Improving occupational safety and health in micro and small enterprises in Europe – Construction and Agriculture sectors

A sector agreement in construction for a preventive service – THE BAM BUS

Hans Jørgen Limborg
Research Director, Teamarbejdsliv
Adjunct professor Roskilde University
Characteristics of the construction sector

• Construction process is complicated and conditions changing
• Regulation and agreements are not transparent
• Culture based on professions and process - optimization
• Low level of OSH competence on workplace level
• Low level of learning and sharing of knowledge
• The sector expresses interest in mutual conditions for competition.
Background for the ‘Bam-bus’

Generelt
- Outsourcing of the Occupational Health Service in 2005
- Inspired by Sweden: Bygghälsan & Regional Safety Reps

Social Partners in construction
- Political pressure on OSH in the sector – high accident rate.
- From struggle to co-operation and consensus
- Agreements as a mean to fund development
- Sector’s council develops and disseminates tools and good OSH practice
- Compliance is low in the sector (no request, low priority)
- Interventions programs are successful when implemented
Agreements on Bam-bus

OK (Agreement) - 2007
- Funding of mutual OSH projects
- Outlines for Bam-bus

Follow up
- 2013: Extension until 2017, evaluation
- 2017: extension and enhancement (20%)
Financing of Bam-bus

Agreement fund
- 2008: ca. 8 øre pr. hour pr. employee
- 2012: 10 øre
- 2017: 12 øre

12 øre = app. 0,01 Euro pr employee
Bam-bus’ objectives

- Disseminate prevention strategies and good practice
- Support prevention on company level: organization, competences, roles and methods
- Reaching the Small companies at the construction sites
- Knowledge sharing
Bam-bus’ means

- 10 regionally based consultants
- Skilled in construction – professions and OSH
- Present and demonstrate practical solutions and strategies at the construction sites.
- Hotline
- Stubbornness – keeping up cases
- Representing the social partners - in agreement
Competence demands

- Understanding the sector: Culture, tasks, OSH issues, history, conflicts etc.
- Speaking ‘the language’
- Legitimacy
- Thorough knowledge of OSH, exposures, prevention strategies, regulation etc.
- On-going up dating of knowledge of technology, research, regulation etc.
Bam-bus’ practice

1.500 yearly visits

- Most contacts are outreach (unplanned visits)
- Some are required (mostly follow up)

Other Activities

- Campaigns
- Participation in fairs and events
- Training and education in vocational schools
- Hotline
- Newsletters
Pros

• Collective agreements and funding provides advice free of charge
• High legitimacy
• Bam- bus are allowed to show up uninvited
• Reach out to Small companies
• Can assist SME’s to comply with Labour law and Labour Inspections
and cons

• Limited resources
• No demands for formal training in OSH
• Can only advise beyond the levels of legislation
Bam-bus – general experiences

- Highly accepted and recognized in the sector
- Difficult to overcome the fear that OSH will obstruct income and time planning
- What works:
  - Fast help to unexpected problems
  - Demonstration of technology and equipment on site
  - Broad network of serious suppliers
  - Sharing experiences from other companies
  - Openness towards the balance between rules and practice
  - Ability to cooperate with both employers, safety reps and OSH professionals
  - Access to research and development
Thank you for the attention