

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(78) 522 final

Brussels, 20 October 1978

SECOND PROGRESS REPORT
OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON
SAFETY, HYGIENE AND HEALTH PROTECTION AT WORK
(period: 1977)

COM(78) 522 final

C O N T E N T S

	<u>page</u>
0. INTRODUCTION	2
1. MEMBERSHIP	3
2. STRUCTURE AND OPERATION	4
3. MEETINGS	5
4. ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE	7
4. 0 General matters	7
4. 1 Action Programme	7
4. 2 Provision of information to the Committee	8
4. 3 Internal problems	8
4. 4 Vinyl choride monomer	9
4. 5 Classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances	10
4. 6 Asbestos	10
4. 7 Provision of safety signs at places of work.	11
4. 8 Supervision of certain industrial activities in respect of accident risks	11
4. 9 Participating bodies	12
4. 10 Agricultural Safety Week	13
4. 11 European Seminar on Alcoholism	13
4. 12 European Workshop on occupational health services	13
4. 13 Studies	14
5. ACTIVITIES OF THE WORKING PARTIES	14
6. ACTIVITIES OF THE 'RESTRICTED GROUP'	15
7. SECRETARIAT	16
8. CONCLUSIONS	16
<u>Annexes:</u> 1. List of the members of the Committee and the working parties	17
2. Action programme of the European Communities in the field of safety and health protection at work	23
3. Resolution	36

O. INTRODUCTION

Article 3 of the Council Decision of 27 June 1974 on the setting up of an Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection at Work provides that 'the Committee shall produce an annual report on its activities' and 'the Commission shall forward that report to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Consultative Committee of the European Coal and Steel Community'.

The second progress report was compiled by the Secretariat and approved by the Committee on 20 April 1978.

1. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE AND THE WORKING PARTIES

During 1977 several members were replaced; the following table shows their distribution:

	BE	DA	DE	FR	IR	IT	LU	NL	UK
Full members of the Committee	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Alternate members of the Committee	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	1
Members of Working Party I	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1
Members of Working Party II	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Members of Working Party III	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total per country	0	1	4	2	2	0	0	3	4
Overall total	16								

The membership of the Committee and of its three working parties has thus remained relatively stable.

A list of members of the Committee and its three working parties as at 31 December 1977 is given in Annex 1.

2. STRUCTURE AND OPERATION

2.0 In October 1977 a 'restricted group' was provisionally set up (see Items 4.3 and 6). The three working parties already in existence since 1975, were maintained.

2.1 After the departure of the Chairman of Working Party II (research) at the end of 1976, and bearing in mind the possible review of its structure, the Committee made the following temporary appointments in Working Party II in April 1977:

Chairman: Mr den Boer

Vice-chairmen: Mr Guillon and Mr Neild

2.2 To ensure good liaison and cooperation with the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, the Committee decided to allow an observer from this Foundation to attend its meetings.

2.3 The Committee confirmed that it wished to adopt essentially 'political' attitudes (drafting opinions, requests or guidelines), while leaving the technical and/or legal work more to the Secretariat (see Item 7) and the departments of the Commission.

2.4 Attendance at the meetings of the Committee remained very high; working party meetings were less well attended.

3. MEETINGS

3.0 In 1977 ten meetings were held as follows:

Committee	2 meetings:	19 and 20 April 1977 25, 26 and 27 October 1977
Working Party I (Consultation on problems and requirements of accident and disease prevention)	4 meetings:	4 February 1977 21 March 1977 6 and 7 July 1977 7 and 8 November 1977
Working Party II (Coordination and promotion of research into accident and disease prevention)	-	-
Working Party III (Participation of both sides of industry in accident and disease prevention)	2 meetings:	26 and 27 April 1977 6 and 7 September 1977
Chairmen and vice- chairmen of the working parties or the 'restricted group'	2 meetings:	24 and 25 May 1977 21 December 1977

Total

10 meetings

in 1977

3.1 Figures on the number of meetings and the number of days devoted to meetings over three years.

<u>Number of meetings</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1975 (6 months)</u>
- Committee	2	2	1
- Working Party I	4	2	1
- Working Party II	0	1	1
- Working Party III	2	0	1
- 'Restricted Group' or chairmen and vice-chairmen of the working parties	2	1	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	10	6	4

<u>Number of days devoted to meetings</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1975 (6 months)</u>
- Committee	5	5	2
- Working Party I	6	2	1
- Working Party II	0	1	1
- Working Party III	4	0	1
- 'Restricted Group' or chairmen and vice-chairmen of the working parties	3	1	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	18	9	5

The frequency of meetings has increased but is still lower than required.

4. ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

4.0 General matters

In 1977 the Committee, at the Commission's request or on its own initiative, dealt with a dozen or so subjects, which is a very considerable increase over the previous year. These subjects may be grouped as follows:

- problems of structure and operation;
- examination of directives and other Community instruments;
- attendance at large-scale Community meetings or events; these are dealt with in detail below.

4.1 Action Programme of the European Communities on Health and Safety at Work

4.1.0 The Committee was regularly informed of the progress of this programme at Commission level.

4.1.1 Recalling that the general aims and guidelines of the programme had been discussed and approved in October 1976, the Committee expressed regret at the delay in actually implementing the programme and stressed the need for its adoption by the Commission and the Council as quickly as possible. A delegation of Committee members representing workers approached the Commission directly on this point.

4.1.2 With regard to the implementation of this programme, the Committee proposed that it should:

- establish priorities for given periods;
- possibly review its structure in the light of the programme, as soon as the latter was approved by the Council.

4.1.3 The Action Programme was approved by the Commission on 9 December 1977 and forwarded to the Council on 15 December 1977; it is given in Annex 2.

4.2 Provision of information to the Committee

Following preparatory work carried out at a meeting of the Commission departments and the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the working parties (see Item 6), the Committee was given the assurance that the Commission would institute a procedure to ensure that the Committee received regular and timely information on all the Commission's activities concerning health and safety at work.

This information procedure applies particularly to certain activities covered by the following:

- the general programme for the elimination of technical barriers to trade;
- the environment programme;
- the joint committees;
- the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.

4.3 Internal problems

4.3.0 The Committee dealt with several internal problems, namely:

- the extension of its Secretariat (see Item 7);
- its own operation (see Items 2.4.2 and 6.1).

4.3.1 In October 1977 the Committee provisionally set up a 'restricted group'.

The chairmen and vice-chairmen of the three existing working parties make up the provisional membership of restricted group; its Chairman is Dr Recht, and Mr Bauer and Mr Goeminne are in charge of the Secretariat.

For a trial period, the restricted group must be considered as a body responsible for liaison (in particular with the four relevant Commission departments), preparation of the Committee's work and distribution of documents (receiving all information and documentation and forwarding to the Committee any material falling within its competence). The restricted group is essentially an administrative body with no political powers; it does not draft opinions nor take decisions binding on the Committee.

The restricted group will meet fairly frequently and will forward to the Committee a list of all the documents and subjects which have been referred to it, with explanatory comments where necessary.

4.4 Proposal for a Council Directive on vinyl chloride monomer

4.4.0 In April 1977 the Committee delivered an opinion on this proposal for a Directive (OJ No C 291, 10 December 1976).

In particular it stressed the need for the following:

- to make linguistic and legal improvements to the draft;
- to keep the processing of VCM out of this directive;

- to aim at zero exposure;
- to obtain the opinion of the competent authorities when new plants are constructed;
- to stipulate that the measuring points should be chosen only after consultation;
- to provide for an exposure limit to determine the level at which technical and individual measures must be taken;
- to inform the workers fully;
- to consult the Committee in time concerning any review of the directive.

There was disagreement with regard to:

- the number of ppm/TLV to be adopted;
- the length of the reference period for calculating average exposure.

4.4.1 After the Commission issued amendments to this proposal for a Directive (OJ No C 219, 14 September 1977) - especially in order to take account of the requests made by the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee - with regard mainly to the number of ppm/TLV and the reference period of one year, the amendments were referred to the Committee, which once again delivered a divided opinion on these points.

4.5 Proposal for a Council Directive on the sixth modification of the Council Directive of 27 June 1967 on the approximation of the laws of Member States relating to the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances (OJ No 260, 5 November 1976)

The Committee was informed at two meetings of the progress of the discussions in the Council on this proposed Directive; the Committee provided the Commission departments concerned with several items of information to assist them in their discussions with the Council.

4.6 Asbestos

4.6.0 The Committee received a detailed summary of:

- the Commission's work on asbestos;
- the present state of knowledge of the problems created by asbestos in the field of occupational health and the effects of asbestos on workers' health;
- national regulations on asbestos.

4.6.1 A draft Resolution of the Council of the European Communities concerning guidelines for an action programme to reduce the risks to human health from asbestos was forwarded to the Committee. This document was the work of several Commission departments.

The Committee welcomed this draft Resolution as a framework for action and drew up a number of requests concerning the main emphases and priorities envisaged by the Commission.

4.6.2 Following the activities referred to in Item 4.6.0 and 4.6.1, the Committee instructed Working Party I

- to give further consideration to the above draft Resolution, especially to those sections dealing with safety and health at work;
- to examine, in due course, the draft Directive which was being prepared with a view to restricting the use of asbestos and to preventing any harmful effects on the health of workers.

