



## Event summary

# Healthy Workplaces Campaign partner event, 'Benchmarking and exchange of good practices in OSH'

Brussels, 5–6 March, 2015

The importance of managing occupational safety and health (OSH) and in particular psychosocial risks and stress in the workplace was demonstrated in the sharing of good practices. A two-day benchmarking event for Official Campaign Partners of the Healthy Workplaces Campaign was organised by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA).



Attended by representatives from the over one hundred Campaign Partners that are made up of European companies and federations, the benchmarking event was the second of its kind to be organised by EU-OSHA. The idea is to allow Europe's top companies and organisations to share and benchmark their good occupational safety and health (OSH) practices against each other's. It also grew out of a desire to put the themes of the Healthy Workplaces Campaigns into practice.

The event was presided by Christa Sedlatschek, Director of EU-OSHA, who said that, *'This benchmarking event demonstrates the benefits of the exchange of good practice for European workplaces. It also shows*

*just how important Official Campaign Partners are to our Healthy Workplaces Campaigns and the achievement of EU-OSHA's objectives. Their commitment is crucial for bringing about real change at the workplace level.'*

EU-OSHA additionally used the benchmarking event to pay tribute to its Campaign Partners' involvement in the campaign. All attending organisations received a special certificate of participation and one of them - **Siemens** - received the [Healthy Workplaces Good Practice Awards](#) for having made an outstanding and innovative contribution

to managing stress and psychosocial risks at the workplace. Also **Acciona Energia** and **Airbus** were specially commended for their initiatives to manage worked-related stress and psychosocial risks. The award – in the newly created category for ‘Official Campaign Partner’ - was handed over at a special ceremony by Marianne Thyssen, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility.



The Commissioner congratulated all the companies and organisations present and stated, *‘I am impressed by your commitment to eradicating workplace stress. The ceremony here this evening shows us in very practical terms what can be achieved in health and safety at Europe’s workplaces. It is a reminder to us all of the progress that can be made when we all pull together.’*

### **What happened at the benchmarking event?**

The benchmarking event kicked off with an informative opening session followed by two series of parallel workshops that offered participants an opportunity to collaborate and share their experiences. Workshop held were on the topics of: Learning from and reporting incidents and accidents; Leadership training and OSH competence; Fostering an OSH culture in organisations; and, Indicators of OSH performance. The wrap up plenaries that followed the sets of workshops were a chance to draw overall conclusions about the information presented and to place it into the overall perspective.

#### **Day 1**

Day one got underway with an opening session that was moderated by Andrew Smith, where the importance of the campaign and valued participation of partners was stressed by Director Sedlatschek. More information about the ‘Campaign Partners’ category of this year’s Healthy Workplaces Good Practice Awards was given. Peter Kelly, Chair of the jury for the Healthy Workplaces Good Practice Awards and psychologist at the UK’s Health and Safety Executive, talked about how he found this year’s entries to be original, innovative, participative, sustainable, and often showing a strong commitment from senior management. He also took the opportunity to underscore that although psychosocial risks are a growing problem, they are preventable and taking action doesn’t have to cost a lot of money. In Kelly’s view, ‘we must get it right.’



The first interactive workshop was on the topic of ‘learning from incidents and accidents, including the training of workers to report hazards’. Moderated by Lars Hoffman from Siemens, this workshop started off with a short video that the company uses in their OSH training sessions. It dramatically showed what could potentially go wrong when workers fail to report hazards in the workplace. Presentations were also given by representatives from Delphi, Ideal Standard, and Sonae Sierra.



Meanwhile, in the parallel workshop, the topic of 'leadership training & OSH competence' was tackled with panel representatives from the International Safety and Health Construction Coordinators Organization (ISHCCO) and the International Institute of Risk & Safety Management (IIRSM). Elements that underline the campaign theme of managing psychosocial risks in the workplace were dealt with by considering how they can be included in leadership training and competence.

The day's efforts were summed up in a short presentation of the main findings of the workshops and a useful discussion about these was led by Dietmar Elsler from EU-OSHA's Prevention and

Research Unit. It was concluded that although companies strive to reach a 0 % accident rate, this objective is often unattainable due to factors such as insufficient reporting of incidents, lack of leadership and responsibility, and lack of safety culture that encourages communicating lessons learnt. The two workshops saw similar outcomes, as key findings underscored the need to have supportive leadership that involves everyone in promoting a no-blame culture and putting into place strong processes for incident investigation. Training of managers to be leaders and leaders to be managers was also emphasised, along with a need for them to maintain an emotional awareness about employees and be able identify the difference between pressure and stress. The need for SME's in particular to utilise leadership training was discussed.

