Membership of the IALI Executive Committee

The Executive Committee meets formally once or twice a year to discuss the business of the Association, including membership issues, finances, conferences, the website and other administrative matters. Once every 3 years, all IALI members have the opportunity to discuss IALI’s business at its General Assembly, the next one being in June 2005 (more information is given above).

At its last meeting in June 2004, the Executive Committee discussed the issue of membership of the Committee. The current rules are that:

“Nominations and candidature for membership of the Executive Committee are restricted to those nominated representatives of members in good standing, who have duly paid their membership fees ...” (IALI Statutes Article 6g)

The Committee believes that these rules should stay the same, which is consistent with IALI policy that our business should be in the hands of those full members who have paid their fees. However, the Statutes do allow that those facing genuine difficulties in paying fees can become Associate Members; they can receive IALI’s technical services but are unable to vote. You will also recall that there was strong member support for increasing the number of Associate Members (see IALI Forum, September 2003 edition, front page).

However, the Executive Committee also wanted to consult IALI members on whether Associate members should also be entitled to serve on the Committee, which they cannot do at present. Any changes would of course mean a change to our Statutes, which would be discussed at our General Assembly in June 2005.

Please consider the matter and send your views to Malcolm Gifford, IALI Secretariat, no later than 31 December 2004.

I am delighted to welcome you again to this edition of IALI Forum newsletter, the third since our last General Assembly when you elected the current Executive Committee into office. A particular welcome to our new members who have joined the Association since the last edition of our newsletter.

We have much to tell you about since our last edition, all of which has furthered the core purpose of IALI to provide support to all our members in developing the professionalism of labour inspectors across the world. I would also like to thank all our members who have take the time and trouble to contribute to this newsletter.

During the past year, we have held two highly successful conferences. In September 2003 we met in Boroviz, Bulgaria to share experiences about the integration of labour inspection functions, effectiveness and training, and were assisted greatly in this by the International Labour Office and our colleagues in Bulgaria. A full report on those proceedings is now available from the ILO. The second conference was held in Dublin, Ireland, in May 2004 during the Irish Presidency of the European Union, with generous sponsorship from the European Commission and much help from our Irish colleagues. This time the topic was chemicals and carcinogens, a topic chosen by those of our members who have recently joined the EU.

Meanwhile, our plans are well advanced for our first ever conference in Asia, in Macao-China, from 20 – 22 September 2004, where the theme will be construction safety. I hope to see many of you at this important event, to consider what to almost all of our members is a major source of accidents at work.

In last year’s Forum, I mentioned that following your encouragement at the General Assembly in 2002, we had asked 3 of our Vice Presidents to try out new arrangements for Regional Delegates, so as to ensure that IALI remains relevant to the priorities in all parts of the world. András Békés (for Central and Eastern Europe), Michele Patterson (for Australasia and SE Asia) and Sammy Nyambari (for English-speaking African Countries) are taking this forward with the countries in their respective regions. One early development of this is a conference for all our members, in particular those in Africa, in Mauritius in November. Further details are given in the following pages.

Finally, we are now planning for our next triennial Congress and General Assembly, to be held in Geneva from 13-16 June 2005 during the main ILO Conference. I particularly want the themes of our Congress to be those that you, our members, want to hear and to discuss. But that needs you to tell us which topics there are! So please spend just a few minutes considering this and then e-mailing our hard-working secretary Malcolm Gifford (gifford@ilo.org) with your suggestions, and also your views on any aspect of our activities. We look forward to hearing from you.

Adrian Ellis
IALI President

DO VISIT OUR WEBSITE! – www.iali-ailt.org

If you would like more information about any of the articles contained in this edition of the Forum, please contact either the authors of the articles or the Editor. Further information about contact details of all IALI members is given on the IALI website – www.iali-ailt.org.
The countries of Central and Eastern Europe have been much in the public eye in recent months, as ten of them joined the European Union in May 2004; other countries in the region may join at a later date. Such political changes inevitably bring fresh challenges to our members in the region, as social and labour legislation is revised and new ways of working are adopted. At the same time, the IALI Executive Committee appointed András Békés, Director-General of the Hungarian labour Inspectorate, to act as a Regional Delegate for Central and Eastern Europe, to promote interest in the work of IALI amongst member and non-member countries in the region.

