



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Exploring ASSP's Corporate Listening Tour & Grainger's Research on Occupational Safety & Health Reporting Structures**  
— With Reflections From Members of Our Executive Safety Forum



## SAFETY AT THE CENTER OF BUSINESS DECISIONS

Continuous need to adapt to a changing workplace, adopt emerging technology and align with organizational goals.

As the community that protects people, property and the environment, we are the guardians of workplace safety. Our ultimate goal is to have all workers return home safe, healthy and well each day.

To achieve our vision that safety, health and well-being are inherent rights of every worker, we collaborate with regulatory bodies, businesses and nongovernmental organizations as well as our sponsors, our community of safety and health professionals and their employers to identify key trends and emerging issues. This input guides our efforts to create tools and resources to help the occupational safety and health profession improve and advance.

As part of our work to be a trusted advisor, we provide evidence-based guidance to OSH professionals, workers, employers and policy leaders to enhance their efforts to manage risks created by changing work practices and emerging technologies.

Keeping safety, health and well-being at the center of business decisions leads to increased productivity, improved reputation, and higher worker satisfac-

tion and retention. When organizations focus on safeguarding people they are also protecting the assets and resources that support sustainable business performance while minimizing their impact on the environment.

This document highlights three key inputs developed during 2023:

1) Our third corporate listening tour report, which was published in May 2023. It highlights six trends and provides questions to help you guide conversations in your organization. That report begins on the next page.

2) Reflections on several key findings from members of our Executive Safety Forum, a group of corporate safety leaders from a wide range of corporations. Please turn to p. 6.

3) Results of research conducted by Grainger and ASSP to benchmark structure, staffing and responsibilities in the EHS function across industries. Turn to p. 9 for those details. We also invite you to view a related webinar on demand at <https://www.assp.org/resources/free-learning-resource/benchmarking-your-ehs-structure-staffing-responsibilities>.

Research by Grainger confirms that many environmental, health and safety (EHS) teams are responsible for more than just EHS.



### Safety has a seat at the table.

In most companies represented in the Grainger/ASSP survey, the most senior EHS leader reports to either the president/CEO or operations.



### But work is still needed to grow leadership presence.

About half of companies represented reported having equal leadership alignment between EHS and other functions, such as human resources and finance.

## ABOUT OUR MEMBERS

52%

More than half of ASSP members have been in the OSH profession for more than 20 years.



21%

Slightly more than one-fifth of ASSP members work for companies with 10,000 or more employees.

28%

Nearly 3 in 10 members are at the director/department head/ chief level in their organizations.

51%

More than half our members hold the highly respected CSP designation.

Source: 2022 ASSP member needs assessment





# KEY CHALLENGES FACING TODAY'S SAFETY LEADERS

Trends From ASSP's 2023 Corporate Listening Tour



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF  
SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

For the third year, the American Society of Safety Professionals (ASSP) conducted a corporate listening tour in Q1 2023 to strengthen corporate relationships and better understand the ongoing safety challenges facing leaders and their organizations.

The 2023 listening tour was conducted shortly after the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) released 2021 fatality data. The BLS reported that the fatal occupational injury rate of 3.6 fatalities per 100,000 full-time equivalent workers in 2021 represent-

ed the highest annual fatality rate since 2016. ASSP continues to be disheartened by these results. This year's tour offered insights into trends impacting safety, the profession, workers and the companies they serve. With this enhanced understanding of trends, ASSP will be positioned to support occupational safety and health (OSH) professionals as they lead forward.

We categorized trends into priority topics that impact safety including the workplace, work and workforce. In addition, we indicated a level of intensity

representing the frequency of the trend during the interviews according to the following scale: 1) immediate focus (i.e., now); 2) mid-term focus (on the list, but not the top); and 3) long-term focus (aspiration for action).

Intensity and impact of the trend is driven by shifting expectations of customers, investors, and regulators. This framework helps ASSP focus its investment into new products and services that are likely to deliver the greatest value to the professionals we serve and the companies and workers they support.

## KEY FINDINGS

- Change is constant in the business world, and this is affecting how companies operate and how they keep their employees safe.
- Organizational structure and governance, which is how companies are run, is becoming more important. This includes environmental and social responsibility (ESG) and how geopolitical issues are affecting businesses.
- Companies are struggling to find and keep good employees, which is affecting safety and health in the workplace.
- Executives expect occupational safety and health professionals to adapt to the changing needs of the modern workplace.
- Previous concerns, like the need for disaster preparedness and the role of technology in managing risks, are still relevant today.

### Organizational Structure Matters

#### Workplace. High intensity: Requires increased attention.

Organizational structure and governance drives safety, health and sustainability. While incidences in the U.S. remain flat, several influences emerged this year, moving this topic and ESG up the list of trends affecting OSH.

We define governance to be corporate board and management structures, as well as company policies, standards, information disclosures, auditing and compliance issues. These decision-making factors influence workplace safety.

Long-term planning and governance drive action and accountability for safety at the highest level including boards of directors and the C-suite. Strategic direction sets accountability for achieving organizational mission, finances, talent and infrastructure, including safety. The decision-making process informs resource allocation, defines accountability, and drives an organization's overall culture. Because of this, it is important to understand the link between governance and safety. Executives noted the following trends and challenges during interviews.

- OSH professionals must understand an organization's structures and decision-making processes, accountability reporting and the expectations for that reporting.
- Where direct accountability is driven at the top, outcomes are achieved. Where the reporting structure to the C-suite is indirect, accountability is not clear, and the OSH function struggles to have voice and influence. The

outcome of structure impacts the ability of OSH professionals to drive change and keep workers safe.

- Corporate reporting structures influence safety, including accountability in a centralized versus decentralized structure.
  - In cross-functional OSH roles, professionals have influence but often lack direct authority. This approach can be flexible to local demands, but also creates multiple structures to account for safety.
  - In centralized roles, executives noted strong accountability, but this approach does not account for C-suite ownership at the top.
- Companies held by private equity face increased expectations to demonstrate and report on sustainability, holding companies accountable without clear internal systems to support expectations.
- Some risk exists in the market given the lack of agreement on ESG reporting and metrics. Understanding whether the driver is financial, regulatory or social impacts decision-makers and their accountability.
  - Although risk exists, these differing views and debate will elevate ESG and drive change.
- As ESG continues to influence safety in organizations, it will be important to balance global mandatory guidance to local action and culture, ensuring all companies have a path to success.



- In any structure, OSH professionals need strong influencing skills to drive operational change.
- OSH professionals are well positioned to influence the drivers of change, working internally to mobilize resources and operationalize a shared governance understanding of ESG as the market continues to evolve over the next three to five years.

## Workforce Fluidity

### Workforce. High intensity: Requires continued attention.

Access to talent is a top issue and will be for the foreseeable future. This trend is impacted by the access to a global workforce and talent, and policies that create business uncertainty.

- Shifting work arrangements, turnover and the lack of skilled workers increase safety risks for the world's employers. Temporary and contract workers continue to present a risk as well.
- As the workforce in some countries ages, workers may expect more from companies, such as better wages and benefits, while companies may prioritize efficiency measures. This difference presents new safety risks in how and where work will get done.
- Lack of sufficiently skilled labor is increasing employee burnout and stress. In some cases, companies are turning to AI to close the gap, introducing new risks to the workplace.
- Increased worker expectations are impacting company policy. The workforce is commanding higher salaries and safer work environments, forcing companies to rethink policies and structure, and invest in the future.
- Companies are developing and deploying a "build your own" workforce strategy for technical skills linked to employment experience for young people. For many, the approach is proving beneficial.

## The Continued Evolution of the OSH Professional or a Profession at Risk

### Workforce. High intensity: Requires continued attention.

OSH continues to be a profession that is evolving. OSH professionals need to understand business operations and corporate decision-making. They need to be able to translate safety across all areas of operation.

Fundamentally, the COVID-19 global pandemic has shifted safety priorities and added more pressure to already overwhelmed safety professionals. Increasing workforce fluidity is further impacting the expectations of OSH professions. Some executives report that time is now spent constantly training new workers.

As noted in previous listening tour reports, finding qualified OSH professionals with the requisite skills continues to be a challenge. The result is stress, turnover and burnout for many OSH professionals.

- While OSH professionals have the technical skills required to offer expert support, executives say that is not enough in today's fast-paced and changing work environment.
- To be credible, OSH professionals must understand the

processes and how safety controls are impacted by the changing world of work, as well as operational and business interconnectivity.

- OSH professionals must have a future-focused lens to track trends impacting safety. As they advance in their careers, they need business skills and an understanding of sustainability and regulations. They also must be able to influence organizational decision-makers.
- Many executives noted that OSH professionals are a consultant to an organization's brand. They need to drive change through influence, whether in a centralized or decentralized operation.
- OSH professionals will continue to evolve as subject-matter experts and resources to operations.
- Some executives noted that if OSH professionals remain technical experts, functions will shift into business units that drive sustainability.

## Regulation, Beyond Compliance and Increased Customer Expectations

### Work. Moderate intensity: Requires continued attention.

Regulation, compliance and increased customer expectations reinforce expectations that OSH professionals continue to evolve.

- Most companies are moving beyond compliance and a regulatory environment to meet increased customer contract requirements.
- Executives noted requirements for different protocols across customers and identified the challenge of managing to a single standard.
- European companies face the influence of expanded regulatory requirements and reporting.
- Several executives believe that rich intelligence and data points, if captured and aggregated, could inform predictive analytics for OSH.
- Consensus standards like ANSI/ASSP Z16, ANSI/ASSP Z10 and ISO 45001 need to be more widely adopted, shifting the focus from lagging indicators to leading indicators.

## Technology and the Workplace

### Work. Moderate intensity: Requires continued attention.

AI, automation, robotics, IoT and wearable technologies were all mentioned this year. Technology will continue to advance the workplace, creating both new work and new hazards. OSH professionals must become tech savvy as a result.

- Companies are prioritizing technology solutions to improve workplace safety where organizations cannot engineer out the risk in the process or the operation.
- Organizations require more data analytics and more predictive analytics for safety.
- Cyber risks emerged as a threat that OSH professionals should be aware of from a risk management perspective.
- New technologies, including energy storage and batteries, were identified as areas that will change safety protocols.

## Geopolitical Uncertainty, Climate Change and Supply-Chain Disruptions

Workplace, Work and Workforce. Moderate intensity: Requires continued attention.

