

MATES HELPING MATES

REACH & IMPACT REPORT



20
24



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This report was prepared by MATES in Construction, NZ. It contains information about suicide that may be distressing.

If you or someone you know is struggling with thoughts of suicide, please reach out for help.

In an emergency contact 111.

Go to your nearest hospital emergency department or phone your local Mental Health Crisis Team (see <https://info.health.nz/mental-health/mental-health-services/crisis-assessment-teams>)

In a non-emergency, contact the **MATES NZ Helpline at 0800 111 315** for confidential, free support and assistance.

MATES in Construction Data Handling and Privacy Statement

MATES in Construction is committed to meeting its obligations around privacy and confidentiality as set out in the Privacy Act 2020 which governs how organisations and businesses can collect, store, use and share your information. MATES uses data to keep and provide accurate training records, for site accreditation, to inform process/training improvements and to support reporting. All data is securely stored on the MATES database and reasonable safeguards are in place to prevent loss, misuse, or disclosure of personal information.



LOOK
UP
AND
LIVE

A NOTE FROM OUR MATES CEO

We are proud to share the *MATES Helping MATES 2024 Reach and Impact Report* with our Partners, Champions, Collaborators, and Key Stakeholders. This report reflects the mahi carried out by our staff and Industry throughout the year and reinforces MATES' commitment to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in supporting workers' mental health and well-being.

The 2024 report stems from valuable feedback we received, with our Partnership Survey highlighting a need for more reporting on our programmes and services' reach and impact, and our staff research days encouraging us to be bold in sharing our wins and tracking progress. This report embodies that spirit and aims to provide a clear snapshot of how MATES, together with our Industry, are making a difference.

WHAT WE ACHIEVED TOGETHER IN 2024:

- **Worker interactions:** Over **53,660** engagements across our programmes and services, including more than **1,940** MATES staff visits to sites, and **10,441** workers participating in General Awareness Training (GAT) or MATES Awareness Training (MAT).
- **Volunteer training:** **1,030** volunteers trained as on-site support (Connectors and ASIST participants), forming the backbone of our community development model.
- **Support services engagement:** Over **1,680** well-being callback requests, more than **800** calls to the 24/7 MATES Helpline, and **348** new workers accessing MATES' Case Management as part of **3,160** client interactions. These numbers signal a growing cultural shift toward openness around mental health.
- **Economic evaluation:** Completed with a finding of a \$1 to **\$4.42** return on investment, showing MATES' financial value.
- **Attitude and behaviour shifts:** GAT and CON-trained worker pre- to post-training surveys showed a **34%** increase in confidence in noticing a workmate struggling (rising to 81%) and a **28%** increase in confidence in connecting workmates in distress to help (rising to 94%). More than **30%** of CON-trained workers reported using their skills to intervene and support a workmate in distress, connecting them into MATES Case Management or other support. Additionally, ASIST-trained volunteers experienced a **78%** increase in confidence to perform a suicide intervention, reaching **100%** post-training.





Recognition: This year, MATES celebrated achievements, including Raman Lee becoming the first Field Officer to complete 1,000 Site Visits, and AUT PhD student Mohsin Ali receiving the first MATES Allison Milner Scholarship in New Zealand. A refreshed uniform for staff, generously donated by Fashion Biz, further strengthened and unified our team's identity as we celebrated five years of MATES in Aotearoa.

Research: MATES had strong research participation, with over **2,100** responses to the MATES and ASB Wellbeing Survey, and **115** focus group participants contributing to the MATES and BRANZ psychosocial hazard research. These insights informed the publication of three reports – MATES in Construction Well-being Survey, Workplace Psychosocial Stressors, and Economic Cost of Suicide in NZ Construction, [available on the MATES website](#).

The findings were shared at launch events in Auckland and Wellington and are being used to inform: advocacy for funding, ensuring suicide in construction remains a priority, identifying priority groups requiring additional support, educating Industry about the stressors and factors influencing suicide, and understanding how to best promote mental health and well-being to all Industry workers. This allows MATES to adapt, innovate, and provide insights to address the challenges and opportunities ahead in this evolving Industry.

Community collaboration: Community engagement remained strong with fundraising events including Hirepool Clash for Construction, CCNZ and Dreadnought golf days, Footy for All touch rugby, as well as Industry insight webinars, showcasing Industry solidarity and raising funds for MATES' initiatives.

These accomplishments highlight the collective efforts of MATES staff, Partners, and stakeholders to advance our mission of creating a suicide-free Construction Industry where workers and their whānau thrive.

A collaborative vision: MATES' vision is clear: A suicide-free New Zealand Construction Industry in which workers and their families enjoy good mental health. This vision is made possible by the investment and support of our workers, Partners, and stakeholders across Government, Industry, not-for-profit, and community. Partnership and collaboration remain at the heart of our kaupapa. No single organisation can address the complex issue of suicide alone – it takes an all-of-Industry approach and a commitment to fostering courageous conversations about mental well-being.

