

# THE CONSTRUCTION USER

A Publication of The Association of Union Constructors | [www.tauc.org](http://www.tauc.org) | Spring 2017



## FORECASTING *The* FUTURE

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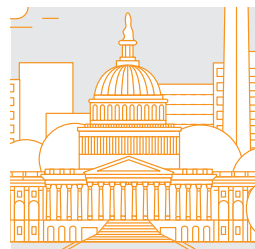
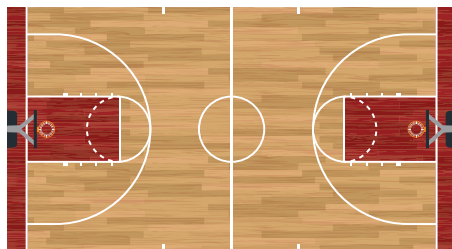
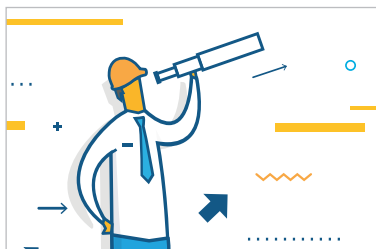
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# Stop, Observe, Reflect...Then Act



by JAKE LOCKLEAR

TAUC PRESIDENT  
PRESIDENT AND CEO,  
APM + APCOM

*The STOP principle is rooted in the protection of people and the environment, and its branches extend shade to protect all aspects of our organizations.*

**“Life moves pretty fast. If you don’t stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it.”**

**— Ferris Bueller from the 1986 movie, *Ferris Bueller’s Day Off***

**A** CORE TENANT OF our company’s environmental health and safety (EHS) culture is the **STOP Work Authority**. All employees are authorized, empowered, and expected to STOP any task or operation when they believe that the risk to people, environment, or assets is not being properly controlled. STOP Work Authority is considered a lifesaving principle in our business, essential to assuring all our employees go home safe and healthy (if you don’t have STOP as part of your EHS culture, please STOP reading this article, contact your EHS leader or any one of us, and learn about how to implement STOP Work Authority with your team).

STOP Work Authority may be considered by most as an EHS program, yet the principle equally applies to other areas of our businesses. For example, STOP can be used in any Quality culture (see the statement above about risk to assets) or Integrity culture (all employees STOP when they believe there is a risk to the character or reputation of the business). The STOP principle is rooted in the protection of people and the environment, and its branches extend shade to protect all aspects of our organizations.

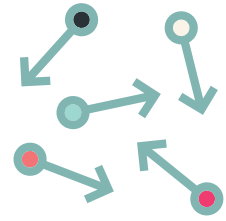
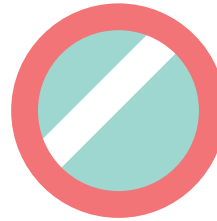
For STOP Work Authority to be effective in protecting our people and our organizations, we must actually STOP (thank you, Captain Obvious!). However, in today’s fast-paced world, ever accelerating and evolving, the discipline to STOP is tough. It is harder for us to slow down, observe

what is happening around us, and reflect. Yet every now and then we all need to do just this – be still, be silent, listen and look, think.

Over the past few months we have had opportunities to observe a lot of events. Much is happening in our ever-changing world. Or, as I heard at the recent UBC Millwright Leadership Conference, we live in an increasingly “VUCA” world – volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous.

For example, look at the U.S. political climate, and reflect on what you learned at our recent TAUC State of the Union Construction conference from folks like Jim VandeHei, the CEO/Co-Founder of Axios, a new media company, and the former CEO/Co-Founder of Politico. The current climate of political change is described as “crazy” or “shocking” or “disruptive.” Who knows what policy statement will come from the administration next? For that matter, who knows what the next tweet from the President will be? Whatever that is, it will most likely be “VUCA.”

As readers well know, our own industry continues to change at an ever-increasing pace, too. Consider this: in January, TAUC and NMAPC leadership had the opportunity to meet with North America’s Building Trades Unions’ Governing Board of Presidents. A few days later, many of those same union leaders met in the Oval Office with the newly elected Republican president and spoke very positively of their interactions with



him. Can you imagine that happening twenty or even ten years ago?

As mentioned earlier, many TAUC members specializing in power generation had the opportunity to attend this year's UBC Millwright Leadership Conference. As I sat and listened to the presentations, the one consistent element was "change." I heard experts talk about the changing skillsets required of today's craftworkers and the changing demographics of our trades and our societies. I have also met with a few customers observing all of these transformations within our industry. They want to know what we're doing about it, and how we are developing strategies to respond to the new environment.

So now I'd like to heed my own advice, apply a little discipline and STOP – find the eye of the storm for some time to observe and reflect. Allow me to share what I **heard and saw** during all of these recent meetings, briefings and events.

- **Safety & Quality Excellence:** No matter who I speak with, I hear that safety and quality are core values we all believe in. Specific to our contractors, we don't have license to work for our customers unless we keep people safe and follow procedure. And for us to have engaged and empowered craftsmen, we need them to trust in their safety and have confidence and pride in their workmanship.
- **Relationships:** In dynamic times, people are looking for partners. Customers want partners to help

identify solutions for their challenges – better competitiveness, productivity, innovation while delivering on safety and quality. The trades want partners to help identify and grow work opportunities for our craftsmen. Our employees want partners to help them provide for their families while building a respectable career.

- **Leadership Investments:** Our demographics are rapidly changing. Baby Boomers are retiring, there aren't enough Generation X-ers to succeed them, and the Millennials are rapidly filling the gap. This requires rapid development of not only the next generation of craftsmen, but also the next generation of leaders of craftsmen who have a different skillset and toolbox than they used in the field. Leaders who engage and empower their teams via transparency and resiliency. Leaders who are confident enough to make tough decisions and are themselves change agents. Leaders who are a walking poster of the professional craftworker as a respected profession.

In these VUCA times, there are challenges ... and opportunities for those who stop, observe, reflect ... and then **ACT**.

There is opportunity to rally together around our core values of Safety & Quality. If you are passionate about this, have observed and reflected on how we can improve, and are ready to act ... join us at our


TAUC Leadership Conference this May and engage our EHS Committee.

There is opportunity to partner with customers on their challenges. If you are passionate about this, have observed and reflected on solutions to those challenges, and are ready to act ... join us at our TAUC Leadership Conference and invite a customer to come with you.

There is opportunity to partner with this administration and Congress to help them follow through on commitments to invest in infrastructure or reform health-care and multi-employer pensions. If you are passionate about this, have observed and reflected on possible reform, and are ready to act ... join us at our TAUC Leadership Conference and engage our Government Affairs Committee.

There is opportunity to invest in the development of the next generation of leaders and craftsmen. If you are passionate about this, have observed and reflected on how we develop our craftsmen, and are ready to act ... join us at our TAUC Leadership Conference and engage our Industrial Relations Committee.

One final point: Engagement is a good start, but it is not action. Our committees take time to stop, discuss what we have observed, and reflect on what we have learned. And our committees are dedicated to walk out of these discussions with actions designed to improve our industry.

Join us and help us influence positive change for the benefit and longevity of our industry and the many lives it impacts. 

# Bright, Shiny Objects

by STEVE LINDAUER, TAUC CEO

**A** S I WRITE this article, March Madness is about to get underway, and soon college basketball teams from across the country will begin competing for a national championship. I always enjoy tournament season, but to me, it's about more than just rooting for my favorite team. What really impresses me is the ability of a select few players – the true superstars — to ignore the screams of opposing fans and focus on performing at the highest possible level. They simply refuse to be distracted. When they step up to the free-throw line and the game is tied with one second left on the clock, all they see is the basket. These are the people who walk off the court as champions.

I've been thinking a lot about focus lately. Every day in our industry, contractors must navigate through a never-ending sea of potential distractions. These bright, shiny objects exist for one purpose: to lure us away from the task at hand. It's so easy to get caught up in them. I'd like to give you two quick examples, one positive and one negative.

The positive: I'm sure most of you are aware that on January 23, his first day in office, President Trump invited Sean McGarvey, head of North America's Building Trades Unions, and several other prominent building trades leaders to the White House. He talked about the need for huge infrastructure spending and repeatedly emphasized his respect for the building trades. Afterwards, those leaders – many of whom had supported the other party's candidate – spoke about the meeting in glowing terms. Many people were shocked. It was the first time in recent memory that representatives of our industry received so much attention from a president – any president. Was this a sign of big things to come? Did we really have a new and powerful ally in the Oval Office? Was union construction and maintenance about to finally “turn the corner” after so many years of economic uncertainty?

The negative: around the same time as the industry was buzzing about President Trump's meeting, newspapers were reporting on other, more sobering developments. Republicans won big in November at both the federal and state levels. Not only do they control both houses of Congress, but in 32 states, Republicans also control both legislative chambers, and 33 states have Republican governors. That means the potential for a stronger push for right-to-work laws and the repeal of prevailing wage provisions in more states. We've already been on a losing streak in both areas; now it looks as if things could get even worse.

Two stories. Two narratives – one wildly optimistic, the other potentially dire. Which one should we believe? Which scenario deserves our attention?

Neither. Like the basketball player standing at the free-throw line with one second left in the game, we don't have the luxury of getting distracted by what-ifs and maybes. We need to focus on what's in front of us. The star player concentrates on making his shot, and star contractors concentrate on ensuring that we continue to deliver next-level service and quality to our customers.

Does that mean we should stop fighting against bad legislation and give up? Of course not. But we shouldn't let our opponents' apparent advantage shake us off course, either.

Let me put it this way. Say the positive scenario turns out to be true, and President Trump spurs a new era of union construction growth. The building trades train up thousands of new members and contractors have more work than they know what to do with. Everything's coming up roses. How will that change the core qualities and values you bring to the job? Will you suddenly fire half your safety team and decide that zero-injury jobsites are no longer a priority?