A leading theme in our 2022 listening tour was constant disruption and the need for strong continuity of operations. In 2023, geopolitical uncertainty and the economy emerged as well.

- Disaster response is constant. Emergency preparedness and business continuity continue to be significant issues facing OSH professionals and business.
- Global versus local sourcing is at an inflection point. Many companies have not recovered from the supply-chain disruptions caused by the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic.
- Supply chain and input costs, including inflation, are impacting corporate decision-making.
- The global economy, the war in Ukraine, the 2024 U.S. presidential election and tensions between the U.S. and China are impacting the supply chain and creating an environment of uncertainty that is influencing corporate decision-making.

## CONCLUSION

### People and Profitability

“A safe and healthy working environment” as a fundamental principle and right at work presents many challenges in creating safe, healthy working conditions, ensuring resources to support workforce resilience and building a workforce able to adapt to constant change. Many leading organizations are anchoring action in a people-centered approach.

- Progressive companies move beyond making safety and well-being a value to making people, and safety, a lens for every business decision. They invest in people as part of the triple bottom line — people, planet and prosperity.

Organizations that work toward psychological safety are set up for success because team members recognize the organization cares about them.

- Workers have increased expectations, demand a healthy, safe, diverse and inclusive work environment, and have the social capital to hold companies accountable through activism and social media channels. Employees are empowered to speak up; however, without context, the voice could damage the company’s reputation, especially in safety.
- Executives agree organizational structure and governance drive safety in the workplace, work and the workforce. This demands that top leaders and boards of directors take actions to ensure workplaces are safe.
- With enhanced skills, armed with deeper understanding of the changing nature of work and the trends impacting business, OSH professionals are uniquely positioned to connect people and profitability, evolving to leaders of people, guardians of change management and influencers of decision-makers.

### Opportunity in a Time of Change

As we face a time of constant change and evolution, ASSP is presented with a unique opportunity to support the advancement of OSH professionals. ASSP will:

- Support the growth, development and advancement of OSH professionals, building the skills needed to drive business outcomes.
- Create a diverse and inclusive Society, build the skills of today’s OSH professionals, and engage our future leaders to support and drive change.
- Build effective partnerships to advance our mission and solve challenges.
- Document best practices in industry consensus standards, build community and enhance corporate knowledge to keep workers, companies and the professionals we serve safe and healthy.

## START A CONVERSATION WITH YOUR LEADERS

We encourage you to use the findings in this report to engage your leaders in proactive, ongoing conversations of how these trends are impacting your organization. These conversations and the answers to these questions can lead to program improvements and better understanding and integration across the organization.

### Facilitation Questions

- 1) Which of these trends is affecting our company the most? Are our current measures addressing the issues effectively?
- 2) How is safety integrated into our decision-making processes? What more can we do to ensure it is prioritized and whose support do we need?
- 3) What challenges has our company faced in maintaining safety during times of high turnover? How can we overcome those challenges in the future?
- 4) How do the results in this report affect my role as an OSH leader in my company? What changes should I make to more effectively address these trends?
- 5) How can we spread awareness of these findings to other leaders in our company and get them involved in acting on safety issues? What tactics can we use to engage different departments or divisions?

# SAFETY EXECUTIVE INSIGHTS

## ON 6 KEY THEMES

Based on the results of both our corporate listening tour and the Grainger/ASSP survey on EHS structure, staffing and responsibilities, we identified six key themes and asked our Executive Safety Forum (ESF), which currently has more than 60 members, to share experiences from their organizations related to these themes. While their responses do not reflect a statistically valid sample, we believe they support the findings of our corporate listening tour and the results of the statistically significant Grainger/ASSP survey.

### Theme 1: Change Is Constant

The need for organizations to be agile and adaptable has never been more critical to sustained business success. Similarly, EHS teams must address rapidly evolving responsibilities and growing expectations, particularly in times of crisis like the global COVID-19 pandemic. Clearly, the effects of the pandemic will continue to reverberate and generate change well into the future.

As noted by one ESF member, “Safety’s reach within an organization, by the sheer work that is performed, seems to always be tapped to take on additional responsibilities when things need to reach down to the frontline level. We need to continue to examine the scope and breadth of the roles, the competencies of those in the roles and pivot between generalist and specialist-type assignments,” says Nicole Thunich, CRM, executive vice president and chief safety officer of MV Transportation.

Many ESF survey respondents expressed similar thoughts about the need for EHS teams to be fluid and ready to adapt to changing climates and needs. Because it takes time to change organizational structure, this agility is key. “The personnel we have must be highly capable and adaptable,” says Ronald “Chet” Brandon, M.S., CSP, CHMM, global director for GrafTech International Inc.

Constant change also requires identifying what skills and competencies are needed for the future. “External factors such as labor availability, including availability of new and future skills as well as compensation scales, impact organizational design,” says Stephen Jenkins, CPE, director of safety and health at Cintas. He notes that cultural fit and emerging technology will continue to have a significant impact as well. “Developing a nimble team that can shift and evolve as needed and a structure and developmental model that supports this is critical.”

To have a nimble team, organizations must be proactive in both upskilling current staff and recruiting new members. “It’s most important to place the right team members in the right positions to ensure success for the individual as well

#### The ASSP Executive Safety Forum

To be a member of the Executive Safety Forum, the safety leader must be:

- A current ASSP member
- The top safety professional in an organization, overseeing a team of more than 25 safety professionals
- Recommended by an existing ASSP Executive Safety Forum member or ASSP leadership team

The group meets every year at our annual professional development conference and gathers virtually throughout the year.

as the organization,” explains Wendy Burkett, CSP, senior director, global safety, Ford Motor Co. “Continued education and professional development for our seasoned team members, and solid, competitive recruiting for our new team members helps ensure we are adjusting in the constantly changing world and industry.”

### Theme 2: Safety Professionals Must Link Their Technical Work to Organizational Goals

This theme resonated strongly with our ESF survey respondents. Many say safety connects with elements across the entire organization, which uniquely positions EHS teams to achieve widespread improvements in safety while also influencing overall business performance. “Safety can drive culture changes that can reach far beyond the safety agenda. Safety can be used as a change agent,” MV Transportation’s Thunich says.

To be viewed as integral to success, EHS teams must directly link their work to larger business goals. “We do this by demonstrating the direct and indirect benefits of our safety initiatives,” says Peter Van Derlyke, Ph.D., CSP, corporate director, EHS, Peco Foods. These benefits include risk reduction, cost savings, operational efficiency, reputation enhancement and alignment with the organization’s values and mission. company.

Achieving this alignment requires diligence by EHS teams. The first step is recognizing the need so you can eliminate silos, according to Sean Moyna, CSP, SMS, CHST, who is director of safety for CSI Electrical Contractors Inc. “There should never be any silos in an effective system. Every system within an organization should be interdependent with each other and all organizational goals should be the same.”

The second step is communicating with the C-suite. “Top management has to understand and support the safety key



performance indicators,” Burkett explains. “It’s our job as safety professionals to ensure we develop, track and communicate the right objectives.”

### **Theme 3: Safety Reporting Structure Can Impact Results**

As the results of our corporate listening tour and the Grainger/ASSP survey indicate, corporate governance and structure are key drivers of safety, health and sustainability.

In most companies represented in the Grainger survey, the most senior EHS leader reports to either the president/CEO or operations, while less than 10% of respondents said their senior EHS leader reports to multiple entities. Interestingly, of the companies represented, about half reported having equal leadership alignment between EHS and other functions, such as HR and finance.

We asked ESF members whether safety reports directly to the C-suite in their organizations. Their comments reflect the wide range of EHS reporting structures that exist today:

- Plant-level EHS professionals report to their plant manager and up through operations. Corporate EHS reports up through legal to the C-suite,” says Sherry Pond, CSP, CIH, global health and safety leader with Johns Manville.
- “Safety and operations both report into second tier of executives,” Moyna says of CSI Electrical Contractors.
- “In an effort to ensure that safety concerns and initiatives are given high priority and that decisions related to safety have top-level support and attention, we report directly to the CEO of the company,” explains Van Derlyke.
- “Safety is part of the C-Suite (chief safety officer) and part of the executive leadership team reporting to the COO along with their peers, presidents of business units,” says MV Transportation’s Thunich.
- “We report directly to the C-suite,” says Ford’s Burkett. The safety skill team members report up to the global safety director who reports to the vice president of labor affairs and then to the vice president of HR.”

While there is no clear consensus related to a preferred organizational reporting structure with respect to EHS teams, anecdotal feedback indicates that where direct accountability is driven at the top, outcomes are achieved. Where the reporting structure to the C-suite is indirect, accountability is often not as clear, and the safety function may struggle to have influence. Ultimately, executives recognize that structure impacts the organization’s ability to drive change and keep workers safe and healthy.

### **Theme 4: Use of Global Voluntary Consensus Standards Is Growing**

Progressive companies move beyond making safety and well-being a value to making people and safety a lens for every business decision. One way to support this investment in the triple bottom line of people, planet and prosperity, is

to exceed regulatory compliance by implementing national and international consensus standards such as ANSI/ASSP Z10 and Z16, and ISO 45001 and 14000.

Several ESF members noted that while they don’t have specific requirements to integrate global standards, they are increasingly working to implement consensus standards. “We leverage voluntary standards when there is either no company standard, no regulation and/or an evolving technology (e.g., collaborative robots),” says Martin Stern, CIH, vice president of global EHS for Colgate-Palmolive Co.

Using consensus standards can also create a competitive advantage. “We gravitate to align to voluntary standards to demonstrate industry leadership as a differentiator among our peers,” Thunich notes.

Some organizations also view these standards to provide greater flexibility across multiple sites while still creating corporate alignment. “We give local teams latitude to align with consensus standards that are the most sensible for their location,” Brandon explains. “But we also require all business units to align with standards (such as ISO 45001) that the corporate team determines are to be treated as universal requirements.”

Bottom line: Many safety leaders recognize this as an area rich with opportunities for continued growth and business improvement.

### **Theme 5: Business Leaders Still View EHS Professionals as Technical Experts First**

Responses related to this theme indicate that a growing number of executives see EHS professionals as both technical experts and business leaders, but this continues to be an area of opportunity for career development and growth for EHS professionals.

This theme ties directly to the need to align EHS goals with organizational goals. “We expect our EHS professionals to align and support achieving business objectives,” Colgate-Palmolive’s Stern says.