4.6.3. In addition to the activities already mentioned, Working Group I made considerable progress in drawing up a draft opinion stating the overall views of the Committee with regard to asbestos. This opinion can be used for reference whenever the Commission draws up, under the Resolution mentioned in Item 4.6.1, any specific legal text dealing with health protection at work.

4.7 Directive on safety signs at places of work (OJ No L 299 7 September 1977)

Since it was aware that the committee responsible for adapting this Directive to technical progress (Articles 4, 5 and 6) was being set up, the Committee asked to be consulted before any such adaptation was made.

4.8 Draft Directive on the supervision of certain industrial activities in respect of accident risks

The Committee was informed of this draft, on which preparatory work was being done at inter-departmental level.

The Committee instructed its Working Party I to examine this draft when it had reached a sufficiently advanced stage.

4.9. Participation of both sides of industry in occupational accident and disease prevention

4.9.0 The Committee took note of the comparative study on the organizations concerned with safety and health protection at work involving participation by both sides of industry, which had been drawn up by Working Party III.

Since this study will serve as basic documentation for any future measures in this field, the Committee instructed Working Party III to consider whether there was any need for it to be updated in the short or long term.

4.9.1 The Committee examined the proposals drawn up by Working Party III to lay down the content of a Community instrument for the setting up and running of accident and disease prevention bodies involving the participation of both sides of industry at national interprofessional level in sectors of industry and in undertakings.

After unanimously agreeing on a number of points, the Committee was faced with differences of opinion between the workers' and employers' representatives, particularly with regard to

- the size of undertakings in which a safety committee or safety delegates should be compulsory;
- the range of responsibilities to be given to such committees and/or delegates.

In view of this situation, the Committee instructed Working Party III to continue its work, taking into account the differences of opinion expressed during the first discussion of the working document.

4.10 European Agricultural Safety Week

Since it was given rather late notice of this Safety Week organized by all the Member States in cooperation with the Commission and held from 2 to 8 May 1977, the Committee expressed the hope that it would be informed as soon as possible if another event of this kind were organized in future.

4.11 European Seminar on Alcoholism

The Commission informed the Committee of the European Seminar on Alcoholism, which took place in Luxembourg on 15 - 17 November 1977. The Committee expressed the opinion that:

- alcoholism should be regarded as a general social and medical problem and not as an industrial problem;
- the links between alcoholism and work (worker, working environment or industrial medicine) should not be taken as the major topic for this kind of seminar, the aim of which should be general.

The title of the Seminar was amended as follows:

' on the medico-social risks of excessive alcohol consumption'

4.12 Workshop on occupational health services

Some members of the restricted group and the doctors in the Committee were invited to attend this Workshop, which took place on 24 - 25 November 1977 and was organized with the help of the Commission by the Industrial Medicine Section of the Standing Committee of Doctors of the EEC.

The Committee was interested in this Workshop because it concerned one of the questions dealt with in the Action Programme, i.e. revision of the Commission Recommendation on industrial medical services.

Furthermore, the Workshop was the starting point for a dialogue between the Commission, the Advisory Committee and the Standing Committee of Doctors of the EEC.

4.13 Studies

The Committee was informed of the studies which the Commission was currently carrying out and the subjects of which were covered by the draft Action Programme. In 1977, these studies dealt chiefly with the following:

- safety training for management and executives;
- machine noise in the textile industry;
- the use of television and radio in the prevention of occupational hazards;
- the legal basis and practical operation of industrial safety services.

5. ACTIVITIES OF THE WORKING PARTIES

The working parties drew up documents for the Committee on a number of subjects and stated a number of opinions; the activities were distributed as follows:

5.0 Working Party I was responsible for

- closely following the progress of the Action Programme, the problems concerning the Secretariat and the information procedure drawn up by the restricted group;
- drawing up the opinion on vinyl chloride monomer and organizing, with the help of experts especially invited by the Commission, an internal information session on the problems involved in measuring this substance;
- studying the national regulations on asbestos and drawing up preliminary opinions and an overall opinion on asbestos;

5.1 Working Party II

The Working Party did not meet in 1977. In order to fulfil the mandate given to it in 1976 by the Committee, the Working Party needed a list of recent research. However, the Commission departments, in agreement with the Chairman of the Working Party, chose not to carry out this work themselves but to use an international list on the subject which was being prepared by a safety institute in one of the Member States.

This 'world' list is to be provided with a 'European' index, which will be available to the Working Party at the beginning of 1978.

5.2 Working Party III was responsible for

- carrying out a comparative study on the organizations concerned with safety and health protection at work involving participation by both sides of industry;
- drawing up proposals with a view to the setting up and running of accident and disease prevention bodies involving the participation of both sides of industry at national interprofessional level in sectors of industry and in undertakings.