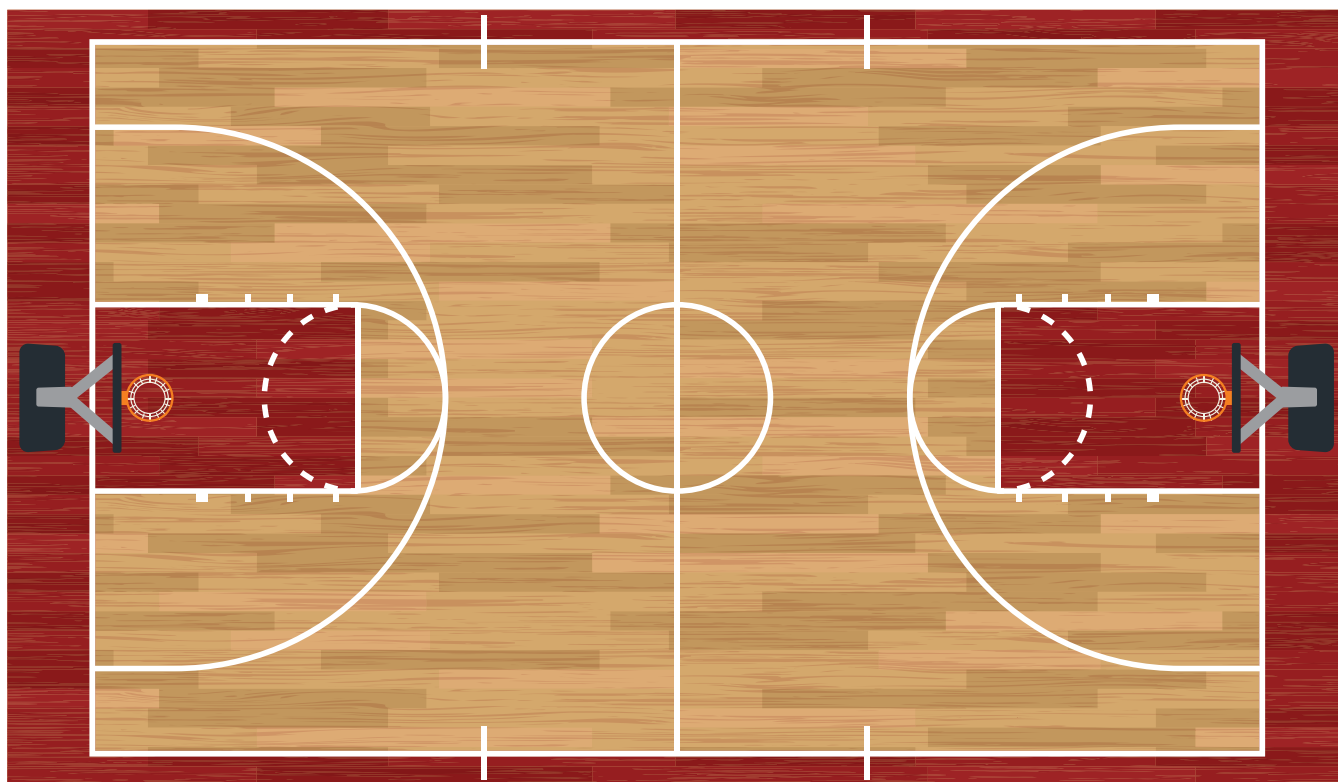


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Now imagine the worst-case scenario. More states pass right-to-work laws and repeal prevailing wage statutes. Our competition is emboldened. Big projects dry up. Small contractors close their doors. Craftworkers are sitting on the bench, waiting for a job – any job. As a contractor, would this set of circumstances prompt you to stop training your employees altogether? Would you cancel toolbox talks and adopt a “good enough” standard when it comes to quality?

The answers to all of these questions are obvious. Neither scenario is an excuse to slack off. Regardless of what the future brings, an honorable contractor has certain non-negotiables: he won’t skimp on safety or quality, and he will always push to bring in the project on time and under budget.


So as we head into 2017, let’s redouble our efforts, step up to the free-throw line and focus on putting the ball in the basket. Forget about all of the shouting and waving around us. Our clients are paying us to focus on their priorities first and foremost. We can deal with those bright, shiny objects on our own time and in our own way. 



*Steve Lindauer is the CEO of The Association of Union Constructors and also serves as Impartial Secretary and CEO of the National Maintenance Agreements Policy Committee, Inc. (NMAPC).*









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# Analysis: The New Administration and the Union Construction Industry

by MARK BRESLIN

**T**HE INEVITABILITY OF change is something that all business leaders need to embrace. The wisest among them will monitor change closely and do what they can to influence it. The advent of a new presidential administration has the potential to generate far-reaching changes for union-affiliated contractors and their labor partners. While what follows is by no means a comprehensive analysis, I have canvassed many interested and informed parties to provide you with some thoughts on the next several years of political and economic change — the good, the bad and (perhaps) the ugly.

## The Future of Prevailing Wage Laws

This is an area of grave uncertainty for many union contractors who work on public projects throughout the U.S. While prevailing wage laws don't yet enjoy the same momentum that accompanies the right-to-work movement, many advocates are working hard to advance their cause — and their actions require our attention. In late January, Sen. Jeff Flake (R) of Arizona introduced legislation to suspend the prevailing wage on all federal highway construction contracts. As I write this article, a new Labor Secretary hasn't yet been confirmed, but the administration is sending some strong signals about its agenda. President Trump's first choice, fast-food magnate Andrew Puzder — who later removed himself from consideration — worked almost exclusively in a non-union business environment, is a strong free-market advocate and has been very critical of government regulations and market interference. And Geoff Burr, a former lobbyist and government affairs executive for the non-union Associated Builders and Contractors, was brought on board to help the administration install a new team at the Labor Department. All of these developments should concern readers in favor of the prevailing wage at both the federal and state levels. With massive infrastructure projects on the horizon, it's not a stretch to imagine that we will soon begin to hear arguments on reducing worker compensation via free-market forces in order to obtain greater value for each taxpayer dollar.

## Infrastructure Investment

In this area, a lot of changes have already occurred to reposition infrastructure as a necessary and vital part of America's foundation. The new President's strong endorsement of infrastructure and building has already quieted many Tea Party advocates who labeled such projects as "pork" and were vehemently opposed to the shovel-ready stimulus projects of the last decade. President Trump's advisor, Steve Bannon, has observed that money is cheap and there is an opportunity to rebuild domestic infrastructure and invest in America on a massive scale. However, the Republican Congress will most certainly push back

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on any new tax measures or similar efforts to raise money for these projects. Private equity or tax credits have been identified as possible funding sources, as has the repatriation of foreign tax obligations to create an Infrastructure Bank. But the idea of infrastructure “paying for itself” is problematic because most of the things that traditionally fall into this category – roads, bridges, etc. – typically don’t have readily available extended revenue streams. Despite these hurdles, the good news is that even in an increasingly polarized political environment, there is broad bipartisan support for action on infrastructure – most likely sooner rather than later.

## The Blue Collar Vote

In discussions I have had with a number of union International Presidents, they acknowledge that roughly half of their members likely voted for Donald Trump. This represents a significant shift in traditional blue-collar union loyalties, and Republicans will be working hard to attract even more union households and convert them into long-term supporters. In the past, unions such as the Teamsters supported Republicans, but it has been some time since this block of voters was in play at such a critical level, especially in the key Midwestern states. The challenge for the Trump administration is to balance the expectations and economic interests of these new voters with the traditional Republican platform, which at times is in direct conflict with union members’ concerns (right-to-work, prevailing wage, etc.). This dilemma may serve as a moderating influence on Republican policymaking and balance out the party’s traditionally conservative Congressional agenda.

## Right to Work


A very strong and sophisticated nationwide effort is underway to enact right-to-work laws at the state level. So far, this effort has been extremely successful, and it’s gaining momentum. More than 30 states have Republican governors, and 32 states have Republican-controlled legislatures. Party leaders are keenly interested in using their newfound dominance to kneecap their political opponents. Unions are being forced to dedicate more resources to battling right-to-work efforts, which could potentially impact expenditures in other areas such as training. There is even talk of national right-to-work legislation. It remains to be seen whether President Trump wants (or needs) to maintain his newfound political currency with construction unions by opposing such a bill.

## Union Access and Relationships

In the first hours of his new administration, President Trump met with top construction union leaders, including those from the Laborers, the United Association and the Carpenters. Within a week, he had signed an order expediting the construction of the XL Pipeline. As well, he reportedly spoke in a convincing manner to unions about establishing a collaborative effort to rebuild America. The reviews from building trades representatives who were present at these meetings have been enthusiastic to say the least, and stand in marked contrast to the rather cool relationship construction unions had with the previous administration. Labor sought help on a number of fronts, including pension reform, organizing legislation, and the impact of environmental regulations without much success. If the Trump administration continues to respond positively to unions, no one should be surprised that common, if nontraditional, political ground may be found. That’s good news for a president who approaches things from a transactional point of view (and who will be in need of friends come 2020).

## Pension Liability and Reform

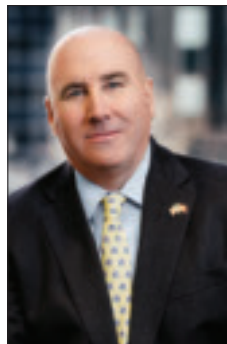
Pension issues are an ongoing challenge for union employers and it is worth noting that an expert on this subject is part of the new Cabinet. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross is very familiar with pension liability, laws, regulation and business impacts. When he obtained troubled assets as a businessman, he dispensed with pension liabilities as part of a strategic plan to boost value. Obviously, he had his own interests in mind then. It’s not clear how he will approach the pension problem and the perennially underfunded PBGC as Commerce Secretary. What *is* clear, though, is that Ross understands these issues intimately, and he will be sitting at the right hand of a President who is depending on him to develop a sound pension policy.

In summary, the many challenges I have just discussed require only one thing: diligent attention to what is vital and important. I won’t be standing on the sidelines, and I’m sure TAUC won’t, either. 



*Mark Breslin is a strategist and author of several books, including most recently, **The Five Minute Foreman: Mastering the People Side of Construction**. Visit his website at [www.breslin.biz](http://www.breslin.biz) or contact him at (925) 705-7662.*

## Former Boston Police Chief to Keynote Leadership Conference



**T**AUC IS PLEASED to announce that Daniel Linskey, former Superintendent-in-Chief of the Boston Police Department and a 27-year veteran of the force, will be a keynote speaker at this year's TAUC Leadership Conference, scheduled for May 9-12 at the beautiful Four Seasons Biltmore Resort in Santa Barbara, California.

As Boston police chief, Dan provided strong leadership through some of the most tragic and contentious events in the city's history, including the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings. You won't want to miss his story of courage and leadership during this crisis.