It also connects to the theme related to organizational structure. “Currently we are considered technical experts. However, we are transitioning to a more balanced approach to strike a balance between specialized expertise and strategic leadership. This is to ensure that safety not only meets compliance requirements but also contributes to the organization’s overall success and sustainability,” Peco Food’s Van Derlyke states.

This hybrid view of how the EHS team should function could eventually take root across more organizations, particularly when viewed as an opportunity to grow and retain team members. Cintas is already working to implement this model, says Jenkins. “We balance our team around operational and technical skills that allow for individual development plans that can be diverse based on employee needs.”



## Theme 6: The Value of a Common Language & Baseline for Benchmarking

Most ESF respondents noted that industry continues to focus on lagging indicators. Those metrics must be reported by law and in many cases they provide readily comparable data points. However, as more organizations incorporate leading indicators into their set of metrics, most believe industry benchmarking will improve. “We need to work on defining measurements that are more leading indicators but standardized so they can become true, valid benchmarks,” Thunich explains.

The momentum behind developing a more balanced approach of both leading and lagging EHS indicators continues to build. In fact, in 2023, OSHA conducted public hearings as part of its effort to gather information on creating a resource to promote use of leading EHS indicators. “This is an area where we can improve and move past OSHA-like

metrics. If you compare safety performance to financial performance, for example, the latter has many more standard leading measures such as return on assets, return on investment and earnings per share.”

## Conclusion

These six key themes highlight the critical need to be adaptable in an ever-changing business landscape and emphasize the need for nimble and well-skilled EHS teams. EHS goals must align with broader organizational goals and EHS teams must communicate effectively with the C-suite to serve as a catalyst for culture change and performance improvement. Regardless of reporting structures, EHS professionals are expected to be both technical experts and strategic leaders within their organization, which continues to create new knowledge needs as well as great opportunities to influence business outcomes.

## CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION WITH YOUR TEAM & YOUR LEADERS

Consider reviewing these questions with your team and others in your organization to assess current practices related to these themes and identify opportunities for change, improvement and collaboration.

- 1) How can we enhance the adaptability of our EHS team to better respond to the rapidly changing business landscape?
- 2) What strategies can we implement to ensure EHS initiatives align with broader organizational goals and become a catalyst for cultural change within our organization?
- 3) How can we improve communication with the C-suite to ensure their understanding and support for key safety performance indicators?
- 4) What is the reporting structure for our EHS professionals? Does it support to their effectiveness?
- 5) In what ways can we explore and implement national and international consensus standards like ANSI/ASSP Z10 and Z16, and ISO 45001 and ISO 14000 to enhance our organizational performance and align with best practices?
- 6) What steps can we take to develop our EHS professionals so they are not only technical experts but also strategic leaders?
- 7) How can we incorporate leading indicators into our safety metrics to achieve a more balanced approach to benchmarking?





AMERICAN SOCIETY OF  
SAFETY PROFESSIONALS



# Benchmarking the EHS Function: Structure, Staffing and Responsibilities Across Industries

**Matt Law, DrPH, CSP, REHS**

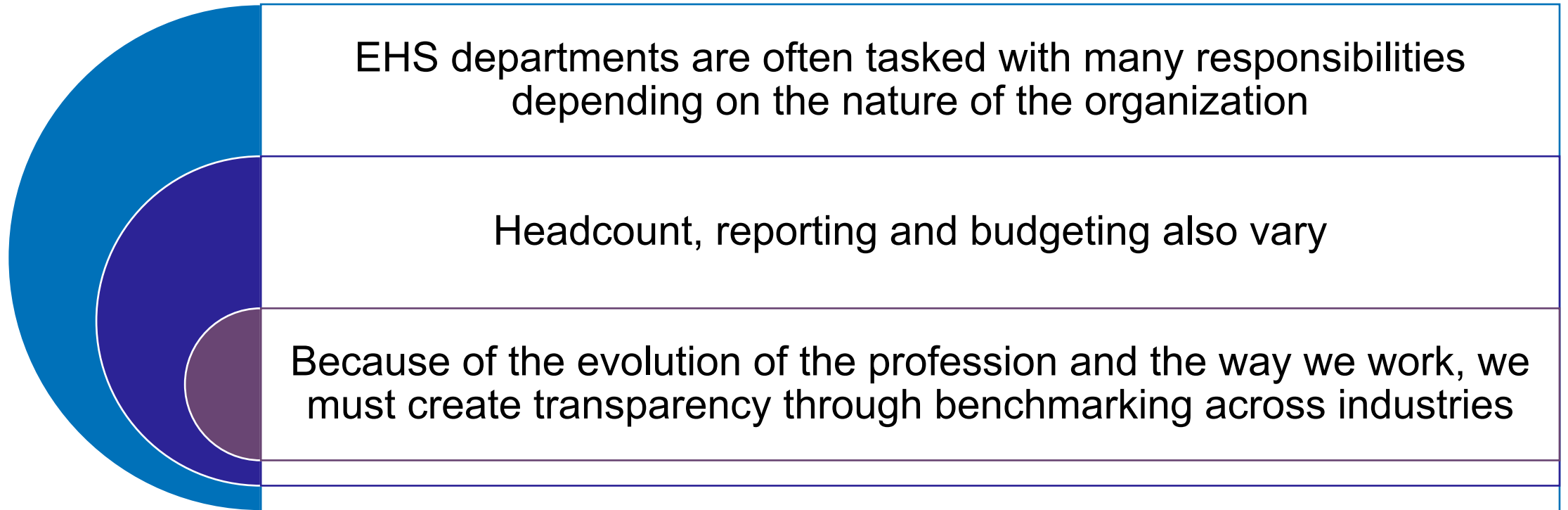
*Manager, Customer Safety Strategy – W. W. Grainger Inc.*

**Travis Kruse, Ph.D., CSP, CHMM**

*Senior Director, Safety & Sustainability Strategy – W. W. Grainger Inc.*

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# Introduction





# Learning Objectives

Identify the elements that define EHS function structure, staffing, and responsibilities across industries

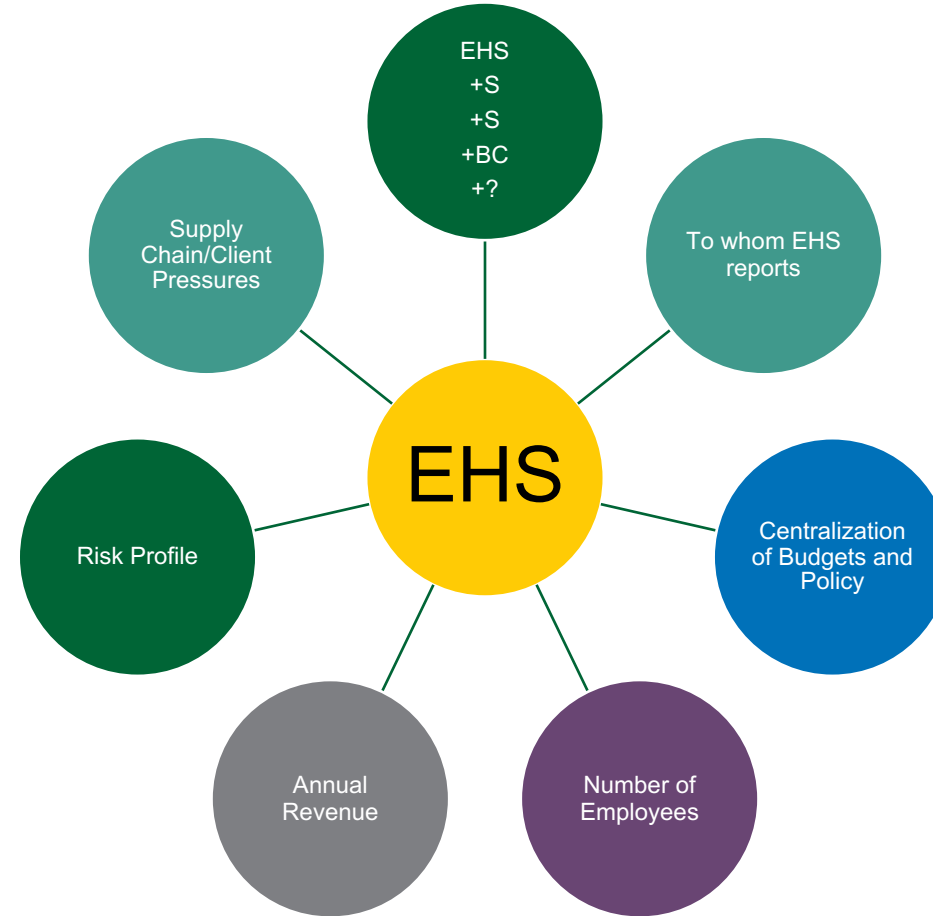
Discuss the current state of EHS departments and establish relationships between predictive factors based on survey results

Discuss the potential for future benchmarking opportunities for EHS functions

**What are the elements that define structure, staffing and responsibilities for EHS?**



# Potential Factors Impacting EHS Structure, Staffing and Responsibilities



# Benchmarking the EHS Function



# Summary of the Benchmarking Survey

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ASSP distributed a survey on Grainger's behalf to about 33% of members in May 2023 based on input and guidance from the ASSP Executive Safety Forum (ESF)

A total response rate of 5.9% and a final sample size of  $N = 573$  manager-level or above respondents resulted in an excellent amount of data with which to draw conclusions in present EHS benchmarking

The results of the survey tell a story about EHS structures, responsibilities, titles, centralization and alignment with other business functions

Some correlations were drawn between organizational size, in terms of both number of employees and annual revenue, and how EHS departments are structured in terms of centralization and senior titles

# Key Research Questions

What percentage of organizations are responsible for more than EHS?

To what degree do number of employees, annual revenue, risk profile, and supply chain pressures affect EHS headcount?

Is there an association between size of the organization, based on number of employees, and the highest given EHS title?

Is there an association between size of the organization, based on number of employees, and centralization of EHS budgets and policy?

