Contents

President’s Letter from Michele Patterson  3
Secretary - General Report  5
Revitalising ASEAN OSHNET  6
Radio Remote Controls / Pacemaker Danger  8
Psychosocial Risks: What are we talking about?  10
‘Respect Life’: Accident Prevention in Construction  12
Causes of Injuries in Construction: Czech Republic  14
Safety Campaign: Tree-Felling  15
Free OSH Lectures for Employers  17
Steps Toward Fully Integrated Labour Inspection  19
SLIC Evaluation: Labour Inspectorate Policies and Practice  20
Creation of RALI of CIS Countries and Mongolia  22
Report from the IALI Congress and General Assembly, June 2011  23
Education for OSH  24
Gym Equipment Safety in Schools  25
Trinidad and Tobago: Construction Symposium and Trade Show  28
Second International Conference of RALI CIS and Mongolia  30
Stoffenmanager: Online Chemical Risk Management Tool  31
ASEM Workshop  33
Norway Updates  35
IALI Calendar 2012  36
President’s Letter

Michele Patterson
IALI President

Dear IALI Colleagues around the world

In June 2011 IALI held its Congress and General Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland. The General Assembly, held once every 3 years, is IALI’s most significant forum. It brings together IALI members from around the globe to review the work of the previous 3-year period, to contribute to and approve work plans for the next 3 years and most importantly, to decide by general vote on the governance arrangements for IALI for the next triennium.

This year, the General Assembly approved reports from the President, Secretary General and Treasurer and Auditor, discussed and endorsed IALI’s Action Plan for the Future: 2011-2014 and Beyond; and elected a new Executive Committee to lead and guide the organization through the next 3 years. Details of the reports and revised Action Plan can be found on our recently enhanced and updated website (refer to the Secretary General’s Report following in this Forum for further information).

It is my honour and privilege to be elected as President of IALI for a third term and my thanks go to all of you for this opportunity. I am thrilled to now have the chance to work towards consolidating so many of our ground-breaking and exciting achievements over the last few years throughout the world.

My thanks go to the outgoing Executive Committee members for the fantastic contribution they have made, many of them over a long period. In this regard we extend our thanks to Mr Sahli Chaker of Tunisia for the excellent work he has done in bringing together the labour inspection services in the Maghreb countries of Northern Africa over the last 3 years.

In addition, I must mention the long service of Mr Nils-Petter Wedege from Norway who, having retired from the Executive Committee in 2008, has continued to serve IALI as a Technical Advisor over the last 3 years. In recognition of his outstanding service the Executive Committee agreed that Mr Wedege would be awarded the IALI President’s medal on behalf of all of you, in thanks for his dedication to IALI’s causes. We also wish him well for the future and a long, happy and healthy retirement.

Further thanks are due to IALI’s former Secretary-General, Mr Paul Weber and Secretary Madame Nadine Schneider and the Secretariat team in Luxemburg, for their outstanding contribution in running IALI’s Secretariat over the last 6 years. IALI is truly grateful for the great advances in services achieved over this period by the Luxemburg team and in particular, for the greatly enhanced web site facility that has allowed improved communication with members. The contributions by Luxemburg to so many areas of IALI’s work are much appreciated.

I am delighted to be able to welcome the incoming Executive Committee for 2011-2014 who will work with me in building and growing IALI and facing the global challenges in the world of work over the period ahead and I want to take this opportunity to introduce the members to you.

The new Executive has two important features. First, I am happy to report that the Executive reflects an ongoing expansion in representation from a wide range of continents and regions of the world and this demonstrates another step towards meeting our objective of providing truly global representation for our members. Secondly, it is with great pleasure that I can report that the level of gender diversity on the Executive Committee continues to gradually improve with the Executive now including 3 women (out of a 9-member Committee).

IALI Vice President Mr Kevin Myers from the United Kingdom has kindly agreed to take on the role of Secretary General which includes providing and managing IALI’s Secretariat services. Our thanks go to the UK for their willingness to adopt this role following the excellent contribution from Luxemburg and we welcome Ms Claire Lonsdale who will be assisting Mr Myers in carrying out Secretariat functions for IALI.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)
IALI is privileged indeed to have retained the services of Vice President, Mr Michel Gisler from Switzerland in the role of Treasurer. I extend on behalf of all IALI members, our many thanks to Mr Gisler for his long and dedicated service in this role and for his willingness to continue this vital assistance.

I am pleased to welcome back on to the Executive as Vice Presidents, Mr Paul Weber of Luxemburg, Ms Shi Yanping of China, Mr Bernd Bruckner of Germany and Mr Ho Siong Hin of Singapore. Thanks also to Mr Gerd Albracht and Mr Wolfgang von Richthofen who have agreed to continue their services to the Executive as Technical Advisors over the coming period.

It is with great pleasure that I welcome on to the Executive two new Vice Presidents of IALI:

- Ms Sylvie Siffermann, Directrice du Travail who leads the labour inspectorate in region of Alsace, France; and
- Mr Andrey Selivanov, Deputy Director General of the Russian Federal Service on Labour and Employment (ROSTRUD).

In addition to this excellent line-up on the executive, IALI is currently arranging for the appointment of a number of Regional Delegates (some of whom will not be Executive Committee members), who can assist the Executive to promote IALI’s work across all parts of the globe. A report on these developments will shortly be included on our web site.

As usual, this issue of the Forum is full of interesting and informative information about Labour Inspectorate activities everywhere and I thank you all for your contributions and the excellent initiatives demonstrated across the globe during 2011.

I am really looking forward to continuing to work with all IALI members until June 2014 to consolidate our recent achievements and to forge new frontiers as well as welcoming many new members to our organization.

Best wishes and warm regards,

Michele

Michele Patterson PSM
President
IALI
As IALI’s new Secretary-General, it gives me great pleasure to contribute to this year’s edition of the IALI Forum. I would first like to extend my thanks and congratulations to Mr Paul Weber and Mrs Nadine Schneider, whose hard work in providing the previous Secretariat played a large part in generating the successes that I am able to report. You may notice some changes this year’s edition of the IALI Forum, which we have been able to produce in an online, interactive format for the first time. I hope that you like our new look newsletter and that you will provide us with feedback to help us keep improving the services we provide to you, our members.

2011 has certainly been busy for IALI, as the contents of this newsletter show. During the past year, we have welcomed several new members including colleagues from Gabon, Barbados, Algeria and the Republic of Ireland. There has been further progress in promoting regional cooperation, with the establishment of RALI: CIS and Mongolia in Eastern Europe and the development of initiatives for existing partnerships (ASEAN and RALI: South East Europe, Azerbaijan and Belarus).

IALI’s biggest event in 2011 was our Congress and General Assembly, which was held at the International Labour Offices in Geneva on 16 June. Thanks to your support and active participation, the Conference was a great success, generating the new ‘IALI Action Plan for 2011 – 2014 and Beyond’, which aims to build on the goals and achievements of the previous plan. We also welcomed a new Executive Committee, elected to administer the day to day functions of IALI and progress organisational aims and activities on behalf of its members. I was honoured to be elected as Secretary-General and it is my intention to ensure that the high standards of the previous Secretariat are carried forward. You can read more about the 2011 Congress and General Assembly in this newsletter, or on the IALI website.

Some of you may have already noticed that the IALI website has recently been redesigned. This was one of the new Secretariat’s first projects and it is aimed at making the website more accessible and user-friendly. Most of the content is available in at least three languages (English, French and Spanish), with some additional translations into Mandarin, Russian and Arabic supplied by our fellow members. We hope that you are pleased with the new design and welcome your feedback. Our intention is that the website will make it easier for you to keep up to date with IALI member activities and to become involved in our projects.