Also keynoting this year's TAUC Leadership Conference is Amy Webb, brilliant tech futurist and author of the bestseller *The Signals Are Talking*. Amy will teach you how to forecast the future and prepare for the next wave of

technological change – check out our exclusive Q&A with her on Page 16!

The TAUC Leadership Conference is the industry's premier event for union construction and maintenance professionals — a true “must-attend” meeting for leaders in the contractor, labor and owner-client communities. Discover firsthand the unique, collaborative atmosphere where the entire agenda is designed to encourage honest dialogue and foster mutual cooperation between the tripartite community.

Meet 200+ industry professionals — contractors, labor leaders and owner-clients — through numerous networking opportunities, including meals, opening cocktail reception, gala dinner and — of course — our famous TAUC Union-Made Golf Tournament. We promise you'll leave with new friends — and a new outlook on achieving success in our industry!

Make plans now to attend — but hurry! **REGISTRATION CLOSES TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 2017.** Visit [www.taucleadershipconference.org](http://www.taucleadershipconference.org) for more information.

## CEA Legislative Conference Set for May 2-4

**T**ired of politicians and regulators enacting laws and policies that damage your industry? Interested in taking a more hands-on approach and let Congress know how its actions impact your business? Want to learn more about how things work on Capitol Hill?

If you answered “yes” to any of those questions, then make plans now to attend the Construction Employers of America (CEA) National Legislative Conference, May 2-4 in Washington, D.C. It's a can't-miss opportunity for contractors to network with Washington policy experts and engage in face-to-face meetings with members of Congress and/or their staffs.

CEA is a joint initiative coordinating action on labor, workforce, and construction issues facing our industries. CEA works to strengthen the construction industry and provide opportunities for top-quality construction workers to learn and maintain the skills

they need to deliver highly productive, quality workmanship that provides the best value to project owners while earning high-value compensation and benefits for themselves, their families, and their communities.

TAUC is proud to sponsor CEA along with three other leading construction specialty trade associations: FCA International, the Mechanical Contractors Association of America (MCAA) and the Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors' National Association (SMACNA). Together we represent industries comprised of more than 20,000 contractor firms that perform mechanical, electrical, sheet metal, plumbing, air conditioning, steel erection, painting, glazing, flooring and related work, using well-trained and highly skilled workers from the organized building trades.

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# What Construction Unions Are Doing About Suicide Prevention

by BOB VANDEPOL AND CAL BEYER



*Editor's Note: Leaders in the construction industry are uniting to tackle the issue of suicide prevention in the construction industry. The Association of Union Constructors (TAUC) recently joined the Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention (CIASP) which is being spearheaded by the Construction Financial Management Association (CFMA). In fact, TAUC is one of 20*

*construction industry associations that have joined the CIASP to further promote resources and tools for their member companies to address mental health and suicide risk. (See Page 20 for more information)*

## **Mental Health and Suicide Prevention: The Next Frontier in Safety**

Suicide prevention must become part of a 24/7 safety culture where it is discussed at work, at home with our families, and in our schools and communities. Most construction companies believe in zero injuries. These companies talk about ensuring every employee is safe at the end of each shift. But these companies also need to think about a *zero suicide culture*. For

***Suicide prevention must become part of a 24/7 safety culture where it is discussed at work, at home with our families, and in our schools and communities.***

employees at risk, it is just as important to get employees back to work safe from home, or to get the help they need to cope with life challenges.

## **Case Study #1: International Union of Operating Engineers Local #478**

### **How long has #478 had a Member Assistance Program (MAP)?**

"Local #478 has had a formal MAP program for four years," explained Kyle Zimmer, Director of Health/Safety and Member Assistance Program (MAP) for Local #478 in Hamden, Connecticut (Kyle can be reached at [kzimmer@local478benefits.org](mailto:kzimmer@local478benefits.org)). "The need was realized by Business Manager Craig Metz and me that situations were presenting themselves where members were in one form of crisis or another, from substance abuse, critical incident stress, family issues and so on. As we became more and more aware of our member's needs, we also found that the

traditional EAP (Employee Assistance Program) model was not working. Members weren't getting timely professional help when calling the number on back of the health benefits card."

### **How did the #478 MAP come to be developed?**

Zimmer worked with Jerry Marcil of Connecticut Counseling and Wellness (CCW) to develop a comprehensive MAP. Marcil stated, "Local #478 contracts with CCW to provide 24/7 'boots on the ground' response and consultation related to behavioral health and substance abuse issues on or off the worksite." Zimmer added, "Marcil is a licensed counsel-

or who has experience in suicide prevention, intervention and post-event counseling. Jerry has MAP experience running the internal program for the Machinists Union for 15 years and is a retired union member."

The final piece of the program is that Local #478 contracted with Anthem EAP. With Anthem utilizing their national resources and willingness to collaborate with Zimmer and Marcil, the local helps members and, most importantly, makes the MAP a viable and effective way for members to access help in a personal, confidential manner.

### **Why is a MAP necessary with today's workforce?**

## Why Suicide Prevention is a Construction Industry Issue

In July 2016 the Centers for Disease Control published the first-ever study of suicide deaths by occupation. Construction has the second-highest rate among *all* occupations, and the construction/extraction industry has the highest number of suicide deaths among *major* occupations. Specifically, the construction/extraction industry reports 53.3 suicide deaths per 100,000 employees, second only to the industry group of fishing, farming and forestry. Worse yet, if you combined engineering and architecture at number five with 32.2 suicide deaths per 100,000 employees, the combined architecture, engineering and construction (AEC) industry is the industry with the highest number of suicide deaths with 85.5 per 100,000 employees.

### Suicide Risk Factors

Most of the time, there are warning signs that someone wants to end

their life. Pay attention for these signs of D-A-N-G-E-R:

**Depression** – Many of those posing suicidal risk experience depression. Depression is an extremely treatable disease but people often resist seeking treatment. Signs of depression include enduring sadness, a loss of interest in previously enjoyable activities, reduced energy, a significant change in sleep (either more or less), a change in appetite and body weight (either a 5% increase or decrease), diminished concentration, and talk about suicide. Accompanying anxiety increases risk significantly.

**Alcohol and other Drugs** – Many studies have shown an increased likelihood of the presence of alcohol and drugs in the bloodstreams of those who have died by suicide. These substances are often depressants, are used in attempt to reduce pain, and often lower our inhibitions.

**Negativity** – Listen for a sense of powerlessness, hopelessness, self-loathing, feeling trapped, and a belief that others would be better off without them.

**Giving Life Away** – Sometimes those at risk of suicide “unload” that which they previously valued as they say goodbye. This can include giving away possessions, taking out the 401K, resigning from positions, etc.

**Estrangement** – This isolating from others can take several forms and serve various purposes. Sometimes people pull away by avoiding contact, some push people away by being irritable, and some retreat into brief, superficial conversations.

**Rage and Revenge** – This is a particularly tough one for those left behind as the person lashes out to hurt others and send a destructive message.

### What Can Managers and Co-Workers Do?

Preventively:

- Create a culture where asking for help is viewed as a sign of strength rather than weakness.
- Promote meaningful utilization of your Employee Assistance

“Everyone struggles with something,” Zimmer said. “A MAP program ensures the workforce that there is help out there. As I have said before, in construction, you spend more time with your coworkers than your family during the working season, so if someone at the jobsite can lend a hand, or ear, why not use it to everyone’s advantage? Employers don’t want to lose highly trained, skilled union labor because of a problem that grew because it wasn’t being addressed.”

### How many members have been helped through the MAP?

“Since the inception of the program, I would say in the hundreds — every-

thing from a simple phone call on where to dispose of unused medications to job site fatalities to substance abuse issues,” Zimmer said. “Anything that you could think of, we handle — even where to get a therapy dog.”

### What have been the biggest benefits of the MAP?

“Seeing a member that struggles with a serious behavioral health issue get back on track, embrace the ‘peer’ concept and then watch them help another brother or sister in need is the best feeling ever,” Zimmer responded. “More of our stories of hope and recovery from the MAP involve behavioral health and substance abuse disorders than suicide attempts but

we’re concerned that an untreated substance abuse disorder can often lead to the tragedy of suicide.”

### How do signatory employers feel about the MAP?

“Once signatory contractors understand the concept, they embrace the program in a very positive manner,” Zimmer said. “They are realizing the issues that are facing today’s workforce and are willing to work with Labor to resolve them, especially with the opioid crisis. Finally, employers are starting to see what this epidemic is costing in lost productivity, accidents and employee replacement cost.”

Program (EAP) or Member Assistance Program (MAP). Normalize the fact that it is often hard to be a person and an employee at the same time, but help is available. Include training in suicide prevention.

- Host educational events that focus upon various forms of well-being — physical, emotional, relational, financial, spiritual, and legal.

When Suicide Risk Becomes Evident:

- ASK! Can you imagine being in imminent danger of death and not feeling that anyone cared enough to ask? This script, phrased in your own words, can be helpful in initiating the conversation: *“I’ve really been feeling concerned about you lately and care enough to have a difficult conversation. You haven’t seemed yourself. Some of the things you have said and*

*done worry me. Are you thinking about killing yourself?”*

- Continue the conversation. Express caring and your commitment to stick with them. Be yourself. Listen non-judgmentally without arguing with them. Persuade them to seek professional help. Stay with them until additional support is present and lethal means are removed.
- Connect them with help. This may include taking them to their doctor, clergy, hospital emergency department, or mental health professional. Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK) to obtain resources in your area. Let them know you care enough about them to risk really ticking them off!

**Everyone has a role to play in preventing suicide. Learning the industry risk factors and the demographic risk factors that make suicide a threat in construction is a step in the right direction.**

## Conclusion

The good news is that suicide is preventable. Everyone has a role to play in preventing suicide. Learning the industry risk factors and the demographic risk factors that make suicide a threat in construction is a

## Case Study #2: International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers (SMART).

### How long has the SMART Union been addressing suicide prevention?

“SMART has been engaged in awareness training and assisting our local unions in developing mental health networks for about two and a half years,” explained Chris Carlough, SMART’s Director of Education (Chris can be reached at ccaarlough@smart-union.org). SMART serves 800,000 members and dependents through 100 locals representing 6,000 signatory companies. “Through this awareness training we met Sally Spencer-Thomas from the Carson J Spencer Foundation and our awareness trainings became an action movement.”

