

Healthy Workplaces Good for you. Good for business.

A European campaign
on Risk Assessment

1st iNTeg-Risk Conference
2 - 4 June 2009, Stuttgart, Germany

<http://hw.osha.europa.eu>



European Agency
for Safety and Health
at Work

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Healthy Workplaces

Content

- 1. The Agency**
- 2. The European campaign on risk assessment**
- 3. European Risk Observatory: Identifying emerging risks**

European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

Established in 1996 in Bilbao, Spain



The Agency's mission

To help improve working conditions in the European Union by collecting, analysing, promoting and communicating technical, scientific and economic information related to Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) to Community bodies, Member States, the social partners, employers, workers, and all those involved in the field of OSH

A network Agency: Focal Points



Context

- **205 million employees in Europe**
- **167,000 fatalities attributed to work-related accidents (7,460) and diseases (159,000) in EU-27**
- **Every 3.5 minutes, somebody in the EU-27 dies from work-related causes.**
- **Every 4.5 seconds, a worker in the EU-27 is involved in an accident that forces him/her to stay at home for at least three working days.**
- **Over 7 million of accidents at work causing three or more days of absence every year.**
- **Costs are huge (human tragedies, sick-leave, turnover, productivity, motivation, healthcare systems)**

Why a campaign on risk assessment?

- Risk Assessment (RA) is a legal obligation for employers (EU framework directive 89/391)
- Still quite a number of companies who do not assess their risks. In general: The smaller a company, the less likely RA is done.
 - ▶ France: risks of Carcinogens, Mutagens and Reprotoxicants assessed by 20% of micro enterprises, 38% of small companies, 57% of medium companies, and 67% of companies with > 200 workers.
- Need to improve the quality of RA (EU Commission COM 2004/62)
 - ▶ RA is often a one-off (need for regular updates)
 - ▶ RA is not (well) documented
 - ▶ Long term (e.g. dangerous substances) and psychosocial risks are neglected
 - ▶ Efficiency of measures taken is not sufficiently supervised

What is Risk Assessment?

It is not...

- **Complex**
- **Bureaucratic**
- **Only for experts**



Campaign target and objectives

- **Core target audience**
 - ▶ **SMEs and micro firms (!)**
 - ▶ **Employers, workers, safety representatives, OSH practitioners**
 - ▶ **Try to reach them via intermediaries (policy makers, social partners, focal points...)**
- **Campaign objectives**
 - ▶ **Raise awareness and encourage to do a RA**
 - ▶ **Demystify the process**
 - ▶ **Underline that RA is an ongoing process**
 - ▶ **Everyone in the workplace should be involved**
 - ▶ **Identify and promote good practices**

Then...what is Risk Assessment?

- RA is the first step to safer and healthier workplaces and the key to reducing work-related accidents and diseases.
- RA is the process of evaluating the risks to workers' safety and health from workplace hazards. It is a systematic examination of all aspects of work that considers:
 - ▶ What could cause injury or harm,
 - ▶ Whether hazards can be eliminated and, if not,
 - ▶ What preventive or protective measures need to be in place to control the risks.
- RA is a duty for employers and workers should be involved.

How to do Risk Assessment?

- **There are two principles which should always be born in mind when carrying out an RA:**
 - ▶ **Structure the assessment to ensure all relevant hazards and risks are addressed**
 - ▶ **First, try to eliminate them. If not possible, reduce them.**
- **Five-step approach to RA:**
 1. **Identifying hazards and people at risk**
 2. **Evaluating and prioritising risks**
 3. **Deciding on preventive action**
 4. **Taking action**
 5. **Monitoring and reviewing**
- **Remember:**