## Day 2

What did participants discuss in the workshops on the second day? Well, the first was on the topic of 'Safety and health culture of an organisation'. The question that really motivated discussion at this workshop was, 'how to best develop a positive Health and Safety Culture?' It featured presentations from Lego, Heineken, BST Solutions and Ideal Standard.

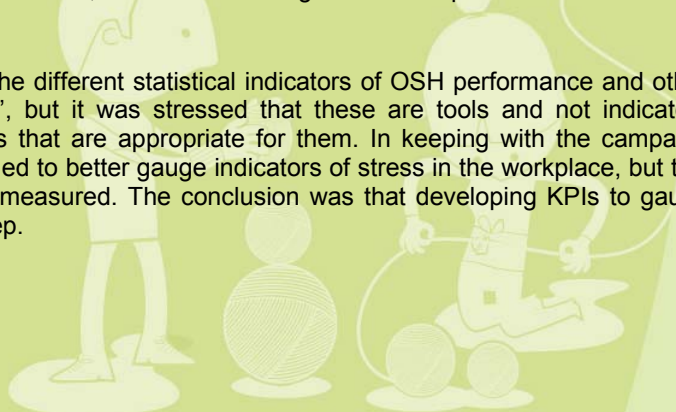


The parallel workshop was on the topic of 'Indicators of OSH performance'. The panel was composed of five different presenters from Toyota, The European Technology Platform on Industrial Safety (ETPIS), Baxter International, the Institut National de l'Environnement Industriel et des Risques (INERIS), and the European Process Safety Center.

What were the main outcomes of the workshops on the second day? To answer this, a conclusion plenary was moderated by Brenda O'Brien who manages EU-OSHA's Brussels Liaison Office. Regarding the first workshop, everyone agreed that when it comes to developing an OSH culture in a company, the results you get equal the effort you put in. This can be aided by setting a

baseline and establishing a core set of OSH values. Communicating these values is sure to motivate employees to participate in the OSH culture and to do things like report incidents and learn from them. Before long, results will start to be achieved, but consistency, positive reinforcement, and role-modelling will also help to embed behaviours in an organisation.

Main findings from the other workshop focused on the different statistical indicators of OSH performance and other guiding tools such as the 'plan-do-check-act cycle', but it was stressed that these are tools and not indicators themselves, so companies should use sets of tools that are appropriate for them. In keeping with the campaign theme, it was admitted that more work was still needed to better gauge indicators of stress in the workplace, but this constructively led to a discussion of how it can be measured. The conclusion was that developing KPIs to gauge psychosocial risks in the workplace is a good first step.



## Another successful benchmarking event

Another successful benchmarking event came to a close and EU-OSHA Director Christa Sedlatschek took the opportunity to wrap things up by underlining the value to European industry of holding such benchmarking events while also recognising the strong commitment from the Official Campaign Partners to managing psychosocial risks and stress in the workplace.

Upcoming campaign milestones, including:

- The Healthy Workplaces Good Practice Awards Ceremony in Riga on 27 April 2015 where leading examples of companies or organisations from all over Europe actively managing stress and psychosocial risks at work will be awarded;
- The annual European Week for Safety and Health at Work with hundreds of events that will take place across Europe from 19-23 October 2015;
- Conclusion of the current campaign at the Healthy Workplaces Summit in Bilbao on the 3-4 November 2015; and
- The next 2-year campaign, scheduled to run from 2016-2017, which will be on theme of “Healthy Workplaces for all ages”.

Official Campaign Partners, inspired by the format, are also organising benchmarking events at their own premises, to which they welcome the other partners for the exchange of good practices. 2014 year saw ETPIS Berlin, Heineken Amsterdam, LEGO Denmark and Toyota Sweden host benchmarking events, while SEAT and Siemens have plans underway to organise their own in 2015.



Interested? Find out more by visiting the campaign website at <https://www.healthy-workplaces.eu/en/campaign-partners/official-campaign-partners>