Carlough continued: “My primary role is with our national and local-

ized training and awareness program centered on the problems associated with mental health disorders, with a focus on substance use disorder and suicide prevention. I am also working with individual local unions to help establish peer networks and other professional mental health options.”

### What are the key elements of SMART’s efforts on suicide prevention?

1. Employee Assistance Programs: many of SMART’s local unions have contracted with EAP’s through their jointly administered health insurance programs
2. Substance abuse disorder treatment program

3. Peer support networks
4. Mental health & suicide prevention training

### Why is mental health & suicide prevention necessary with today’s workforce?

“As a union, we feel it is an absolute necessity that we support our members and their families as they struggle through serious life threatening challenges,” Carlough said. “Our membership fits the key demographic of those who take their own lives by suicide and struggle with substance use disorder. We are committed to developing a caring network of compassionate union members, along with mental health experts, to help in improving our members’ quality of life.”

step in the right direction. Progressive unions are establishing member assistance programs to provide support and services to members in need. Likewise, signatory companies are expanding their understanding of the warning signs of mental health and suicide prevention. These progressive contractors are integrating suicide prevention into safety, health and wellness programs. Working together, unions and contractors are joining this life-saving industry movement.

## Resources

- Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention. <http://www.cfma.org/news/content.cfm?ItemNumber=4570>
- Carson J. Spencer Foundation. <http://www.carsonjspencer.org/>
- Construction Working Minds. <http://www.constructionworkingminds.org/>

- Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services. <https://www.pinerest.org/resource/suicide/>
- Screening for Mental Health. Help Yourself. Help Others. Anonymous Screening Website. <http://helpyourselfhelpothers.org/>
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. <http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center. <http://www.sprc.org/>

**Bob VandePol** serves as Director of Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services' Employee Assistance Program. He helps business leaders leverage behavioral health expertise to enhance the health and productivity of their work teams. Active as a keynote speaker and author, his areas of particular interest include suicide prevention, leading mission-driven teams, and facilitating individual and organizational resilience

after tragedies. Bob is a leader, mentor and coach in the field of suicide prevention. He is a former Co-Lead for the Workplace Task Force of the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention. He can be reached at [bob.vandepol@pinerest.org](mailto:bob.vandepol@pinerest.org)

**Cal Beyer** is the Risk Management Director for Lakeside Industries, a hot mix asphalt production and paving contractor in Issaquah, WA. Lakeside is signatory to the Laborers, Operating Engineers and Teamsters unions. Cal serves on the Executive Committee for the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention and as the Co-Lead of its Workplace Task Force. Since 2015 Cal has been co-leading an initiative in the construction industry on mental health and suicide prevention with Dr. Sally Spencer-Thomas of the Carson J Spencer Foundation in Denver. Cal was named one of the Top 25 Newsmakers of 2016 by Engineering News-Record. Contact: [cal.beyer@lakesideindustries.com](mailto:cal.beyer@lakesideindustries.com)

## What advice do you have for other unions?

"A union's core mission is to represent its membership to its highest ability," Carlough said. "By developing peer networks in areas surrounding mental health, we are at the core of that mission: to support our members and their families when they are in the midst of some of life's hardest struggles. We are showing them that they matter to us and that we care enough to walk with and support them through these difficulties. Unions used to play this role in members' lives many, many years ago, at [the labor movement's] beginning. Going back to our roots will make our union movement healthier and stronger."

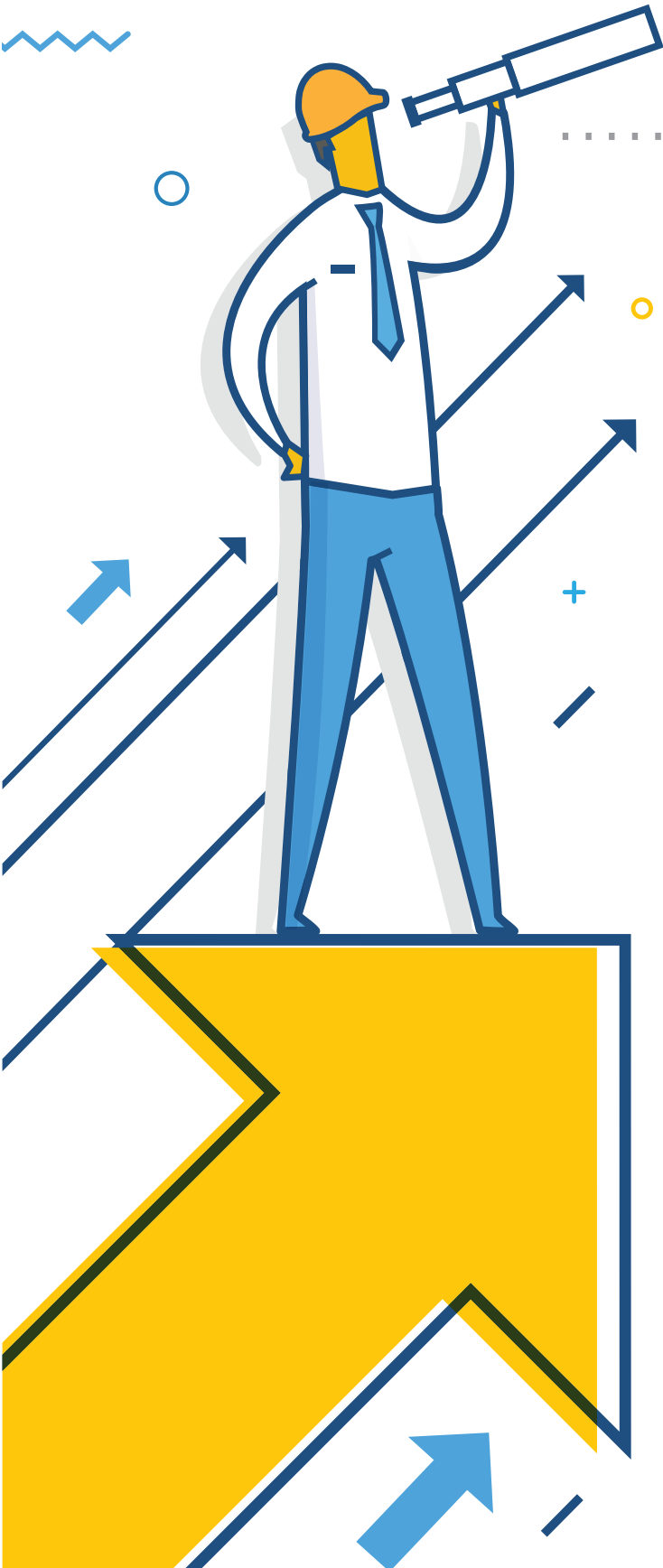
## What makes Peer to Peer networking so effective?

"Our SMART MAP Volunteers (peers) are union members with high credibility within their local unions with strong interpersonal and attentive listening skills who have time and a natural desire to help others," Carlough explained. "These Volunteers support our members when returning to work from treatment and assist with coordinating the member's continuing care plan. Once our members complete that initial treatment, their re-integration back into their home and work life can offer some steep obstacles. The therapeutic value of one union member understanding and helping another union member is without parallel. This support is often the difference

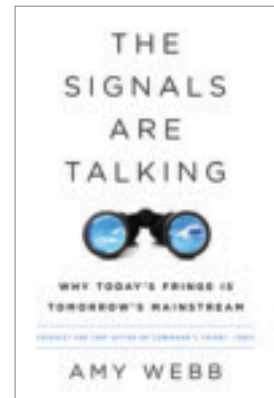
between relapsing or developing a successful and happy lifestyle in active recovery."

## How are you seeing fellow union brothers & sisters helping one another?

"Even though we feel we are just beginning in this initiative, we are seeing our local SMART MAP volunteers change lives by supporting our members in this way," Carlough said. "Our vision for the future is to provide our members and their families the mental health support and services they need to improve their quality of lives. We are excited to see where this program leads us and how we can change our members' lives for the better."



## FORECASTING THE FUTURE: A Q&A WITH AMY WEBB



**H**ow will technology impact our industry – both positively and negatively – in the next decade and beyond? How can contractors, unions and owner-clients get a better sense of what tomorrow will look like today, so they can better plan and prepare for inevitable change?

These are big, important questions – and a new book can help you find the answers. Amy Webb is the author of *The Signals Are Talking: Why Today's Fringe Is Tomorrow's Mainstream* (PublicAffairs), a guidebook to help anyone – not just experts – peer around the corner and anticipate what's coming. She is a futurist and the founder of the Future Today Institute, a leading future forecasting and strategy firm. She was named one of *Forbes'* Five Women Changing the World and is an Adjunct Professor at NYU's Stern School of Business. Her future forecasting work has been featured in *The New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*. **Ms. Webb will be a keynote speaker at this year's TAUC Leadership Conference, May 9-12.** For more information, log on to [www.taucleadershipconference.org](http://www.taucleadershipconference.org).

## AMY WEBB'S SIX-STEP FUTURE FORECASTING METHOD

**1. Find the Fringe:** Cast a wide enough net to harness information from the fringe. This involves creating a map showing nodes and the relationships between them, and rounding up what you will later refer to as “the unusual suspects.”

**2. Use CIPHER:** Uncover hidden patterns by categorizing data from the fringe. Patterns indicate a trend, so you'll do an exhaustive search for Contradictions, Inflections, Practices, Hacks, Extremes, and Rarities.

**3. Ask the Right Questions:** Determine whether a pattern really is a trend. You will

be tempted to stop looking once you've spotted a pattern, but you will soon learn that creating counterarguments is an essential part of the forecasting process, even though most forecasters never force themselves to poke holes into every single assumption and assertion they make.

**4. Calculate the ETA:** Interpret the trend and ensure that the timing is right. This isn't just about finding a typical S-curve and the point of inflection. As technology trends move along their trajectory, there are two forces in play—internal developments within tech companies, and external developments within the government, adjacent businesses, and the like—and both must be calculated.

**5. Create Scenarios and Strategies:** Build scenarios to create probable, plausible, and possible futures and accompanying strategies. This step requires

thinking about both the timeline of a technology's development and your emotional reactions to all of the outcomes. You'll give each scenario a score, and based on your analysis, you will create a corresponding strategy for taking action.

**6. Pressure-Test Your Action:** But what if the action you choose to take on a trend is the wrong one? In this final step, you must make sure the strategy you take on a trend will deliver the desired outcome, and that requires asking difficult questions about both the present and the future.

