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World Safety Organization

India Chapter

QUARTERLY

NEWSLETTER

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From the desk of C. Kannan, Chairman

Dear Readers,

As you know every year on the 28th of April, the International Labour Organization commemorates the World Day for Safety and Health at Work, serving as a crucial reminder of our collective responsibility to safeguard workers' well-being. This year's theme, **"Exploring the Impacts of Climate Change on Occupational Safety and Health,"** underscores the intersection of environmental shifts and workplace safety.

The Changing weather patterns have notable impacts on the world of work, particularly affecting workers safety and health. Some of the significant occupational risks exacerbated by climate change include heat stress, UV radiation, air pollution, major industrial accidents, extreme weather events, an increase in vector-borne diseases and increased exposure to chemicals. As we commemorate this World Day, Let's unite to create safer workplaces for all.

Finally, as we diligently prepare for the upcoming 5th World Safety Organization Conference and the 3rd Edition of the World Safety Organization State Level OHS&E Awards 2024, I extend my warm invitation to each of you. Your active participation in this significant event will undoubtedly contribute to its success.



OUR STORY



United Nations
Economic and Social
Council (ECOSOC)

WSO in the United Nations

The World Safety Organization (WSO), with its Special Consultative Status Category II (NGOs) recognition by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) since 1987, actively engages in global safety initiatives. Collaborating with international organizations, the WSO advances safety technology and fosters professionalism among safety practitioners all while championing the overarching mission of "Making Safety a Way of Life... Worldwide."

Notably, the WSO has dedicated members within the Economic and Social Council, contributing expertise and resolutions to enhance safety on a global scale. During annual international conferences in the USA, the WSO hosts the Global Safety Roundtable, where experts exchange knowledge and discuss safety resolutions for the UN Economic and Social Council.

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The World Safety Organization (WSO) memberships and Certifications are internationally accredited by the International Certification Accreditation Council (ICAC) in compliance with ISO/IEC 17024.



Challenges for Safety in the Indian Construction Industry



By **Martyn Gomersall**

Chairman, WSO India Awards Committee

My first venture into the construction industry in India was more than 12 years ago when I joined the Metro Phase 1 project in Chennai, since then I have worked four more Indian Metro projects. I am thus, I believe, able to give some opinion on this subject, especially when viewed from an overseas perspective.

Following my experience in India, I am often asked by other safety professionals about my experiences on the different projects and what challenges I thought face the Indian construction industry going forward. In my opinion I believe we can categorize the challenges into five major issues, as follows:

1. Lack of Strict Enforcement: This can lead to hazardous conditions, endangering lives and compromising public safety.

It is hoped that the introduction of the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, introduced in 2020, will, if properly implemented and policed, reduce the number of injuries and fatalities in the country as it seeks to implement the practice for employers to remove or reduce risks in the workplace, to as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP). This concept is not widely used thus far in India but has been successful in the United Kingdom reducing fatalities by 85% over four decades since its introduction. Proper implementation and strict adherence to safety standards are crucial for preventing accidents.

2. Unsafe Work Practices: In the interest of promoting safety and best practices, it's essential to address outdated or unsafe work practices at construction sites. This may include inadequate training for workers, improper use of equipment, and a lack of awareness regarding safety measures.

The individual contractor companies bear the responsibility for this, together with the client organisation. In this context, we need to redouble

efforts to eliminate unsafe practices through any means possible, it is no longer acceptable to allow people to take risks either willfully or thro' ignorance.

3. Limited Training and Awareness: Insufficient training programs for construction workers can lead to a lack of awareness about safety protocols and best practices. Proper education on hazard identification, safe work procedures, and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is essential.

In my experience on projects in the country, there is a lot of talk about training and in many instances training is done but the effectiveness is not measured to evaluate its relevance to preventing safety incidents. And remember, there is no "Fits All Solutions" to safety training, we need to tailor training to the work tasks and to the site conditions.

4. High Turnover and Informal Labour Practices: High turnover rates and the prevalence of informal labour practices can make it challenging to maintain a consistently trained and safety-conscious workforce. A transient workforce may be less invested in adhering to safety protocols.

Added to this is the relatively low average education levels and low sophistication of workers from the rural areas of India. While there is not a lot we can do as individuals to change this, employers should look at their employment practices and seek solutions to ensure worker retention.

5. Inadequate Supervision: This is a "pet hate" of mine, insufficient supervision and oversight of construction activities can lead to a disregard for safety protocols and use of safety equipment. Good management and regular safety audits are necessary to ensure compliance with safety standards.

