Safe work with carcinogens – coordinated inspections in Germany (2020-2025)

Gemeinsame Deutsche Arbeits | schutz | strategie

RoC Conference „The air we work in“
28th of october 2026, Dublin

Targets:



1. To reduce work-related cancer
2. To gather the state-of-play of legal compliance regarding carcinogens and increase compliance
3. To promote substantial improvement in awareness, especially in small and medium-sized enterprise

[4. To establish one inspection standard for all Labour Inspectors]

Parameter:

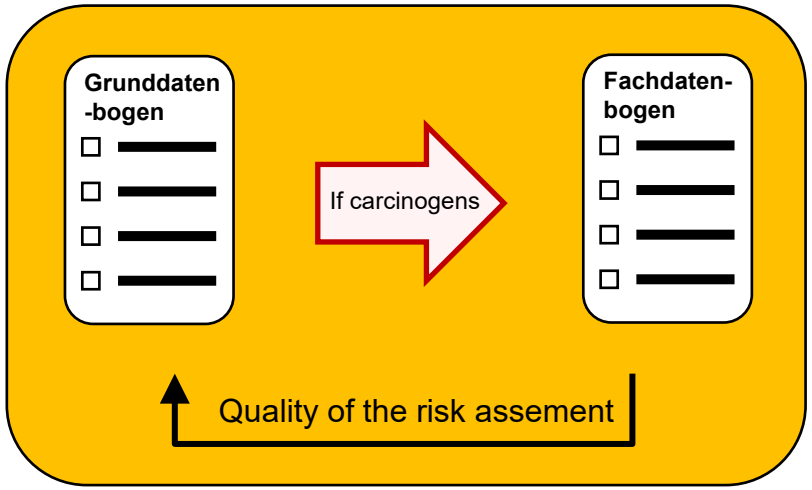
- A definite period of 4 years for inspections (2021-2025)
- A definite number of enterprises (3,3% of 200.000)
- Definite 12 carcinogens (MDA, Asbestos, Benzene, Chromium(VI) compounds, Cobalt compounds, Diesel engine exhaust, Formaldehyde, Hartwood dust, Nickel compounds, Benzo(a)pyrene, Respirable silica dust, TRI)
- Targeted enterprises: max. 250 employees
- Quarterly reports for all entities of enforcement (one central database)
- One checklist for all labour inspectors (broad approach, not only experts, Länder

and DGUV)

- If risk assessment of carcinogens is poor, general risk assessment is incomplete.