The articles within this newsletter show that our members remain committed to promoting IALI’s values and principles throughout the world. I hope that we can continue to build on this year’s successes during 2012.
Mr Ho Siong Hin, IALI Vice-President

The ASEAN-OSHNET has existed for more than 10 years to coordinate the work of the respective OSH administrations within ASEAN in driving OSH developments in the region. Its work is overseen by a Coordinating Board, who meet annually to discuss the work and progress of ASEAN-OSHNET. In 2007, the first ASEAN Policy Dialogue was held in Singapore and formulated a Plan of Action which focused on: (a) Guiding ASEAN Member States (AMS) in the implementation and strengthening of national OSH frameworks; and (b) Enhancing OSH standards, systems, strategies and programmes in the region, as well as other partner countries and international organisations in pursuing the same objectives.

It was noted that while ASEAN-OSHNET had accomplished much in organizing training workshops and events to raise awareness of OSH issues and build capabilities, to have greater improvements in safety and health in the ASEAN region, ASEAN-OSHNET had to move beyond information sharing and capacity building. As such, the second ASEAN OSH Policy Dialogue was held in Singapore on 25-27 Jan 2011.

(Continued on page 7)
The policy dialogue was attended by a total of 35 government officials from ASEAN, Korea and Japan to develop plans for taking forward how ASEAN-OSHNET could be better positioned to raise OSH standards in ASEAN and contribute towards the goal of ASEAN integration.

A Plan of Action was subsequently drafted and endorsed by the ASEAN member countries as their recommendation on how ASEAN-OSHNET could progress. The focus of the plan was in three vital areas: (a) raising the profile of OSH in ASEAN, (b) benchmarking OSH performances in ASEAN; and (c) strengthening regional and international cooperation beyond current partner countries and international organisations.

To raise the profile of OSH in ASEAN, ASEAN OSHNET aims to involve all stakeholders beyond the government level in OSH developments to ensure strong integration of good OSH practices at workplaces and workers. A key initiative that ASEAN OSHNET intends to undertake under this Plan of Action to involve stakeholders is to hold an annual regional ASEAN-OSHNET conference as a platform for sharing each country’s achievements and challenges, as well as for unions and employers to share.

As part of the initiatives to benchmark OSH performances in ASEAN, a key highlight is that an ASEAN-OSHNET score card comprising of quantitative and qualitative indicators would be formulated for progress reporting to track safety and health improvements in the region. In addition, an ASEAN Code of Integrity for OSH Inspectors would also be developed, taking reference from the IALI Global Code of Integrity for Labour Inspection.

ASEAN-OSHNET will also renew their commitment to work with existing partners to shape OSH landscape in ASEAN and widen the collaboration network to include other countries in the Asia-Pacific region, such as Australia and New Zealand, as well as international organisations like the International Association for Labour Inspection (IALI) and the International Social Security Association (ISSA).

This Plan of Action was thereafter submitted to the ASEAN-OSHNET Coordinating Board Meeting held in April 2011 and endorsed by the meeting. It was officially adopted as the new Plan of Action with the concurrence of the Senior Labour Officials in May 2011.

With this new direction for greater improvements in safety and health, ASEAN-OSHNET is working hard towards achieving better safety and health standards and safer workplaces for their workers.
The modernization of individual workplaces has brought a change to the way cranes and other lifting equipment are operated. The times when every crane had a crane driver who waited for a gesture from the slinger are long gone.

Button operated devices came into use. These hung on a cable which limited the movement of the crane driver. Other factors made crane operation difficult, e.g. the button operated device could turn 360°, which created a problem with marking individual directions of movement. Marking was therefore modified according to individual operators.

The disadvantages of using radio remote controls

Radio remote controls were subsequently introduced. The problem with cables was solved but other complications emerged. These complications related especially to older cranes which had to be adapted.

Cranes that were originally operated from a cabin had a foot-operated-brake which could stop the crane. This brake, however, did not work in the case of radio control. Everything depended on the crane operator’s ability to judge when to stop the remote control. Such cases led to collisions between cranes on the same track or to collisions between crane operators, which could only be solved by selecting highly competent workers.

Danger for people with a pacemaker

Currently a new problem with radio control crane operation is emerging where cranes are operated in close proximity to people who suffer from heart disease or a related complaint and have a pacemaker in their body.

There have been several cases when an employee with a pacemaker collapsed during the operation of a crane using radio remote control. Until now nobody connected the collapse with the fact that the crane operator had a pacemaker. After medical intervention a worker returned to their work and had doctor’s approval to do so.

When this happened to a worker who collapsed again, their employer began to question their capability to operate a crane with a radio remote control and passed this concern onto a physician. It was found that the pacemaker failed and a conclusion was made that this could have been caused by the radio remote control.

(Continued on page 9)
It is for this reason that a new sign was developed which bans people with a pacemaker from entering an area where a lifting device is operated with a radio remote control. The sign has a warning circle, in which there is a picture of a crossed heart with a mechanical handle; the picture is complemented by text. When I show this sign at training session, those present often think it is a joke connected to Valentine’s Day. It is not a joke, it is reality.

Warning to the wider public

In connection to this, employers ask us where they should display this sign. No rules and regulations or crane operation manuals point out this danger for people with pacemaker. From the position of a safety at work inspector who carries out inspections of lifting equipment, I recommend that this safety sign is displayed at all the places where radio remote control of lifting equipment is used. We also recommend that during preventative health checks the employer notifies the physician that an employee will operate a crane with a radio remote control.

This problem does not only relate to employees, it affects the public as well. It is important to bear in mind that most radio controlled cranes operate in public places where there may be people with pacemakers. The impulse from a radio remote control may cause health problems for those people too.

Conclusion

It is for these reasons that we approached relevant bodies and organizations to be involved in the solution to this problem. This article does not aim to create mass hysteria whereby each crane may cause a person with a pacemaker to collapse; rather it aims to appeal to the responsible institutions to state exact criteria for using radio remote controls of lifting equipment. Heart failure can happen during other activities too, but very few people would connect this collapse to radio remote controls. If there are developments in this field we will endeavour to keep the public informed.
Psychosocial Risks: What are we talking about?

Sylvie Siffermann
IALI Vice-President

Article L.4121-1 of the Labour Code places a requirement upon employers to protect the mental health of their employees.

A changing world of work

The issue of mental health at work has emerged in parallel with recent developments in the world of work. The need to adapt to an increasingly demanding environment in both the private sector and the public sector is having consequences for the organisation of work: Complex office structures, conduct of business and government, job insecurity and status, increased pace of work, individual work organisation and career management and remuneration, changing patterns of management and general decrease in flexibility for both organisations and individuals.

Collectively, these changes impose increasing constraints, which have contributed to the emergence of “psychosocial hazards”.

Multi-factorial risk

Although France currently has no regulatory definition of psychosocial risk (PSR), we usually describe this by the acronym SPP: Stress, domestic violence (bullying, sexual harassment) and external violence (physical or verbal violence suffered by employees from outside the company).

Agreements of 2 July 2008 regarding stress and of 26 March 2010 on harassment and workplace violence recognise the multi-factorial nature of PHI (Personal Health Information), as well as the need to consider the organisation of work in efforts at prevention.

The College of expertise on the monitoring of psychosocial risks at work, chaired by Michel Gollac, reported six groups of factors to consider in the assessment of psychosocial risk:

- Work intensity and working time
- The emotional demands
- Autonomy
- Social relations at work
- Conflicting values
- Job insecurity

All or any of these can have important consequences for both individuals and society.

“An attack on people’s health…”

Psychosocial risks have detrimental effects on both the physical and mental health of workers. By their relationship to cardiovascular disease, musculoskeletal disorders and mental illnesses (depression, anxiety), psychosocial risks are a major issue in terms of public health. In Alsace, pressures on mental health are the second leading cause of illness in working professionals, (behind musculoskeletal disorders) and are a common cause and reason for incapacity in the workplace.