6. ACTIVITIES OF THE 'RESTRICTED GROUP'

6.0 The meeting of the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the working parties in May 1977

- drew up the procedure for informing the Committee mentioned in Item 4.2;
- decided to set up the 'restricted group' (see Item 4.3.1).

6.1 In December 1977 the 'restricted group' met to begin its examination of the problems involving structure and operation which already existed or which might arise when the Action Programme was put into effect.

7. SECRETARIAT

In April 1977 the Committee unanimously adopted a Resolution firmly reiterating its request to the Commission that the Secretariat be adequately staffed to enable the Committee to operate normally. This Resolution is given in Annex 3. The approach made to the Commission by a delegation of those members representing workers, mentioned in Item 4.1, also concerned the operation of the Committee's Secretariat, which in 1977 was made up of 2 grade A officials and 1 grade C employee.

8. CONCLUSIONS

The activities of the Committee and the working parties increased in 1977. As indicated in 3.1. the number of meetings rose from 6 in 1976 to 10 in 1977 and the number of days taken up by these meetings rose from 9 in 1976 to 18.

Despite this gratifying increase in activity (which can be attributed to some extent to the fact that the Secretariat had additional staff for a number of months) the conditions which the Committee and the working parties need in order to function normally are still far from being met.

This is all the more unfortunate in that next year will certainly see a great increase in activity after that the Communities' action programme (4.1.) has been approved by the Council.

If these activities cannot be adequately performed by the Committee and the working parties, this could create considerable tensions among the groupings represented on the Committee and could cause the very existence of the Committee and its tasks to be called into question.

The resolution in Annex 3 should be understood in this light.

Bilag 1
Appendix 1
Allegato 1

Anlage 1
Annexe 1
Bijlage 1

MEDLEMNER MITGLIEDER MEMBERS MEMBRES MEMBRI LEDEN
--

31.12.1977

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 = Faste medlemmer
Titulaires | Mitglieder
Membri titolari | Full members
Leden |
| 2 = Suppleanterne
Suppléants | Stellvertreter
Membri supplenti | Alternate members
Plaatsvervangers |
- A = Repraesentanter for regeringen
Regierungsvertreter
Representatives of the Government
Représentants du gouvernement
Rappresentanti del governo
Vertegenwoordigers van de Regering
- B = Repraesentanter for arbejdstagernes faglige organisationer
Vertreter der Arbeitnehmerorganisationen
Representatives of trade unions
Représentants des organisations syndicales de travailleurs
Rappresentanti delle organizzazioni sindacali dei lavoratori
Vertegenwoordigers van de organisaties van werknemers
- C = Repraesentanter for arbejdsgivernes faglige organisationer
Vertreter der Arbeitgeberorganisationen
Representatives of employers' organizations
Représentants des organisations syndicales d'employeurs
Rappresentanti delle organizzazioni sindacali dei datori di lavoro
Vertegenwoordigers van de organisaties van werkgevers

UDVALG
AUSSCHUSS
COMMITTEE
COMITE
COMITATO
COMITE

		1	2
BELGIQUE BELGIE	A A B B C C	BENS G. DENONNE L. SAUVAGE G. THYRE A. VAN GAEVER G. CORDY A.	PAQUE H. MEDAETS J. SILON P. COLLE A. CLOQUET L. LEONARD R.
DANMARK	A A B B C C	SAXILD W. JENSEN G. DREWSEN B. CHRISTENSEN B. KAHR S. RASMUSSEN L.	TOFT A. BLOU J. NIELSEN B. ELIKOFER J. STENBJERRE J. HOLM K.
BUNDESREPUBLIK DEUTSCHLAND	A A B B C C	KLIESCH G. WAGNER R. KONSTANTY R. PARTIKEL H. MEYER T. ORTLEPP H.	OPFERMANN R. WOLFF H. KIENAPPEL W. SCHUPETA E. WINCKLER R. BISCHOFF H.
FRANCE	A A B B C C	LAMIRAND COURSAUT-DURAND ATLAN M. GUILLON P. CAVE J. TASSIN J.	PASTY CORVAISIER ROUXEL R. GAISNE A. FREDERIC-MOREAU P. DELAGE M.