Looking ahead: With the Industry evolving rapidly, MATES is committed to staying relevant and responsive to workers' needs. In 2025, MATES will roll out new initiatives based on worker and Partner feedback, including:

- The Whitiora Well-being Programme, focusing on holistic worker well-being.
- The Respond Programme, designed to upskill the workforce in managing Critical Incidents.
- The Supervisor Programme, which emphasises social-emotional leadership skills in the Construction Industry.

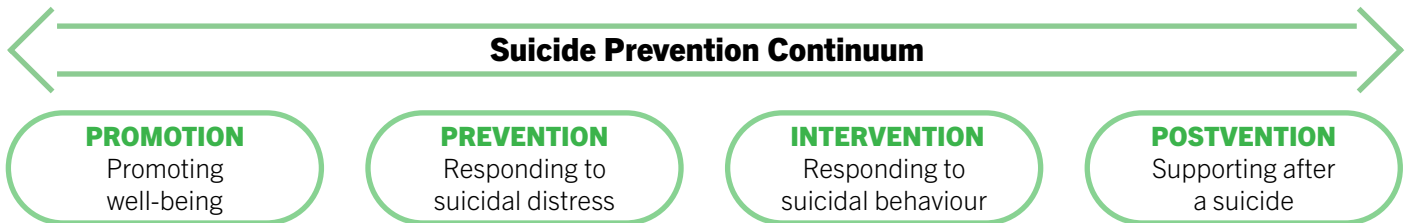
We're thrilled to announce that MATES has secured new funding moving into 2025, following a successful application to the Mental Health and Addiction Community Sector Innovation Fund.

Thank you for standing alongside MATES in this important journey. Together, we can continue to make the Construction Industry a safe and mentally healthy place for all.

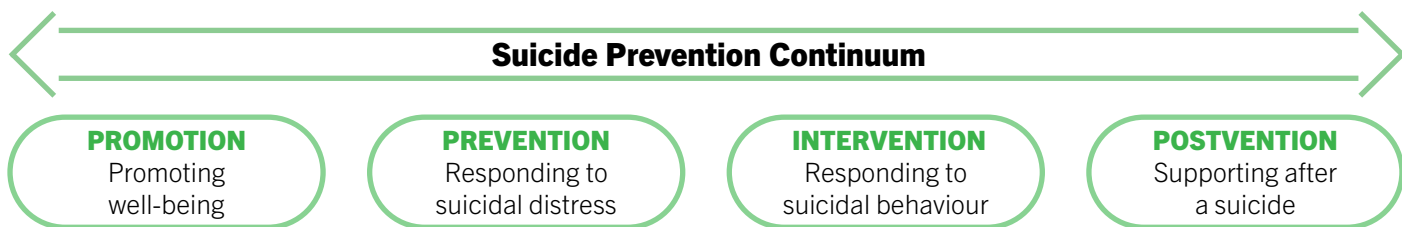
Ngā mihi, John Chapman (CEO)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: REACH AND IMPACT in 2024

MATES in Construction is an evidence-based, suicide prevention organisation aligned with **New Zealand's Every Life Matters: He Tapu te Oranga National Suicide Prevention Strategy** (Ministry of Health, 2019). MATES community development model spans across the full Suicide Prevention Continuum, addressing the needs of workers in one of the most at-risk industries: construction.