“…That also impacts on the health of the company as a whole”

We can note a relationship between the occurrence of these risks and absenteeism, high staff turnover, non-compliance with working schedules or quality requirements, discipline problems, reduced productivity, accidents at work and other incidents, reduced product quality (increased scrap, wastage and defects, etc), social deterioration and damage to the company image.

(Continued on page 11)
Government involvement in the prevention of psychosocial risks

In 2009, the Ministry of Labour launched a plan for the prevention of psychosocial risks. Companies with more than 1000 employees were asked to hold discussions about stress.

The Regional Health Work Plan (2010–2014) for Alsace (PRST2) attaches great importance to the prevention of psychosocial risks and aims to provide opportunities for companies to anticipate and lead change by involving their workforces. It places emphasis upon the renewal of communications with employers about work and arrangements for career development for the good of employee health and business performance.

Corporate restructuring and the need to take into account mental health issues

Any significant change in the organisation of a company, (for example, changing the working conditions with or without pay), may place pressure on all workers undergoing a period of uncertainty about the future of the company and their colleagues. With a lack of anticipation, the conditions under which restructuring takes place can be harmful not only to the health of employees laid off, but for the health of those who remain, those leading HR restructuring and the entrepreneur himself, who will not emerge unaffected by these procedures.

Social dialogue should address mental health issues by encouraging a culture of support, solidarity and human rights:

- Before the restructuring: Encourage a policy of recognition for experience, prior learning and training throughout the career, promoting professional mobility.
- During the restructuring phase: Ensure the process is fair and transparent, taking into account the different points of view.

After the restructuring phase: Hold discussions with employees on the new organisation of work.

Allow time for listening and dialogue in the workplace

Good social dialogue is important in the context of restructuring, also contributing to the prevention of psychosocial risks in the daily operations of the company. Among the psychosocial risk factors related to work organisation is the absence of places and procedures for debate on the work itself and expectations of what “good work” and “quality of work” means in practice. The term ‘quality’ most often refers to those who design the working procedures and approval process. For those who do the work, the criteria for quality of work may differ from one person to another and should be discussed between employees and managers.

Social dialogue that reflects the necessary discussions on the quality of work helps to prevent psychosocial risks.

Assess and prevent risks

Employers, employees and representatives may usefully take advice from the medical officer of the company regarding the assessment and prevention of psychosocial risks. Depending on the size of the company, the problems identified, the resources available internally, the process of prevention and evaluation, good practice can vary from one company to another. In all cases, management commitment and involvement of employees and/or their representatives are essential. A shared diagnosis should precede the establishment of a plan of action.

The Alsace PRST2 explains that the protection of mental health centres upon four factors:

Area 1: Company provision of employee training.
Area 2: The development of external support systems.
Area 3: The promotion of business support.
Area 4: Opposing all forms of discrimination generating RPS.
Marta Chodorowska
Chief Labour Inspectorate, Poland

Overall, 165 construction workers died in workplace accidents in Poland in 2010, while 216 workers were seriously injured (in 2009 there were 170 fatalities and 261 seriously injured workers, in 2008 the respective figures were 176 and 281).

In 2009 the labour inspectorate in Poland commenced a three-year-long communication and inspection campaign “Work safety in construction. Falls and slips”. Messages reading: “What mark will you leave behind”, which were addressed to workers, focused on the tragic consequences of ignoring hazards in work at height. According to a general poll, the campaign covered 40% of all people employed in the target sector.

In 2010 the National Labour Inspectorate’s mass media campaign focused specifically on employers to remind them that the cost of accidents at work is higher than the cost of investments in work safety. Particular attention was paid to popularizing the use of collective protection solutions such as railing systems, safety nets, and safety scaffolding.

That year the campaign’s slogan: “Respect life! Safe work at heights” was used for the first time. The largest construction companies and sector organisations signed a “Memorandum of Understanding for Work Safety in Construction”. The document, which came into existence under the patronage of the labour inspectorate, is an expression of willingness to cooperate in the sphere of labour protection, where price-related rivalry can lead to harmful and pathological consequences. The signatories of the memorandum have also begun developing and implementing common work safety standards for workers and subcontractors, which are higher than the ones prescribed by the law. The campaign has received widespread support from many other companies and mass media partners.

In 2011 the campaign’s slogan was “OSH training, medical checkups and supervision of workers taken seriously!” The campaign’s messages were addressed to employers, managers and worker supervisors.

(Continued on page 13)
For the three years of campaign implementation the labour inspectorate offered advisory and training services to employers, including a special prevention programme based on the principle of self-inspection by the employer and the subsequent follow-up review by a labour inspector, as well as a wide array of information and educational materials in support of worker training.

In 2011, the mass media campaign reached an overall figure of 72% in the target group of construction employers and entrepreneurs, mainly owing to TV broadcasts. More than 1000 construction sites across Poland displayed banners with the slogan “Respect life! Safe work at heights”. Training events were attended by 4000 employers.
Causes of Injuries in Construction

The Leading Causes of Injuries and Fatalities in the Construction Industry, with a Focus on Regional Specifics within the Czech Republic

The Regional Labour Inspectorate for the Moravian-Silesian region and Olomouc region, based in Ostrava, is a part of the State Labour Inspection Office. The Inspectorate’s scope of activity covers more than 43,000 employees in the construction industry.

Inspection results for the year 2010/2011 and recorded reports of occupational accidents that occurred indicate the leading causes and consequences of injuries and fatalities in construction.

Construction is the most dangerous land-based work sector in the Czech Republic. Based on inspection results the leading safety hazards are given as:

- Fall from construction
- Falls from roofs
- Falls from scaffolding
- Excavation accidents
- Motor vehicle crashes
- Electrocution
- Construction machines
- Manual handling activities, and;
- Being struck by falling objects

Consequences of occupational accidents are much more variable and depend on the construction site conditions, the height of the fall and the injured body part.

In the year 2010, the Inspectorate recorded a total of 9 fatal occupational accidents that occurred on construction sites, which correspond to 37.5% of the total occupational fatalities. There is a slight increment of fatalities in the year 2011.

Attention must be given to serious occupational injuries that lead to hospitalisation exceeding 5 days. In the year 2010 the Inspectorate recorded a total of 33 of these serious injuries in construction, which correspond to 17% of the total occupational fatalities. But there was more than a 30% growth in serious injuries leading to hospitalisation in the year 2011.

The average time for treatment and rehabilitation after occupation accidents in the construction industry is highly concerning. The average number of working days lost to due incapacity for work is 91 days and it is almost two times more than lost days in other industries.

Major reasons for the large number of occupational accidents in construction are undercompliance with measures required by safety regulations and not using personal protective equipments.

The Moravian-Silesian Region has to deal with some serious issues relating to its geographical location. A key example is the increased number of foreign self-employed workers from Slovakia, Ukraine and Poland, who are more likely to work without using appropriate personal protective equipment and sometimes have low educational and professional qualifications.

Successful reduction of fall injury and fatality rates requires continued and concerted efforts of inspectorates and industry leaders, professional associations, employers and employees.
Occupational Safety of Manual Tree-Felling for the Self-employed: Campaign Evaluation

Inspection Findings

67 inspections were performed during the campaign. The primary problem found in 50 per cent of inspections consisted of breaches to safe working procedures. It should be stressed that a failure to follow safe working procedures was a common cause of occupational accidents in 2010. For this reason, labour inspectors paid special attention to adherence to requirements stipulated by legislation on safe working procedures, which are included in the relevant OSH related regulations.

The following shortcomings were found especially in connection with tree-felling technique, and parameters for various types of cuts, (for example, insufficient height of the main felling cut), leaving no hinge, or shallow direction notch.

Concerning the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) by the group of self-employed workers, the main issue that was frequently identified by inspections was non-use of PPE items such as eye and ear protection, or cut-resistant protective clothes.