The standard process: two checklists for the inspections

Checklist „general“ OSH



Checklist Carcinogens

Working groups

→ Checklist and training

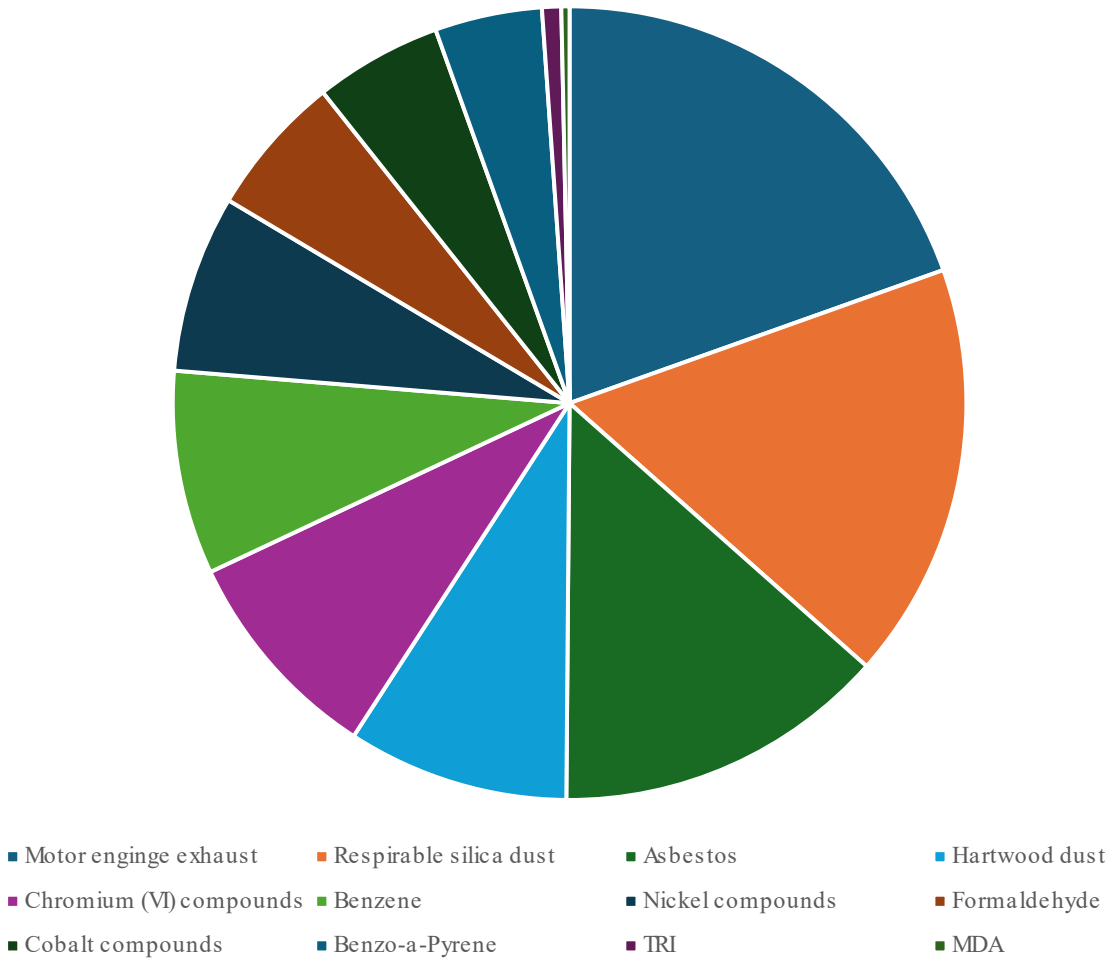
→ GDA Haz Sub Check
→ Best Practice Datenbase
→ PR & Communications

“KISS”: Seven questions

(1) Is a hazardous substance inventory present?
(2) Are operating instructions available for workers?
(3) Is specific medical surveillance offered to workers?
(4) Was the exposure assessed?
(5) Are limit values complied with?
(6) If limit values are exceeded, is a risk reduction strategy plan present?
(7) Is high risk exposure documented?

The 12 targeted carcinogens

(Data set Q4/26, N= 6.914)

