

# ACCIDENT PREVENTION METHODS IN BULGARIA

Maria Titopoulou<sup>1,2</sup>, Dimitrinka Stoyanova<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup>LOT-CONSULT EOOD, 16 Troyanski Prohod str., 1612 Sofia, Bulgaria,



<sup>2</sup>Technical University - Varna, Varna, Bulgaria

## INTRODUCTION

The industrial traumatism causes human suffering and huge economic loss to businesses. It is an objective indicator of the negative impact of the work and workplace, upon humans' health.

The accidents at work in 2013 were 2768; out of them 92 were fatal and 12 resulted with disability. Due to these accidents at work 154846 calendar days were lost. According to the National Survey of the working conditions in Bulgaria in 2012 [2], the largest number of accidents occur in the biggest companies (with staff over 500-1000 employees). Possible reasons for that is the number of employees involved in the work processes, the specifics of the production activities and the presence of different and mixed factors in the work environment and the work flow.

A fundamental principle of the modern theory and practice for ensuring safety and health at work is the principle of precaution, i.e. the risks to be minimized or eliminated in advance, before they may cause any damage to the workers.

## METHODS

Data used is retrieved from the Information system of the National Insurance Institute (NII) on the accidents for year 2013.

## RESULTS

In order to achieve effective results in occupational accident prevention we suggest a combined method which includes the following methods:

### Commitment of all parties involved with the problems of occupational safety and health

The basic principles of this method are:

- ✓ effective and strong leadership;
- ✓ employees' participation in OSH provision procedures.

The presence of strong leadership and OSH commitment in all organizational levels ensures compliance with the rules and regulations for safety and health at work and high OSH culture.

The specific OSH experience and knowledge of the workers about the hazards and risks in the workplace assists also the employers to identify the real problems and to develop realistic and effective approaches for accident prevention.

### Communication

A well functioning communication system with feedback options is essential for the prevention of accidents.

The senior management defines the commitments and responsibilities of all staff members, indicating how, what kind, and to whom should be given the safety related information. The employer is mainly responsible for building the corporate culture, whereby all employees share the commitment related to the accidents prevention policy.

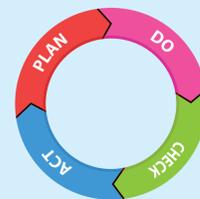
### Encouragement

Through the implementation of this method a personal and/or collective, direct and/or indirect interest is created, aiming at the minimization of occupational accidents. Regarding the working conditions, the employer and the employees have the same interest - nobody to get hurt or die during work. The high motivation and work satisfaction are beneficial for both parties of the labour process. The favorable economic results create employment security and opportunities for improvement of the working environment. Consequently the occupational accidents and diseases are expected to be reduced. Certain benefits are highly attractive to workers (for example low health risk levels), while others refer largely to the enterprise itself (on expected higher performance results, on increased quality parameters for products or services, etc.).

### Continuous improvement of the working environment

The company's management creates conditions for safety and health at work through:

- ✓ Introduction of work technologies and equipment with high level of safety;
- ✓ Implementation of measures to secure the work equipment and technological design;
- ✓ Usage of regulating measures for employees' behavior and strict respect of the work safety procedures.



### Control or elimination the hazards and risks at work

This method relates to the identification of potential hazards and risks, as well as to the development and implementation of measures to ensure coordinated actions of all workers and employees with regards to safety and health at work. It requires preparation and undertaking of preventive and corrective actions, which must be taken in advance in order to eliminate possible events associated with endangering the life, safety and health of the employees.



## CONCLUSION

The effective prevention of the occupational accidents requires efficient policy based on the principle for continuous improvement of safety and health at work, including:

- Permanent and periodic **inspection of the work equipment** in terms of technical safety and compliance with the European standards on safety.
- Provision of **OSH training** emphasizing on the prevention issues to all stakeholders.
- Ensuring close cooperation between the employees and the senior management about jointly finding the most effective solutions for risk prevention.
- **Building a strong sense of prevention culture** among workers, and a further development of the system of prevention activities in the field of safety and health at work, by combining a variety of tools to update legislation, economic initiatives, and cooperation between all actors in the labor process.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Operational information of the occupational accidents for 2013 in Bulgaria, National Insurance Institute, Sofia 2014.
2. Staykova J., Titopoulou M., Chilingirova R., The Industrial Traumatism in Bulgaria 2000-2012, Project BG051PO001-3.3.06-0005, Contract D01-89/19.03.201
3. Report based on the National survey of the working conditions in Bulgaria, Consortium "National Survey of the Working Conditions", Sofia 2012.