(Continued on page 16)
Conclusion

The primary objective and one of the main pillars of the campaign was the effort to reduce the incidence of occupational accidents in forests and on similar workplaces through prevention. An integral part of the campaign was also disseminating information on hazards of tree-felling among the self-employed.

The State Labour Inspection Office in Opava recorded over 13 fatal occupational accidents and occupational injuries with hospitalization exceeding 5 days. The majority of these accidents fell within the category of working procedures.

These generally unsatisfactory findings from the campaign, which monitored the level of occupational safety amongst self-employed workers in the forestry sector, call for an increase in OSH-related inspection activity.

Based on these circumstances, one of priorities in the Czech Republic for the year 2012 will focus on checking the state of technical equipment, e.g. chainsaws, means of transport, lifts, etc. The inspections will also focus on equipment and the use of PPE, first-aid kits and other necessary working tools. The scope of inspection at places of work will consist of checking that safe working procedures for logging, gathering, manipulation, storage and transport of felled wood are all adhered to. This will be targeted at companies employing high numbers of workers (over 50 employees) and also the self-employed.

The main objective in 2012 will be to press for compliance with safety regulations in order to reduce the incidence of occupational accidents in forestry and in workplaces of similar type.
Labour Inspection in Slovakia Provides Free OSH Lectures to Help Employers

Besides performing labour inspections in the field of OSH, labour inspection in Slovakia also involves checking the observance of labour-law legislation. During checks of employers, labour inspectors found thousands of infringements in both areas. At the beginning of 2011, the labour inspectorate came up with the idea to organise free lectures for employers, where information would be provided directly by experts from the labour inspectorate. The project met with a huge response, as shown by the year-end figures.

The idea of professional lectures for employers came from the National labour inspectorate, which manages labour inspection in Slovakia. The ambition and goal of the project was to help employers to better understand labour-law and OSH provisions and thus to avoid more effectively contingent violations of provisions due to either their lack of knowledge or negligence.

The lectures were free of charge for all employers’ representatives. They were organised every month by all eight labour inspectorates in their regions. The topics of the lectures were notified in advance and they were promoted directly to employers during labour inspections, via the labour inspectorate website and via the authority’s own portal in the social network Facebook, which was established by the National Labour Inspectorate in 2010.

Figures alone illustrate the success of the lectures and the project as a whole. The Labour Inspectorate started the project in January 2011 and in that year there were about a hundred lectures organised on wide spectrum of topics. The average attendance rate was about 50 employers’ representatives per lecture. The lectures were organised in the seats of labour inspectorates in the regions. During the year, these free lectures were attended by a total of almost 5000 employers’ representatives.

(Continued on page 18)
Free OSH Lectures for employers

(Continued from page 17)

The project has proved to be successful and has met with the interest of employers. The hottest issues were current legislative changes. The employers’ representatives always appreciated that the changes of legislation were explained by experts directly from the labour inspection environment and that this was always done at the time when these changes were implemented. Free lectures are also one of the ways in which to use public resources effectively for the benefit of the whole of society.

This is also the reason why labour inspection in Slovakia has decided to continue in these lectures in 2012. Moreover, in 2011 the free lecture project has been enlarged by further areas. One of them is, for example, the establishment of cooperation with labour offices/employment agencies, where labour inspection has started to provide free lectures for job applicants. Their goal is to improve awareness of unemployed people on labour-law legislation, to enable them to better prevent contingent violation of provisions on the part of employers. Another example is the lectures for children’s homes, which are provided to young people who leave these facilities and who are expected to integrate into employment in common society.
During the past year, the Labour and OSH Inspection Sector within the Republika Srpska Inspectorate took several steps towards fully integrated labour inspection.

The integrated approach came to life in 2011 by introducing integrated check lists (covering labour and OSH matters) and preventive and proactive inspections, while most of inspectors were trained to conduct integrated inspections.

A “step-by-step” approach was used on the path to fully integrated labour inspection, starting with the training of labour inspectors in the integrated approach using the “train-the-trainer” principle.

A methodology for integrated inspection visits was established as a basis for the integrated approach, enabling labour inspectors to work in a uniform way, as well as encouraging consistency in proactive approaches. At the same time, this will provide for better evaluation of the effectiveness of labour inspections.

During the planning of inspection visits, risk assessment is used while developing short and long-term plans. This is based on inspections conducted in previous time periods according to business activities and types of facilities, which results in better organization and effectiveness of work. Implementation of risk assessment in occupational safety and health was presented to a delegation of the Mongolian Generalised Agency for Specialized Inspection during their visit to the Republika Srpska Inspectorate which was organized by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) – World Bank Group.

Out of several important trainings for labour and OSH inspectors of the Republika Srpska Inspectorate, it is important to mention one named “Human Trafficking for Labour Exploitation” organised by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The aim of the training was to improve the knowledge in human trafficking for labour exploitation so that inspectors could work more efficiently on preventing and combating human trafficking.

The labour inspectors in Republika Srpska are continuing to work on improving their performance towards European and global standards for the benefit of better working conditions and safety and health of workers.
Developments Since 2003

Comparing the findings of the first evaluation (reflected in the SLIC evaluation report of 2003) and the observations during the second evaluation, the Evaluation Team under the chair of Katrin Kaarma, Director General of the Labour Inspectorate of Estonia, noted clear developments in some areas.

The situation has changed concerning recruitment and the powers of controllers who were appointed on the basis of trade union proposals. The previous controllers have been upgraded / replaced by inspectors who are public officials and who possess all the powers to inspect and to act on an individual basis. They are totally empowered to act as stipulated in the ILO convention. The criticism regarding this problem expressed during the first evaluation has therefore been addressed and the problem has been resolved.

In order to be more efficient, a new entity called Help Centre has been created. This provides mainly a help line for phone calls and a help desk for e-mails related to frequently asked questions. This structural change and creation of a national Help Centre enables ITM to avoid running 3 separate similar services at the regional centres as was the case before. This direct contact with clients also enables the Inspectorate du Travail et des Mines (ITM) to obtain information about problems in enterprises and allows better targeting and planning their activities.

An important development is also the change of former, relatively independent, regional agencies to decentralised regional offices. This arrangement allows inspectors from regional offices to specialise and take care of several economic sectors countrywide. So the geographical splitting of Luxembourg into 3 regions is maintained for only a few economic sectors (for instance the building sector).

This approach of decentralisation allows more specialization of field inspectors. At the same time field inspectors continue to have a generalist approach, meaning that they deal with occupational health and safety matters as well as labour relations.

Senior labour inspectors who have university degrees are now considered as specialists and are members of divisions dealing with specific areas:

- granting operation permits for classified establishments,
- dealing with special types of accidents,
- dealing with posted workers,
- dealing with OSH coaching for SMEs, etc.

This new functional structure allows easier cooperation with other administrations, for instance with customs officers, labour physicians, inspectors dealing with public administration and accident insurance.

(Continued on page 21)
Good Practice Examples

The Evaluation Team could also illustrate several examples of good practice.

The new service mentioned above; the Help Line could serve as a good example to be followed by other countries. It helps to achieve a greater responsiveness to employer and employee needs and prevent the blockage of the ITM regional services. It enjoys recognised prestige among the population for its proven effectiveness.

There is high visibility of the ITM responsibilities in dealing with occupational accidents. Inspectors in regional offices are on duty 24/7 and ready to go out to investigate serious accidents. These arrangements are considered important by employers.

The Evaluation Team wants to highlight good social partnership examples at an enterprise level. As a rule, employees’ representatives were present during all the site visits. They were aware of their rights and responsibilities and participated regularly in company activities. In some cases they had direct relations with the responsible labour inspector.

With the recent big organizational change the clearer specialization of field inspectors has taken place allowing them to become experts in the sector of their responsibility. It gives the potential for consistency between inspectors’ demands in enterprises of the same sector across the country.