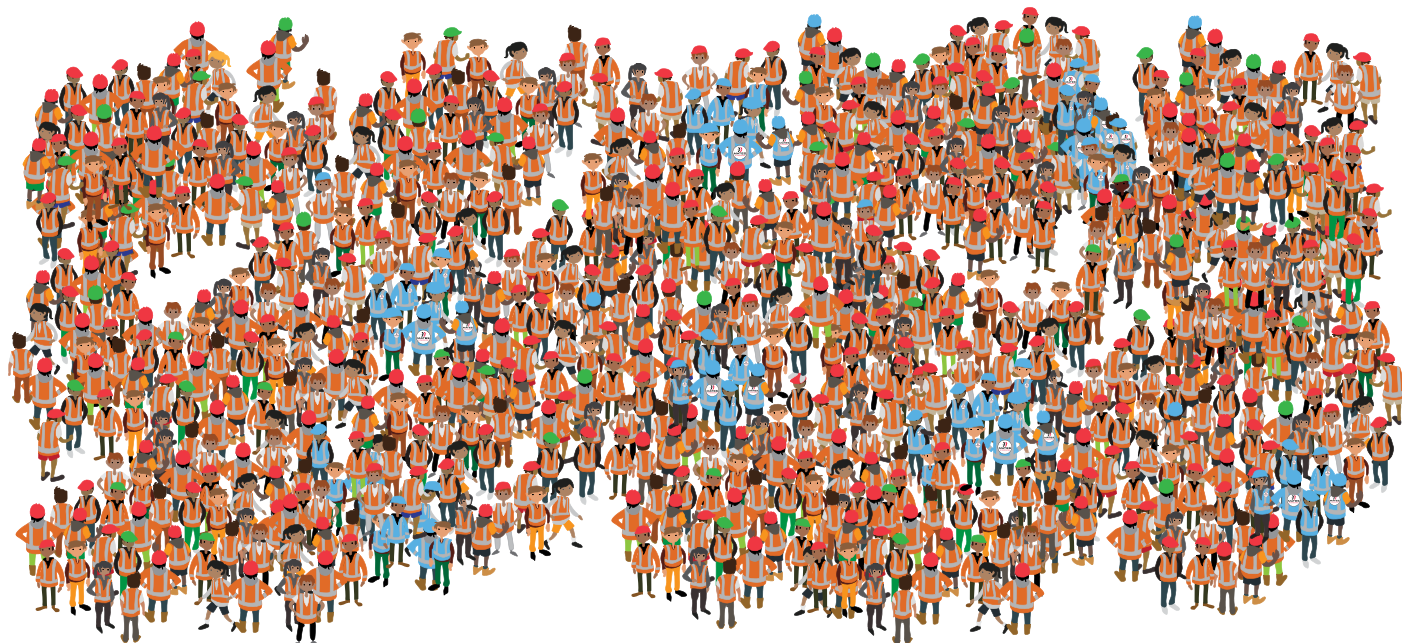


Service / Programme Description	Suicide Prevention Continuum	Reach
Site Visit		
MATES staff visiting sites, building relationships with workers, and familiarising them with MATES services.	PROMOTION & PREVENTION	1,940 Site Visits (Reaching 22,786 workers)
Toolbox Talk		
Brief on-site meetings focusing on well-being, encouraging open discussions, and helping workers recognise signs of distress.	PROMOTION & PREVENTION	414 Toolbox Talks (Reaching 16,412 workers)
MATES Awareness Training (MAT)		
A pared back version of GAT (see below) delivered if a site has a small number of workers.	PROMOTION & PREVENTION	2,934 MAT participants
General Awareness Training (GAT)		
This introductory training raises awareness about the prevalence of suicide in the Industry, teaches workers to recognise signs of distress, and offers practical guidance on how to offer support.	PROMOTION & PREVENTION	7,507 GAT participants
Connector Training (CON)		
Workers who volunteer to become Connectors receive more in-depth training to recognise and support workmates not travelling well, acting as an early link to help.	PREVENTION & INTERVENTION	935 CON participants
Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)		
The most advanced level of training, teaching workers intervention skills to de-escalate situations and ensure individuals in crisis are supported and kept safe.	INTERVENTION	95 ASIST participants
Whitiara MATES Wellbeing Training		
A two-hour training for office-based construction workers focusing on hauora (well-being), including practical tools to help relieve distress, enabling people to thrive rather than survive. Pilot-phase completed in 2024.	POSTVENTION & PREVENTION	135 Whitiara participants



Service / Programme Description	Suicide Prevention Continuum	Reach
Callback		
At the conclusion of training, workers can request a callback from MATES staff to kōrero about their mental health and well-being, aiming to identify any support needed and connect them with additional help if required.	PREVENTION & INTERVENTION	1,684 Callbacks
Helpline		
Free to access 24/7 Helpline providing timely mental health and well-being support to workers.	PREVENTION & INTERVENTION	809 calls to the Helpline
Case Management		
Trained professionals (counsellors, psychologists, and social workers) supporting workers who are struggling, and helping them to navigate and access support options targeted to their individual needs.	INTERVENTION & POSTVENTION	348 new clients
Postvention/Critical Incident Response		
Mental health support provided to workers, whānau, and communities after a suicide or traumatic event.	POSTVENTION	19 Postventions/ Critical Incident Response (Reaching more than 660 workers)