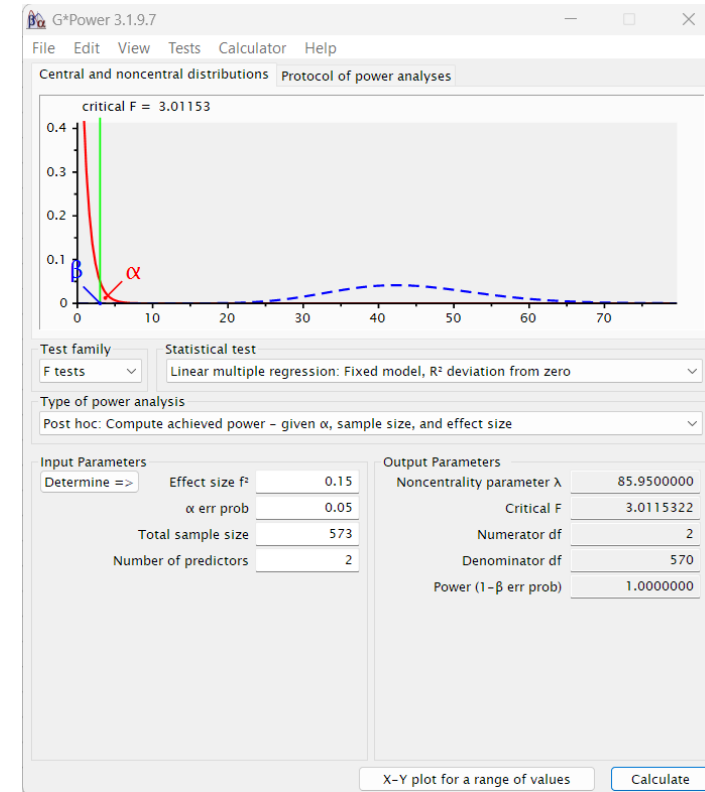
Is there an association between annual revenue and centralization of EHS budgets and policy?

# Sampling Methods

- ASSP distributed web-based survey to 11,095 members (~33% of membership)
- Total responses  $N = 663$
- Total response rate = 5.9%
- Data cleanup
  - Excluded “Other” industries ( $N = 35$ ) including:
    - Services – Other
    - Insurance/Risk Management
    - Non-classifiable
    - Services – Retail
    - Non-Profit/Membership
  - Excluded responses with titles below “manager” level ( $N = 55$ )
  - Final sample size  $N = 573$

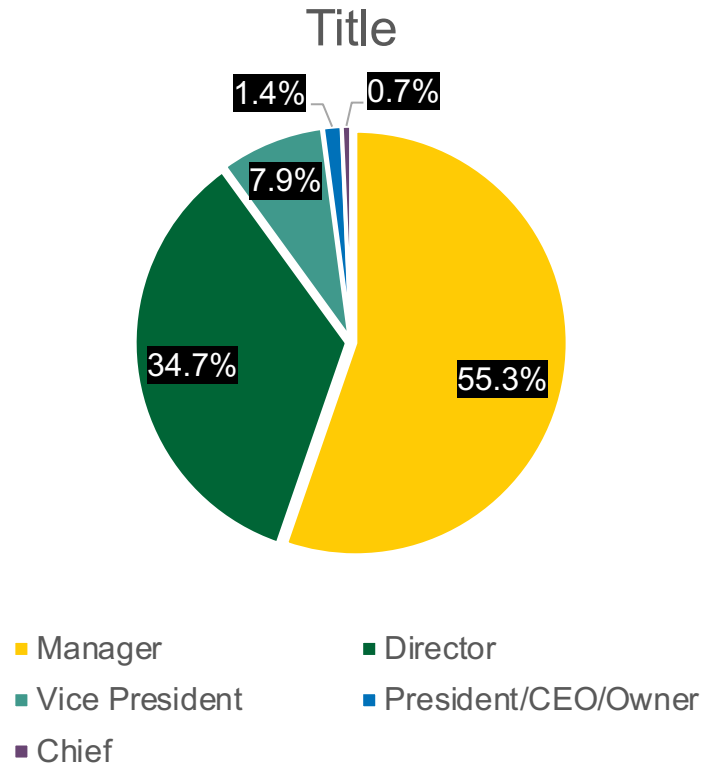
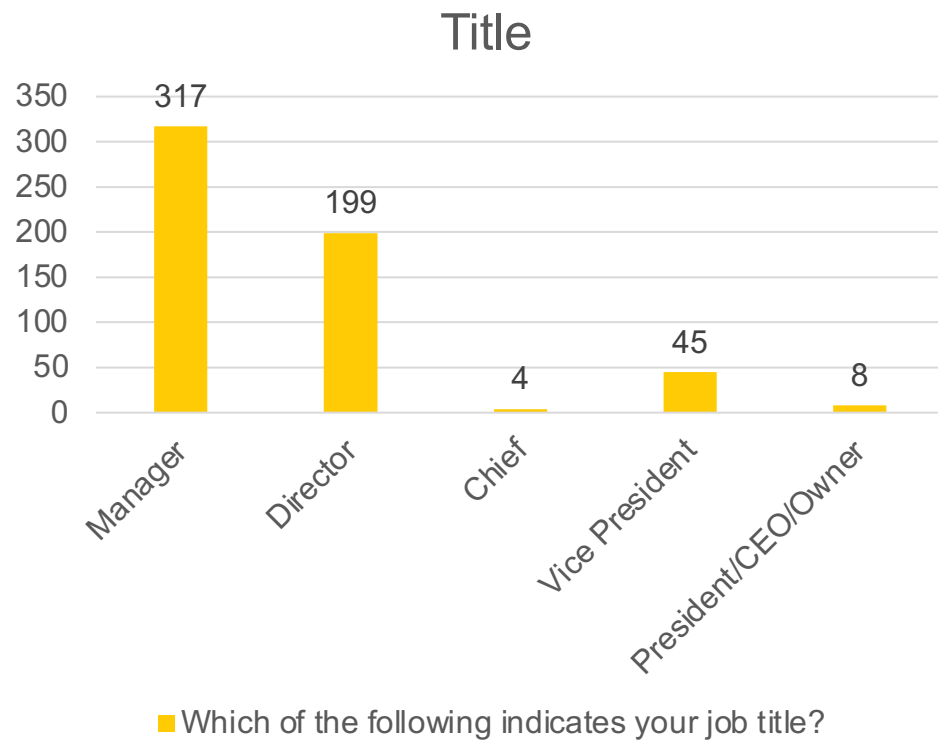
# Statistical Power of the Final Sample

- G\*Power post hoc power analysis
- Multiple regression model
- 0.15 effect size
- 0.05 alpha
- $N = 573$
- Statistical power = 1.0
  - Extremely large effect size





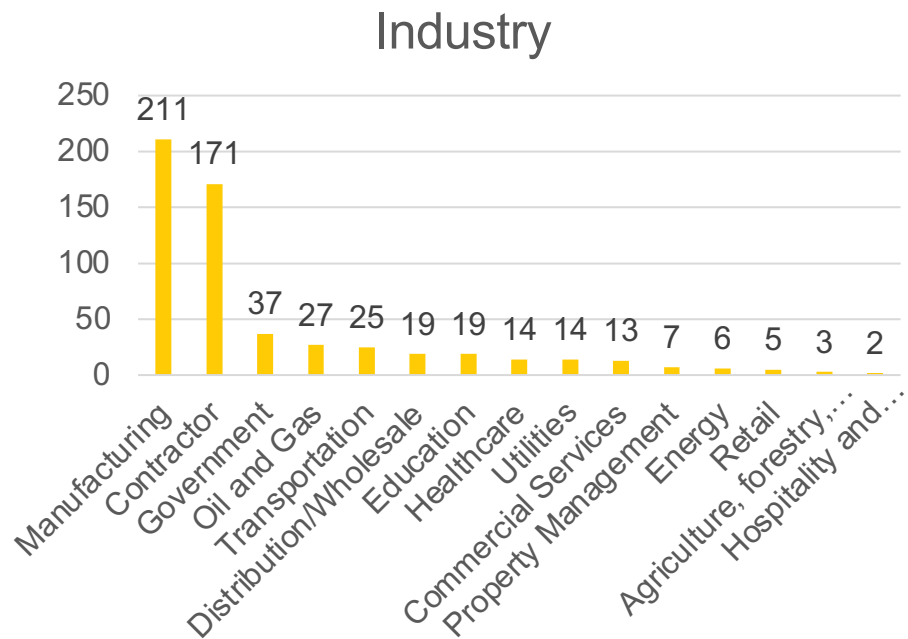
# Demographics



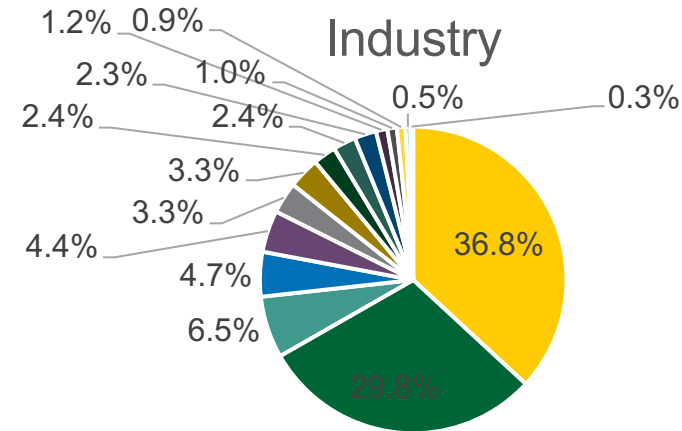
**Key Takeaways:**

- More than half of respondents were manager-level, followed by directors.

# Demographics



■ Which of the following best describes the industry of your company/organization where you work?