During the site visits, inspections of labour relations were of high quality. Employment contracts as well as collective agreements on company level and sector level were examined. An inspector had checklists with the issues she was planning to discuss. Thorough explanations were given about the regulations.

Katrin Kaarma
Director General
Labour Inspectorate of Estonia

Creation of RALI of CIS Countries and Mongolia

Svetlana Zontova, International Cooperation Division, Federal Service on Labour and Employment Moscow, Russian Federation

An International Conference of Labour Inspection of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and other countries took place in the Crowne Plaza World Trade Center in Moscow on 10 June, 2011. The International Conference was organized by the Federal Service for Labour and Employment. The Conference participants included Michele Patterson, the President of the International Association of Labour Inspection (IALI), Alexander Safonov, Deputy Minister of Healthcare and Social Development of the Russian Federation, representatives of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and State Labour Inspection officials from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan and Ukraine.

At the initiative of the Federal Service for Labour and Employment, the International Conference of Labour Inspection of the CIS and other countries saw the signature of the Moscow Declaration and the creation of the Regional Alliance of Labour Inspection of CIS countries and Mongolia (RALI of CIS and Mongolia). The main objectives of the Regional Alliance are:

- The exchange of experience on ensuring safety and health at work;
- To assist participating countries to find solutions to shared, cross-border problems, and;
- The development of efficient information exchange systems among the Labour Inspections of RALI of CIS and Mongolia.

On behalf of Russia the Declaration was signed by Yury Gertsiy, Head of the Federal Service for Labour and Employment, State Labour Inspector General of the Russian Federation.

Membership in RALI of CIS and Mongolia is voluntary and free. The signatories are to preside in the Alliance for one year periods on a rotation basis.

Information about the second RALI: CIS & Mongolia Conference is available (here).
The 13th IALI Congress and General Assembly was held at the International Labour Office in Geneva on 16 June 2011. IALI members met with members of the Executive Committee to receive a report on the work of the Association over the past 3 years. The proposed Strategy and activities for the next 3 years were also discussed.

Michele Patterson welcomed all of the members and expressed her honour of serving as IALI President for the last 6 years. She highlighted that she is proposing no change to IALI’s six key strategic objectives in the Action Plan for the Future, 2011 – 2014, as these have served well to focus the objectives and activities of IALI’s members. Ms Patterson expressed her heartfelt thanks to those members who have held and participated in conferences, forums and events during 2008 – 2011. She also thanked the ILO and LABADMIN for their partnership and cooperation during this period, as well as colleagues from Safework South Australia.

As Secretary-General, Paul Weber summarised IALI’s activities since the last General Assembly in June 2008. During this time, IALI has organised 23 major conferences, seminars and congresses, often in partnership with other organisations such as ILO and ISSA. Progress has also been made in promoting the IALI Global Code of Integrity for Labour Inspection, which has now been translated into 11 different languages.

Regional cooperation is a key theme and IALI has been acting as a catalyst for the development, promotion and implementation of these initiatives, which has resulted in very significant developments during 2008 – 2011. Regional cooperation initiatives have been established in Northern Africa (Maghreb Countries), South Eastern Europe (RALI: South Eastern Europe, Azerbaijan and The Ukraine), Eastern Europe (RALI: CIS, Mongolia and Belarus) and in Asia (ASEAN). For the next three years, efforts will focus on consolidating the great achievements in these areas as well as increasing activities in Central and South America and other parts of Africa.

Members approved the different reports from the President, Secretary-General, Treasurer and Auditor. These can all be read on the IALI website, together with the Action Plan for 2008 – 2011 and the Action Plan for 2011 to 2014 and Beyond.

Following results of the IALI Executive Committee election, members welcomed the appointment of the newly elected IALI Executive Committee for 2011 – 2014:

- Michele Patterson, Australia – President
- Kevin Myers, U.K. – Secretary-General
- Michel Gisler – Treasurer
- Bernhard Brueckner, Germany – Vice-President
- Ho Siong Hin, Singapore – Vice President
- Shi Yanping, China – Vice President
- Sylvie Siffermann, France – Vice President
- Paul Weber, Luxembourg – Vice President
- Andrey Selivanov, Russian Federation – Vice President

Thanks were expressed to all those who stood for election and Michele Patterson expressed her heartfelt thanks to the outgoing Secretariat Team and Executive Committee for all of their good work. It is hoped that the new Executive Committee and Secretariat will continue to build on these successes and enhance the role of IALI as a professional association.

A full report of the 13th IALI Congress and General Assembly can be accessed on the IALI website.
Mainstreaming Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) into Education

In the process of preparing the study, the consultant reviewed the external and internal environment and consulted with all the involved stakeholders in Cyprus i.e. trade unions, employer’s organisations, teachers trade unions and many others.

The consultant in his study, (conducted in 2005-2006), suggested that safety and health issues should be mainstreamed in the analytical programme of studies of public education establishments, i.e. Pre elementary, Elementary, Gymnasium, Secondary and Technical Education, following the interdisciplinary approach as the most suitable method of integration of OSH in the public education system.

The study also contains training material, for both teachers and students, consisting of 80 thematic examples of mainstreaming OSH into the curricula of the Cyprus Educational System for student ages ranging from 5 to 17 (five thematic examples for each school year, including three years of technical education).

The aforesaid study was adopted and ratified by a decision of the Council of Ministers of Cyprus in 2006. According to the same decision for all Public Schools, an annual good practice competition has been run since 2009, in conjunction with a Poster Competition which had also been organised on an annual basis since 2003.

The awards of both competitions are presented to the winners during the Opening Ceremony of the European Week for Safety and Health at Work in Cyprus by the Minister of Labour and Social Insurance and the Director General of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

The Department of Labour inspection offered training for teachers, information material and any other forms of support required for the successful implementation of the project.

Recently, within the framework of the reform of the Cyprus education system, a new lesson has been introduced. Since September 2011, the lesson has taken place in the analytical programmes of all levels of education, under the title “Health Education”, dealing, among others, with OSH, in parallel with the interdisciplinary approach.

The real benefits are expected in the future when today’s students will become employers and employees. However, by assessing the good practice examples or the posters submitted within the relevant competitions, the contribution of the project in the raising of awareness on OSH is obvious.

The ultimate goal of the project is the development of safety culture and the risk assessment concept within the population in Cyprus.
One of the last year topics of Bachelor thesis that could be chosen by students of the Faculty of Safety Engineering - Department of Safety Management at VSB TU Ostrava, was to focus on gymnastic equipment used at primary and secondary schools and to assess whether or not these products meet the required safety standards in accordance with the relevant national and EU regulations. The motivation for focusing on this issue was the published statistics on incidence rate of child injuries in the Czech Republic, which revealed that the highest number of injuries (2451) was in the Morava-Silesian region (see Chart no. 1).

Accidents Incidence Rate at Schools and Current State of Gymnastic Equipment

About 50 per cent of accidents at schools - primary schools in particular - occurred during physical education classes. For this reason, a sample consisting of 5 schools in Morava-Silesian region was taken.

The purpose of this inquiry was to assess the state of gymnastic aids and equipment that are currently in use, including the level of necessary documentation provided by manufacturers, i.e. not only user guides, maintenance manuals, product labels, but also buyers’ or school employees’ level of knowledge of the relevant equipment - their awareness of checking, repair, or maintenance processes. The information looked for included the presence of labels on the equipment providing details about the producer or distributor.

(Continued on page 26)
Gym Equipment Safety in Schools

(Continued from page 25)

In most cases, there were no such labels. Frequently, it was impossible to find information on the producer or distributor, production year, or other basic information on the product, following the relevant Act and the ČSN EN 913 standard.