		1	2
IRELAND	A	KENNEDY M.	MORRISON N.
	A	CASHELL M.	O'BRIEN J.
	B	CASSELLS P.	O'HALLORAN M.
	B	DALY D.	KEATING P.
	C	RICE A.	DOHERTY J.
	C	CLARKE R.	CASSIDY M.
ITALIA	A	FREDELLA A.	GUERRIERI M.
	A	FIGLIO N.	FIGLIORINO P.
	B	TRICARICO M.	ROTA L.
	B	FERIOLI G.	ROCCHI M.
	C	BIOCCA M.	PALLADINO S.
	C	BUSSETTI E.	PACI A.
LUXEMBOURG	A	SCHUSTER A.	MOUSEL J.
	A	NOESEN R.	DEMUTH J.
	B	RECH L.	DUNKEL H.
	B	MIRKES A.	KLEIN M.
	C	SCHMIT E.	BERWEILER J.
	C	MATHGEN T.	BEFFORT R.
NEDERLAND	A	WINK A.	ROOYAKKERS-BEEMSTER T.
	A	TINGA E.	RIKSENSPOEL I.
	B	HOGENES J.	SCHMITZ H.
	B	DE BRUIN A.	VAN TOL J.
	C	DEN BOER A.	DE QUANT W.
	C	VAN GORKOM J.	KORTEN M.
UNITED KINGDOM	A	MARTIN A.	BARGER F.
	A	NEILD F.	BLACKADDER E.
	B	JACQUES P.	HAMILTON J.
	B	LLOYD G.	PARRY T.
	C	BRADBURY P.	ROBSON V.
	C	COBB M.	HANLEY A.

Arbejdsgruppen I
Arbeitsgruppe I
Working Party I
Groupe de travail I
Gruppo di lavoro I
Werkgroep I

Drøftelse af problemer og forskrifter i forbindelse med forebyggelse
Konzertierung über Probleme und Vorschriften auf dem Gebiet der Unfallverhütung
Consultation on problems and requirements of prevention
Concertation sur des problèmes et des prescriptions de prévention
Concertazione su problemi e norme di prevenzione
Overleg over preventieproblemen en -voorschriften

	A	B	C
Belgique België	BENS G.	SILON P. (*)	CORDY A.
Danmark	SAXILD W.	ELIKOFER J.	HOLM K.
Bundesrepublik Deutschland	HORNEFFER K.	PARTIKEL H.	ROBOCK K.
France	JANIN	LEVY J.	CAVE J.
Ireland		DALY D.	CLARKE G. (**)
Italia	FIGLIORE N. (**)	FERIOLE G.	BUSSETTI E.
Luxembourg	SCHUSTER A.	DUNKEL E.	
Nederland	RIKMENSPOEL I.	SCHMITZ H.	DEN BOER A.
United Kingdom	WOODCOCK P.	JACQUES P.	COBB M.

(*) Président

(**) Vice-président

Arbejdsgruppen II
 Arbeitsgruppe II
 Working Party II
 Groupe de travail II.
 Gruppo di lavoro II
 Werkgroep II

Koordinering og fremme af forskningen inden for forebyggelse
 Koordinierung und Förderung der Unfallverhütungsforschung
 Coordination and promotion of research into prevention
 Coordination et promotion de la recherche en matière de prévention
 Coordinamento e promozione della ricerca in materia di prevenzione
 Coordinatie en bevordering van het onderzoek op het gebied van de ongevalle-
 preventie

	A	B	C
Belgique België	NUYTS R.	SAUVAGE G.	CORDY A.
Danmark	JENSEN G.	TJØRNEHØJ	ESKESEN O.
Bundesrepublik Deutschland	HAGENKÖTTER M.	KIENAPPEL W.	BASTONG K.
France	DARMON M.	GUILLOIN P. (**)	
Ireland		O'HALLORAN M.	
Italia	FREDELLA A.	TRICARICO M.	RIMA A.
Luxembourg	SCHUSTER A.		
Nederland		VAN TOL J.	DEN BOER A. (*)
United Kingdom	NEILD F. (**)	OWEN R.	

(*) Président

(**) Vice-président

Arbejdsgruppen III
 Arbeitsgruppe III
 Working Party III
 Groupe de travail III
 Gruppo di lavoro III
 Werkgroep III

Arbejdsmarkedets parters deltagelse i forebyggelse
 Beteiligung der Sozialpartner an der Unfallverhütung
 Participation of both sides of industrie in prevention
 Participation des partenaires sociaux à la prévention
 Partecipazione delle parti sociali alla prevenzione
 Inschakeling van de Sociale partners bij de ongevallenpreventie

	A	B	C
Belgique België		THYRE A.	VAN GAEVER C.
Danmark		ELIKOFER J.	HOLM K.
Bundesrepublik Deutschland		KONSTANTY R.	VON HASSELL J.
France		CHAVROT L.	TASSIN J. (**)
Ireland		CASSELLS P. (*)	RICE F.
Italia		ROCCHI M.	PASINI L.
Luxembourg		RECH L.	MARGUE G.
Nederland		DE BRUIN A.	VAN GORKOM J.
United Kingdom		LLOYD G.	COBB M.