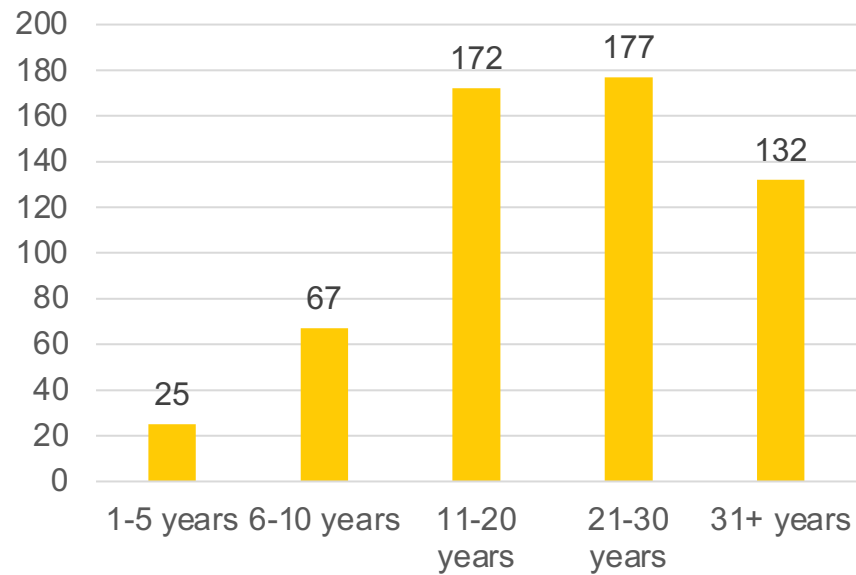
- Manufacturing
- Contractor
- Government
- Oil and Gas
- Transportation
- Distribution/Wholesale
- Education
- Healthcare
- Utilities
- Commercial Services

## Key Takeaways:

- The largest industry representation came from manufacturing, followed by contractors (construction).
- Govt, oil & gas, and transportation were also well represented, with a mix of other industries completing the sample

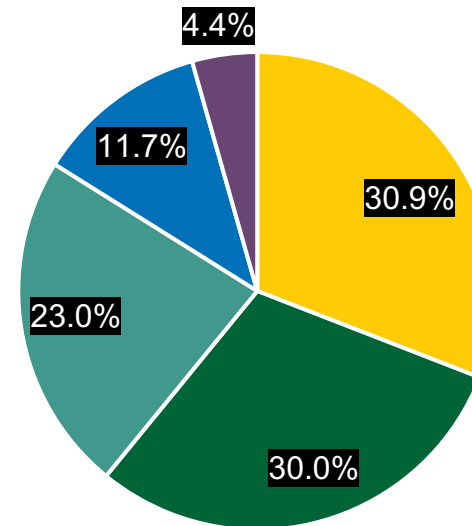
# Demographics

Years of Experience



■ How many years of experience do you have in the safety profession?

Years of Experience

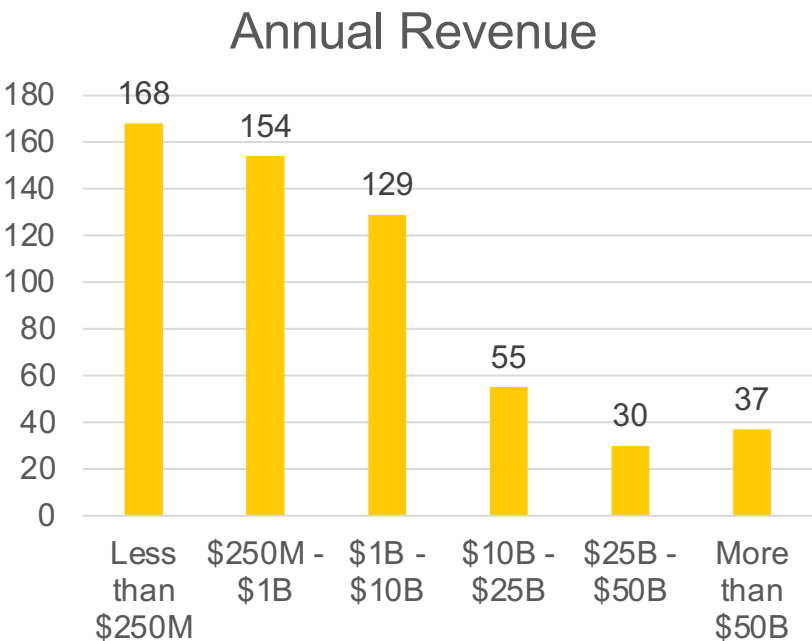


■ 21-30 years ■ 11-20 years ■ 31+ years  
■ 6-10 years ■ 1-5 years

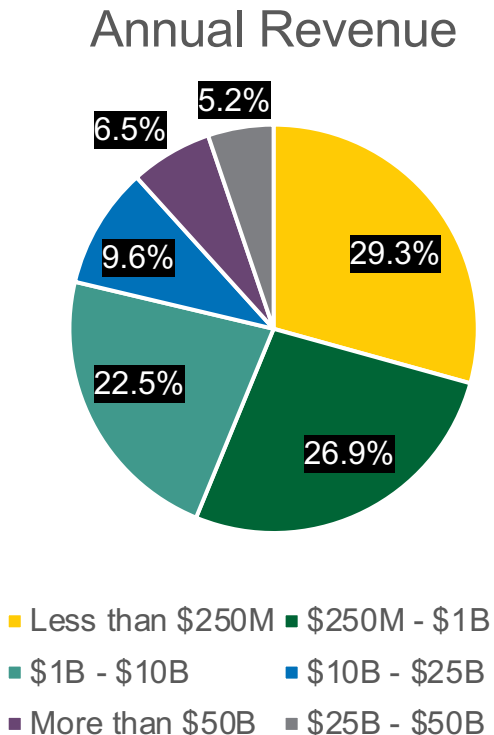
## Key Takeaways:

- Most respondents (83.9%) had at least 11 years of experience in the safety profession.
- The largest portion of the sample had between 11 and 30 years of experience.

# Demographics



■ What is the estimated annual revenue of your company?

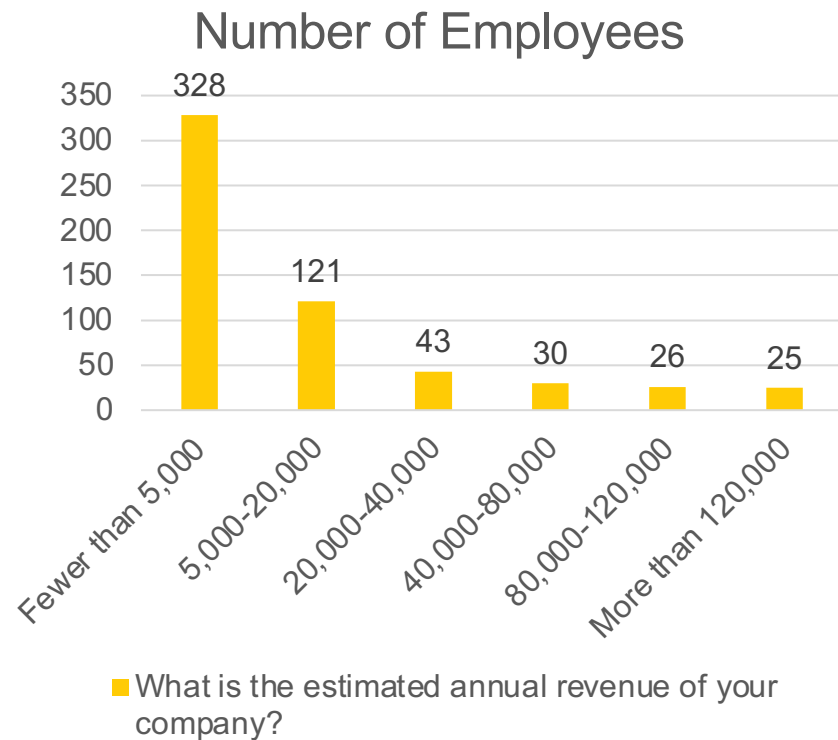


## Key Takeaways:

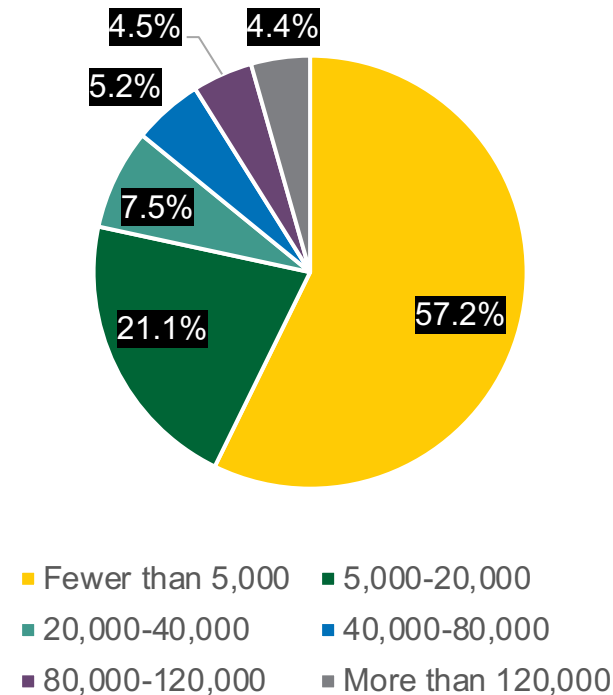
- Respondents represented companies of all sizes, with the majority having less than \$10B in annual revenue.
- Over half of the companies represented had less than \$1B in annual revenue



# Demographics



Number of Employees

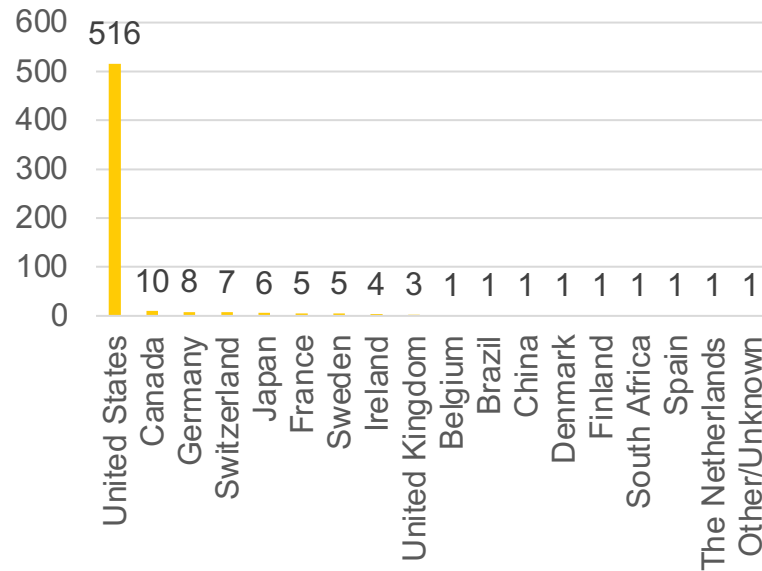


## Key Takeaways:

- In similar fashion to annual revenue, most respondents represented smaller companies in terms of number of employees.
- Over half of companies represented had less than 5,000 employees

