

Best practice examples

Agency report:
Preventing harm to cleaning workers



European Agency for Safety and Health at Work
Cleaners Seminar, 2 and 3 December 2009
Brussels, Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and
Social Dialogue

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Overview

- Health and safety related to procurement - best practice
- Training tool
- Actions taken on various levels – best practice
- Conclusions – help for SMEs



Procurement and OSH

- Importance of putting attention to the procurement process
 - According to EFCI: proliferation of companies that charge prices that do not even cover labour costs, thereby pushing law-abiding companies out of the market
 - Cleaners pay not only by putting up with low wages and job insecurity, but also by working under unsafe and unhealthy conditions
 - Cheap bids may expose selecting body and society to higher economic costs overall

Procurement and OSH



■ Example

- Unprofessionally cleaned: THW Kiel's Champion-League-floor-lining ruined
- Floor lining became slippery after cleaning with wrong agent
- 30,000 Euro lost



Procurement and OSH

■ Initiatives at European level

☐ Legislation

Besides framework Directive and its offshoots, also directives on procurement influence situation of workers: 2004/17/EC Utilities Directive and 2004/18/EC Classic Directive

☐ Sectoral Social Dialogue, cleaning industry

A very active body, has issued a procurement guide outlining the advantages of selecting the economically most advantageous tender rather than the lowest price.

☐ EUROCITIES' CARPE procurement guide

Network of the local governments of more than 130 large cities in over 30 European countries

CARPE (cities as responsible purchasers in Europe) procurement guide, aiming at integrating social, environmental, and/or ethical concerns into public purchasing decisions - cleaning explicitly mentioned

Procurement and OSH

■ Initiatives at European level, cont.

- The Social Platform procurement campaign: 'Making the most of public money'
Association of over 30 European non-governmental organisations, unions, federations and networks in the social sector
Campaign in 2004 to urge governments and public authorities to include social, ethical and environmental considerations in public procurement processes - new European legislation providing more opportunities in this field
- European standard EN13549: 2001
Guideline for the procurement of cleaning services applying standardised output criteria which has a direct influence on cleaners' workloads (ISO planned)

Procurement and OSH



■ Initiative by Agency

- ☐ Training support tool
slides and speaker's notes
- ☐ Target group: those in enterprises and public services who procure cleaning services
- ☐ Shows connection between procurement and health and safety situation of cleaners
- ☐ 23 slides and comprehensive references included in the notes


Procurement practice vs. cleaner's health

Procurement

- Many service companies go far below tariff and legal standards \Rightarrow pressure on working conditions
- Lack of control of working conditions by public authorities.


Health and Safety

- Increasing amount of diseases
 - MSDs
 - skin diseases
 - cardiovascular diseases,...
- High rate of accidents
- High % under- or non- reporting of accidents and health problems



In brief: What should be considered when procuring services?

- Procurement officials have responsibilities for the cleaners work situation and health and safety.
Important aspects:
 - Remuneration and wages
 - Monitoring of the work load, work organisation
 - Monitoring of qualifications, career opportunities, training,...
- Make use of procurement guides, follow-up the different steps of the process
- Collaboration between contractors and procurement officials to provide “cleaner friendly” rooms, furniture, floor coating, etc.



In brief: What should be considered when procuring services?

Work organisation: Follow-up of measures

- organisation of team work, job enrichment, women-friendly working times and schedules day-time cleaning,...
and other measures to enrich and vary work tasks, jobs and increase social support from colleagues, supervisors,...
- ergonomic work equipment, appropriate machinery for large area cleaning, adequate cleaning procedures
- training in correct working movements and postures
- ...

Procurement and OSH

■ Initiatives at Member State level

- Procurement of cleaning agents — IKA (Denmark)
Association of Public Purchasers in Denmark produced guidelines
One of the aims: encourage suppliers to develop more environmentally and occupationally safe cleaning agents
- RAL-GZ 902 (Germany) :
Institute for Quality Assurance and Certifications awards quality mark for the cleaning of buildings to contractors who display adequate technical competence, (amongst others: prevent spills) etc.
- DIN 77400: a quality standard for cleaning school buildings (Germany)
Regulates the procurement of cleaning services, advises that certain onerous working methods and hazardous materials should be avoided

Procurement and OSH

■ Initiatives at Member State level

- CleanNet (Finland)
Clean Basic Ltd a multilingual working-time cost-calculating software company developed the programme that enables employers to gain an accurate idea of the staff levels, time required, likely costs and special instructions needed for their cleaning work.
- BICSc Guide to Best Value in Building Cleaning (UK)
British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICSc) has published a Guide to Standards, Specifications and Productivity Rates for Best Value in Building Cleaning, providing standard tables, specifications and information on cleaning costs which ensure compliance with UK safety and health legislation.