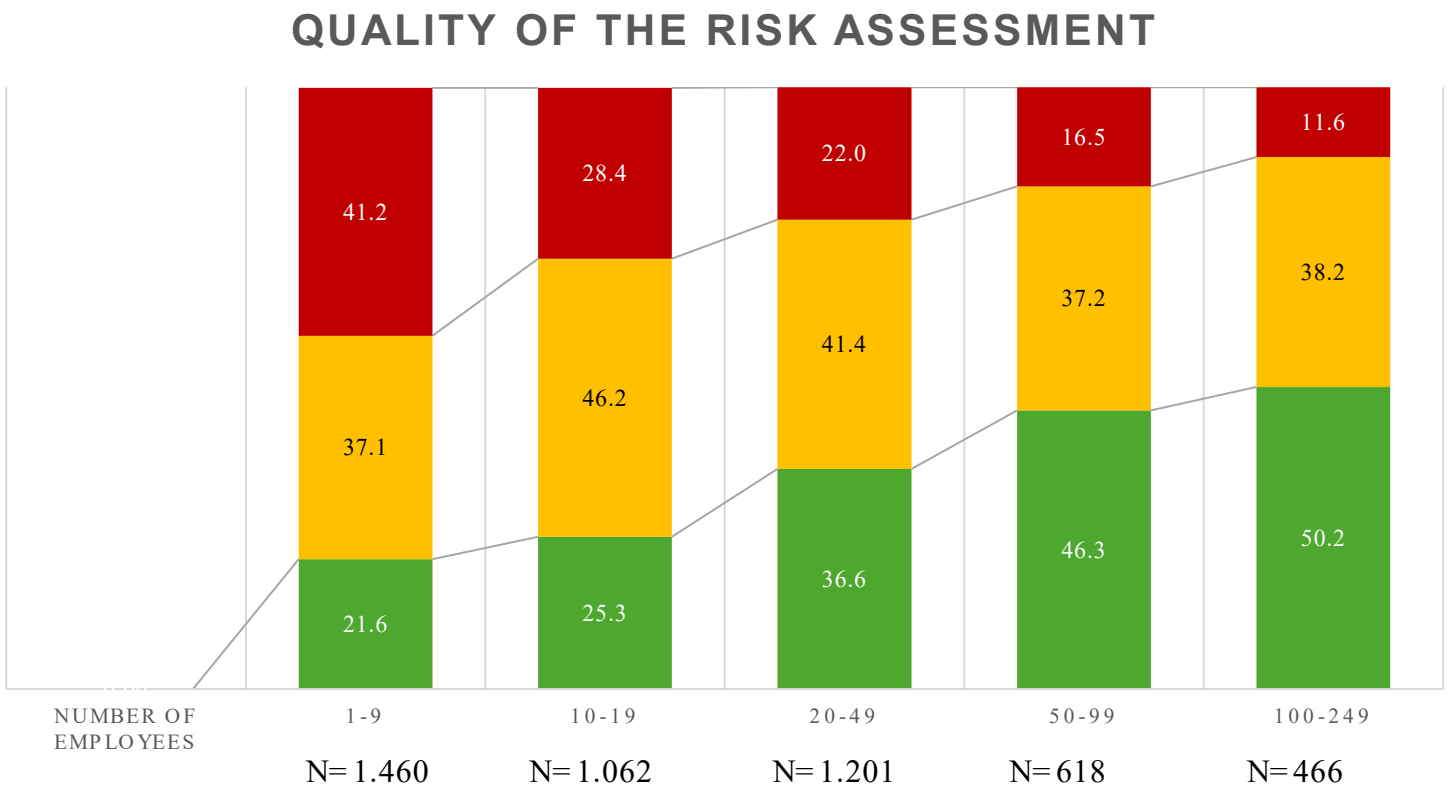


The dirty 12	Total number	Percentage (%)
Motor enginge exhaust	1352	20
Respirable silica dust	1174	17
Asbestos	940	14
Hartwood dust	624	9
Chromium (VI) compounds	612	9
Benzene	574	8
Nickel compounds	500	7
Formaldehyde	400	6
Cobalt compounds	359	5
Benzo-a-Pyrene	302	4
TRI	54	1
MDA	23	0

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How good is the risk assessment over all?