Excerpted from *The Signals Are Talking: Why Today's Fringe Is Tomorrow's Mainstream* by Amy Webb. Copyright © 2016. Available from PublicAffairs, an imprint of Perseus Books, LLC, a subsidiary of Hachette Book Group, Inc.

Ms. Webb was interviewed via email by *The Construction User* Executive Editor David Acord.

**In your book, you argue that in order to survive over the long term, businesses of all types must constantly be looking and listening for “signals” or trends that will shape the future, especially in the area of technology. First off, how do you define a trend?**

**Amy Webb:** What's most important to remember is that real trends are rarely “trendy.” Futurists use trends as signposts as we map out the future, and trends typically share four characteristics. First, a trend is driven by a basic human need, one that is catalyzed by new technology. So for example, we think of self-driving cars, like the Tesla, as a brand new trend. In fact, humans have been trying to automate travel since the ancient Sumarians first attached wheels to their carts in battle. Think of how much easier construction is because of equipment like jackhammers, excavators and dozers.

Second, trends are timely, but they persist. We've been developing new

technologies to automate laborious or monotonous tasks, like driving. With each new technological advancement — such as the combustion engine, GPS, and artificial intelligence — we get closer to complete automation.

Third, trends evolve as they emerge. Many people don't know that GE actually developed a self-driving car and custom track back in the 1950s. Engineers have been working on self-driving car prototypes for decades. Within the next five years, we will see several models that offer limited self-driving capabilities.

Finally, trends usually materialize as a series of un-connectable dots which begin out on the fringe and move to the mainstream. For Tesla cars to function, an entire adjacent ecosystem needed to be built: LiDAR, more expansive WiFi, GPS, multidimensional maps and the like. Without a framework, it's very hard to distinguish trend from trendy, but it's vitally important for every business.

**You focus a great deal on technological trends. When most people think of technology, they think of software companies and start-ups**

**in the Silicon Valley. Why is it important for companies far removed from that sector — a construction firm in the Midwest, say, or an industrial contractor in New Jersey — to spend valuable time and energy on identifying future technology trends?**

**Webb:** There is literally no field that won't be impacted, in some way, by technology in the coming years. For example, I think that an industrial contractor in Northwest Indiana, which is where I grew up, needs to pay very close attention to Uber. While you might think of Uber as a ride-sharing service, it's much more than that. Uber is a well-capitalized logistics platform that is in the early days of development. Uber acquired the entire advanced robotics department from Carnegie Mellon, as well as a mapping service, and it's made vast investments in AI. Uber is already building a fleet of self-driving cars.

*Continued on Next Page*

Given what we know to be true in 2017, we've modeled out scenarios where Uber soon becomes a service that takes us, our pets, our packages and the like wherever we need to go. Not long after that, Uber becomes an autonomous delivery service, and there would be enormous value in disrupting UPS and DHL.

Now consider automating other fields and industries. What if Uber partnered with Monsanto to fully automate a farm? What if Uber partnered with Komatsu on collaborative robots to automate some—or many—of the jobs on a commercial construction site? It's entirely plausible that Uber could upend the construction business. This is why it's so important for everyone to start listening for the signals, and to understand that Silicon Valley isn't the only epicenter of tech.

**Surprisingly, you show that successful companies are the ones most likely to miss new developing trends – and thus endanger their long-term viability. Why is that?**

**Webb:** If a company doesn't dedicate resources to futures forecasting—this means either hiring someone to lead the work within the organization, or engaging an outside firm for research and guide staff—then they will miss what's coming next. The problem is that when companies are already quite successful, they don't see the need to do this kind of work. Blackberry is a terrific example of what happens when a successful company gets too comfortable with the status quo and doesn't aggressively pursue the future. Blackberry executives were so focused on their existing product lineup and their significant market share that they couldn't see the iPhone coming. It's that phone—along with a seismic shift in consumer expectations and behaviors—which unseeded a phone that was so popular worldwide that it earned the nickname "crackberry." The reason Blackberry fell so far behind wasn't the phone itself,

but rather the executive management who weren't interested in data-driven futures forecasting.

**You argue that the future is already here, to a certain extent – the seeds of the next great advancements in technology are hiding on the "fringe." What is the fringe?**

**Webb:** The fringe is that place where people are starting to do new research, or are taking existing research to next levels. This includes work being done by independent R&D labs, by DIY hackers and makers, by academics and students, by some corporate innovations teams and by everyday people who are curious about technology.

**You outline a six-step method for identifying the future of x – in our case, the industrial construction and maintenance sector. The first step is finding this fringe. Where should executives look? In their own industry? Outside of it?**

**Webb:** In the book, I explain that there are ten sources of modern change, which include arenas like demographics, wealth distribution, the government and more. To find the fringe, executives would need to start with those sources of change, and then to those doing work in adjacent fields and industries. Then they'd need to ask questions like: who would stand to lose or gain if a particular technology succeeds? Who would work for it? Against it? Who's funding research, and why? This is a vastly different way of doing traditional research, which tends to focus on newspapers, trade publications and focus groups. The goal at the fringe is to create a comprehensive map, because the next step is to identify hidden patterns which will reveal possible trends.


**So now we know where to look. But what are we looking for? Can you give some tips for the aspiring futurist on how to spot significant trends, separate the wheat from the chaff and evaluate the data?**

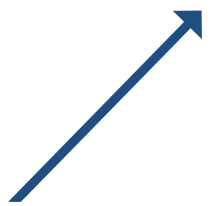
**Webb:** The first step involves taking a trip to the fringe and creating what we call a "fringe sketch." But that only gets you to zero. Now comes the hard part, which is identifying possible trend candidates and then eviscerating your work to ensure that you haven't misidentified or skipped any trends. This work is best done with a group of people who complement each others' thinking, experience and worldviews. A diverse group is ideal.

**Once the data has been collected, how can we use it to forecast the future?**

**Webb:** Once you've identified a trend candidate, you need to figure out what its timing and trajectory are. A technology may be evolving on its own, but external events—such as new government regulation, or a natural disaster—could slow or even stop the advancement of that technology. The final two steps of the process are about getting that trend into action. For this, we use tools to build scenarios and to pressure-test strategies.

**How can executives build in forecasting as part of their business strategy? Who within the company should be involved in searching for potentially game-changing trends?**

**Webb:** Ideally, everyone within an organization should learn and use the tools of a futurist. The worst thing an executive can do would be to relegate this work to the youngest staff, or to those who seem particularly "techie". It's important that executives also learn these tools, just as they'd be expected to know how to read a P&L statement. Identifying and taking action on trends is an ongoing process. My hope with my book is that I've democratized the tools of futurists—the more people who understand how to use data and evidence to forecast what's over the horizon, the better off we'll all be. 





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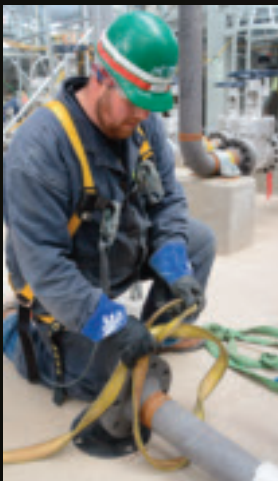
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**Mike Pleasant**

*UA Assistant General President*

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## NMAPC Approves New Midstream Shale Addendum

**T**HE NATIONAL MAINTENANCE Agreements Policy Committee, Inc. (NMAPC) has approved a new addendum to the National Maintenance Agreements (NMA) for certain midstream shale gas work in three states.

In the last 5 years, over 15 million work hours have been performed under the NMAPC Program in the ever-changing shale gas midstream market. Through a labor-management approach, the NMA has been carefully scrutinized in an effort to identify necessary changes, in the form of an addendum that will allow NMAPC participants to better compete in this market.

Past addendums to the NMA focused on other markets have given NMAPC contractors and crafts consistent work opportunities and also contributed to the overall advancement of those industries. As such, the NMAPC recently approved the utilization of the “Midstream Maintenance and Emergency Crew Addendum” for the States of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

The addendum is based upon the limited portability of crafts to perform maintenance and emergency work not to exceed 14 calendar days for a given job, and allows for one crew on a per employer, per customer basis. Crews may consist of any combination of NMA crafts, but cannot exceed the maximum number of employees allocated to each craft as listed in the addendum. NMA signatory contractors wishing to utilize the addendum must first request such in writing on letterhead to the NMAPC.

You can read the full addendum at [www.nmapc.org/midstream](http://www.nmapc.org/midstream).



## TAUC Joins Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention

**T**AUC IS PLEASED to announce that it has joined the Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention (CIASP).

Established by the Construction Financial Management Association (CFMA) in 2016, CIASP is a group of key industry organizations who have recognized

and are committed to promoting the safety and well-being of construction's most important asset - its human capital.

A July 2016 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that construction is one of the most at-risk industries for suicide. The study, which examined suicide risk by profession, found that of about 12,300 suicides in the 17 states studied, 1,324 people worked in construction and extraction (10.8%) and 1,049 (8.5%) worked in management, a category that includes top executives as well as others in management positions.

Construction industry risk factors include a competitive, high-pressure environment, a relatively higher prevalence of alcohol and substance abuse, furloughs, end-of-season layoffs, and separation from family are just some of the actors that can challenge mental stability. The devastating truth is that all too often, people who experience mental health conditions - which can lead to suicidal despair - suffer in silence. Despite dramatic advances in awareness, prevention, intervention, and treatment, mental health conditions and suicide prevention are still taboo topics of conversation. As such, it is an industry imperative to shatter the mental health stigma and provide resources to assist construction companies so that they may address this issue which has long been ignored. There is a need for more proactive prevention-based strategies, solutions, and services to help the construction industry address mental health and suicide prevention.

CIASP's mission is simple, but profound: To provide and disseminate information and resources for suicide prevention and mental health promotion in construction with the goal of creating a zero-suicide industry.

To read more about CIASP and suicide prevention, see our exclusive article on Page 12 of this issue.

## TAUC Welcomes New Governing, Affiliate Members

**T**AUC IS PLEASED to welcome our newest Governing Members:

**Burns & McDonnell** is a family of companies made up of more than 5,700 engineers, architects, construction professionals, scientists, consultants and entrepreneurs across the country and around the world. Headquartered in Kansas City, Burns & McDonnell offers more than 350 services in industries including construction, manufacturing, oil & gas, power, transportation and water.