The following articles show some of the interesting programmes and initiatives that are already taking place in Central and Eastern Europe...
The ILO recently launched a new initiative to link OSH with an important international trend to improve both OSH standards and the quality of production systems of suppliers of multi-national enterprises. This initiative took off last year at an ILO conference on OSH and supply chain management, jointly organized with major German electricity company, RWE, and the UN Global Compact office in New York. The conference confirmed that OSH was a key consideration for Corporate Social Responsibility and also highlighted that clear strategies on improving OSH can contribute significantly to the UN Global Compact agenda and to worldwide poverty reduction. Although much needs to be done to reach out to smaller firms, globalization offers immense opportunities for the promotion of a worldwide health and safety culture via Corporate Social Responsibility.

A specific programme arising from this initiative is that of the car manufacturer Volkswagen, already a member of the Global Compact. VW has begun an interregional project jointly with the ILO and the German Corporation for Technical Cooperation, GTZ, to ensure that their suppliers have proper OSH systems in place. VW will provide guidance to their suppliers on how to improve health and safety in goods and services supplied as well as on quality control, guidance that will be given by teams of labour inspectors, VW and international experts. Follow-up action will ensure that suppliers adjust their standards to the relatively high standards of VW as well as national legal requirements. The teams’ findings and recommendations will be published in an internet-based information system so that other small and medium sized enterprises outside the VW supply chain, but dealing with the same risks, can also benefit.

The Safe Enterprise programme is a preventative approach that has been developed by the Czech Occupational Safety Office, to improve the management of occupational safety and health (OSH) in enterprises across the country.

The programme is based on the ILO’s “Guidelines on occupational safety and health management systems” (2001) as well as other management system standards and the Czech Republic’s own National Handbook for OSH management systems. However, the programme provides a more comprehensive approach than those contained in the standards, in that it also deals with issues such as fire safety, handling dangerous substances and health care, and it takes into consideration the new EU Strategy on Health and Safety at Work with its emphasis on the need to improve “well-being” at work.

In the Czech Republic, employers are not legally required to have OSH management systems. The Safe Enterprise programme is a systematic approach to help employers comply with their obligations under OSH law. Employers can be awarded Safe Enterprise certificates. The Labour Inspectorate consults with organisations applying for certificates, advising them on how to meet the programme’s requirements. Certificates are awarded twice a year by the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs at a special ceremony. The certificates are valid for three years, during which time the Labour Inspectorate carries out annual random inspections in order to verify whether the stipulated conditions are still being observed. The main benefit of the programme, however, is not the large number of certificates actually issued, but rather the fact that the programme is changing OSH management culture in many organizations, a change that has been achieved through voluntary means rather than new legal obligations. The Czech Occupational Safety Office will continue to refine the programme in the light of experience and new OSH trends, in order to bring more and greater benefits to organizations in future.
The subject of hazardous child labour was highlighted in the 2002 edition of the Forum, and since then several labour inspectors have started to take up the challenges of dealing with this issue more proactively. Several IALI members are now running training courses for their inspectors - one of these is described below...

Albania – training of labour inspectors on child labour issues
- Shkëraj Manaj, Chief of Child Labour Unit, Albania

For the last 3 years, the Child Labour Unit (CLU) in Albania and its partners have been organising training courses for labour inspectors in order to strengthen their roles in the battle against child labour. Training has been provided on a wide range of relevant topics, including the basic information about child labour, methods of identifying, monitoring and combating it, diagnostic and interviewing skills and knowledge of relevant ILO Conventions and national legislation. So far, training has been concentrated in Tirana, but training for inspectors elsewhere in Albania has already begun. The effects of the training are being evaluated by the CLU.

Other partners involved in combating child labour also take part in this training - Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs, of Education and of Public Order, the Institute of Pedagogical Studies and Non-Governmental Organizations. These events provide a great opportunity for consultation on child labour inspection issues. The next step will be to create multi-disciplinary inspection teams.

Make use of the IALI child labour helpdesk!

