

United States Department of Labor
Occupational Safety and Health Administration

**Minutes of the Meeting
of the
Federal Advisory Council on Occupational Safety and Health (FACOSH)**

March 29, 2004

FACOSH met in the Frances Perkins Building, Room N-3437 A - C, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC, at 1:30 p.m.

Representatives Attending:

John L. Henshaw, Chairperson
Assistant Secretary
Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
Department of Labor

John Hancock
Director, Occupational Safety and Health
Department of Veterans' Affairs

Marvin Hecker
Manager
Department of Justice

Dennis Bushta
Director, Safety, Health, and Environmental Management
Environmental Protection Agency

Curtis Bowling
Director
Department of Defense

James Stevens (*Alternate*)
Director, Safety and Health
Department of Agriculture

Robert Brant
U.S. Postal Service

Frank Carelli
Director, Government Employees' Department
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO

Jeff Friday (*Alternate*)
National Counsel
National Treasury Employees' Union

Art Kaminski, Lt. Col., USAF, BSC (*Alternate*)
Assistant for Occupational Health
Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense

Patrick Curtis
Fraternal Order of Police

Also Present:

Shelby Hallmark
Director, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs
Department of Labor

Tom Galassi
Deputy Director, Directorate of Enforcement Programs, OSHA
Department of Labor

Tom Marple
Director, Office of Federal Agency Programs, OSHA
Department of Labor

Call to Order

At approximately 1:30 p.m., Assistant Secretary John L. Henshaw called the FACOSH meeting to order. He asked the members and alternates to introduce themselves and asked Tom Marple to explain the emergency evacuation procedures. Mr. Henshaw then asked members/alternates to update their contact information on the membership list. He also discussed two of the members who had left the Council.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Henshaw asked for comments or questions on the October 29, 2003, FACOSH meeting minutes that the members and alternates had previously received. He asked for a vote on accepting the minutes since no one had any comments or questions; the minutes were unanimously approved as written.

Updates on Ongoing Activities

SHARE Initiative

Shelby Hallmark, OSHA, introduced the President's Safety, Health, and Return-to-Employment (SHARE) Initiative by providing statistics on the costs of workplace injuries, illnesses, and lost production days. He noted that the Initiative would run for three years (until 2006) and that all federal departments and agencies were required to participate. The Initiative is projected to save approximately a quarter of a billion dollars.

The goals of the Initiative are to:

- Reduce the total case rate by 3% per year;
- Reduce the lost work day case rate by 3% per year;
- Reduce the total lost production days by 1% per year; and
- Increase timely claim filing by 5% per year.

Mr. Hallmark stated that the Department of Labor (DOL) would lead the Initiative, measure progress, and report to the President. He said that the tracking and reporting would be coordinated through OSHA and OWCP.

When discussing the yearly goals, Mr. Hallmark noted that because the Initiative was not announced until the middle of the fiscal year, agencies were unwilling to set "stretch" goals beyond the minimum. However, he hoped that they would be more willing to do so for the 2005 and 2006 fiscal years.

Mr. Hallmark gave a slide show discussing the specifics of SHARE and providing information on how to calculate several of the statistics. He also noted that a great deal of information on the program was available on his office's website (www.dol-esa.gov) and that his office would be providing outreach and training.

Federal Recordkeeping Change

Tom Marple, OSHA, noted that the draft *Federal Register* notice, requiring federal agencies to conform with 29 CFR 1904, was awaiting review by the DOL's Policy Planning Board (PPB). Once approved by DOL, he said the notice would be sent to the

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review. The proposed effective date of the change is January 1, 2005.

Mr. Marple said the original implementation had been planned for January 1, 2004, but that the PPB had raised several questions necessitating a postponement. He noted that the questions had been answered and he hoped the Board would accept the recommendation this time. He said to expect publication in the June *Federal Register*.

59th Annual Federal Safety and Health Council Awards Ceremony and Training Conference

Kyong Propst, OSHA, reported that the annual Federal Safety and Health Training Week would be held from June 21-25, 2004 at the OSHA Training Institute in Arlington Heights, Chicago, Illinois. She said that the five most popular classes, from a survey of field professionals, would be offered (Industrial Hygiene for Safety Personnel; Fire Protection and Life Safety; Indoor Air Quality; Principles of Ergonomics Applied to Work-Related Musculoskeletal and Nerve Disorders; and Emergency Response to Hazardous Substance Release).

Ms. Propst said that she expected more than 200 participants in the classes and was still accepting registrations. She also stated that the classes were free for federal employees but that OSHA would not pay for travel expenses.

On the subject of the 59th Annual Federal Safety and Health Council Award Ceremony, Ms. Propst stated that it would be held at the JW Marriott Hotel in New Orleans, LA from September 14-16, 2004. She said that the Ceremony would be held in conjunction with the National Safety Congress and Expo.