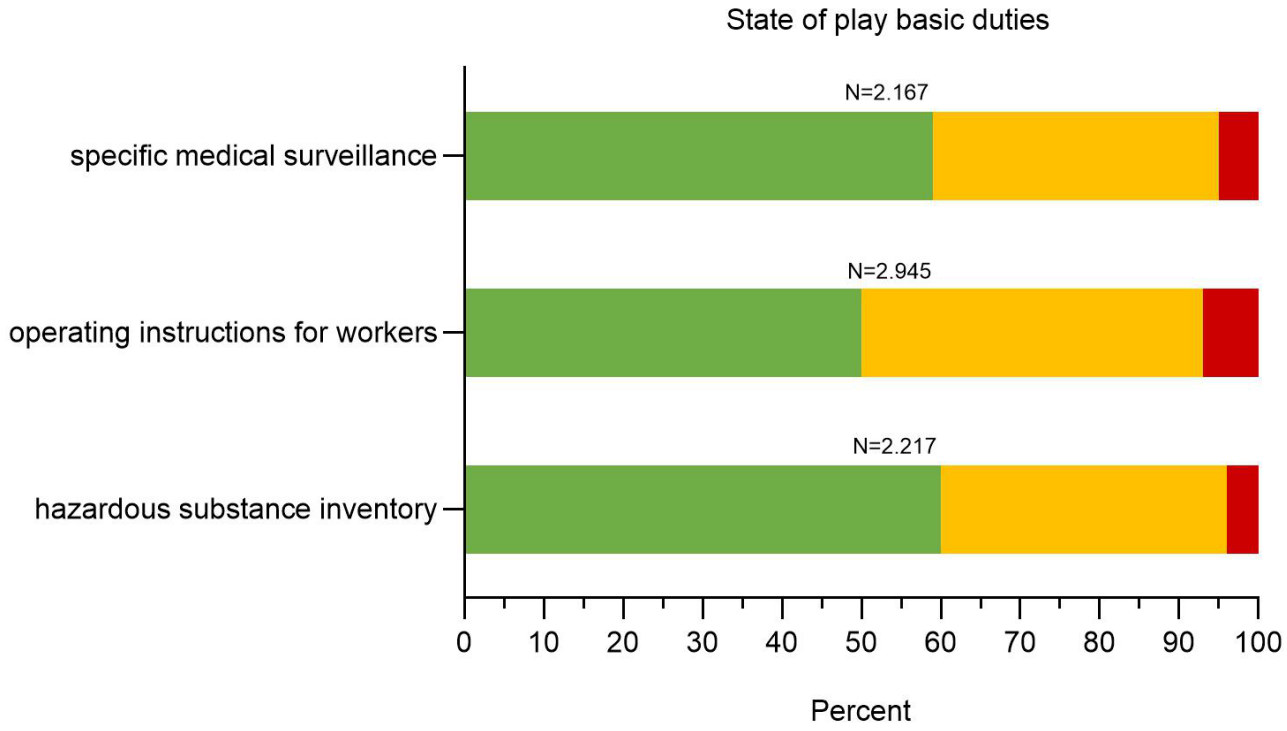
(Data set Q4/26, N= 4.807)



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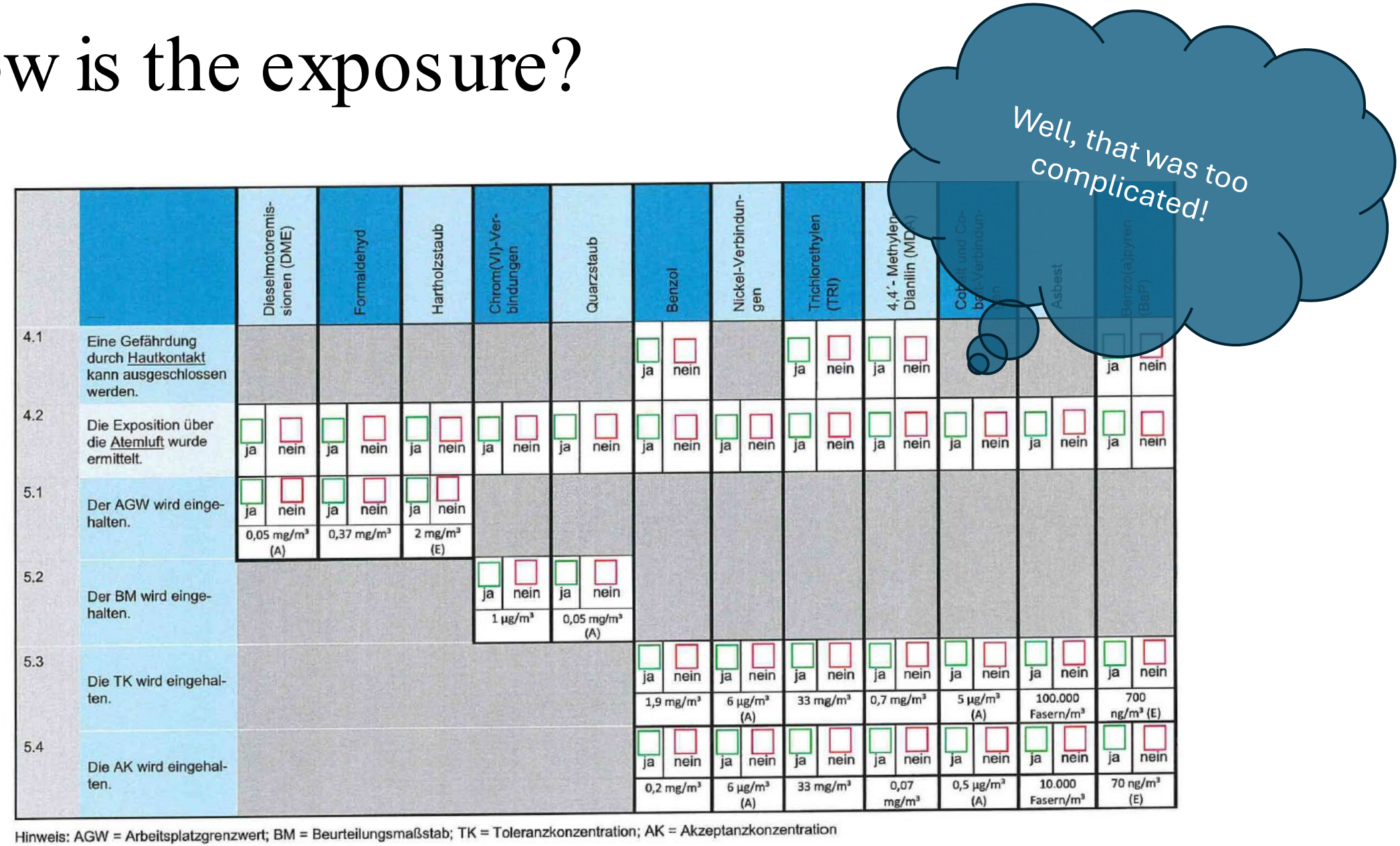
Compliance to basic duties is only …