The subject of child labour continues to be an important issue in many countries, as is the role of labour inspectors in helping to combat it - whether through monitoring or assessing situations in which children are working or taking formal enforcement action. We want to support our members who are engaged in this task, and to that end we launched our child labour helpdesk in 2003 (see IALI Forum, September 2003 edition). The aim of the helpdesk is to assist IALI members by searching for different kinds of mutual support that may be available on the subject, and acting as a point of information exchange, eg on strategies for tackling child labour that have been shown to be successful. Exchange of such experiences is essential for a universal approach in the combating of child labour.

Use of the child labour helpdesk itself is free of charge to IALI members, but if further assistance is required, such as in writing or participating in training courses, the expenses of persons involved will need to be covered.

Whether you, our members, have already gained valuable experience in this area that could assist others, or whether you are looking for some advice and/or support, please make contact with the helpdesk by simply getting in touch with:
Mr Jacques van der Pols, Arbeidsinspectie Postbus 9018 6800 DX Arnhem Jansport 2 The Netherlands Tel: +31.26.355.7111 Fax: +31.26.442.4046 E-mail: jdpols@minzws.nl

The child labour helpdesk and its accompanying request form can be accessed via the IALI website on www.iali-ail.org/english/child.html

What is “safety and health culture”?
Malcolm Gifford, ILO SafeWork

The concept of 'safety culture' became more widely used after 1991, following a report on the Chernobyl accident. Several more recent inquiries into major industrial disasters have also considered the idea, pinpointing weaknesses in safety culture rather than the absence of policies and procedures as the main reason for poor safety performance.

Safety culture has been variously defined over the last 10 years. One definition was “the product of individual and group values, attitudes, perceptions, competences and patterns of behaviour that determine the commitment to, and the style and proficiency of, an organisation’s health and safety management” (UK, 1993). Clearly safety culture includes health too. More recently, the concept has been seen in the context of society as a whole, not just ‘at work’. A positive safety culture has been defined as “a shared set of beliefs, attitudes, values and ways of behaving that support the prevention of injury” (New Zealand, 2003).

Encouraging a strong safety and health culture at work is important since, if it is weak, safety and health policies and management systems will be much less effective. Many enterprises have apparently good policies and management systems, but serious accidents happen because people cut corners on safety and health, and they do that because of overriding business pressures, human nature and weak safety culture. Having a strong safety culture, however, can benefit business competitiveness and worker employability as well as improving safety and health performance. Some of the features of a strong safety culture are:

1. Strong leadership and commitment to high standards of safety and health, from the top of an enterprise. This will be a real priority for top managers - in practice as well on paper.
2. The full participation and involvement of managers, supervisors and workers at all levels. Positive attitudes towards accident and ill-health prevention will be noticeable throughout the enterprise.
3. A willingness to learn from mistakes when accidents do occur, and to apply lessons learned throughout the enterprise (and its other sites if there are any), since everyone has responsibilities.

There are of course significant differences in national cultures, but a fundamental principle that underpins a strong safety culture is a respect for human dignity and well being, and this is entirely compatible with value frameworks in all national cultures.
CROWD SAFETY

- David Eves, Technical Adviser to IALI

All around the world, sporting occasions, festivals, shopping malls, funfairs, theatres and the like are attracting very large numbers of people. The risks need to be well managed if their experience is to be enjoyable and safe. In some countries the Labour Inspectorate is the public authority with responsibility for licensing or otherwise enforcing public safety at events or locations such as these.

The risks of catastrophe can be considerable. In the summer of 2003 a crowding accident in which over 240 people died occurred at Mecca during the Hajj. A similar incident was recently reported to have occurred at Nashik, India, when 45 people were crushed to death. It is thought that at least 2,000 people around the world have been killed in accidents involving crowds during the last decade. European regulatory authorities have been shocked into regulatory action by serious accidents to crowds at football stadia.

In Great Britain, general health and safety law requires undertakings to be conducted so as to protect workers and the public from risks arising from work activities, so far as is reasonably practicable, and regulations specifically require that a "sufficient and suitable assessment" of risks be carried out.

This covers risks to people in crowded situations.