Federal Safety and Health Councils

Michelle Walker, OSHA, reported that for the first time since the Federal Safety and Health Councils (FSHCs) began, Charters were either signed and issued or in the process thereof for all the FSHCs in existence. Specifically, 14 of the 50 had received signed Charters in late December, another 26 Charters were being processed for signature, and the rest would be issued shortly thereafter.

Ms. Walker further noted that she expected the Councils to play a vital role in helping OSHA and OWCP to roll out the SHARE Initiative. According to Ms. Walker, the FSHCs could provide invaluable resources for sharing information and training programs.

Young Worker Safety

Elise Handelman, OSHA, updated the Committee on the status of the young worker safety and health initiative. She noted that there was intense interest in the initiative and its agency members. She said that the major participants in the project (FEDNET; nine federal agencies), were working on several fronts to reduce redundancies and optimize the impact of some of the federal resources.

Ms. Handelman stated that the group was able to accomplish three major tasks during its first year: getting organized; completing 14 projects such as a forklift safety packet, and abstract submission to the NSC's World Safety and Health Conference for 2005; and substantial educational work among the members. Ms. Handelman also discussed two of FEDNET's current projects: a generic checklist of questions to ask prospective employers, and a new initiative on summer job safety.

Ms. Handelman described the plans for a new youth worker webpage and provided several details about its intended content and links. She depicted its basic design as part of a slide presentation and noted that as much information as possible would also be available in Spanish.

New Business

Seatbelt Safety

John Henshaw, OSHA, discussed the executive order (13043; signed by President Clinton) that directed all federal employees in a moving vehicle to wear a seatbelt. He stated that, given the prevalence of auto-related fatalities, he would like to relaunch or reenergize the effort to get people to wear seatbelts.

Mr. Henshaw asked Robert Brant (USPS) about the USPS's efforts to get workers to wear their seatbelts. Mr. Brant mentioned several efforts to improve driver safety, including seatbelts, mirrors, and surveillance cameras.

Alliances

Bob Pitulej, OSHA, spoke about federal agency Alliances with OSHA, how they were the newest compliance assistance program, and how they allowed agencies to work with OSHA on a less intimate basis than Partnerships or VPP agreements. He noted that Alliances focused on training and education, outreach and communication, and promoting national dialogue. He further explained that OSHA and the participating agency would define goals and that Alliances did not include an enforcement component.

Mr. Pitulej explained that Alliances generally ran in two-year increments and could be ended or continued at the end of each two-year period. He also noted that Alliances provided an excellent vehicle for networking with other agencies within the government as well as private industry.

Mr. Pitulej spoke about the Alliances webpage and provided extensive information on its design and content. He also provided information about available training and outreach materials as well as examples of several successful Alliances and their accomplishments. Finally, Mr. Pitulej mentioned that MSHA had implemented a similar program and that there was both national and international interest in the Alliance program.

VPP/Partnerships

Bob Pitulej, OSHA, provided information on the VPP and Partnerships programs. He stated that there are currently 216 open Partnerships, with 21 involving federal agencies. However, only four federal agencies are involved in the Voluntary Protection Program (VPP).

Robert Brant noted that the Postal Service has 12 VPP sites and another 20 or so are in the planning stages. He reported that the USPS's participation in VPP had produced good results with reductions in injuries and illnesses.

Mr. Pitulej assured the Committee that there would be a full update on the VPP program at the next meeting. John Henshaw (OSHA) noted that the VPP program would work for any type of facility; it was not limited to manufacturing facilities. He mentioned several OSHA sites and facilities that were pursuing VPP qualifications. Mr. Pitulej, in reference to the level of involvement with OSHA, mentioned that Alliances were akin to putting

“your toe in the water”; Partnerships were similar to getting in “knee deep”; and VPP involved “total submersion.”

World Safety Congress

Larry Liberatore (NSC) spoke about the World Safety Congress, a world-wide event held every three years for the last fifty years. He noted that the 2005 Congress would be the first one ever held in the U.S (in Orlando, FL).

According to Mr. Liberatore, the last conference, held in Vienna, was very Eurocentric and research-oriented and that the goal of this conference was to bridge the gap between research and workplace best practices and to be more global in outlook. He provided information about the call for papers and abstract submission and noted that there would also be a film and multimedia festival.

Mr. Liberatore said that the deadline for program submissions was December 2004 and that a preliminary program would be out by the end of the year. He encouraged participation and noted that the global outlook of the conference would provide excellent learning and networking opportunities.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:12 p.m. The next meeting will be held Monday, November 8, 2004, at 1:30 p.m.