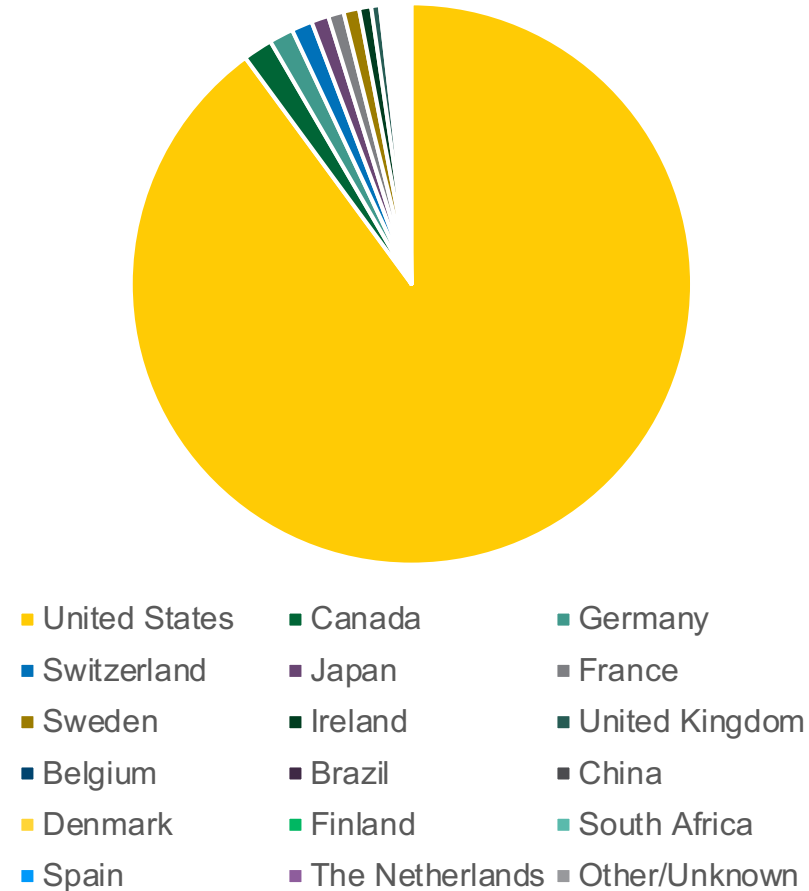
# Demographics

Corporate HQ Location



What country is your corporate headquarters located in?

Corporate HQ Location

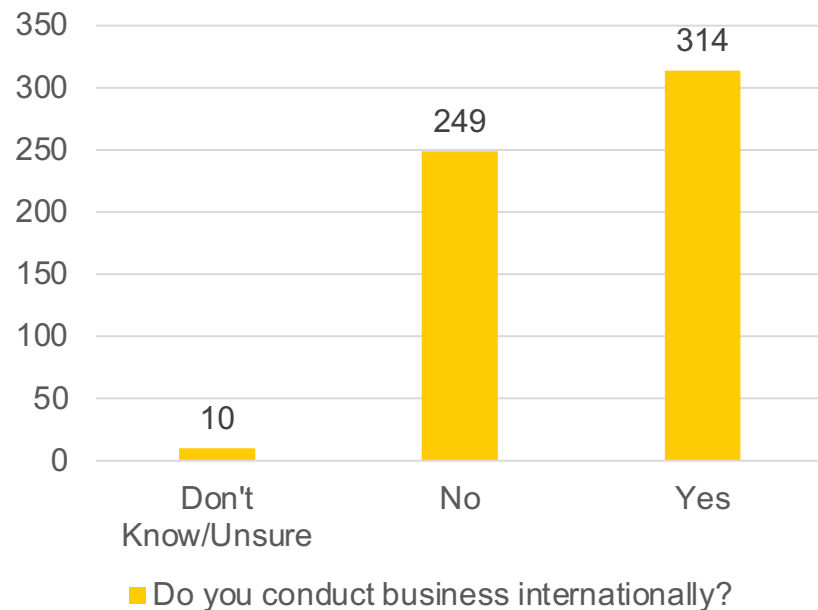


## Key Takeaways:

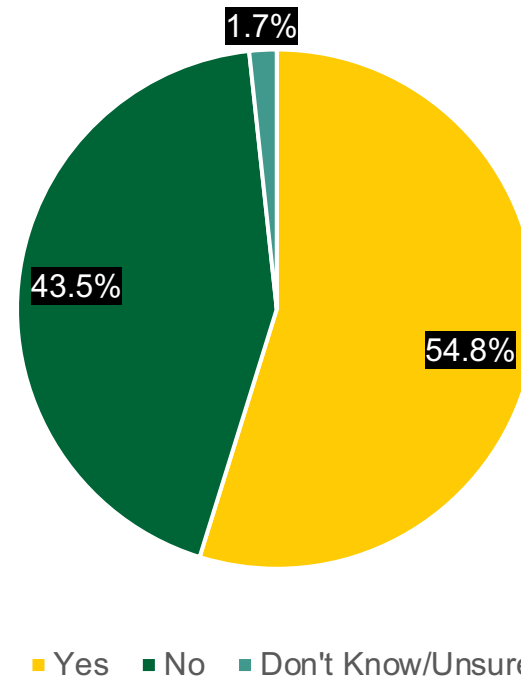
- A very large percentage of respondents came from companies that are headquartered in the U.S.
- A mix of other internationally headquartered companies comprise the remainder of the sample

# Demographics

Conduct Business Internationally



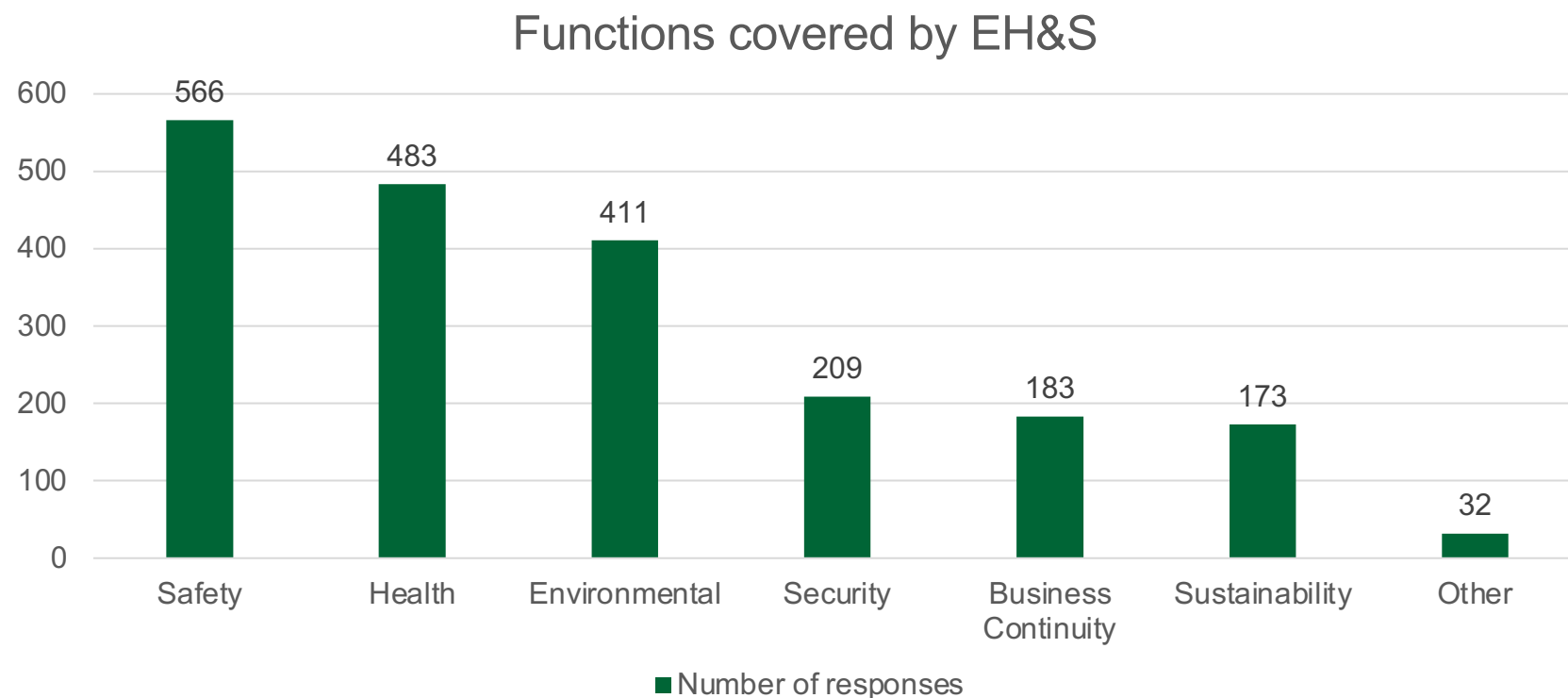
Conduct Business Internationally



## Key Takeaways:

- Over half of companies represented in the sample conduct business internationally.
- Our previous research into the adoption of safety management systems suggests international business may influence how SMS are structured