Some user guides and maintenance manuals were either missing or were written a language other than Czech. The translations were often incomprehensible. For older equipment models, i.e. those over 3 years, there were no manuals available. Another problem found was poor product quality.

What Were the Findings for Each Gymnastic Equipment with Regards to OSH Breaches?

Mats

None of the 50 mats inspected was provided with a product label. Therefore, it was impossible to identify the producer/distributor, age, or material composition.

Mats must be labelled legibly and indelibly in writing with the following information:

- number of the EU standard EN 12503-1 and type number;
- product name and brand, vendor or importer and production year;
- mat label must be present on the upper surface (if that is not clearly distinguishable).

Plyometric Training Boxes

The following faults were identified when plyometric training boxes were checked: unsuitable material, (i.e. soft wood), which often resulted in splinters, cracks, or chipping out in places of excessive stress to the material when pushed and pulled. Connecting bolts were not fully embedded and stuck out by up to several centimetres from the joined parts; the safety standard allows that the bolt heads and pivot heads may protrude by up to 8 millimetres on inaccessible parts, but only on condition they have no sharp edges and burrs.

Sometimes, nails that jutted out of the material were used during repairs, which put gymnasts at risk when moving these boxes.

Trampolines

Checks of this type of equipment revealed cases where the trampolines were completely corroded and bolts were missing in frames. The metallic trampoline legs had no clamping or anti-slip features; the trampolines had holes on the sides that in most cases were not covered, which posed a risk for gymnasts who could easily fall through and hurt their lower limbs. Springs were also damaged, sometimes even missing.

Gymnastic Rings

Gymnastic rings in gymnasiuums, if used at all, had been repaired by hand sewing, which did not inspire confidence in gymnasts who used them, or there were worn spots on leather straps which considerably lowered their maximum load capacity. For instance, if carbon-based materials were used instead, the maximum load capacity would increase together with this equipment’s durability.

(Continued on page 27)
Suggested Corrective Measures

At schools that were visited, checks were performed on annual basis, which was in accordance with the regulation requirements. The bad state of the inspected equipment is more than obvious from the pictures and written assessment. The common practice was that checks and repairs of such equipment were performed by the same person. Objective assessment of the state of equipment, repairs made, and maintenance jobs performed was therefore not ensured. Without exception, repairs were carried out inexpertly, or in a manner that ensured that a similar repair job would be required next time. Needless to say that everything will have to be paid for. It is unthinkable that 2 months after a repair has been made, the gymnastic equipment poses a risk to children again. It is highly improbable that the equipment could be damaged to such a degree in only 2 months of use. Some schools, in order to save money, use their own employees to make necessary repairs.

The purpose of this article is not to criticize school teachers and directors, but rather to differentiate good products and practices from the bad ones. Quite frequently owing to the lack of funding at schools, the only criterion when buying a product is the price. Unfortunately, schools often cannot choose products of renowned brands, even if it would be much more suitable, because they simply cannot afford it. The situation needs to be seen and understood in a much broader sense, i.e. not only from the point of view of education sector, but other sectors should be considered as well. Low quality but affordable products and materials of dubious origin, which would not even last for the 2-year warranty, are being bought across many sectors.

Following the Products Act, manufacturers have an obligation to issue a statement of compliance that their product meets the requirements of EU regulations. This also applies for distributors who import such equipment.

The products should always be provided with:

- product labels with basic information about the producer and product, as required by Act no. 22/1997 Col.,
- production and operating documentation including the user guide, maintenance manual, and of course warranty certificate and post-warranty information.

According to ČSN EN 913 standard, product labels should contain the following information on:

- manufacturer or distributor, i.e. manufacturer’s or company name,
- year of manufacture,
- registration number, product serial number,
- product type,
- weight, quantity, product dimensions,
- material used for production,
- or if applicable also consumption, e.g. for electrical appliances.

The state of gymnastic equipment has been sufficiently described. Decide for yourselves whether or not these facts had an influence over the accidents incidence rate at schools.
“Constructing Steps to the Next Level of Safety: Beyond Compliance to Excellence” was a follow-up to the initial sensitisation programme “Small Steps to Big Change: Transforming the Workplace, Changing the Culture” successfully held for the construction industry by The Trinidad and Tobago Occupational Safety and Health Authority and Agency (TTOSHA) in the first quarter of 2009. Whereas the 2009 event informed and educated small contracted firms and self-employed workers to key Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) issues, this three-day symposium and trade show, the first of its kind to be held in Trinidad and Tobago, covered all aspects of OSH related matters in the construction sector. It was therefore regarded as a construction symposium rather than a contractors’ symposium; a multi-faceted event where the activities included a series of lectures relevant to the industry by local and international experts, exhibitor booths and live demonstrations of safe work practices.

An intention was expressed by the Government of Trinidad & Tobago in November 2010 to stimulate activity in the construction sector. A number of construction related projects were anticipated, inclusive of road infrastructure improvement programmes, rehabilitation of public buildings and a health sector reform programme. Accordingly, proactive efforts such as this event are important requirements to ensure a balance between economic development and Decent Work. A wide target group was identified, embracing all duty holders of the industry; clients, designers, principal (main) contractors and sub-contractors. The event introduced students to the OSH profession as it included a Career Fair for schools. This was consistent with TTOSHA's development and execution of an education programme for primary and secondary schools. Apart from interfacing with the exhibitors and attending lectures students were also able to witness the safe work demonstrations.

The general populace and potential OSH practitioners were also included in the target group. Public sensitization was desirable given that there is an increased likelihood for members of the public to be exposed to actual physical danger from a construction site, as opposed to a fixed industrial establishment such as a factory, where the public is likely to be removed from the internal processes by barriers such as walls and buffer zones. The occupier has a duty to protect the safety and health of members of the public in accordance with Section 9 of the Trinidad & Tobago OSH Act No. 1 of 2004 (OSH Act) and under Section 7 all employers on a project site, such as a sub-contracted firm, have a legal responsibility to ensure that the safety and health of persons not in their employment is protected.

(Continued on page 29)
The OSH Act mandates broad responsibilities, for example to provide “a safe and healthy workplace” and “systems of work that are safe and without risks to health.” This symposium & trade show helped to assist duty holders in meeting these requirements, by providing the “how to” in achieving practical methods of implementation and compliance while facilitating the promotion of increased skill levels, capability and productivity. Some attendees and exhibitors indicated that this event facilitated networking and interaction with the main duty holders in the industry. Increased communication, cooperation and collaboration are key to risk reduction in the construction industry and synergy may be derived from the establishment of these linkages. The timing of the symposium supported regulations for Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment currently being developed for Trinidad and Tobago. Persons were given the opportunity to appreciate the technical application of this legislation and ACOP. Standards for the construction industry are also being prepared in cooperation with the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards, a body corporate with the primary role of developing, promoting and enforcing standards to improve the quality and performance of goods produced or used in Trinidad and Tobago. These standards include a standard for work being conducted at height. The necessity for safe work at height is critical in this industry especially in light of the high number of fatalities arising from these tasks. The topic was given adequate attention at the 2011 Construction Symposium and Trade Show. TTOSHA’s stakeholders were involved both at the planning and implementation level of this event. The Planning Committee for the 2009 Symposium was reconvened and additional stakeholders invited to join including a representative from Ferrosaal Industrial Projects GMBH, a global provider of industrial services in plant construction and engineering (also the Gold Sponsor for the event). A tripartite constitution for the Planning Committee was maintained; this approach was consistent with International Labour Organizational (ILO) Policy, which promotes cooperation and collaboration to address labour concerns inclusive of the resolution of OSH issues and the development of a prevention culture. The spirit of alliance was evident in the international and local support for this Symposium and Trade Show. Stakeholders from some 70 organisations participated in the event including the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH), Vinci Construction Grand Projects, a global firm specialising in the design and building of major civil engineering structures (also the Silver Sponsor for the event), China Jiangsu International T&T Ltd and the Safety Council of Trinidad and Tobago. With the kind cooperation of the ILO, experts from the ILO Caribbean Office and the ILO Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland participated in the lecture sessions. Stakeholders were sensitized to the role of the ILO in influencing national labour legislation and labour practices; they were able to appreciate that International labour standards constitute a source of authority, guidance and protection for labour inspection and also their role in guiding governments in setting national laws, regulations and their enforcement. The Trade and Investment Section of the British High Commission also facilitated the participation of the Vice President of Hill International, a global leader in managing construction risk and the eighth largest construction management firm in the US.