Remember, supervisors need a broad skill set, including keen observation, effective communication, and problem-solving abilities. Their commitment to safety significantly impacts workplace well-being.

To conclude, maybe many of you will disagree with me, but the fact is that despite efforts, construction workers in India continue to face high risks of injury and death. Together, with our commitment, resources, and belief, we can make a difference, and we in the WSO (India Chapter) would encourage all safety professionals to take that extra step to turn the situation around and make India a beacon to lead the world in safety excellence!



Inside News

Introduction of WSO India Chapter Women Wing



We are thrilled to announce the establishment of the World Safety Organization (WSO) India Women’s Wing, a pioneering initiative aimed at fostering inclusivity, empowerment, and excellence within our organization. Led by the dynamic Ms. Shweta, the Women Wing is poised to make significant strides in advancing safety, health, and environmental best practices.

Our Vision

The WSO India Women’s Wing envisions a world where women play a pivotal role in shaping safety standards, championing health initiatives, and safeguarding our environment. We believe that an inclusive culture—one that values diversity and harnesses the unique strengths of every individual—leads to holistic organizational growth.

Why Join the Women’s Wing?

We believe that diverse perspectives lead to better outcomes. By joining the Women’s Wing, you become part of a supportive community that values your unique contributions. Be a voice for gender equality and advocate for policies that promote safety, health, and environmental well-being. Together, we can drive positive change.



Public Corner

Empowering SHE: Unveiling the DNA of Impactful Women

Women’s safety has consistently been a critical topic of discussion. However, there’s a broader perspective to consider: Women’s impact extends beyond safety alone.



In this dedicated section of our newsletter, we celebrate accomplished women in the SHE (Safety, Health, and Environment) field. The tales that tell the idea that “Difference lies in our DNA”. Through their expertise, resilience, and contributions, these women shape a safer, healthier, and more sustainable world.

The Trailblazing Journey of Smt. Bharati Magadum

Meet Smt. Bharati Magadum, Deputy Director of Factories in the Department of Factories, Boilers, Industrial Safety, and Health for the Government of Karnataka, India. Her journey began as a Mechanical Engineer in 1989, and she swiftly transitioned into the field of Safety, Health, and Environment (SHE) management within industries.

Smt. Magadum holds a significant distinction: she is the first woman to join the department specifically for SHE management in industrial settings. Her presence serves as a powerful motivation for countless other women, encouraging them to pursue fulfilling careers in this critical domain.

Her philosophy centers on continuous education and awareness regarding safe work practices. Smt. Magadum firmly believes that fostering a culture of safety among the workforce leads to a better and more secure work environment. Her tireless efforts have borne fruit through numerous large-scale initiatives, particularly during National Safety Day celebrations. These initiatives unite diverse sectors of the economy under a common safety goal. Let us applaud Smt. Bharati Magadum for her unwavering commitment to elevating industrial safety—a beacon of inspiration for all.

By Shwetha. L

WSO India -Women Wing Lead



Become a sponsor for the WSO India OHSE Awards 2024 and get recognition and exposure for your business.

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Our Services

WSO India offers various services in the field of occupational health, safety and environment.

- ✓ WSO membership is for anyone interested in the field of safety and accident prevention. WSO will check your background and qualifications. There are four types of membership Categories: Professional, Associate, Institutional / Corporate.
- ✓ We provide Management / Supervisors trainings on various OHS&E related topics. We also conduct Health & Safety audits and provide customized trainings based on Client requirements.
- ✓ WSO offers various professional certifications for OHS&E professionals. To apply for any WSO certification, one must be a current affiliate member of the WSO and meet the specific eligibility criteria for each category.
- ✓ The WSO India Annual Awards are given to recognize individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to OHS&E. The awards aim to promote excellence and innovation in OHSE & Sustainability.

Current Topics

Why is Well-being Importance in the Workplace?



Workplace well-being is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it has a direct effect on worker morale, output, and general job satisfaction. Employees are more likely to engage fully in their work and make a meaningful contribution to the organisation when they feel supported in maintaining their physical and mental health

Prioritising well-being also helps lower turnover rates, absenteeism, and medical expenses for organisations. Companies can use a variety of tactics, like delivering employee assistance programmes, encouraging work-life balance, giving access to wellness resources, and creating a welcoming and inclusive culture, to promote both mental and physical wellbeing. Nevertheless, obstacles like the stigma associated with mental health, high levels of stress, a lack of resources, and the need for constant connection in the current digital era might make these attempts more difficult. A comprehensive strategy including leadership dedication, training, and ongoing assessment and modification of workplace policies and procedures is needed to overcome these obstacles.