(Data set Q4/26, N= 4.807)



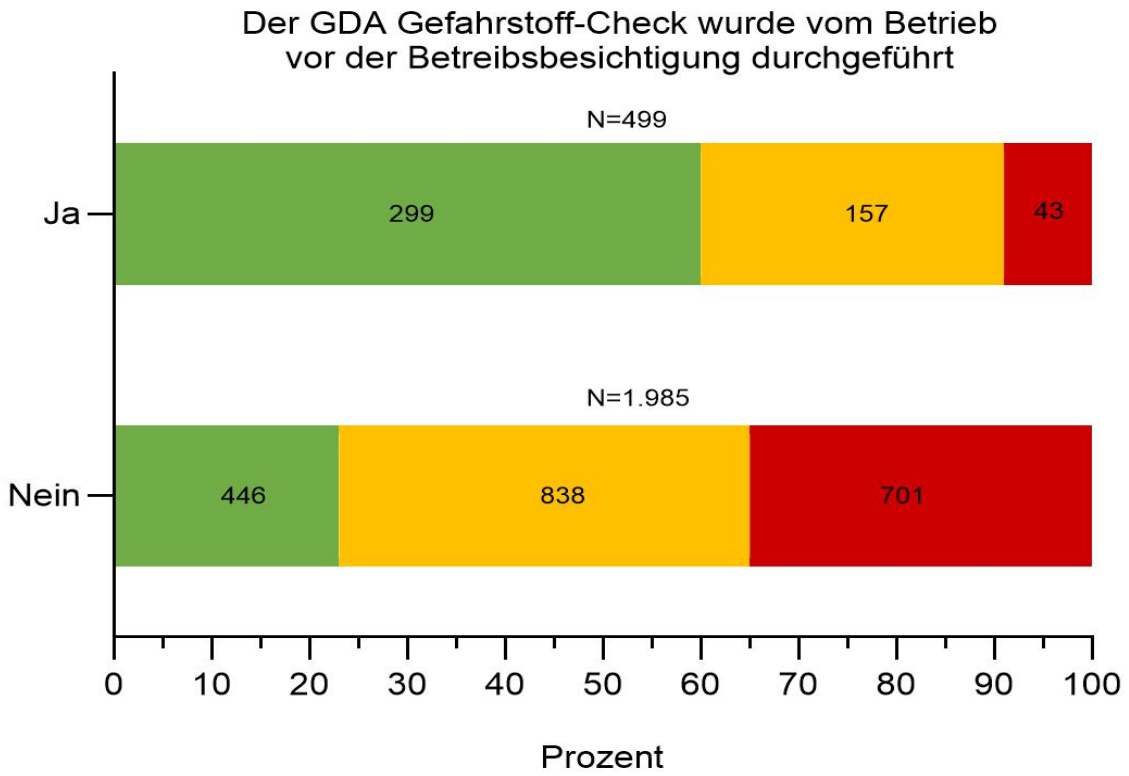
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How is the exposure?