From a grand opening, featuring a rope rescue operation from Reach Engineering and Diving Services (REDS) Caribbean, to a live demonstration on crane safety and rigging by Ferrosaal Industrial Projects GMBH, BSI Services Trinidad Limited, Damus Ltd & Paramount Transport Ltd, every facet was well executed. The live demonstrations were a unique facet in our OSH experience in Trinidad and Tobago and were never before attempted by TTOSHA; traditionally information was transferred via lectures and literature. A calypso competition featuring OSH related performances from various contestants provided an ideal finale. The commitment to Trinidad and Tobago’s National Decent Work Agenda was also clearly demonstrated by the presence of two Government Ministers attached to the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development at the opening ceremony. A 90 page full colour publication on the event was developed for distribution among all TTOSHA’s stakeholders.
The 2nd International Conference of the Regional Alliance of Labour Inspections of CIS and Mongolia (RALI CIS and Mongolia), jointly hosted by the Federal Service on Labour and Employment (Rostrud) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), was held in Moscow between 7-8 December 2011. The conference was led by Andrey Selivanov, IALI Vice-President and Deputy Director General of the Federal Service on Labour and Employment of the Russian Federation.

Participants in the proceedings of the Conference included: The Director General of the Federal Service on Labour and Employment of the Russian Federation Yury Gertsiy, ILO representative Wiking Husberg (Finland), international OSH-specialist Nils-Petter Wedege (Norway), representatives of State Labour Inspections of the Russian Federation, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, Lithuania and Estonia.

The participants identified the common objective – to provide safe working conditions for employees. In the course of the event the Statute of RALI CIS and Mongolia was adopted and further development of the Alliance was discussed. Good practices in labour inspection and preventive measures for the creation of safe labour conditions at work were also analysed. The most discussed subject was methods of determining the social and economic effectiveness of labour inspectors’ activity. In the framework of the Conference, participants also visited the 15th Annual International Particularized Exhibition “Safety and Health at Work 2011” and the industrial enterprise OTIS, which produces elevators.
A Validated Web Based Instrument Supports Companies in Safe Handling of Hazardous Substances

Erika Ustailieva
TNO Netherlands

Innovative Approach to Chemical Risk Management

The traditional management of chemical exposures in the workplace is to rely on technical experts to evaluate workplace hazards and risks, conduct exposure monitoring, compare with the existing OELs and recommend control measures. The innovative approach to risk management is to empower owners/operators to evaluate their own workplaces for hazards and risks and focus resources on practical control solutions rather than expensive exposure measurements.

The web based IT tool called “Stoffenmanager” allows small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) as well as large companies to:

- Generate recommendations for preventing exposure using available resources and technologies.
- Develop a program plan for addressing workplace hazards.
- Conduct a qualitative and quantitative assessment of a workplace.
- Categorize exposure groups.
- Recommend intervention strategies for reducing exposure.
- Begin a program plan for the workplace.

What is Stoffenmanager?

Stoffenmanager is a control banding and exposure assessment tool and has been recommended in Chapter R.14 of the REACH technical Guidance document. The European committee officially recognizes Stoffenmanager as a REACH instrument. The quantitative inhalation exposure model has been accepted as a method to evaluate dangerous substances at the workplace by the Dutch Labour Inspectorate.

The research and development of Stoffenmanager was done by a consortium of experts from TNO (Netherlands Organization for Applied Scientific Research), Arbo Unie (Occupational Health Service) and BECO (IT Development and Sustainability consulting) from the Netherlands and is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment.

Key features of the tool are:

- Self: own responsibility of the users, do it yourself management.
- Simple: user-friendliness and efficiency are important.
- Smart: broad experience and extensive knowledge is embedded in the tool.
- Safe: reliable and accepted tool.

The tool is available in several languages:

- Dutch and English (www.stoffenmanager.nl)
- German (https://gestis-stoffmanager.dguv.de/)
- Finnish (expected mid 2012).

(Continued on page 32)
Stoffenmanager has now reached version 4.5 and contains:

- Control banding module - helps the user to prioritize health risks of dangerous substances to workers and to determine effective control measures.
- A quantitative inhalation exposure module - contains a quantified and validated exposure model for estimating inhalation exposure to both inhalable dust and vapour. It calculates a time weighted daily average concentration which can be compared with a suitable threshold value.
- A REACH Tier-one quantitative inhalation exposure module - contains an estimation that can be compared with the DNEL of the substance, link with ECHA’s Chesar, and compatibility with EU-GHS.
- Stoffenmanager Nano 1.0.

More Than a Digital Risk Assessment Tool

The development of the Stoffenmanager tool is based on an user participatory approach and building a Stoffenmanager community. The ultimate goal of such an approach is to reach the target users, to transfer knowledge, assure support and allow users to participate in further development of the tool. The use of film (promo-film, PIMEX-film) and multimedia (website, community portal, Twitter and LinkedIn) are means to achieve this goal.

International Growth - Country Versions

The Stoffenmanager has currently more than 13,500 registered users; even more when including sector-specific versions and the German version that was launched last year. This number is growing at an average of 100-150 users each month. Stoffenmanager has become a leading tool nationally and lately its international use is rapidly increasing. At the moment approximately 30% of the Stoffenmanager visitors originate from outside the Netherlands, including several European countries and countries outside Europe like Australia, the USA, Brazil, China, Korea and South-Africa. The various international versions of Stoffenmanager are a striking example of the international interest.

In response to this trend the developers established an “International Scientific Advisory Board” (ISAB Stoffenmanager) in 2011. The advisory board will have a prominent role in the further development of the basic version of Stoffenmanager, i.e. the part of the Stoffenmanager supporting company compliance with European regulations, which is the same in all international versions. The board members are either scientific experts with prominent, international positions in the field of chemical safety, or representatives of an international version of Stoffenmanager.

In October 2011 the first Stoffenmanager International Implementation Workshop was held. Representatives from Austria, Croatia, Finland, Germany, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK discussed implementation issues and new developments. During the morning sessions, presentations were given on the development of the Dutch and international versions, the new version 4.5 of Stoffenmanager and Stoffenmanager Nano. In the afternoon the implementation experiences of The Netherlands (Dutch Labour Inspectorate), Germany (Institute for occupational safety and health of the German Social Accident Insurance), Finland (Finnish Institute of Occupational Health) and Sweden (Dalarna University and Lund University) were presented and discussed. As an outcome it is expected that more country versions will follow in due time.

The Second Stoffenmanager International Implementation Workshop will be held in October 2012. More information will be announced at www.stoffenmanager.nl

The developers’ intention is to continue hosting Stoffenmanager and keep it up-to-date with respect to EU regulations, scientific developments, and new emerging risks like the use of nanomaterials. In addition, the developers aim at positioning Stoffenmanager as one of the major international tools for chemicals management.
ASEM Workshop

Occupational Safety and Health National Strategies (Yogyakarta, 12-13 October 2011)

ASEM Conference Secretariat

Summary Report

The Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia and the Ministry of Manpower of the Republic of Singapore jointly organised the ASEM Workshop on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) National Strategies, which was held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, on 12-13 October 2011.