Procurement and OSH

■ Initiatives at company and institution level

- Procurement Service Austria provides guidelines and advice to all government and public institutions

The institute has issued a guideline on cleaning services, focus mainly on environment, but OSH issues such as skin protection are included


Experiences from Vienna hospitals and schools are presented

Preventing harm to cleaning workers – European level



- European health and safety research on cleaning
 - BIOMED project
- Actions by the ILO
 - Conventions legally binding international treaties
 - Recommendations
 - ILO International Occupational Safety and Health Information Centre (CIS): Cleaners datasheet Application in Poland

Preventing harm to cleaning workers – Member State level

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- Participatory approaches, collective agreements
 - Campaigns (e.g. anti racism), awards
 - Stress prevention
 - Guidelines (e.g. risk assessment), databases (e.g. gloves), networks, fora
 - Training, qualification
 - OSH management systems
 - Prevention re dangerous substances
 - Photo documentation, exhibition

Preventing harm to cleaning workers – Member State level



- Covenants on working conditions (Netherlands)
 - Drawn up between government and various stakeholders in each industry including the social partners.
 - The covenant for the cleaning and window cleaning sector aimed mainly at combating employment risks:
 - Exposure to solvents, pressure of work, physical strain involved in lifting and actions resulting in upper limb disorders
 - And promoting the reintegration into work of absent cleaners during the first year of sick leave.
 - Orbis Advies en Onderzoek BV evaluated the covenant in the first half of 2007, producing a report on its effects on working conditions and absenteeism and giving recommendations.

Preventing harm to cleaning workers – company level



- ‘Toolbox’ meetings help create a safer workplace — CARE NV (Belgium)
- AMS BAU — Occupational safety and health policy for cleaning workers in AVANT-Gebäudedienste GMBH (Germany)
Establishing an OSH management system
- Introducing a health circle in a cleaning service (Germany)
- Enabling people with disabilities to work as cleaners (Germany)

Preventing harm to cleaning workers – company level




- Customised safety and health training for cleaners (Greece)
- Prevention of chemical spills (Spain)
- Designing hotel rooms with cleaning in mind (France)
- Organisational and training plan — Greco Group (Italy)
- Mapping of risks from repetitive upper limb movements in chambermaids (Italy)
- Daytime cleaning at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (Netherlands)

Preventing harm to cleaning workers – company level




- MAS — Multicultural Amsterdam Cleaning company (Netherlands)
- Dussmann Service (Austria)
- Good practice guidelines in a radiopharmaceuticals department (Poland)
- Daytime cleaning at Sodexo AB (Sweden)
- Cleaning laboratories at the University of Edinburgh (UK)

Conclusions for SMEs

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- Point out to procurement officials guidelines from esteemed institutions such as EUROCITIES and European Social Dialogue - objective decision criteria including social, environmental and ethical aspects
 - Daytime cleaning, common in some countries, has shown a number of benefits for clients and contractors alike (communication).
 - Work in different premises underlines importance of OSH management systems. Report gives an example that also in a small company the system has been beneficial to health and safety and has improved the economic situation.
 - Holistic approach to OSH is required; consultation with the workers is vital

Conclusions for SMEs

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- Communication channels between clients and service providers need to be improved. Procurement officials need feedback. Cleaners need a proper introduction to the job and regular contact with supervisors
 - Training should build on practical experience of the cleaners. Comprehensive manuals on OSH available, e.g. from European Social Dialogue.
 - Make use of various internet fora, networks, platforms, portals, databases, etc., aimed at SMEs
 - Make use of guides, rules, and standards – e.g. allocating reasonable time for specified work
 - Job enrichment, team-based cleaning and more full-time jobs can tackle sector problems
 - Tackle difficulties of multicultural environment e.g. by special language courses

Last slide



■ Thanks for your attention