(*) Président

(**) Vice-président

Draft Council resolution on a Community action programme on safety and health at work

(Submitted by the Commission to the Council on 15 December 1977)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaties establishing the European Communities,

Having regard to the draft from the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee,

Whereas the Council resolution of 21 January 1974 on a social action programme ⁽¹⁾, envisages the setting up of an action programme on safety and health at work;

Whereas, in particular, under Article 2 of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, the Community shall have as a particular task to promote throughout the Community a harmonious development of economic activities, a continuous and balanced expansion and an accelerated raising of the standard of living, which entails suitable health protection for the general public and the effective prevention of risks at work;

Whereas under Articles 117 and 118 of the said Treaty the Member States agree upon the need to promote improved working conditions and an improved standard of living for workers so as to

make possible their harmonization while the improvement is being maintained and that both the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases and health conditions at work are among the essential tasks;

Whereas the heads of State or of government, at the conference held in Paris in October 1972, affirmed that economic expansion should result in an improvement in the quality of life as well as in the standard of living;

Whereas the large number of people killed, injured and suffering from invalidity or sickness as a result of accidents at work or occupational diseases represents a serious problem which requires constant attention;

Whereas considerable effort is needed at Community level to preserve the human capital represented by the Community workforce and to endeavour to implement suitable means to maintain or create a working environment tailored to the needs of man having regard to his rightful job aspirations;

Whereas this effort requires not only a strengthening of the collaboration between Member States and the Commission but also the increasing participation of management and labour in decisions and action in the field of safety, hygiene and health protection at work at all levels, particularly at the level of the undertaking;

Whereas the improvement of working conditions and the working environment must be envisaged on a global basis and must concern all sectors of the economy;

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 13, 12. 2. 1974, p. 1.

Whereas the Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection at Work, set up by the Council Decision of 27 June 1974 ⁽¹⁾, should be associated with this sphere of action,

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 185, 9. 7. 1974, p. 15.

Approves the action programme annexed hereto;

Notes that the Commission will present, within the context of the actions described in the programme and in accordance with the time schedule and priorities set out therein, suitable proposals for the successful implementation of the programme.

ACTION PROGRAMME OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES ON HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

Introduction

A high percentage of the population of the nine Member States is exposed to varying degrees of many and widely divergent occupational risks which could threaten their health and personal safety. Occupational pathology is habitually concerned with accidents and diseases resulting from work, the prevention or diagnosis of which have been the subject of action within the Community for several years, and the harmful effects of which are partly or totally compensated through various schemes.

Despite the efforts made in the Member States of the Community, the number of accidents and diseases resulting from work remains high. Quite apart from their financial importance, the human and social consequences of occupational accidents and diseases are incalculable, since it is not easy to assess the psychological damage done or to take into account the long-term factors connected with accidents and disease. Thus there is good reason to believe that the total social and financial cost of occupational accidents and diseases is far greater than the quantitative estimates at our disposal suggest.

Modern technology uses increasingly advanced processes which present new dangers. They produce or use chemical substances which are inadequately tested for their harmful effects on man. All chemical, physical, mechanical and biological agents and the psychosocial factors connected with work must be readily recognizable and brought under control or eliminated by suitable means so as to avoid any damage to health or a significant reduction in safety.

The prevention, limitation and, where possible, elimination of occupational risks constitute major

elements of a policy to protect the health and safety of the workers.

Of course, the Member States have a long tradition in the organization of industrial safety and health but they must also agree to shoulder a joint programme of positive and effective actions to improve the conditions under which man performs his job and do everything possible to ensure his well-being and guarantee the quality of his working environment. In order to implement such a programme, it is necessary not only to harmonize ideas and basic principles, but also to plan and guide technical progress and the organization of work in such a way as to take account of the requirement of health and safety.

In view of the persisting gravity of the problem, the Commission must initiate, promote and develop a common preventive policy with regard to all occupational risks, especially by obtaining fresh knowledge, by encouraging cooperation and coordination and by developing appropriate actions at different levels of responsibility or competence. In addition to promoting exchanges and the improvement of reciprocal information, such a programme should aim to persuade responsible authorities in the Member States and the social partners to join forces against risks of all kinds which the work environment brings to bear on the health and safety of workers and on society at large.

The present programme takes account of the guidelines proposed by the Commission and of several studies made and consultations held over the past two years. It also takes into consideration the experience gained by the Commission in the coal and steel industries and the nuclear field where, under the

terms of the ECSC and Euratom Treaties, research programmes and work on harmonization and standardization in accident and disease prevention and protection with regard to specific risks in these three sectors have been carried out for many years.

This programme does not effect other programmes such as those for the elimination of technical barriers to trade and for the protection of the environment. In proposing specific actions within the framework of

this programme, the work undertaken by other research programmes, notably in the environmental field will be taken into account, so that maximum coordination is ensured.

Some action could be taken in collaboration or conjunction with other organizations, such as the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions and the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.

I. General objectives of the action programme on safety and health

The main aim of the programme is to increase the level of protection against occupational risks of all types by increasing the efficiency of measures for preventing, monitoring and controlling these risks.