Prioritizing wellness leads to greater productivity and performance. Healthy employees can focus better, make sound judgments, and collaborate effectively. Conversely, mental health struggles can hinder optimal functioning. Valuing wellness creates a positive work environment. When companies invest in employee well-being, workers feel supported and appreciated. Organizations should adopt a multifaceted approach, including leadership commitment, transparent communication, and adaptable policies, to promote employee wellness.

By Chris Daniel Johnson

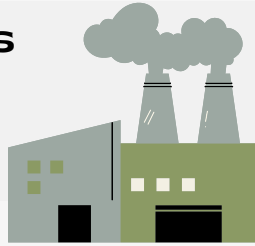
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Safety Challenges in Manufacturing Industry



By S. Shanmugam

Head EHS - Senior Director, Biocon Biologics Ltd

Safety culture plays a pivotal role in determining the success or failure of any business. Organizations with a robust safety culture proactively identify areas for improvement and seek assistance to enhance safety practices. In the context of the Manufacturing industry, addressing the following challenges is essential to ensuring comprehensive safety:

- 1. Mechanical Integrity:** Implementing robust engineering practices that proactively analyze essential checks, interlocks, and timely replacement of worn components can effectively prevent accidents, injuries, and potential fatalities.
- 2. Unavailability of BCP / Risk Management Procedures:** Business continuity involves creating preventive and recovery strategies to mitigate potential hazards within the manufacturing industry. Departing from established risk management protocols can result in accidents, injuries, and even fatalities. Additionally, noncompliance with regulatory risk management standards may carry legal and financial consequences.

3. Personal Protective Equipment: Behavioral breaches stemming from overconfidence, such as failing to utilize the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) during workplace operations, can lead to severe injuries.

4. Effectiveness of Training: Inadequate safety training can result in noncompliance with safety regulations and procedures as well as negatively affect employee morale and overall productivity. Therefore, it is essential that workers undergo comprehensive safety training and evaluation before assuming their roles.

5. Lockout/Tagout: Neglecting to implement Lockout/Tagout (LOTO) procedures can have severe consequences, including injuries and fatalities. Compliance with LOTO procedures is legally mandated. Lockout/Tagout entails disconnecting and isolating energy sources from equipment during maintenance, repair, or cleaning to prevent accidental start-up, ensuring both legal compliance and a safe working environment.

6. Ergonomics: In manufacturing industries, operators often engage in repetitive tasks or work in awkward positions which can lead to musculoskeletal disorders such as back pain and carpal tunnel syndrome. By adhering to ergonomics design principles, organizations can mitigate the risk of injuries, enhance productivity, and alleviate worker fatigue and discomfort.



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A Journey towards Safety.....



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Checks for a Robust Emergency Response Plan



When it comes to safeguarding lives and minimizing damage during emergencies, a well-crafted Emergency Response Plan (ERP) is indispensable. Whether you're responsible for a business, a community, or an organization, assessing your ERP is crucial. Let's explore the key checks to ensure your plan is robust and effective:

1. Assess Strengths and Weaknesses

Begin by evaluating your current ERP. Identify its strengths—what it does well—and its weaknesses—areas that need improvement. Consider the following methods:

- **Review Past Incidents:** Analyze historical emergency events. What worked? What fell short? Learn from experience.
- **Conduct Surveys:** Seek input from employees, stakeholders, and community members. Their perspectives provide valuable insights.
- **Realistic Scenario-Based Exercises:** These are invaluable for evaluating an emergency response plan. These drills allow you to assess the plan's strengths, weaknesses, and team coordination and pinpoint areas needing improvement.

2. Benchmark Against Best Practices

Compare your ERP against industry best practices

- **Coverage of Hazards and Risks:** Does your ERP address all potential threats? From natural disasters to human-made incidents, ensure comprehensive coverage.
- **Clear Goals and Objectives:** Are your goals realistic and achievable? Clarity is essential for effective execution.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** Assign specific roles to individuals and teams. Who activates the plan? Who communicates with external agencies?
- **Detailed Procedures:** Each emergency situation demands specific actions. Does your plan provide step-by-step procedures?
- **Communication, Training, and Testing:** Effective communication channels, regular training, and realistic drills and evaluation are vital. Test your plan's functionality.

3. Conclusion

A robust ERP is more than a document—it's a lifeline. Regularly revisit and update it. Remember, preparedness saves lives.

By Daniel C Johnson

President -Maharashtra Chapter, WSO India

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