**Stenco Construction Company** has established itself as a leading interior construction contractor in the Detroit area. Now licensed or registered in 12 states as a self-performing general contractor, Stenco uses its own skilled

*Continued on Page 25*

A large industrial crane is silhouetted against a vibrant sunset sky with orange and yellow clouds. The crane's arm extends from the right side of the frame towards the center. In the background, other industrial structures are visible on the left side.

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# Interesting Times – And Incredible Opportunities

by JIM KOLB, PARTNER, SUMMIT STRATEGIES GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS LLC

**W**E HAVE ALL heard the phrase: “May you live in interesting times.” Its exact origin and meaning cannot be traced, but it seems particularly adept for the current environment in Washington, D.C.

In my nearly 30 years in the Nation’s Capital, I have never seen a more “interesting” time. The so-called “wise men” and talking-head elites have no idea what has happened to the political system – or what comes next.

It wasn’t that hard to see this coming. For years, the partisan divide in Congress has grown. Republicans and Democrats rarely talk to each other about solving our nation’s problems. Policymakers can choose their own source of news and analysis to fit their ideological beliefs and desired policy outcomes. Honest differences of opinion and recognition of the nuance involved in policymaking have been replaced by a black-and-white “understanding” of the issues. We now live in a world of “alternative facts” and competing “fact checkers” as ideologues and think tanks provide politicians information to fit the policy narrative their backers want.

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***The so-called “wise men” and talking-head elites have no idea what has happened to the political system – or what comes next.***

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All the while, the public’s cynicism and distrust in our political, media, and business institutions has grown deeper and deeper. Many Americans are tired of watching the dysfunction in Washington — lurching from one crisis or showdown to the next — while policymakers fail to address the underlying challenges facing the nation.

The public is tired of Washington creating additional regulations that will make it hard for the local steel mill to stay open. They don’t need to hear from political elites and talking heads about the economic importance of trade agreements that incentivize the auto parts plant in town to outsource jobs overseas. They are tired of watching the stock market go up when their take-home pay has remained stagnant for the past 20 years. They’ve had enough of

politicians who tell them we don’t need to increase investment in our crumbling infrastructure, we just need to invest “smarter” (whatever that means). Many Americans believe that the economic system is stacked against them, and the current political and legislative process is so broken that it cannot address their concerns.

This past November, voters sent a clear message that they believe America is heading in the wrong direction. Regardless of how you feel about President Trump, many Americans were screaming (literally and figuratively) that they are sick and tired of the status quo. Many who voted for change in November perceive most policy-makers in Washington either lacking the ability or the intellectual honesty to deal with the serious problems we face. They were shouting that it was time to invest in America industry and in American workers. They want Washington to start dealing with some very important, complex issues to provide jobs with good benefits, and enact policies that strengthen their communities and protect their families.

Whether everyone in Washington understood this message is unclear. Some view the election outcome as an opportunity to advance ideological policies that will further undermine middle class job opportunities and cut the wages and benefits of working Americans. They are actively pursuing policies to undermine the types of jobs provided by the union construction industry. The people who voted for change in November did not do so to push policies that will lead to a race to the bottom in the construction industry, but that is the agenda some in Washington are trying to enact.


While we have seen efforts to lessen the regulatory burden on business and discussions of finding incentives for companies to invest in the U.S., some have pushed policies to repeal prevailing wage, enact national right-to-work, ban the use of project labor agreements on federal projects, and eliminate an executive order that will level the playing field for responsible contractors.

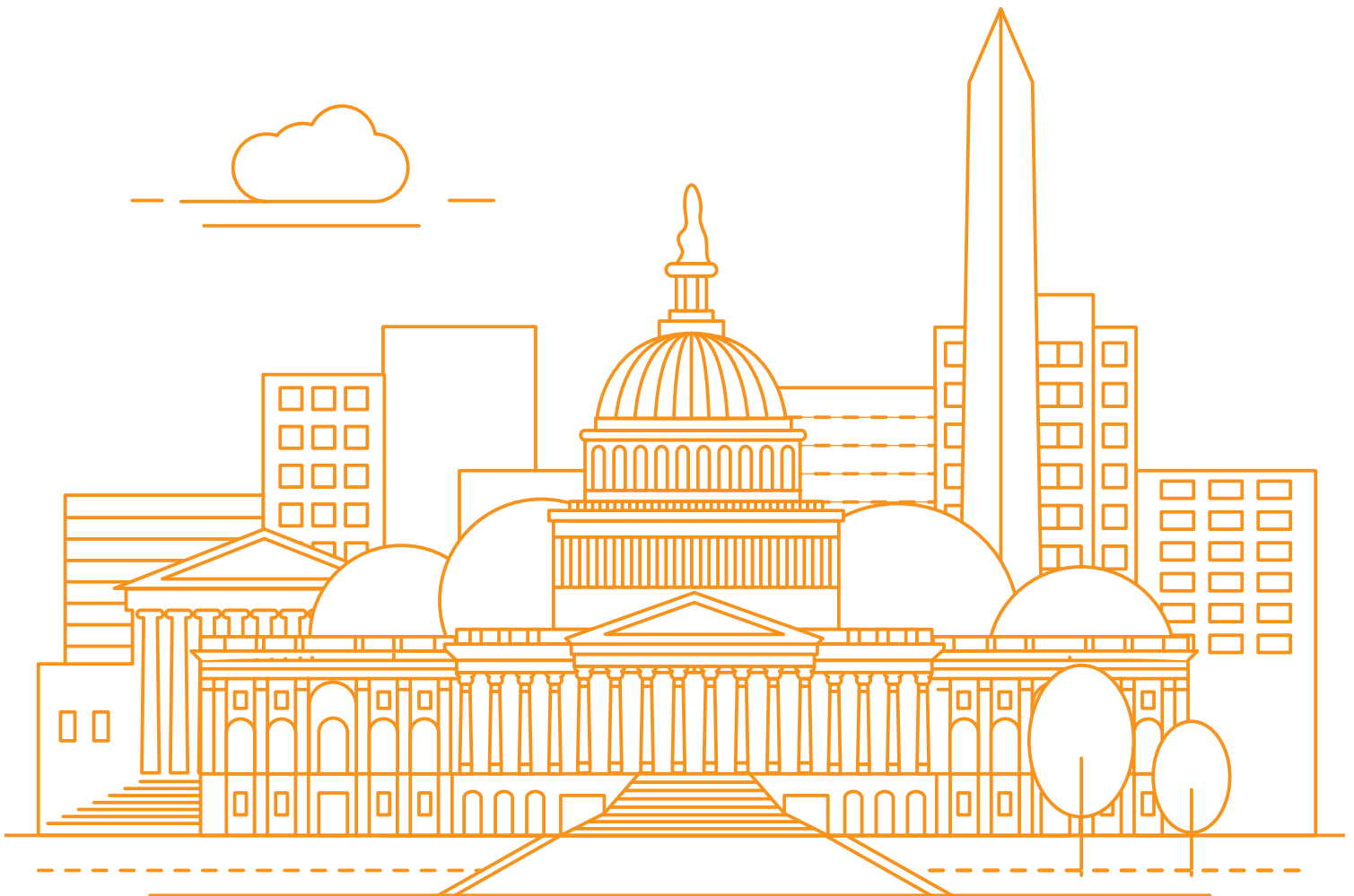
TAUC and our building trade union and construction trade association partners oppose efforts to undermine union contractors, and are working together to ensure that these initiatives are not successful. These policies are not good for TAUC members, the construction industry, or the nation.

We will also continue to pursue policies and regulations that drive market opportunities for TAUC members, and continue to fight for legislation and policies that recognize and reward contractors who provide high-skilled, high-wage jobs by investing in training programs and its work force.

We need your help in this effort. It is more important than ever before that TAUC and its members communicate their needs and the needs of their employees and customers to policymakers with a united voice in support of policies that strengthen the union construction industry. TAUC's role as an advocate for union contractors, and its tripartite approach towards construction projects, makes us uniquely

positioned to play a leading role in the development of policies that provide the good middle-class jobs that will strengthen families and communities.

While we may be "living in interesting times" in our nation's capital, this should not be viewed as a curse. It should be considered an opportunity. Yes, the challenges facing our nation are complex, and there are no easy answers. But strengthening the union construction industry and our partners will address many of the underlying concerns voters had in November. This makes it more critical than ever to ensure our voice is heard. 



WASHINGTON D.C.

# The Foreman Conundrum

by JACOB SNYDER

**I**F YOU WERE asked to write a description for a job posting for a foreman at your company, what would it say? If we are being honest, it would probably sound something like this:

“Seeking a qualified foreman willing to work in industrial environments, including in the elements, who is willing to travel, and work extended hours. The foreman will manage roughly \$300-\$500 million in work over his career and be responsible for overall project delivery of his scope of work. The foreman is a craft leader with demonstrated expertise in their field who is responsible for the management of craftsmen, the development of apprentices, and the planning and assignments of work. The foreman is responsible for the safety of his employees, ensuring that the work assigned stays on schedule and on budget. The foreman must be able to read drawings and track progress, including monitoring changes in scope while working with the customer to ensure satisfaction in the face of a changing and dynamic environment.”

The fact of the matter is, we take foremen for granted in many of our companies without giving much thought to what we are asking them to do. Some companies have steady foremen, but in many cases contractors have to hire new foremen from the hall. Either way, do you think that the foremen that your company employs have the skills necessary to manage a \$300-\$500 million business based on their skills and training?

Most foremen go through an apprenticeship and learn the skills of their craft. However, generally they are not trained on management skills, leadership, safety management, project software, etc. Further, we hand these craftsmen the keys to the business and want them to transform

into a leader overnight, to boot. And for all of that responsibility we pay them two dollars more per hour and give them little or no training.

Does this sound like a winning strategy?

The issue we have is that we do not train, pay or recognize foremen as the professionals we need them to be, but we expect excellence. To make the problem even worse, we are about to lose most of our baby boomer workforce over the next 5 years. For most contractors, most of their foremen and leaders currently fall into that demographic.

This problem isn't created solely by the contractor, however. It's part of a bigger issue: the general way in which foremen identify themselves. If a stranger ran into one of your foremen at a bar and asked what he did for a living, what do you think he would say? My experience is that they would identify with their craft – i.e. a Boilermaker, Pipefitter, etc. But what they really ought to say is something like, “I manage significant construction projects for major American corporations.” That's the answer of an engaged leader who is proud of what they do.