However, risk assessment is not easy when assessing crowd safety. Human behaviour will vary in different situations. In a crowd, individual members of the public do not behave like members of a trained, disciplined workforce who are familiar with their surroundings and the attendant hazards. Controlling risks to crowds is obviously not as simple as fixing a guard to a dangerous part of machinery. Building standards which prescribe evacuation times, numbers of fire exits and maximum travel distances to exits may not take sufficient account of factors affecting safety such as aspects of an individual building's architectural design, its purpose, the nature of the materials used in construction, or visitors' familiarity, or lack of it, with the building. Venues more or less in the open air might seem safer but these can also create particular hazards, for example when thousands of people are trying to leave a venue at the same time. And if a serious incident occurs, it is important to ensure that the emergency services can get through the crowds to the scene.

Predictive computer modelling based on research into pedestrian behaviour can help designers estimate the number of people who can pass safely through a given space in a given time. For example, simulation can predict the time taken for a crowd to move through passage and stairs, locate potential bottlenecks and enable redesign and better operational management.

Sometimes it may seem difficult, short of not holding an event at all, to control the risks adequately and comply with the law, but something can usually be done to improve matters. The British Health and Safety Executive (HSE) commissioned research in 1991 leading to publication of a free leaflet called "Managing Crowds Safely", which sets out some key points to consider. In 1998 HSE published further research into a risk assessment methodology for crowd safety (see www.hse.gov.uk for more details).

An adequate risk assessment, though essential, is only the first step towards safe operation. There could be benefits to safety in requiring designers and operators of buildings or events attracting very large numbers of people to prepare a written safety case demonstrating that all the risks have been properly assessed and appropriate control measures put in place. In any case, operational plans which specify control measures and describe the system for managing the risks, identifying key people, responsibilities, competencies and arrangements for training staff and responding to emergencies will need to be prepared and regularly reviewed by operators, involving worker representatives, safety practitioners and the emergency services.

For several years, the Polish Labour Inspectorate has been targeting discrimination within labour relations, especially where it concerns sexual discrimination. Following initial visits in previous years, inspectors paid more visits in 2003 on the equal treatment of women and men in labour relations. These inspections were based on a questionnaire covering the issue of equal remuneration and equal opportunities for promotion, access to upgrading training, working conditions, full time and part-time employment and overtime. The results showed that twice as many men held senior management posts as did women, and that discrimination was most visible in cases of remuneration. Men holding the same office and having similar obligations as women might receive higher annual wages, with differences of up to at least a month's wage. Differences in remuneration were the biggest in the case of senior management posts. Inspections on this same topic are continuing in 2004. It should be added that labour inspectors not only inspect but they also promote non-discrimination, signalling any irregularities to employers and also informing employees of their rights. During their visits labour inspectors distribute detailed leaflets, prepared by the office of the Chief Labour Inspectorate, on equal treatment in employment.

Austrian Bakeries campaign, 2000 - 2005

Exposure to flour dust in bakeries through better information, consultation and supervision. The campaign began in 2001-02 with consultation, information and publicity for a brochure about the basic requirements for reducing such exposures, which led to some improvements in almost 40% of bakeries. At the same time, the Labour Inspectorate continued to consult and to provide information at regular informal meetings of bakers, trade fairs, conferences and at training colleges. The results of the campaign so far have highlighted the need to pay greater attention to changing patterns of behaviour as well as to improve specific "hardware" measures. It has also been shown that less than a quarter of establishments have worker safety representatives and just over half had access to professional advisors. More information about the basic requirements is available at: www.bmwa.gv.at/BMWa-Themen/Arbeitsrhoet/ Publikationen/Broschuere/ publik080.html

WHO: Networking for occupational health “continued”

Disorders; Preventive technology; Training of occupational health and safety personnel; Internet resources and networks; National and local profiles and indicators; Economic evaluation and Global burden of disease.

please contact Gerry Eijkemans at the World Health Organisation, e-mail eijkemans@who.int

New Zealand: TV series follows labour inspectors

A reality television series being filmed with New Zealand labour inspectors will give viewers a chance to see beyond the headlines. The “Special Investigators” series will follow Occupational Safety and Health Inspectors as they investigate workplace accidents, and it is hoped the series will result in greater understanding of inspectors’ important work, and the cooperative approach they take to helping businesses work more safely. “The series is a fantastic opportunity for us,” says OISH National Operations Manager Mike Cosman. “Reality television truly is a global phenomenon, it attracts huge audiences and has the power to influence people’s perceptions and behaviour. We’re hoping that when the series is broadcast in 2005 it will help bring our workplace health and safety messages to a wide audience, in a way that they can really relate to.”