Network-based campaigning

- **25 million SMEs – 205 million workers**
 - ▶ **Beyond Agency capabilities to reach them all**
- **A decentralised campaign**
 - ▶ **Agency coordinates campaign, provides information in 22 languages and via the website, stimulates partner activities, organises Good Practice Awards and Closing Event**
 - ▶ **Focal Points promote, stimulate and organise activities at national level**
- **Tripartite network**
 - ▶ **Employers, workers, governments**
 - ▶ **On EU and national level**
- **Other partners:**
 - ▶ **European Commission; EU Presidencies; EEN (Enterprise Europe Network)**
 - ▶ **NGOs; sectoral federations and networks;**
 - ▶ **Large enterprises and their supply chain (SMEs)**

A two-year campaign

- **2008**

- ▶ **13 June** **Launch event in Brussels (with SI)**
- ▶ **20-26 Oct.** **European Week (focus of activities)**
- ▶ **3-4 Nov.** **Forum International Travail et Sécurité
in Paris (FR)**
- ▶ **All year** **National events and Good Practice
Awards**

- **2009**

- ▶ **Feb/March** **EU GP Awards event (with CZ)**
- ▶ **19-25 Oct.** **European Week (focus of activities)**
- ▶ **Oct./Nov.** **Conference (with SE)**
- ▶ **Nov.** **Closing event of the campaign in Bilbao**
- ▶ **All year** **Topic based activities; local and sector
focus; promotion of GP Award winners**

Good Practice Award 2009

Case study: A knowledge-based software solution for risk management in a research environment

Name of the organisation(s)

Delft University of Technology

Country:

Netherlands

The issue

Experimental set-ups used in scientific research contain many safety hazards. However, because these set-ups change frequently, classic risk assessment soon becomes outdated. In addition, safety professionals are often not in a position to understand the implications of a set-up. The scientific researcher in turn knows these implications, but lacks expert safety knowledge. Safety management is not very effective under these conditions, and accidents and damage become more likely. To overcome these problems, Delft University has developed the so-called 'safety report system'.

The action

The safety report system is a software tool, enabling researchers to make their own safety assessment for the experimental set-ups under their control. The tool systematically provides checklists and it assists the researcher with a guidance side-kick. After completion, the researcher submits his safety report to his supervisor, who can either approve or disapprove the report. Once approved, the safety report is stored into a database which has a search function, making expert knowledge available to all other safety report users; a growing pool of best practices to the research community involved. In addition, the database provides transparency into the decisions made, safeguarding the integrity of the safety system.

As a final safety check, the experimental set-ups are inspected on a regular base by professionals.

The results

The safety report system has been in use at Delft University for three years now and has not only improved the safety level in the laboratories, but also strengthened the accountability of supervisors and boosted collegial discussions about safety in general. As such it contributed greatly to the overall safety performance.



News

[What's your image of safety & health at work?](#)
22.05.2009

[A comprehensive approach to risk assessment at Revoz car plant](#)
20.05.2009

[EU-OSHA alert service](#)
20.05.2009

[Open for Participation: 2009 Global Survey of Health Promotion and Workplace Wellness Strategies](#)
19.05.2009

[International- WHO, Case management of Influenza A\(H1N1\) in air transport](#)
19.05.2009



Healthy Workplaces

Get involved!

- Use our free Campaign material in 22 languages on:
 - ▶ Logo, poster, folder, factsheets, PPTs, internet banner
 - ▶ Quizzes, Napo DVD, animations
 - ▶ Good Practice database, Risk Assessment tools database, etc.
- Ideas for action
 - ▶ Disseminate campaign material
 - ▶ Promote Good Practice Awards
 - ▶ Organise your own conference, seminar, workshop
 - ▶ Launch a poster/photo competition
- Getting recognition
 - ▶ Certificate of Participation
 - ▶ Partner Status

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Coming up...Risk Assessment interactive tool

- **Free interactive software**
- **Downloadable application which can be installed on any computer and completed off-line**
- **The goal: help SMEs to put in place the RA process**
- **Sector-specific**
- **It will include:**
 - ▶ **Checklist with additional information**
 - ▶ **Automatic generation of “to do” lists and plans of measures**
 - ▶ **Automatic action plan could include: hazards, actions, sorting on priority, person in charge, deadlines; updateable status, ...**
- **Available to the public before the end of the year**