One of the primary conditions for the implementation of such a programme is the full participation of both sides of industry in preventive and protective measures.

Each of the actions proposed in the programme must be seen as an element contributing to the better organization of preventive and protective measures for workers and to closer collaboration between the social partners towards that end. Furthermore, in order to take account of the experience obtained by international organizations and to avoid duplication of effort in the surveys or actions undertaken, liaison between Member States must be improved with a view to organizing joint action in international agencies responsible for occupational health and safety.

Such a programme should make it possible to achieve the following general objectives:

(a) Improvement of the working situation with a view to increased safety and with due regard to health requirements in the organization of the work. Such an improvement should cover not only the existing situation but also new technical developments. Technical progress which contributes to the creation of a new working situation or to the improvement of an existing situation is not always conceived and directed in line with the dictates of safety and health; where machinery, premises and plant are concerned,

safety aspects should be considered at the design stage and integrated into the subsequent stages of their production and commissioning. Due attention must also be paid to health considerations at every stage in the production and use of chemical substances.

There is a close link between occupational accident and disease prevention on the one hand, and the organization of work and safety and health training and information at the place of work on the other. There is an urgent need to review and redefine a more effective accident and disease prevention strategy in order to up-date traditional methods.

Where it is not possible to eliminate it, exposure to occupational risks must be kept to permissible levels applicable to all workers within the Community and based on common concepts and references.

So as to monitor more effectively the application of preventive measures, surveillance of health and working conditions must be intensified, notably in line with the exigencies of occupational medicine, hygiene and safety appropriate to present-day conditions.

(b) Improvement of knowledge in order to identify and assess risks and perfect prevention and control methods.

In view of the complexity and diversity of the factors it embraces, aetiology is a priority subject for research and analysis. Valid and comparable statistics must be prepared and existing research

coordinated. The promotion of new research is an essential corollary to any Community action in occupational medicine, hygiene and safety.

- (c) Improvement of human attitudes in order to promote and develop safety and health consciousness.

Alongside the technical aspects of accident prevention and health protection, a real system of safety instruction and health education must be created. This has yet to be introduced and will be taught in different ways at the various educational levels and at the various levels of responsibility and action within undertakings.

II. Description of the initiatives to be taken at Community level

Attainment of the general objectives requires many initiatives involving various scientific disciplines. Such initiatives presuppose the effective participation of individuals in managing their own health and safety and should encourage the social partners and the various professional associations and bodies to take a more active part in the formulation and implementation of a policy for the prevention of dangers at the workplace.

The following six concrete initiatives are planned within various time limits for the attainment of these general objectives:

1. incorporation of safety aspects into the various stages of design, production and operation;
2. determination of exposure limits for workers with regard to pollutants and harmful substances present or likely to be present at the workplace;
3. more extensive monitoring of workers' safety and health;
4. accident and disease aetiology and assessment of the risks connected with work;
5. coordination and promotion of research on occupational safety and health;
6. development of safety and health consciousness by education and training.

INITIATIVE 1

Incorporation of safety aspects into the various stages of design, production and operation

Aim

In order to promote this incorporation the Commission will consider actions aimed essentially at

harmonizing, from the safety point of view, the principles and designs of workplaces, machinery, equipment and plant and at the formulation or coordination of rules for their use and guidance on the use of dangerous substances.

The principle of integrated safety is today generally regarded as essential for all preventive measures and it is receiving increasing attention at national and international level. In all decisions with regard to undertakings (planning and construction of the undertaking, purchase and operation of plant, organization of production, working methods, etc.) more attention must be paid to safety. Similarly operational safety should be studied in advance for the design and manufacture of machinery and tools so as to guarantee protection of the worker's health as far as possible. As concerns the production and distribution of dangerous substances, the same principles have to be taken into account.

The principles of ergonomics are not yet sufficiently well applied in the search for better safety. In particular design ergonomics which is already widespread in the Community has not been sufficiently adopted, as compared with the work carried out in the Scandinavian countries and in the United States.

The results of research carried out over several years in the coal and steel industries indicate the measures which should be planned at Community level in other sectors of industry.

In this field the Commission is planning to propose a certain number of measures which will encourage the application of these principles and which could progressively form a basis of legal, regulatory and administrative provisions or of up-to-date technical guides drawn up at Community level in order to improve the current situation in many industrial or agricultural spheres. These measures concern in particular:

(a) *Setting up of undertakings and planning of layout and equipment*

The Commission has selected the following points from amongst the numerous factors which must be taken into consideration: ventilation and lighting, temperature, protection against falling from heights and against falling heavy objects, protection against fire, noise and vibrations, gases, vapours and dusts, design of general and emergency thoroughfares and location of doors and windows.