MATES engaged in 53,664 worker interactions





MATES REACH IN 2024

Site Visits, Toolbox Talks, and Trainings

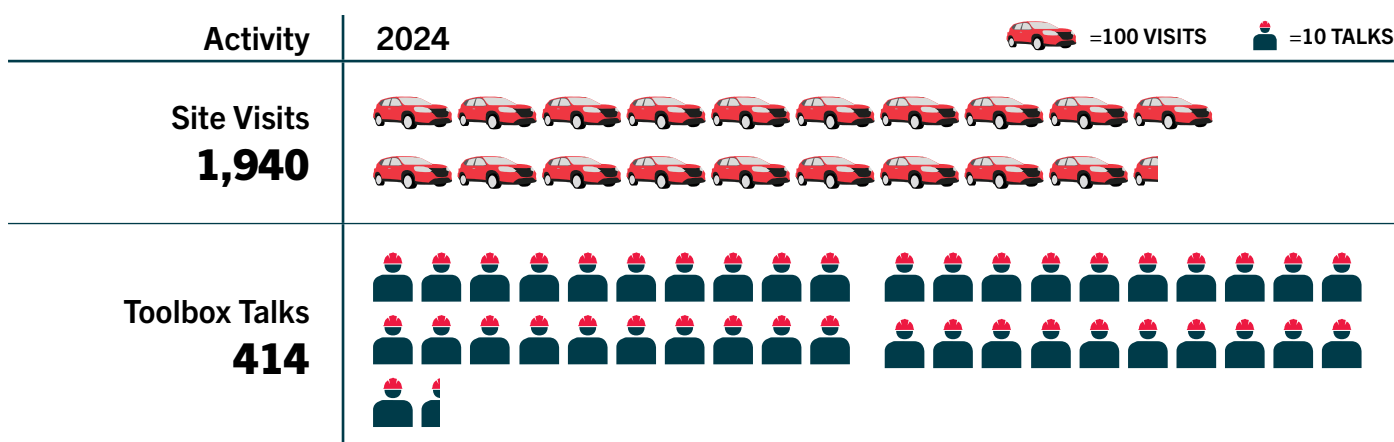
EMPOWERING WORKERS, SUPPORTING LIVES: ABOUT THE MATES PROGRAMME AND TRAININGS

MATES focuses on **reducing the high rates of suicide in the Construction Industry** by creating supportive workplace environments that promote well-being not only for workers but also for their whānau (family) and communities.

MATES' core approach is to **build awareness and encourage open conversations about mental health** through on-site, face-to-face interactions. Workers are empowered to recognise the signs of distress in their peers and are trained to connect them to help (CON or ASIST volunteer). By **engaging workers directly on-site and offering culturally inclusive, peer-driven support**, MATES delivers effective and evidence-based suicide prevention training in a way that is accessible to workers, responsive to their needs and workplace culture, and resonates with the unique challenges faced in the Construction Industry.

PROMOTION AND PREVENTION: SITE VISITS AND TOOLBOX TALKS

MATES **Site Visits** and **Toolbox Talks** are key to engaging construction workers and promoting mental health awareness. Site Visits build relationships, raise awareness about suicide prevention, and familiarise workers with support services. Toolbox Talks are brief, on-site meetings that focus on well-being, encouraging open discussions and helping workers recognise signs of distress in their peers. These efforts ensure workers feel comfortable and know how to seek help, and foster a supportive workplace culture.



MATES TRAININGS

MATES offers **three tiers of training** designed to equip workers with suicide prevention tools:



PROMOTION & PREVENTION

- 1. General Awareness Training (GAT):** This introductory 45-minute training raises awareness about the prevalence of suicide in the Industry, teaches workers how to recognise signs of distress, and offers practical guidance on how to offer support. A pared back version – MATES Awareness Training (MAT) – is delivered if the site has a very small number of workers.



PREVENTION & INTERVENTION

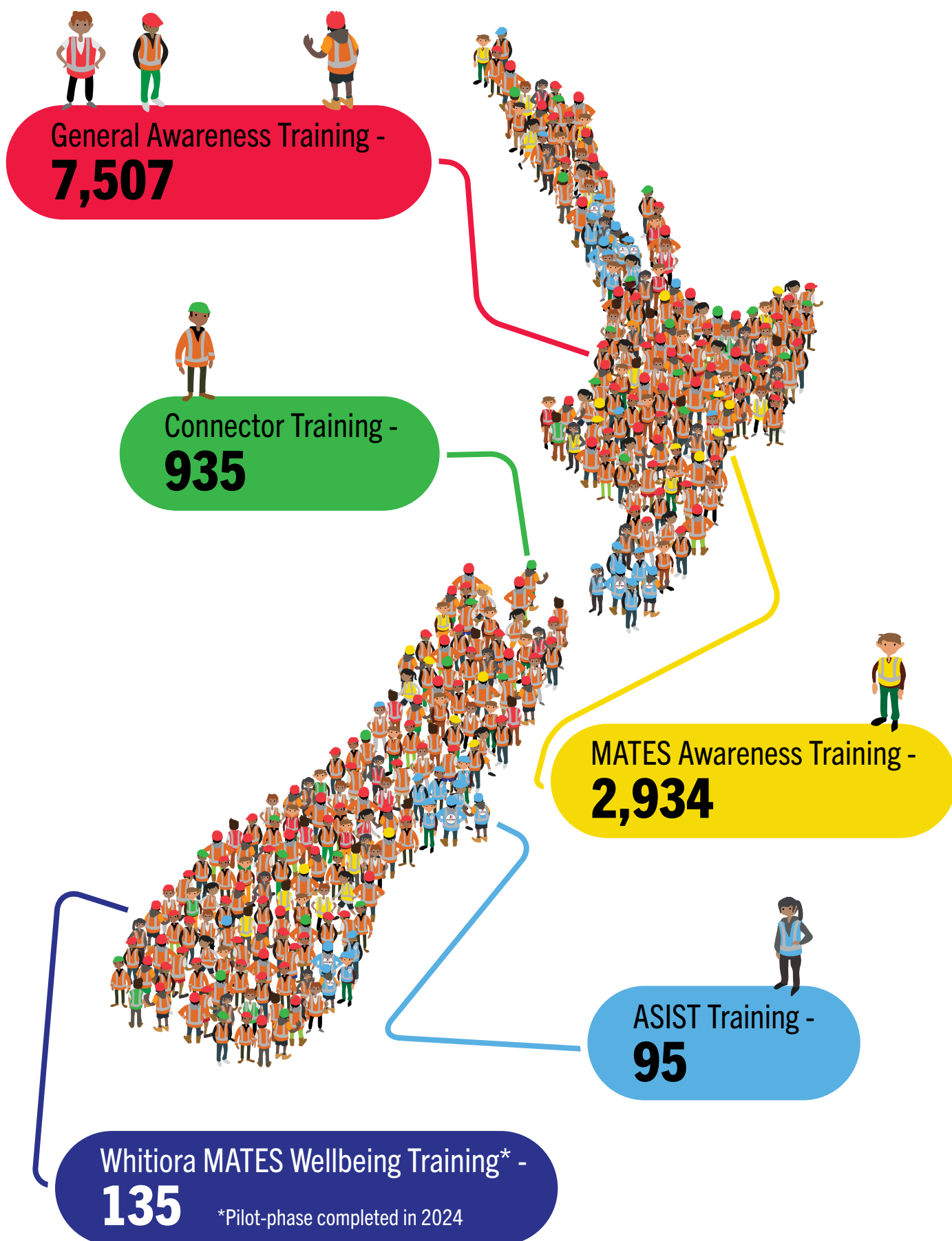
- 2. Connector Training (CON):** Workers who volunteer to become Connectors receive an in-depth, 4-hour training on how to recognise and support workmates in crisis. Connectors play a vital role on sites by acting as an early link to help, ensuring workers can be directed to professional resources when needed.



