

1. Identify

When a worker identifies an unsafe condition, act, error, omission, or misunderstanding that could result in an undesirable event, they must immediately initiate an intervention to stop the work with the potentially endangered worker(s).

2. Stop!

Stop work interventions should be started on a positive note by briefly introducing yourself and starting a conversation with, "My name is...I am using my authority to stop work because..." This phrase will clarify the user's intent and set appropriate expectations. Notify affected workers and supervision of the work stoppage enactment. If necessary, stop associated work activities, remove worker(s) from the area, stabilize the situation and make the area as safe as possible.





Obstacles and challenges that employees need to overcome to apply SWA



- There is a sense of operational urgency to finish the work and stopping the work would cause a delay.
- Unsafe acts may be carried out by more experienced and senior employees and a new employee may feel that it is not their duty to call attention to risky behavior.
- Peer pressure influences employees not to apply the SWA.
- Fear of embarrassment or ridicule for applying the SWA in a task that is unknown.
- Unclear understanding of the SWA process or what unsafe acts can be considered worth stopping and who to address them to (use of means such as WhatsApp or email) .
- Other workers are present and no one else says anything.
- Accepting the “we've always done it this way” paradigm as an excuse to perform work in an unsafe manner.
- Fear of angering a supervisor or management and their possible negative retaliation.



The benefits of the SWA application



- Gives the worker the responsibility and the right to stop work that they believe could create an imminent danger to themselves or other workers.
- SWA provides a defined process that allows loss prevention to be applied in a documented and immediate manner.
- The SWA procedure protects the individual who exercises the SWA from reprisals or other negative consequences for the actions carried out, since it is supported by the Safety Policy and is guaranteed by the high level of management.
- SWA provides the organization with trained and competent employees who become the "safety observers" in real time.



Make it easy to understand, make it simple and consistent



IF YOU IDENTIFY A HAZARD,
STOP, DISCUSS & AGREE

STOP WORK AUTHORITY (SWA)

YOU HAVE THE
AUTHORITY
TO STOP WORK

IF YOU SEE A HAZARD...

- Identify
- Stop
- Discuss
- Agree



Identify



Stop



Discuss



Agree

WHAT IS STOP WORK AUTHORITY (SWA)



SAFETY
RECOMMENDATION
#022

RubinObs.srec#020

July 2022



Stop Work Authority establishes the responsibility and authority of any worker to stop work if unanticipated/unsafe conditions are identified or non-compliant practices are observed at Rubin Observatory

If unanticipated/unsafe conditions are identified or non-compliant practices are observed at the Site workers shall stop the work immediately and notify their supervisor(s), safety and health representative(s), and the LSST site manager of this action. Disagreements or differences of opinion about the need to terminate an activity shall be discussed only after the activity is stopped and workers are removed from the hazard. All workers at the site have the authority to stop work. Work may not proceed until the circumstances are investigated and deficiencies corrected and it has been determined that it is safe to proceed.

Stop Work Authority Process

- Stop work interventions should be initiated in a positive manner by briefly introducing yourself and starting a conversation with, "I am using my stop work authority because..." Using this phrase will clarify the user's intent and set proper expectations.
- Affected parties shall discuss and gain agreement on the stop work issue.
- If determined and agreed that the task or operation is okay to proceed as is, the affected workers should thank the initiator for their concern and proceed with the work.
- If the stop work issue cannot be resolved immediately, work shall be suspended until proper resolution is achieved

REMEMBER

Click to add text

- Identify
- Stop
- Discuss
- Agree



Questions ?