What can we do to address this issue? I would suggest we need to look at three areas:

1. **Pay foremen like professionals.** What is it worth to have competent foremen to execute your work and look out for the best interest of the company? I don't have an exact number in mind, but I know that \$2/hour more for a guy that goes back and forth in and out of the crew and manages all facets of the work isn't enough. However, it needs to be understood that the suggestion of an increase is based on the other two items below being implemented.



2. **Train our foremen.** This can be done in a variety of ways. I know that some crafts have adopted foreman and supervisor courses, which is a great start. But I would suggest we need to build on the college credit offered through most apprentice programs and offer a track for an associate's degree in construction management or business administration. Further, we as companies need to invest in our foremen. I understand the obstacles as well as anyone: temporary employees, geographically spread out, time constraints, and cost. However, we need to understand how providing better training for our foremen in key areas can impact the business as a whole. As Vince Lombardi famously said, "Leaders are made, they are not born."

3. **Change how we look at foremen and make changes accordingly.** The first thing we need to do is change the terminology "foreman." Mark Breslin has suggested that this term carries some negative connotations, and I would agree. We need to look at names like "project leader" or others to lend professionalism and prestige

to the position. Furthermore, the ability to identify this prestigious position in career discussions should help with recruiting. Also, we need to consider how we hire and retain foremen. Consideration needs to be given to their position in the bargaining unit, portability to other locals for retention, and other options that make ROI for training more appealing.

As leaders retire, technology changes, schedules shrink, and regulations increase, it is essential as contractors that we figure out how to better attract, train, and retain the front line supervision we rely on to execute our projects. What are we as an industry doing to help create the next generation of leaders?



*Jacob Snyder is the TAUC Industrial Relations Committee Chairman and Director of Safety and Labor Relations for Enerfab Power & Industrial, Inc.*

### Continued from Page 20

labor force and pre-qualified specialty contractors to provide clients with a single source for interior build-outs. Services range from demolition to dry wall, metal studs and framing, plumbing, electrical work, fire protection, and final finishes such as acoustical ceilings, flooring, painting, and wall coverings.

**TAUC is also pleased to welcome our newest Affiliate Members:**

**Midland Tool & Supply** has been servicing its customers in the industrial construction sector with the most recognized products available for more than 50 years. Midland's clientele base is exceptionally diverse, and ranges from the world's largest contractors, industrial plants and factories, to local contractors in the mechanical, electrical, steel erection, general construction, and pipefitting industries.

**FDRSafety** distinguishes itself with the expertise and wide-ranging experience of its leaders and safety professionals. Its mission is to assist clients with smart plans and top-quality training and services to make their workplaces productive, safe and healthy. FDRSafety believes the safest, healthiest and most productive work environments are created when workers are motivated to "want to" be safe rather than feeling that they "have to." FDRSafety helps companies build that thinking into their culture with its unique Attitude-Based Safety Culture Training program and other services.

**Haztek Inc.** employs a staff of more than 170 salaried safety professionals to manage safety on clients' projects. The Haztek team is very diverse in experience levels and areas of focus, enabling it to manage any project regardless of size or scope. HazTek provides comprehensive safety services at competitive prices, and is able to manage construction site safety without any conflict of interest. Haztek helps clients meet deadlines and improve their bottom line, while making them more competitive and helping to get their employees home safely.

## New TAUC Media Kit Available

**I** NTERESTED IN ADVERTISING in this magazine, on our website or in our official e-newsletter, TAUC Tripartite News? Want to reach thousands of high-level executives in the union construction and maintenance industry?

Then you'll want to download our new 2017 Media Kit containing advertising rates, specs and deadlines. You can get it now at [www.tauc.org/mediakit](http://www.tauc.org/mediakit).

You can also contact TAUC's Advertising Sales Representative Bill Spilman at (309) 483-6467 or [bill@innovativemediasolutions.com](mailto:bill@innovativemediasolutions.com).

# Expecting the Unexpected as a Safety Professional

by JOE LASKY, JR., CSP, CHMM

**O**VER THE HOLIDAYS, at an event with peers, the topic of how we deal with the “unexpected” in our profession came up. The very nature of our work places us in the 24-7 category for availability. There are hundreds of articles on the web that talk about “expecting the unexpected.” My general takeaway from all of them is that “Murphy’s Law” hovers over us every day of our lives, both on and off the job.

I know that when things happen to me unexpectedly, especially on the job, my stress level increases dramatically. A good example that comes to mind is dealing with the end-of-year activities around the holidays, both at work and home – everything from shutting down projects to purchasing that final holiday gift. Just when you think you have covered all contingencies, and that any potential for incidents is over, you get that phone call or notification that puts you on pins and needles, again. Some days require more courage and staying power than others. However, as Murphy’s Law suggests, issues beyond anyone’s control can – and will – happen. Weather, accidents, mechanical breakdowns, and road construction are just a few of them. To make matters worse, more serious threats can occur, such as natural disasters, man-made catastrophes and acts of terrorism.

How does a safety professional address the unexpected on an ongoing basis? I know what you are thinking – plan, plan, plan. Of course,

the planning list goes on forever and continues without end. We train our supervisors and foremen on the importance of Pre-Job/Project planning by using Risk Mitigation Plans and Job Safety Analyses. Likewise, we also train them in performing a

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***How does a safety professional deal with the unexpected? Preparation is the critical difference that can potentially save a life or avoid a serious injury.***

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thorough hazard recognition analysis using a Daily Safe Work Plan and Total Safety Task Instruction process.

At points, this endless cycle of often repetitive training may seem mundane or unnecessary. Such is not the case, however. This preparation is the critical difference that can potentially save a life or avoid a serious injury. If employees have reviewed and practiced these safety procedures, the muscle reflexes, including their immediate intuitive responses, will lead to safer and more immediate responses to any unforeseen developments.

In addition to a thorough Pre-Job/Project planning and comprehensive Risk Assessment, you should always ask yourself the proverbial questions:

- What can go wrong?
- How likely is it?
- What are the consequences?

These questions alone will make you better prepared and possibly help you develop a safer approach to any potential safety incident. But can risk analysis/assessments, and standard safeguards prevent us from the unexpected? Not surprisingly, we all know the answer to that.

Stay Safe Out There! 



*Joe Lasky is Chair of the TAUC Environmental Health and Safety Committee and Director of Corporate Safety, Health and Environment for Scheck Industries.*

## Questions?

## Comments?

**We want to hear from you!**

E-mail Executive Editor  
David Acord at [dacord@tauc.org](mailto:dacord@tauc.org).

Let him know what you thought about this issue, or suggest an idea for a future article!

# In Our Own Words

By SCOTT FISHER, AGC OF MICHIGAN

**A**S CHAIRMAN OF TAUC's Local Employer Organization (LEO) Committee, the two most frequent questions I get are "What's a LEO?" and "What do you guys do in your meetings?" The first answer is easy – LEOs are regional and local trade associations that work on behalf of union contractors to promote industry growth in their areas and forge stronger ties with the local labor and owner-client communities. Many LEOs are also heavily involved in the collective bargaining process, which I discussed in greater detail in my last column (see TCU Winter 2016-17, Page 12).

The second question requires a more detailed answer. What do a bunch of regional association leaders do when they get together in a room for several hours? As it turns out, quite a bit! TAUC recently reached out to LEO members and asked them to explain why they take time out of their busy schedules to attend our committee meetings (the next one is coming up on May 9, by the way – email TAUC LEO Committee Liaison David Acord at [dacord@tauc.org](mailto:dacord@tauc.org) for more information). Below are some of their comments.

"The most benefit I find in being a LEO member is the wealth of knowledge of the committee members," said Alec Rexroat, Executive Director of the National Union Insulation Contractors Alliance. "I always learn something new from this group — always. The folks have worked on and solved problems that I have never been exposed to. Now, if they come up, I can find a solution or at least I know where to go for help."

Perry Doubt, Executive Director of the Associated Steel Erectors of Chicago, pointed out, "LEO meetings help smaller associations like ours stay on top of what is happening in other parts of the country and at the federal level, addressing issues like labor relations, safety, apprenticeship and market share. It's a place to pick up new ideas and make valuable contacts."

Knowledge, ideas, information sharing – are you sensing a theme yet? Bill Kroeger, VP of Labor Relations for AGC of Missouri, emphasized similar benefits. "By attending LEO committee meetings, I learn about what is happening around the country with other LEO members," he said. "Our LEO Committee provides a great way to network, gather information, and provide information to assist our union contractors."


Kevin Comerford of The Northwest Indiana Contractors Association noted that regardless of where a LEO is located geographically, they typically deal with similar problems. "Some of the challenges that we are facing at the local level are typically the same challenges faced by other construction contractors throughout the United States," he said. "The TAUC LEO Committee is essentially a national think tank that shares ideas and provides tangible solutions on a number of business, political, economic, and industry specific challenges. The cumulative knowledge derived from other LEO's has certainly given our local contractors a competitive advantage."

I really like Kevin's phrase "national think tank" – I might borrow it for future use! But he brings up a good

point: the TAUC LEO Committee meetings are one of the few opportunities we local and regional guys have to meet and talk with our colleagues from around the country.

I'd like to end by sharing a comment from one of our newest members, Dave Atkinson of the Mechanical Contractors Association of N.W. Ohio, Inc. Dave recently attended his first committee meeting in December 2016. "Being at my EVP job for only one month prior to attending the TAUC LEO meeting, I was encouraged to find the experience that was at the table and the genuine, frank conversation that was shared from around the country," he said.

If you're a LEO but not yet a member of our committee, I hope this glimpse into the inner workings of our committee will spur your interest. And if you are a member, but haven't attended a meeting in a while, I hope you'll consider penciling us in. In addition to the upcoming May meeting, we will also hold meetings in August and December (again, David Acord at [dacord@tauc.org](mailto:dacord@tauc.org) can fill you in on all the details).

I hope to see you soon! 



*Scott Fisher is the TAUC LEO Committee Chair and Vice President of Labor Relations, Safety & Health and Workforce Development for the Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Michigan.*

# Worldwide Antitrust Fines Set Record for 2016

by STEVE FELLMAN, TAUC GENERAL COUNSEL

**T**ODAY, MORE THAN one hundred countries have antitrust laws, most modeled after U.S. laws. Why have other countries developed such a strong interest in antitrust over the last 20 years? The answer is simple: antitrust enforcement has proved to be a great source of revenue for governments throughout the world.

