



WorkSafe NZ inspectors came to breakfast at WITT recently to dispel a few myths and open communication lines with employers.

“Breakfast with the Inspectors” was organised by The Taranaki Construction Safety Group, which comprises volunteers from a wide variety of businesses and representatives from the Taranaki construction and building industry.

About 80 members were given an insight into the similarities and differences between a policeman monitoring a speed radar and a safety inspector by Thomas Visagie.

“For starters we don’t hide behind bushes,” he said. “But just as when you go over the speed limit, by accident or not, there can be consequences”.

People tended to shy away from inspectors when they met – but it was interesting to see that the more they talked, the more useful information about incidents came forth, he said.

Safety was not an exact science.

“You strive to minimise risk but the consequence doesn’t change and human error comes into play.”

Providing a safe environment was the key – and that included for the boss as well as the employee.

He said New Plymouth data for 2015 showed there were 131 severe injury claims and 7785 days lost as a consequence of work-related accidents.

“Each claim relates to about two months off work – think about the impact on you and on your workers.”

He said the job of inspectors was to engage and educate. It was also important for employers to ensure their workers were involved in establishing risk management strategies.”

Taranaki Construction Safety Group committee member, Joanna Brown said there was a perception inspectors were scary and no one wanted to ask them something in case they open a can of worms.

“Proof of that was in the pudding when the replies from people confirming they wanted to attend came in.”

At the same gathering group chairman Andrew Pepper announced the establishment of a new website, [tcsg.nz](http://tcsg.nz) for members.