# What functions does EHS have responsibility for within your organization?

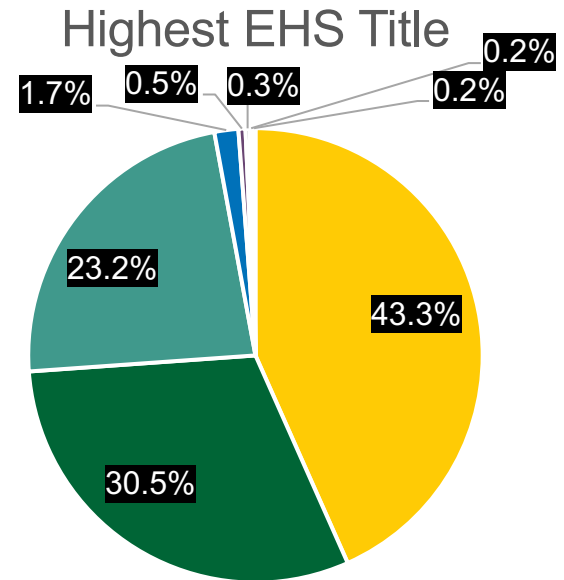
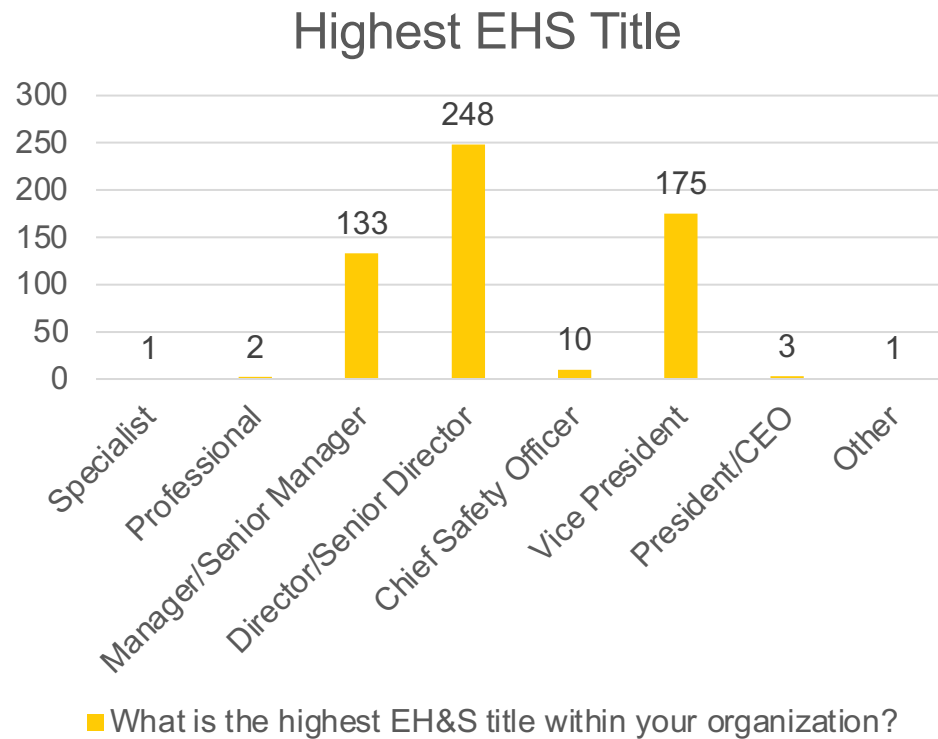


## Key Takeaways:

- Safety, health, and environmental functions remain the most prevalent responsibilities of EHS departments
- Many EHS departments are also responsible for security, business continuity, sustainability, and other functions such as emergency management, HR and product stewardship



# What is the highest EHS title within your organization?



■ Director/Senior Director ■ Vice President  
■ Manager/Senior Manager ■ Chief Safety Officer  
■ President/CEO ■ Professional  
■ Specialist ■ Other

## Key Takeaways:

- For a large portion of companies represented, the highest EHS title was “Director” or “Senior Director”
- 30.5% of companies represented had a VP within EHS

# Is there an association between size of the organization and the highest EHS title?

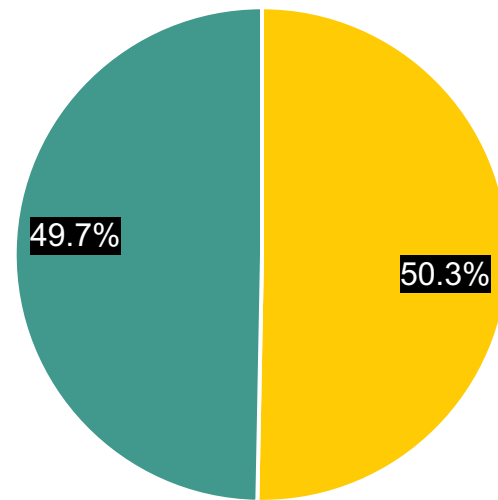
Size of the organization, based on number of employees, statistically significantly predicts the highest EHS title, accounting for 10.1% of the variance. The regression model reflects that larger organizations have higher EH&S titles.

Model	R Square	Std. Error	ANOVA			Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
			F	Sig.	df		B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	.101	1.120	63.905	<.001	1, 570	Constant	3.887	.079		48.941	<.001	3.731	4.043
						ORG_SIZE	.267	.033	.318	7.994	<.001	.202	.333

# Is the EHS corporate function equally aligned at the leadership or management level as other business functions?

(e.g. Is there a VP of HR and Finance, but only Director for EHS at the highest level?)

EHS Alignment at Leadership Level

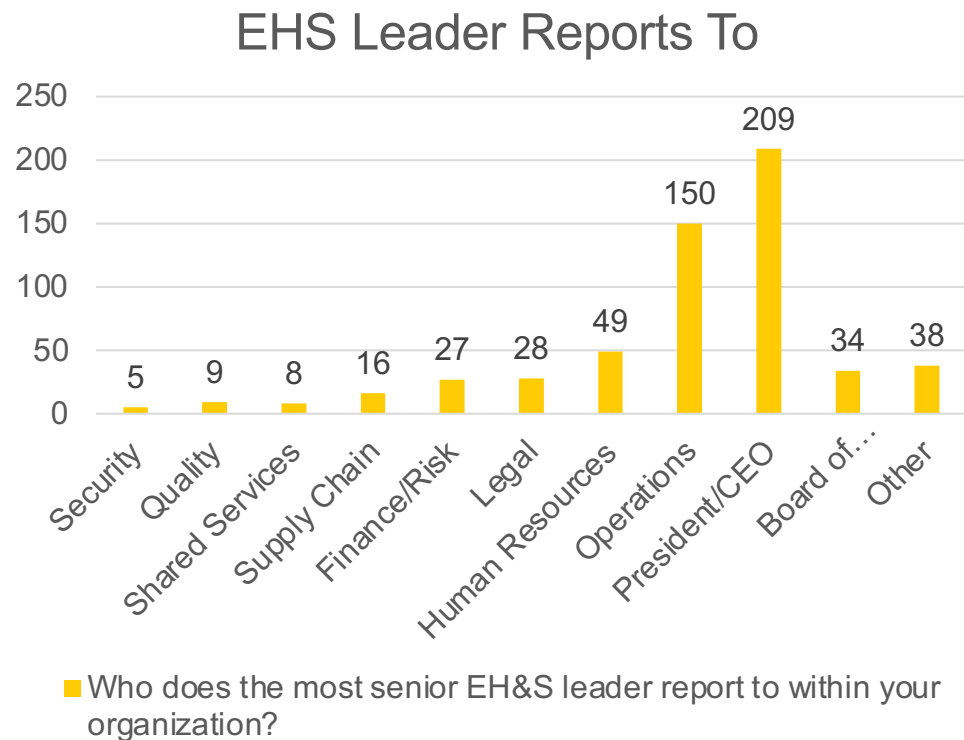


■ Yes ■ No

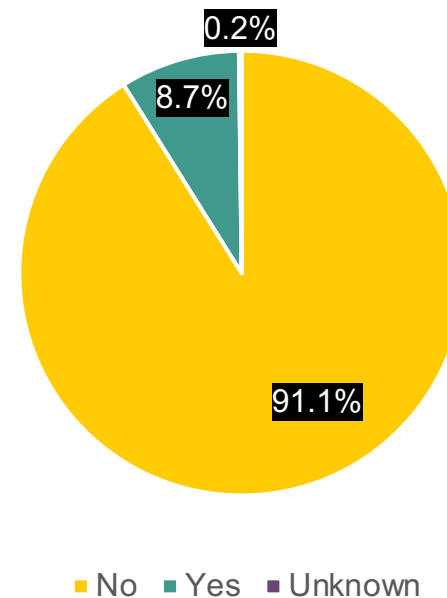
## Key Takeaways:

- About half of companies represented reported having equal leadership alignment between EHS and other functions, such as HR and finance

# Who does the most senior EHS leader report to within your organization?



EHS Leader Reports to Multiple Entities

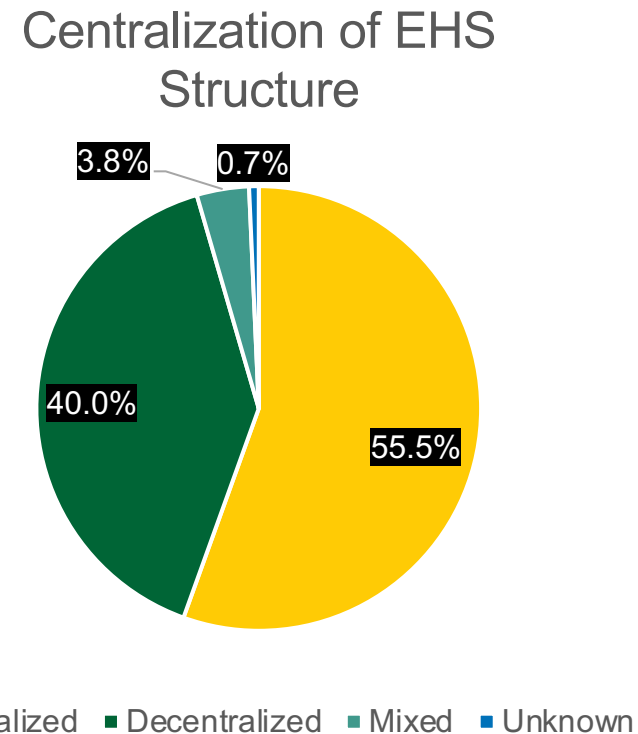
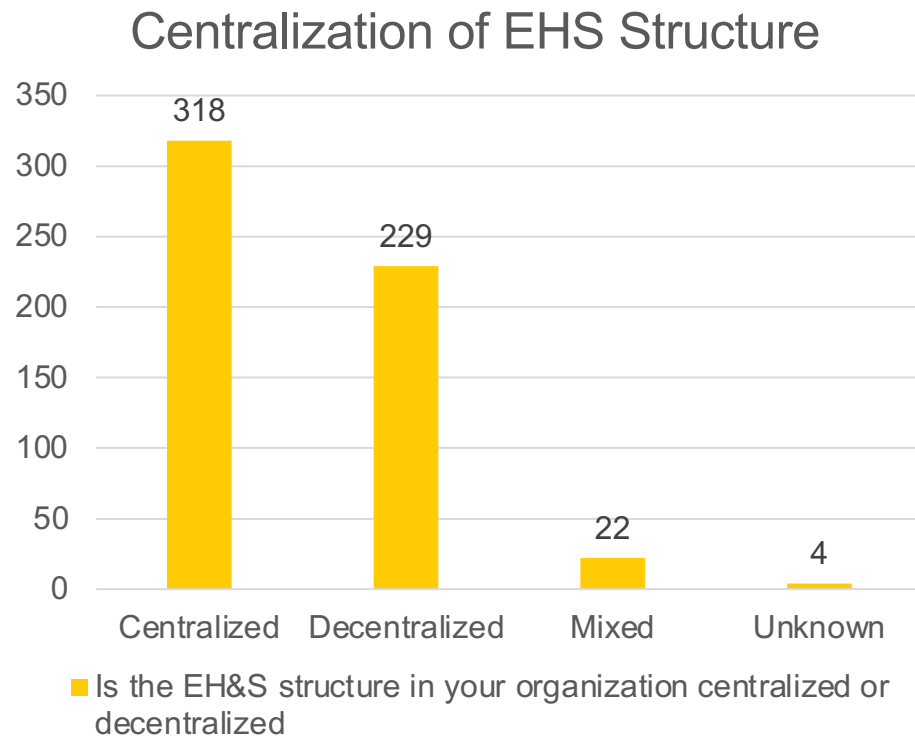