Hinweis: AGW = Arbeitsplatzgrenzwert; BM = Beurteilungsmaßstab; TK = Toleranzkonzentration; AK = Akzeptanzkonzentration

Self-assessment (prior to inspection) is a game changer



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„Safe work with carcinogens“ (2020-2025)

Official Kick-off 26th of may 2021

Training period

Inspections since 01/2022

31.12.2023: 36% (2.371 inspections)

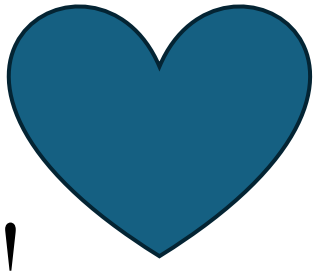
12.146 visits of the haz sub check (31.01.2024)

31.12.2025: 90% (4.807 inspections)

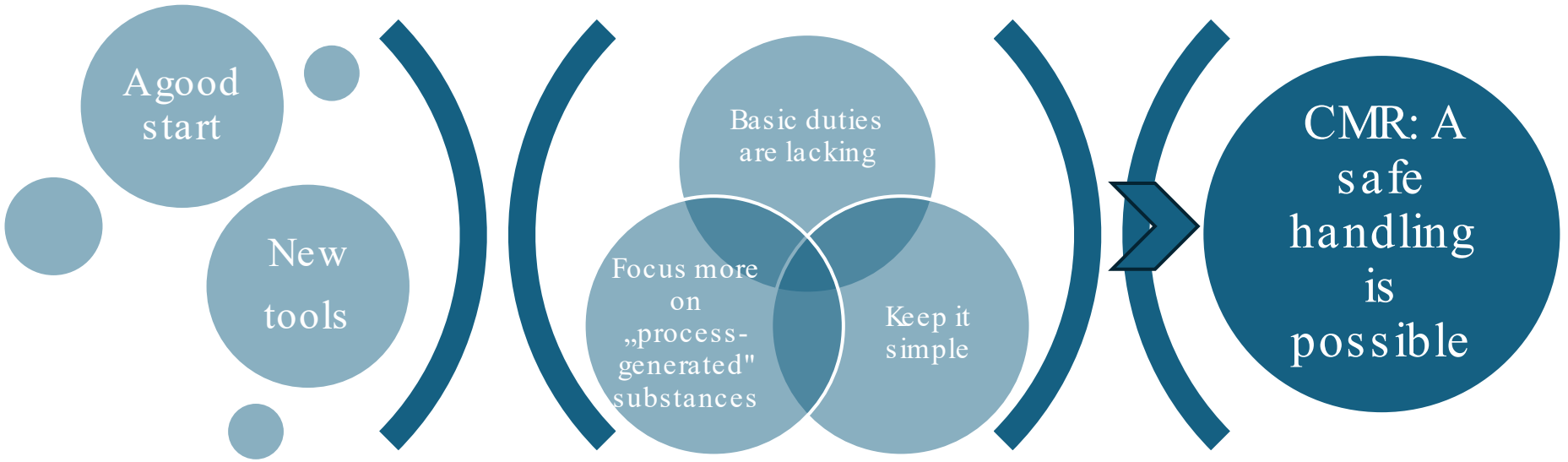
18.617 visits of the haz sub check (31.12.2025)

Thanks to all! Good team work!

It was time consuming, but rewarding!



Key findings



And now?

- The tools „Gefahrstoffcheck“ und „Best practise database“ will be updated regularly

  ➢ https://www.gda-portal.de/EN/Companies/Cancer

- Germany will join the SLIC Asbestos Campaign in spring 2027

- A new joint action 2027/2028+ is in preparation

Thank you for your attention. Questions?

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