Around sixty inspectors have been trained so they’re comfortable in front of the camera, and can articulate OISH’s key messages. OISH also has editorial control over the material that goes to air, ensuring that privacy and commercial sensitivities are protected. “It’s a win-win situation,” says Mike Cosman. “The television company gets access to some dramatic footage, and we get to communicate directly to the public through the powerful medium of television.”
**NEWS IN BRIEF...**

**Austria: New guidance on occupational safety and health management systems**

The Austrian Labour Inspectorate and the country’s general health insurance organisation have jointly produced the “Austrian Guide for Occupational Safety and Health Management Systems”. Based on the ILO's guidelines of 2001 on the subject and relevant national legislation, the Guide provides a framework for action, taking account of a variety of existing systems, promoting workers’ rights and also addressing the role of industrial health promotion. It enables voluntary inspection of the effectiveness of OSH management systems but does not provide for certification by third parties

The Guide is to be published in September this year as a joint declaration of intent by both sides

**INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL NETWORKING...**

**International collaboration on consumer protection: Baltic Sea Market Surveillance**

In May 2004, the Department of Health and Consumer Protection in Hamburg, the North German labour inspectorate, Scandinavian, Baltic countries and Poland set up a market surveillance network to exchange information about consumer protection issues (excluding food topics).

The network will establish cooperation at an executive level between the consumer protection authorities in the Baltic Sea area, with the aim of improving health and safety for consumers at national and European levels as well as reducing economic disadvantages for industry and importers.

The first action on cross-border cooperation will be to check domestic electrical equipment. In future market surveillance activities will be planned in cooperation; information flow and approaches will be increased and coordinated. A coordinated and quick flow of information should inhibit products being re-imported that have already been removed from the market because of poor safety or health design standards. The first results are expected in winter 2004.

**International collaboration on training of labour inspectors**

In July 2004, members of the International Network of Training Centres met in Wroclaw, Poland, for a seminar entitled “The preventive role of labour inspectors – a new approach to the profession”. Delegates came from educational and training institutes in Algeria, France, Morocco, Portugal, Tunis, Italy and Poland.

The agenda comprised presentations about the tasks and competences of labour inspectors, in particular those relating to their preventive activities, and about the role of training centres in helping to shape a new approach to the profession. At the discussion, it was emphasised that prevention should be understood as an inherent element of all activities of labour inspectors, as they serve to prevent risks and shape proper relations in employment. Curricula for labour inspectors’ training courses should cover not only the ability to identify problems discovered during inspections, but also communication and influencing skills needed to achieve results. The role of the training centres should consist in refining the forms of labour inspectors’ activities and the skills needed to promote preventive approaches amongst social partners. Participants agreed to present a list of good practices in this area at their next meeting.

**INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL NETWORKING...**

**National networking to improve construction site safety**

As part its contribution to the EU Construction Site Campaign in 2003, the German Land of Hesse took the lead in setting up a nation-wide construction network called Netzwerk Baustelle, to enhance cooperation between all federal countries and accident insurance institutions.

Under the national programme for construction, 6500 building sites nation-wide were inspected in 2003, and much useful information was gained as a result. It was found that although most sites had site safety coordinators and had health and safety plans, many of these plans did not meet national standards.

Nevertheless, where site safety coordinators had been appointed, health and safety plans were usually better as was compliance. However, sites with five employees or fewer showed distinctly worse results than larger construction sites. Based on the results of this project, an action plan for 2004 has been drawn up that includes projects for the direct consultation of employees and contractors, and also training courses for safety coordinators.

The Netzwerk Baustelle is a starting point for many diverse federal and regional activities, and already has greatly improved the exchange of information and cooperation authorities. Furthermore, uniform information and help at a national level is now available, which is also easily accessible to employers and workers via the website set up by the network’s partners - www.netzwerk-baustelle.de

(The final report of the campaign is available in English on this website.)