The Workshop was attended by participants from 20 ASEM Partners: Australia, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Denmark, France, Germany, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Poland, Singapore, Slovakia, Thailand, United Kingdom, Viet Nam, ASEAN Secretariat and the European Commission. The Workshop also involved representatives from the ILO and ASEAN-OSHNET as speakers and International social partners (ITUC and IOE) as observers.

The Workshop consisted of a keynote session on an update of the international and regional OSH strategies and three plenary sessions covering the strategic approach to OSH challenges in Europe, as well as the development and implementation of OSH strategies in Asia.

At the opening session, Mr. Ho Siong Hin, Commissioner for Workplace Safety and Health, Ministry of Manpower Singapore and co-organiser of the workshop, stressed the importance of having a long-term national OSH strategy to achieve sustained improvements in OSH standards. He added that the key objectives of the workshop were to share good practices and experiences on this issue and to identify areas for collaboration among the ASEM Partners, so as to achieve better OSH outcomes in both regions.

Ms Kay Khaing Soe from the ASEAN Secretariat outlined in her address that the workshop was an essential forum to discuss common interests on OSH issues among ASEM Partners. In line with the ASEAN Leaders Joint Statement on the ASEAN Community on the Global Community of Nations, issued at the 18th ASEAN Summit in May 2011, a common platform for a more coordinated, cohesive and coherent approach shall also be implemented in addressing OSH issues. Strong correlation between economic developments and OSH were further highlighted as OSH had become a key business consideration. In this regard, ASEAN shall also continue in expanding its collaboration platforms with other regions to enhance its OSH capabilities.

A speech address by Mrs. Kristin Schreiber, representing the European Commission, underlined the significance of Asia and Europe partnership and the importance of concrete partnership projects such as the ASEM-OSH Workshop. She emphasised the importance of the parallel progress of both social and economic aspects to achieve sustainable growth. She highlighted the need for an effective OSH prevention system.

Representing the ASEM SOM Leader Indonesia, Director for Intra Regional Cooperation of America and Europe, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ms. Dewi Kusumaastuti emphasized the significance of exchanges of best practices in OSH among ASEM Partners on the basis of equity, mutual respect and mutual benefits. She further underlined that the promotion of multifaceted cooperation among ASEM Partners shall strengthen the partnership in order to reinforce its role and potential on the international stage.

The keynote speech delivered by H.E Muhaimin Iskandar, Minister of Manpower and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia, highlighted the current global trends of OSH as it is becoming one of the key areas for development. Continuation of close collaborations among ASEM Partners is essential to allow both regions raise OSH standards. In order to keep up with these developments, Indonesia established its own National Strategy in line with relevant international Conventions and regional action plans.

(Continued on page 34)
To commence the Workshop, Mr. Ton That Khai, representative from the ILO and Mrs. Ofelia Domingo from the ASEAN OSHNET delivered keynote presentations to update participants on the latest developments in National OSH Strategies at the international and regional levels.

The 1st Plenary Session, entitled “Strategic Approaches to OSH Challenges in Europe”, provided opportunity to discuss main challenges of OSH implementation in Europe. This session was chaired by Malaysia and background presentations were given by the European Commission, France, Denmark, Germany, and the United Kingdom. Various OSH strategies were shared by both the EU and its member countries. Key success factors and the benefits of a national strategy were emphasised and potential challenges were also highlighted.

The Workshop exchanged views and experiences on the implementation of national OSH strategies in ASEM Partners countries and put forward the following recommendations:

- To establish and sustain platforms for productive sharing of information in order to anticipate OSH risks and challenges. The approaches taken by various countries within and across regions were diverse due to their unique environments. Cross sharing of experiences have proven effective in addressing the current and future challenges in OSH.
- To maintain and enhance tripartite partners’ close consultations and partnerships with a view to developing coherent and effective approaches for national OSH strategies.
- To strengthen the collaborations between OSH inter-regional and international networks and improve co-operation in the area of research and capacity building among ASEM Partners.
- To promote awareness that a good OSH performance improves the well-being of workers and has a positive impact on productivity, employability and competitiveness. This is good for business.

The Closing remarks by Mrs. Kristen Schreiber from the European Commission and Mr. Muji Handaya the Director General of Labour Inspection and Development, Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia, highlighted the existing challenges and proposed follow-up for ASEM Partners to further develop cooperation in this regard.

Recommendations of the Workshop will be submitted to the next ASEM Labour and Employment Ministers Conference which will be held in Viet Nam in 2012.

The participants expressed their appreciation for the excellent hospitality rendered by the people and authorities of Yogyakarta, and congratulated Indonesia and Singapore on the successful conclusion of this important event.

Yogyakarta, 13 October 2011
Joint initiative to highlight risk assessment

During three weeks in the autumn of 2011, four inspection authorities carried out joint inspections focusing on risk assessment. More than 300 inspectors all over the country considered whether and how enterprises work to assess and reduce risks at work.

The aim was to improve the safety on Norwegian enterprises, for both Norwegian enterprises and the environment.

The findings show that small and medium-sized enterprises in particular did not assess risks and potential dangers well enough.

The national authorities who participated were:

- The Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning (DSB): http://www.dsb.no/no/toppmeny/English/About-DSB/
- The Climate and Pollution Agency: http://www.klif.no/no/english/english/
- Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority: http://www.nrpa.no/eway/default.aspx?pid=240
- The Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority: http://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/artikkel.html?tid=79289

(Continued on page 36)

New white paper to the Norwegian parliament

At the end of 2011, the first government white paper on working conditions, working environment and safety in Norwegian working life was submitted to the Norwegian parliament. The Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority provided many contributions to the report.

The white paper invites the parliament to take part in a discussion of the basic conditions and challenges of working life in Norway. A key objective of the white paper is to further develop the factual and analytical basis of working environment policies and to submit this for debate in the parliament.

Overall good working conditions

The current status reveals good working conditions in Norway for the vast majority of employees. In general the conditions are better than those in other countries, and in recent years very many employees have experienced further improvement. Employee rights have been extended or strengthened under the centre-left government, for example, rota work has now been equated with shift work.

However, the status description identifies challenges which are significant for both the individual and society:

- Some sectors, for instance cleaning and restaurants are characterized by a large number of questionable enterprises and social dumping.
- Parts of working life are characterized by high levels of long-term sickness absence and social exclusion, for example, within the health and care services and the transport sector.


(Continued on page 36)
Inspections on indoor air quality in public buildings

In 2011, The Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority started a new project on indoor air quality. Altogether 244 inspections were carried out in public buildings.

The project had a particular focus on schools in 2011. After inspecting 128 schools in 53 municipalities, it was found that 57% of the municipalities were given orders from the Labour Inspection Authority.

More than 500 inspections in public buildings have been planned for 2012. The results from the project have got major media attention, particularly in the second largest city, Bergen.

IALI Calendar of Events 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 – 17 March</td>
<td>Hoh Chi Minh City, Vietnam</td>
<td>ASEAN-IALI-ILO-ISSA Conference on Labour Inspection</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 May – 15 June</td>
<td>Geneva, Switzerland</td>
<td>ILO Annual Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 - 13 September</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>Singapore WSH Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 - 20 September</td>
<td>Beijing, China</td>
<td>6th China International Forum on Work Safety / China International Occupational Health &amp; Safety Exhibition</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 – 28 September</td>
<td>Santiago, Chile</td>
<td>20th World Congress of Labour and Social Security Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>TBC (Europe)</td>
<td>RALI – South East Europe, Azerbaijan and Ukraine Annual Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 – 16 November</td>
<td>Riga, Latvia</td>
<td>IALI – State Labour Inspectorate (SLI) of Latvia Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 December</td>
<td>Moscow, Russia</td>
<td>RALI – CIS Countries and Mongolia Annual Conference</td>
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IALI Secretariat
Claire Lonsdale
c/o Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
5.S.3 Redgrave Court
Merton Road
Bootle
L20 7HS
United Kingdom