INTERVENTION

- 3. Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST):** ASIST is the most advanced level of training completed over 2 days. It teaches workers intervention skills to help someone in immediate crisis. ASIST-trained workers serve as 'first responders' on-site, using their skills to de-escalate situations and ensure the individual is supported and kept safe during crisis.

2024 PARTICIPANTS IN MATES TRAINING PROGRAMMES (GENERAL AWARENESS, MATES AWARENESS, CONNECTOR, ASIST, AND WHITIORA)



MATES REACH IN 2024

Callbacks, Helpline, Case Management,
and Critical Incident Response



MATES CALLBACKS, HELPLINE, CASE MANAGEMENT, AND CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE

At the conclusion of training, workers can request a **callback from MATES staff** to kōrero about their, a whānau member, or a workmates' mental health and well-being.

In addition, MATES' **free 24/7 Helpline** and **Case Management services** connect workers in distress with qualified professionals for timely 1:1 support. After a suicide or traumatic event, MATES provides **Critical Incident Response**, offering mental health support to workers, whānau, and communities. This can include providing resources, on-site presence, access to the MATES Helpline, Toolbox Talks, and 1:1 assistance to those at increased risk following the initial incident, ensuring that MATES are available for as long as needed.

These layers of support create a ripple effect throughout the Construction Industry, ensuring that workers at all levels are equipped to notice, speak up, and offer care to their workmates, and know where to turn for help.

2024 (note these services continue to operate over the holiday period, which is not captured here)

PREVENTION



1,684 Callbacks

by MATES staff to workers wanting a kōrero about their well-being

PREVENTION & INTERVENTION



809 calls to the MATES Helpline

(24/7 free service)

INTERVENTION & POSTVENTION



348 new workers

accessing MATES Case Management service

POSTVENTION



19 Postventions/Critical Incident Responses

by MATES at sites across the motu, reaching more than 660 workers



MATES IMPACT IN 2024

Trainings

MATES Training participants complete surveys pre- and immediately post-training collecting their demographic data, self-reported attitudes regarding suicide and mental health, and self-efficacy regarding suicide prevention literacy (understanding of how to notice a mate struggling, risk factors, and support options available). These pre- and post-training surveys, capture shifts in participants' attitudes surrounding suicide and in their suicide prevention literacy. Post-training surveys also collect self-reported measures of satisfaction, safety, and cultural acceptability of trainings (see MATES Data Handling and Privacy Statement on page 1 of this report).

DEMOGRAPHIC AND REGIONAL REACH OF MATES GAT AND CON TRAINING 2024 (BASED ON 7,888 WORKER FEEDBACK FORMS)

Ethnicity



The greatest suicide stigma reduction was evident among Māori and Pasifika workers, both seeing a **14% increase** in those who understand that you can prevent suicide by talking openly about it (up to 89% and 96% respectively post-training).



29% of Pasifika, 21% of Asian, and 14% of both Māori and MELAA workers requested a callback post-training for a kōrero about their well-being from a MATES Field Officer.

Additionally, **96%** of workers (all ethnicities) found MATES trainings to be **safe and culturally inclusive**.



“Aroha i te kaupapa, kia kaha... the kaiako is very clear and well spoken, makes you feel comfortable in your space.”
- Connector participant, Māori

“Loved this! Suicide was so taboo before in my mind. To know now that I don’t have to be afraid to broach it is a huge relief.”
- Connector participant, Pasifika



Gender



84% of training participants identified as male, 15% as female, and 1% as LGBTQIA+.