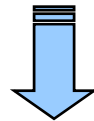
Expert forecasts of Emerging Risks (ERs) - European Risk Observatory

<http://osha.europa.eu>

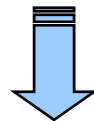
4 Delphi surveys

(physical, chemical, biological & psychosocial risks):

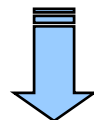
520 experts from 27 EU countries contacted



Round 1: Identification of issues



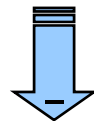
Round 2: Validation and prioritisation



Round 3: Final consultation



if necessary



Forecast by 188 experts (RR=35%):
prioritised lists of ERs

Chemical risks: Five main groups of Emerging Risks

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1. **Nanoparticles**
2. **Allergenic/sensitising substances & skin diseases**
3. **Carcinogenic, mutagenic and in particular reprotoxic substances**
e.g. organic solvents, endocrine disruptors, biocides
4. **Emerging specific sectors**
waste treatment, home care, home nursing
5. **Combined exposures**
 - **Combined exposure to chemicals**
 - **Ototoxic substances and noise**
 - **Dangerous substances in SMEs and sub-contracted jobs**

Nanoparticles (NPs) (MV=4.60)

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- NPs have different properties than materials at the macro scale
- NPs can enter the human body and translocate to organs/ tissues
- The degree of damage is unknown, very specific to the NP type
- Research into health effects still insufficient

Need validated *in vitro* methods, and methods to determine physico-chemical properties

- No official data on the number of workers exposed to NPs
 - 24,400 in companies working only with nanotechnology in 2004
- Expected to grow rapidly
 - by 2014, 15% of manufactured products would contain NPs
 - and 10 million jobs worldwide involved in NP manufacturing
- Need descriptions of exposures & reliable measurement methods
- Need to develop and share Good Practice

Chemical substances in waste treatment (MV=4.11)

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- **One of the most hazardous occupations**
- **Illness rate 50% higher than in other sectors**
- **Waste regulations primarily for environmental purposes**
- **Growing amount of waste in the EU – largest volume from manufacturing, construction, demolition, mining**
- **High level of dust and up to 100 VOCs found**
- **Electrical/electronic equipment and end-of-life vehicles increasingly recycled: contain lead, cadmium, mercury, PCBs**
- **Most efficient measure is to reduce the generation of dust, aerosols and VOCs**
- **Technical collective measures and hygiene plans**
- **Prevention measures to be adapted to the specificity of the waste and treatment activity**

Combined exposures to chemicals (MV=3.89)

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- No EU regulation specific to combined chemicals
- Risk by risk/substance by substance approach questioned
 - **even when each element taken separately is not toxic; combined low-level exposures**
 - **risk to underestimate the real risk to workers**
- Research too limited to some combined exposures
- Develop tools to identify which substances in which jobs
- Develop practical guidance and tools
- CEFIC is developing guidance for the assessment of risks from preparations, in particular for solvents
- Need for an holistic approach cutting across disciplines (e.g. noise and ototoxic substances; environmental/occ. health)

Foresight of emerging risks linked to new technologies in the green economy in 2020

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- How will new technologies in “green jobs” impact on OSH and what will be the resulting OSH emerging risks in 2020?
- Considering the demographic, societal and economic context
e.g. evolution of the labour market; trends in public attitude towards risks; political agendas and developments, such as globalisation or economic crises
- Method: Scenario development with a 10-year time horizon
 - a tool for building visions of possible futures that decisions today can help avoid or make happen
 - aims at stimulating debate and providing insights into ways to shape the future
- Multidisciplinary → new risks are more likely to be identified
- Involves stakeholders closely throughout the process → outputs are appropriate for policy- and decision-makers

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Thank you for your attention!

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