## Key Takeaways:

- In most companies represented, the most senior EHS leader reports to either the president/CEO or operations
- 8.7% of respondents said the most senior EHS leader in their organization reports to multiple entities



# Is the EHS structure in your organization centralized or decentralized?

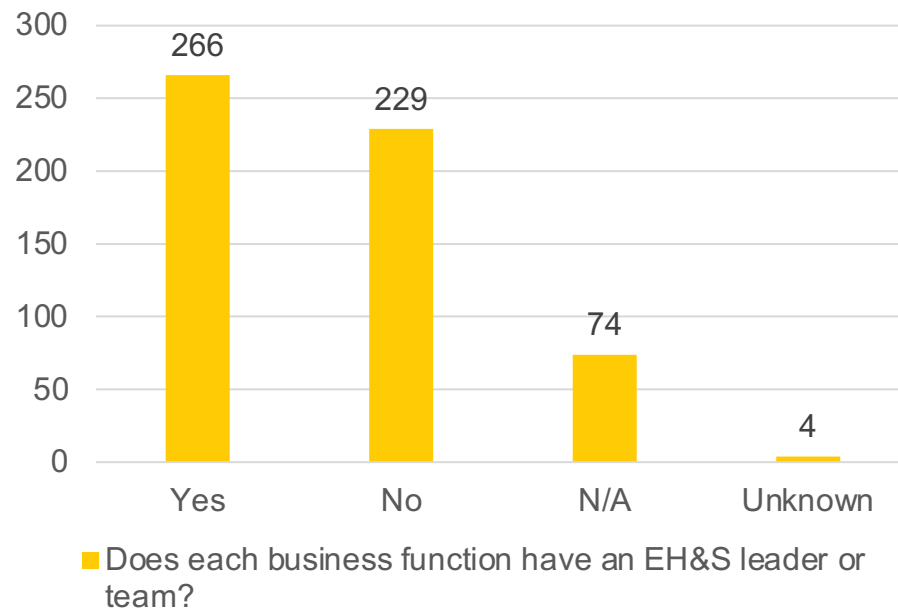


## Key Takeaways:

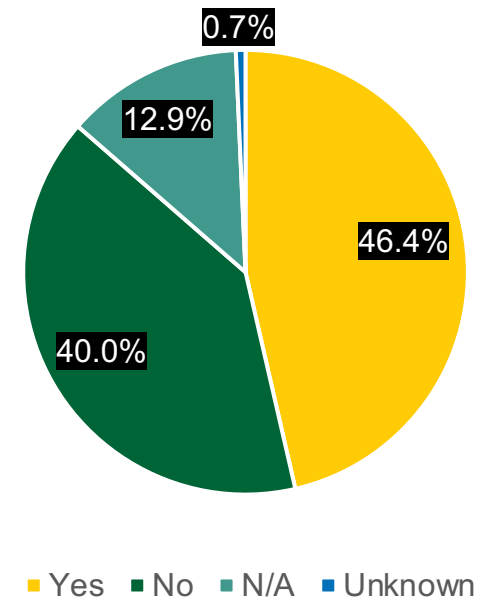
- Over half of the companies represented have centralized policies and budgets for the EHS function.
- 3.8% of respondents reported a mix of centralization and decentralization, such as centralized policies but decentralized budgeting.

# Does each business unit have an EHS leader or team?

EHS Leader for Each Business Unit



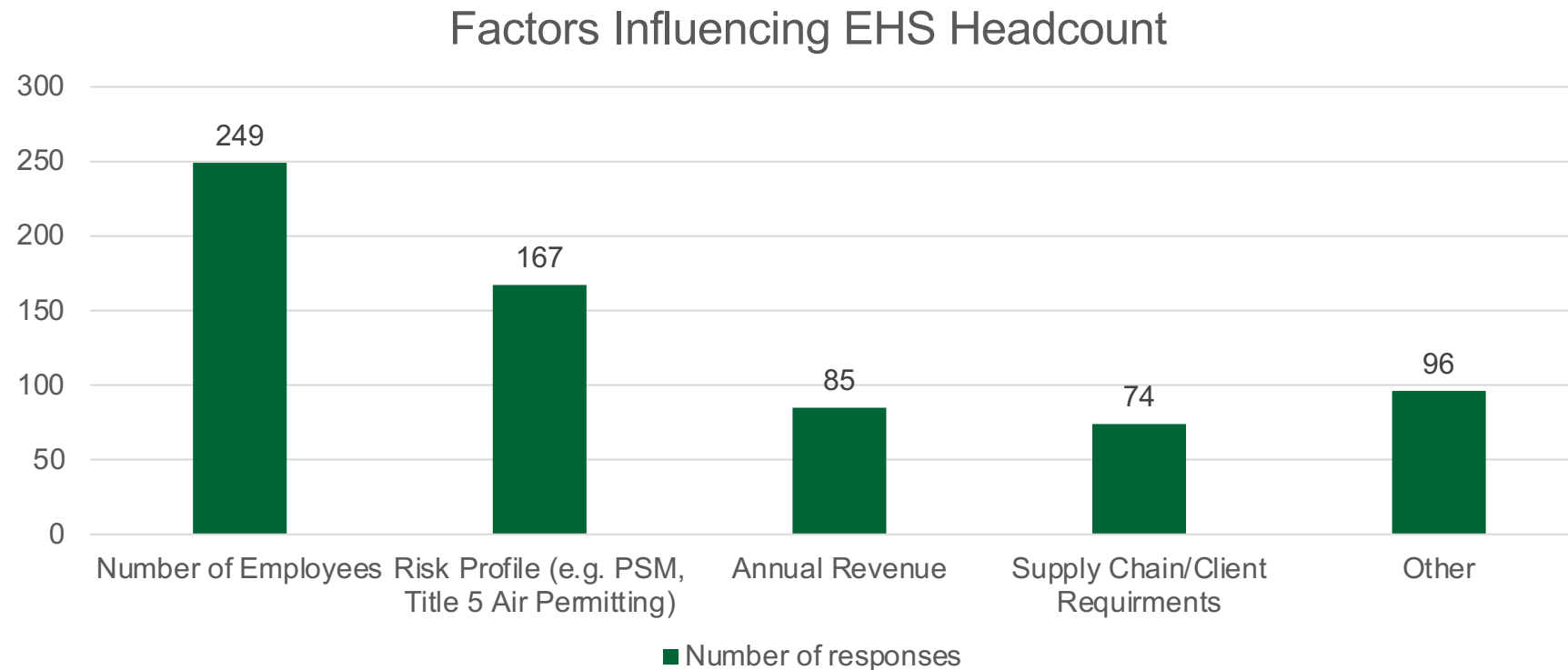
EHS Leader for Each Business Function



## Key Takeaways:

- 46.4% of respondents reported the presence of an EHS leader or team for each business unit within the organization.
- The 12.9% of responses that were N/A were single-site or otherwise too small to have more than one EHS team

# Which of the following factors inform the headcount, or amount of people, working within EHS in your organization?



## Key Takeaways:

- A large portion of companies represented determine their EHS headcount by number of employees, followed by risk profile
- A large number of “Other” responses reported there was no consistent method for determining EHS headcount

# Is there an association between size of the organization and centralization of the EHS function?

Size of the organization, based on number of employees, statistically significantly predicts centralization of the EHS function. However, this only accounts for 3.2% of the variance. The regression model reflects that EHS functions are marginally more decentralized in larger organizations.

			ANOVA				Unstandardized Coefficients					95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
Model	R Square	Std. Error	F	Sig.	df	Variable	B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	.032	.954	18.797	<.001	1, 567	Constant	2.394	.068		35.249	<.001	2.261	2.528
						ORG_SIZE	-.124	.029	-.179	-4.336	<.001	-.180	-.068

# Is there an association between annual revenue and centralization of the EHS function?

Organizational annual revenue statistically significantly predicts centralization of the EHS function. However, this only accounts for 3.5% of the variance. The regression model reflects that EHS functions are marginally more decentralized in organizations with higher annual revenue.

ANOVA						Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta		t		Sig.		95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
Model	R Square	Std. Error	F	Sig.	df	Variable	B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1	.035	.953	20.324	<.001	1, 567	Constant	2.472	.081		30.659	<.001	2.314	2.631		
						ORG_SIZE	-.124	.027	-.186	-4.508	<.001	-.178	-.070		

# What's Next?





# Conclusion and Next Steps

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Many EHS departments are responsible for more than just EHS.

The size of EHS departments varies across industries and is dependent on number of employees, risk profile, annual revenue and supply chain pressures.

Centralization of EHS policies and budgets are dependent on size of the organization, based on number of employees and annual revenue.

There are more data points to collect and more conclusions to be drawn with future benchmarking.

This type of benchmarking should continue to be performed for transparency across industries and the EHS profession.

# Follow Up

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# Additional Statistical Tests

# Is there an association between years of experience and job title?

Years of experience working in the EHS profession statistically significantly predicts job title. However, this only accounts for 4.5% of the variance. The regression model reflects that more years of experience can lead to marginally higher job titles.

			ANOVA				Unstandardized Coefficients					95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
Model	R Square	Std. Error	F	Sig.	df	Variable	B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	.045	.918	27.154	<.001	1, 571	Constant	.821	.164		4.998	<.001	.498	1.143
						EXP	.182	.035	.213	5.211	<.001	.114	.251