Over 90% of workers belonging to all gender groups found MATES trainings to be **safe and culturally inclusive**.



1 in 5 males requested a callback post-training for a kōrero about their well-being from a MATES Field Officer.



“Very helpful for people facing issues with family, money, and pressure from work. You need to talk to your mates.”
- GAT participant, Male



“Thank you for a very emotional and respectful session on preventing suicide.”
- GAT participant, Female

Age



24% of workers completing 2024 GAT and CON training were aged 15-24 and 30% were aged 45-49. Research identifies higher rates of suicide in these two age brackets (Te Whatu Ora Suicide Web Tool, 2023/2024), making them key groups for MATES to reach.

The most significant increase in suicide prevention literacy across age groups was seen in workers aged **15-24 years, with a 38% increase in those who would notice a mate struggling or thinking about suicide (up to 78% post-training).**

“Good content, learned a lot. I feel I now have the skills to ask the hard questions and recognise invitations.”

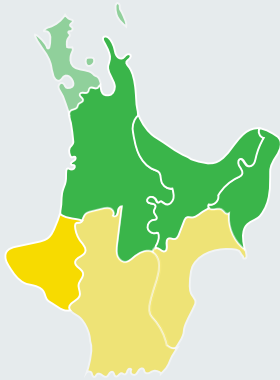
- Connector participant, 45-49 year old



“Excellent training - good to spread the word...around the more subtle signs of someone struggling.”

- GAT participant, 15-24 year old

Region



Te Manawa Taki region has been identified as a high risk region for poor mental well-being (MATES Well-being Survey).

Pre-to-post training feedback forms identified the **greatest suicide stigma reduction in Te Manawa Taki region, as well as increased suicide prevention literacy: at least 30% increase** in noticing a mate struggling and knowing how to connect them to help.



“Awesome course, needed this years ago. Glad MATES is available now.”

- GAT participant, Te Manawa Taki region



Workers who requested a callback for a kōrero about their well-being from a MATES Field Officer included:

- 1 in 3 Trade Workers
- 1 in 5 Labourers, STMS workers, and Machinery Operators and Drivers



Post-training feedback forms saw a **43% increase among Managers and Professionals** who would notice if a worker was thinking about suicide (up to 83% post-training).



“I would agree that everyone needs to do this course as it has opened my eyes a lot on suicide it also pulled a bit of heart strings of my own.”

- GAT participant, Labour/STMS & Traffic Management

“Eye opener fantastic advise on what to look out for, had no idea on the stats. Thanks, appreciate your work.”

- GAT participant, Machinery Operator/Driver



IMPACT OF 2024 ● GENERAL AWARENESS TRAINING (GAT) AND ● CONNECTOR TRAINING (CON)

The impact of MATES training is measured through pre- to post-training evaluations, which allow MATES to monitor improvements and adjust their approach where necessary. In 2024, over **8,440** workers completed GAT and CON training feedback forms, and the results showed **suicide stigma reduction and improved suicide prevention literacy (understanding of how to notice a mate struggling, risk factors, and support options available)**, with examples including:



Belief that open discussions about suicide can help prevent it increased from 81% to **92%**



Confidence in noticing a work mate struggling rose from 47% to **81%**



Willingness to talk about mental health rose from 91% to **97%**



Confidence in connecting work mate to help rose from 66% to **94%**



Awareness of where to seek help rose from 73% to **94%**

These findings demonstrate that MATES is helping to break down the stigma surrounding mental health in the Construction Industry. By empowering workers to talk about mental health openly and to recognise when their workmates, peers, or whānau might be struggling, **MATES contributes to creating safer, more supportive environments both inside and outside of the workplace.**

The training programme's effectiveness is reflected in positive feedback received from GAT and CON participants. In 2024, **97% of participants agreed that the training was delivered in a safe and culturally inclusive manner.** 97% of workers were satisfied with the quality of the training, and **94%** said they would recommend the training to a friend or work mate.

Many workers praised MATES for making discussions about mental health feel “normal” and for creating a space where seeking help was seen as a positive step.



"This was probably the best suicide awareness training that I have been a part of."
- GAT participant



"Great awareness, everyone in the Industry should be aware of this and ... who to go to for help."
- GAT participant



"Very effective program for those who might be going through something and also a good way to help others think and approach suicide more openly and confidently."
- GAT participant

"I really valued the course. You cover lots of areas, give great examples that are usable in real life. I think everyone should complete it."
- Connector



"Great course for work and life experience. Particularly good if you have experienced [poor well-being] so that you can do better if faced with this again."
- Connector



"Prior to the training I would probably have just brushed some things off where as now I will ask more to ensure I can connect the person [to help] if needed."
- Connector



APPLYING SKILLS IN REAL-WORLD SCENARIOS

The MATES Connector Training is designed to ensure that there is always someone on-site who can offer support. Connectors are critical in linking their workmates to professional help and addressing issues before they escalate.