Let's look at the numbers. In 2016, it is reported that worldwide antitrust fines totaled \$6.7 billion dollars. The European Union brought in fines of \$4.1 billion, and other countries also benefited from the bonanza – for example, India collected \$941 million and South Korea collected \$765 million. The European Union picked up total fines of \$4.1 billion last year.

By contrast, the U.S. Antitrust Division reported a sharp drop in collected fines in 2016 – just \$387 million, down from a whopping \$2.85 billion in 2015. But don't assume that the smaller total indicates the U.S. is going soft on antitrust. A record number of cases were settled in 2015, enabling the Antitrust Division to move its limited resources to a series of new cases. It would not be surprising to see Antitrust Division fines in 2017 doubling or even tripling 2015's numbers.

Contractors must remain aware that bid-rigging is one of the major antitrust concerns not only in the U.S. but worldwide. Bid-rigging includes not only agreements on what to bid, but also agreements *not* to bid on certain projects; agreements to submit unreasonably high bids to assist a competitor get the bid at a more reasonable number; and agreements to submit non-responsive bids. In fact, even an “innocent” conversation between competitors regarding a pending RFP could be a basis for a bid rigging charge. All contractors should be aware of what constitutes bid-rigging and should have a written antitrust compliance program. See TAUC's Antitrust Policy Statement at [www.tauc.org/antitrust](http://www.tauc.org/antitrust).

Contractors found guilty of bid-rigging face more than significant fines. According to a recent Department of Justice memo, the Yates Memo, the individuals who actually engage in the illegal activity will be prosecuted. Bid-rigging is a criminal violation of the antitrust laws. Individuals convicted of bid rigging are guilty of a felony and face a mandatory jail sentence of up to ten years.

As governments become more conservative, agencies will be pushed

to engage in activities that show a positive benefit to the economy. Antitrust enforcement is one of those activities. In 2016, the Antitrust Division budget was \$165 million. That investment of tax revenue resulted in income (fines) of \$387 million. Every private company would give its eye teeth to generate that type of return on investment. Contractors can expect antitrust enforcement efforts directed at practices such as bid rigging to continue under the Trump Administration.

We recommend that all contractors not only have a written antitrust compliance program but also conduct annual continuing education sessions with key employees to make sure that they fully understand their responsibilities under the antitrust laws. For further information contact me, Steve Fellman, at [sfellman@gkglaw.com](mailto:sfellman@gkglaw.com).



*Steve Fellman is a shareholder with GKG Law in Washington, D.C. He is also general counsel to The Association of Union Constructors.*

IN 2016  
WORLDWIDE ANTITRUST  
FINES TOTALED

**\$6.7**  
BILLION

THE EUROPEAN UNION  
BROUGHT IN FINES OF

**\$4.1**  
BILLION

IN 2016, THE ANTITRUST  
DIVISION BUDGET WAS

**\$165**  
MILLION

# Building Trades Caucus Seeks Action on Infrastructure Needs

**T**HE CONGRESSIONAL BUILDING Trades Caucus recently sent a bipartisan letter to President Trump detailing national infrastructure priorities to rebuild the country and create jobs.

The Caucus, co-chaired by Representatives Donald Norcross (D-NJ) and David McKinley (R-WV), was created in 2016 to promote issues of importance to American construction workers. Norcross is the only electrician in the House and worked for years installing power lines in refineries and on the tops of bridges. He rose through the ranks and eventually became assistant business manager for IBEW Local 351 and President of the Southern New Jersey AFL-CIO. McKinley worked for years as a civil engineer and is one of only two professional engineers in Congress.

***“While it is important to upgrade our roads, bridges and tunnels, those are not the only pieces of infrastructure that are key to the success of businesses in a modern economy.”***

***— Building Trades Caucus***

“As members of the bipartisan Congressional Building Trades Caucus, we look to work together with your Administration to create a broad-based strategy to meet the United States’ infrastructure needs,” began the letter, signed by 13 Caucus members. “The Building Trades

Caucus is comprised of Members from around the country and both sides of the aisle with extensive experience and interest in the building and construction trades industry. Since its inception, the caucus has worked towards many of the same goals you aspired to during your campaign: advancing policies on behalf of the American worker.”

The Caucus listed a number of specific priorities they feel should be included in any infrastructure spending plan:

**Expansive Definition of Infrastructure** – “While it is important to upgrade our roads, bridges and tunnels, those are not the only pieces of infrastructure that are key to the success of businesses in a modern economy,” the letter noted. “As you endeavor to revive manufacturing in America, we will need a strong transportation infrastructure that includes ports and rails capable of efficiently handling the rise in exports. Businesses will also need access to a diverse array of tools like high-speed internet, a secure, smart and resilient energy grid, and clean water just to name a few.”

**Distribution of Infrastructure Funding** – “While infrastructure investments are needed everywhere in America, as you crossed the country during the election you undoubtedly saw that some areas of the country have shared more richly in previous infrastructure investments than others. In crafting any package, we urge you to seek a fair funding distribution mechanism, to ensure all corners of the country can address their unique infrastructure challenges.”

**Prevailing Wage** – “For the last century, prevailing wage has been a crucial tool for the federal government to ensure it gets a good return on its investments while not artificially

depressing the wages of workers in localities where federal dollars are spent,” the Caucus wrote. “The use of prevailing wage prevents a race to the bottom among contractors, a race that would lead to a shoddy product and a greater cost to the taxpayers, and ensures the income derived from these families sustaining wages is reinvested into local communities. Capital investments in infrastructure are meant to be durable investments that last for centuries at a time. In crafting any infrastructure package, we urge you to include the use of prevailing wage in order to protect the taxpayers’ investment and ensure the highest quality infrastructure for the American people and businesses.”

**Streamlining the Permitting Process** – “As someone who is familiar with the building and construction process, we know you are keenly aware of the problems that can arise from a costly and arduous permitting processes,” the Caucus wrote, referencing President Trump’s real estate background. “Not only does it increase the costs of the project, but the uncertainty can cause investors to walk away from projects or decline to invest in the first place. That means fewer investments in our infrastructure and fewer jobs for American workers. In any infrastructure package, we urge you to find ways to responsibly streamline and expedite federal permitting processes so that we can get Americans back to work as soon as possible. In the meantime, we urge you to include a suite of currently engineered and permitted projects that work can begin on immediately, while some of the larger and more complex projects work their way through the permitting process.”

### Cautious Optimism

Last December, both Norcross and McKinley spoke at TAUC's State of the Union Construction Industry Forum in Washington, D.C. They expressed cautious optimism about a Trump administration.

McKinley told the TAUC Forum audience he was encouraged by discussions he had had with the Trump transition team regarding the proliferation of federal regulations. He predicted Trump will slow down on imposing new regulations that make it harder for businesses to operate.

"If we can get our regulations under control, we can unleash a potential we haven't seen in generations in this country and put our people back to work," Rep. McKinley said.

Regarding infrastructure spending, McKinley's message was simple. "You want to change the economy, [make

it] robust and vibrant again? Put our construction people back to work... use our infrastructure as a vehicle to put Americans back to work quickly."

As for Trump's victory, McKinley said he had "never seen a more seismic shift in our political landscape...I'm

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***"If we can get our regulations under control, we can unleash a potential we haven't seen in generations in this country and put our people back to work."***


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***— Rep. David McKinley***

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excited to see what's going to happen. He wasn't my first choice, but he's the President of the United States."

Norcross said he was "absolutely thrilled" over the potential for Trump to engage in a robust round of infrastructure spending.

"I dealt with Donald Trump for [many] years in Atlantic City...one thing I understood about the Trump organization, they understood the art of the deal... I think there is real opportunity here," Norcross told the crowd. "There is also some peril; I certainly have some issues, and I'm not suggesting everything Donald Trump is doing is the right thing. But he is talking about things that make a difference to the people I represent... it's about building again." 

## Join TAUC and NMAPC On Social Media!

Follow us on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn to stay connected to TAUC and NMAPC, get the latest union construction news and updates, learn about upcoming events and more!



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**NMAPC**

NATIONAL MAINTENANCE AGREEMENTS POLICY COMMITTEE, INC.



# ARE YOU TAUC GM MATERIAL?

The weather is getting warm and that means one thing: baseball is back! Around the league, general managers are busy putting together what they hope will be winning teams.

Here at The Association of Union Constructors (TAUC), we have our own GMs – Governing Members, those who choose to step up and take a larger leadership role within the organization.

TAUC is very proud of our Governing Members – and we want you to consider joining this special team-within-a-team. A Governing Membership shows that you're committed – not just to TAUC, but to the union construction and maintenance industry as a whole.

## **Governing Members give their time and energy – and in return receive the following benefits:**

- Eligible to serve on TAUC Board of Directors
- Eligible to chair TAUC Committees & Task Forces
- Have full voting privileges at TAUC meetings
- Receive special discounted rate for TAUC Leadership Conference
- Participate in all TAUC educational webinars free of charge
- Obtain labor relations assistance from TAUC staff
- Have opportunity to be considered to serve as NMAPC management representative
- Signatories to 10 or more NMAPC agreements receive a discount of up to \$3,300 per year on administrative fees

## **Don't delay – become a TAUC Governing Member Today!**

**Contact: Todd Mustard**

Senior Director of Government Affairs and Member Services  
(703) 524-3336 x112  
tmustard@tauc.org



## **eLearning Resource Center**

The National Maintenance Agreements Policy Committee, Inc. (NMAPC) has been serving the union construction and maintenance industry for more than 40 years. We negotiate and administer the National Maintenance Agreements (NMA), a series of collective bargaining agreements utilized by more than 2,000 industrial construction and maintenance contractors employing members of fourteen international building trades unions.

Now, the NMAPC has created a comprehensive web-based resource center to help contractors, clients and crafts more effectively utilize the NMAPC Program.

The **NMA I.Q. eLearning Resource Center** is the web-based resource for “all things NMA.” It is designed for newcomers and industry veterans alike, and equally useful to all members of the tripartite community – contractors, building trades unions and owner-clients. It offers easy-to-follow online tutorials and short videos on virtually every aspect of the NMA, from a “How does it work?” general overview to detailed instructions and explanations on more technical aspects of the Agreements.

**Try it today – it’s free!**

**[www.NMAIQ.org](http://www.NMAIQ.org)**