Re-Connect provides an opportunity six months or more post-CON training to refresh workers' skills and connect to share their experiences as volunteers. Re-Connect also provides the opportunity to understand **how Connectors are continuing to apply their suicide prevention and intervention skills over time**, and helps identify areas where ongoing support or adjustments to the training may be needed to ensure sustained impact.

In 2024, Re-Connect feedback from **64 workers who completed their** ● **Connector training** more than six months prior highlighted the impact of the training:



80% of Connectors felt confident in recognising warning signs of suicide.



34% reported using their skills to intervene and support a workmate in distress, connecting them into MATES Case Management or other support.



69% of Connectors noticed a positive shift in their attitudes towards mental health and suicide.

The majority of Connectors had completed their training more than a year ago, yet most continued to actively apply their skills in both personal and professional contexts, including **27%** using them weekly at work and **30%** using them monthly in their personal lives.

SUICIDE INTERVENTION SKILLS IN ACTION

The ASIST training is MATES' most comprehensive programme, equipping workers with advanced suicide intervention skills. In 2024, **95 participants completed** ● **ASIST training**, with results showing an increase in their readiness to intervene during a crisis:



100% of participants felt comfortable asking someone if they were thinking about suicide (**76% increase pre- to post-training**).



98% felt confident in helping someone experiencing suicide ideation (**81% increase pre- to post-training**).



93% felt prepared to help someone if experiencing suicidal thoughts (**69% increase pre- to post-training**).



100% would intervene for someone who was thinking of suicide (**78% increase pre- to post-training**).

"The balance was spot on without too much of an information overload."

- ASIST



"Really good. I thought having done mental health first aid I would already be acclimated for this. This course was very specific and created a [safe] vulnerable atmosphere when dealing with prevention. It felt very real and prepared myself well."

- ASIST

"I hope as time goes on talking about suicide becomes normal and not something people hide like a taboo topic."

- ASIST



"I am comfortable and determine to help people best as I can. And when in doubt or need of help, I know I can ask for help also."

- Re-Connect



"Excellent presenters. Highly recommend to all. The exercises were well thought out and thorough. I've learnt more than I thought I would, and feel prepared for future suicide discussions."

- ASIST




"Very thought provoking. Has given me more tools in my kete to deal with these situations."

- ASIST



MATES IMPACT IN 2024

Case Management

A construction worker wearing an orange high-visibility shirt and a white hard hat with a green 'esko' logo is shown in profile, talking on a light blue smartphone. He is standing in a construction site with a yellow crane and other equipment visible in the blurred background.

Case Management client demographic details, referral pathways, and presenting issues are captured with session notes added at each client interaction. This allows Case Managers to track client well-being, shape the support provided, and determine tailored ongoing support options. MATES Case Management clients are given the opportunity to complete a confidential exit-survey at departure of the service, feeding back on their experience and capturing self-reported measures of satisfaction, safety, and cultural acceptability of MATES Case Management (see MATES Data Handling and Privacy Statement on page 1 of this report).

Case Management:

For workers needing more personalised mental health support, MATES provided confidential Case Management services. Qualified Case Managers offer specialised support for workers experiencing poor well-being to prevent them getting to a crisis point, and to help those at risk of suicide or experiencing a mental health crisis. In 2024, MATES Case Management supported **348 new clients** through:



3,160 client interactions
(phone and face-to-face).



Dedicating more than **1,400** hours
to 1:1 direct support for workers across the
Construction Industry.

MATES Case Management reached a wide range of workers:



16% of clients were aged **16-25 years**,
showing that our younger and often more
vulnerable workers received essential
assistance.



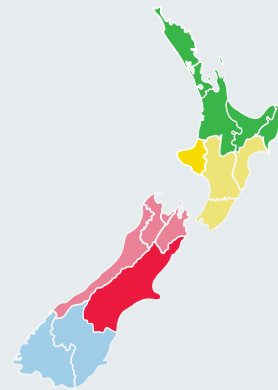
The majority of clients (**88%**) were male,
reflecting the broader demographic
of the Industry.

MATES Case Management engaged with workers from
diverse ethnic backgrounds:

Geographically, MATES Case Management services were
robust, covering major urban centres such as:

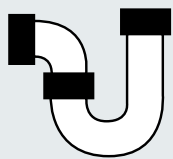


17% of clients identified as **Māori**,
12% as Pasifika, and **11% as Asian**.
This highlights MATES' connection
with these communities, which can
be underrepresented in other support
services but face unique challenges
within the construction sector.



Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland), **Te Whanganui-a-Tara** (Wellington), **Waitaha** (Canterbury),
Waikato, **Te Moana-a-Toitehuatahi** (Bay Of
Plenty), **Te Tai Tokerau** (Northland), and the **Te
Manawa Taki** Region, and extending to rural
and smaller areas. This ensured that workers
from the regions, who can face barriers to
support, were also able to access MATES.

The primary referral pathways into Case Management included **employer-referrals**, **self-referrals**, and **MATES General Awareness Training (GAT)**, indicating workplace engagement and proactive help-seeking behaviours. Clients came from a variety of occupations, including:



Builders and Plumbers



Construction Managers



Labourers



Carpenters

The most common issues faced by clients were:

Relationships



(including whānau and intimate relationships)

Financial stress



(including housing and basic needs)

Work-related Stress



(including workplace stressors and work pipeline)

Health



(including both physical and mental health)

Behaviour



(including addiction and anger)

By providing both timely and longer-term support in 2024, MATES continues to play a role in addressing the complex psychosocial stressors and improving the overall well-being of workers across the Construction Industry.

Of those who provided feedback after exiting Case Management services (35 workers):



89% found it culturally supportive.



91% felt comfortable talking to their Case Manager.

Case Management client testimonials:



"I felt comfortable talking with [Case Manager] he was very supportive and positive. I even referred my work mate to him who was having issues."

"Someone that listened to my needs when I was unsure what I needed at the time. [Case Manager] led me to some great support networks in my community, that I didn't know existed."



"Just getting reassurance on the initial first call that everything will be okay, and they could help right from the start."



"Having support and knowing that I was connecting with people who understand trauma and the side effects."



"Getting checked up on every couple weeks and can call them when I need to."



"[Case Manager] is very down to earth and understanding. Never once made me feel embarrassed or uncomfortable about my situation."





CHANGE
A **MATES** 2024 RESEARCH
LAUNCH SHOWCASE



RESEARCH AND LAUNCH
PROUDLY SPONSORED BY

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MATES 2024 RESEARCH SUMMARY

Gathering insights and driving change through research

MATES is an evidence-based organisation, shaping their mahi through research and data. MATES' commitment to capturing workers' voices ensures programmes/services stay attuned to real-time psychosocial stressors and are underpinned with an understanding of how these challenges affect different worker groups. **This enables MATES to adapt, innovate, and continuously improve their programs, trainings, and supports to meet workers' needs.**

In 2024, MATES' research participation included over **2,100** Well-being Survey responses and **115** focus group participants. These workers' insights underpinned two reports: the MATES in Construction Well-being Survey, and the Workplace Psychosocial Stressors report. In addition, MATES commissioned the Economic Cost of Suicide in New Zealand Construction report, including the return on investment delivered by MATES' programmes and services.

These three reports, launched at research events in Auckland and Wellington and shared across several webinars and presentations, help MATES to continue to advocate for funding, ensure suicide in construction remains a priority, identify priority groups requiring additional support, educate about the stressors and factors influencing suicide, and understand how to best promote mental health and well-being to all Industry workers.

Through research, training evaluations, and Government submissions, MATES is helping to create safer and healthier construction communities. Together, we're addressing today's challenges and unlocking new opportunities to support worker well-being across the construction sector.

Reports are available from: <https://mates.net.nz/research/>



The economic cost of suicide and non-fatal suicide behaviour to the NZ Construction Industry, external report by Central Queensland University

In 2023, 80 construction workers died by suicide and 1,628 experienced self-harm incidents, leading to a significant economic impact estimated at **\$1.135 billion NZD**. MATES generates a return on investment of **\$4.42** to every \$1 invested, with this figure being conservative, as the demand for MATES suggests it may save more lives. This report concludes that evidence based, well-resourced programs like MATES represent a valuable investment in reducing the economic burden of suicidal behaviour and enhancing workplace safety for New Zealand's Construction Industry.



MATES in Construction Well-being Survey, supported by ASB

This report sheds light on the mental health and well-being of over **2,100** workers in New Zealand's construction sector. The online and onsite multi-language survey revealed that while overall self-reported well-being has improved compared to previous years, certain groups - such as those with **mental illness or disabilities, LGBTQIA+ workers, younger workers, those with low support or not in relationships, and workers living in the Te Manawa Taki region** - face higher levels of stress and psychological distress. Key psychosocial stressors of concern included high job demand, poor relationships, and exhaustion.



Workplace psychosocial stressors in the Construction Industry: Perspectives of construction Industry stakeholders – supported by BRANZ, funded by the Building Research Levy

This research used qualitative methods, including 19 focus groups and 2 interviews with **115** Industry workers, to explore psychosocial stressors and their impacts. **Workers identified five key stressors: financial instability, poor communication, entrenched old-school masculinity, low pay and job insecurity, and insufficient mental health support.** Workers' proposed solutions included Government intervention, better regulation, improved communication, supportive workplace cultures, and specific interventions like limits on overtime and mental health programmes.



Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi engari i te toa takitini

*My strength is not of a single
warrior but that of many*



For more information about MATES, please contact:
info@mates.net.nz or MATES NZ Tel: +64 (09) 302 0535

**If you or someone you know is struggling with thoughts of suicide,
please reach out for help. In an emergency contact **111**.**

Go to your nearest hospital emergency department or phone your local
Mental Health Crisis Team.

In a non-emergency, contact MATES NZ Helpline at 0800 111 315
for confidential support and assistance.

Or call one of the following free services:

- Lifeline Aotearoa 0800 543 354 (24/7)
- Suicide Crisis Helpline – Tautoko 0508 828 865
- 1737 Need to Talk?