(b) *Organization of work within undertakings or between several undertakings*

The following points are to receive special attention: equipment and layout of workplaces, outdoor workplaces, warning signs, dangerous jobs, no-access and limited access areas, transport within the undertaking, inspections, maintenance work, plant testing, coordination of work within the undertaking, coordination of the work of various departments belonging to the same undertaking or to different undertakings, etc.

(c) *Manufacture and use of machinery, equipment and tools*

This is the chief area for the application of technical accident and disease prevention which is of paramount social and economic importance. In this sector harmonization measures require lengthy preparation. With regard to the manufacture of machinery and equipment the concept of their safety was already considered in the general programme of 28 May 1969 on the elimination of technical barriers to trade⁽¹⁾. However, there exist inherent dangers in the use of machinery and equipment and a procedure should be introduced for the exchange of experience and information so that such dangers are recognized and identified. Furthermore, since 1969 the Council had already pointed out that it would be possible, if necessary, to lay down rules on use supplementing Community Directives on harmonization with regard to the manufacture of machinery and equipment. Guidelines and rules must be drawn up with a view to determining appropriate legislation at Community level.

(d) *Handling of dangerous substances and preparations*

In this field Community harmonization action must be taken with regard to the handling of

dangerous substances and preparations, with a view to improving the practical organization of safety, that is, handling at the workplace, storage, marking of containers and pipes. Technical and health protection measures, working restrictions and prohibitions, the number of hours worked and medical protection measures should also be harmonized at Community level. The distribution of dangerous substances (classification, identification and packaging) is taken into account in the programmes for the 'elimination of the technical barriers to trade' and 'environment'.

Contents

Some of the objectives set out above can be achieved only in the medium and long-term. The problems will be selected for study on the basis of the wishes expressed or guidance given by relevant bodies who should above all bear in mind practical considerations and on the basis of urgent needs which may arise from unforeseen dangerous situations such as accidents or disasters, or which may be recognized as a result of the acquisition of fresh knowledge on the effects of chemical substances and the need to control their use with a view to protecting health.

The Commission plans to begin work in this field by studying the following matters:

(a) *Setting up of undertakings and planning of layout and equipment*

1. Organization and layout of agricultural holdings. There is reason to consider that modern agricultural holdings should meet requirements similar to those imposed upon industrial enterprises. So far these requirements have generally not been taken into account in national regulations and it would be appropriate to take the necessary steps at Community level.
2. Noise and vibration control. This requires special medium and long-term attention. The main task consists in setting an optimum machine-noise level on the basis of health data and an assessment of results obtained to date by research and the examination of practical experiments (for example the use of machinery with a low-noise level, which has already been perfected). Noise emission levels, designed to take account especially of the practical problems involved in occupational protection, will be established after national

⁽¹⁾ OJ No 76, 17. 6. 1969.

experts have been consulted and will be published in the form of directives.

(b) *Organization of work within undertakings*

1. Transport within undertakings. Internal transport, particularly the safe organization of general thoroughfares, needs to be examined and suitable practical instructions should be drawn up. This sector has a particularly high accident rate.
2. Safety signs at workplaces. Council Directive 77/576/EEC of 25 July 1977 on safety signs at workplaces provides that these signs must be able to keep up with technical progress and meet recommendations for harmonization at international level.

In this connection provision is made for a committee to meet at regular intervals. This action was initiated in 1977 and will be continued in 1978 and 1979 by means of proposals for directives.

3. Coordination of the work of principal and secondary undertakings. The internal and external collaboration of principal and secondary undertakings (subcontracts) requires special technical examination from the point of view of safety. In practice — especially for the coordination of collaboration between several independent undertakings — there are many problems still to be solved. A Community examination of these questions leading to such coordination by means of suitable legal instruments is required.

(c) *Manufacture and use of machinery, equipment and tools*

In addition to the work completed within the context of the elimination of technical barriers to trade which is concerned with the design and manufacture of machines, equipment and tools it seems essential to examine in the short and medium-term the need for joint rules on the use of the following: agricultural machinery, lifting gear, machinery used in construction, metal scaffolding and woodworking machines. Depending on the circumstances and on the results of the collaboration to be organized such rules would take the form of guidelines or directives.

(d) *Handling of dangerous substances and preparations*

An urgent study must be made of the handling of dangerous or toxic substances and agreement reached on common standards which will then be proposed to the Member States. An essentially practical approach is required and attention will initially be directed towards the problems of health protection connected with the use of pesticides and herbicides in agriculture. Similar problems arise with other products, e.g., arsenic, lead, mercury, cadmium, chrome, nickel, vegetable dusts, biological pollution, etc.

As information is obtained on the toxicological effect of these substances, as outlined in paragraph 5 of Initiative 2, practical guidelines will be drawn up for all products which involve handling problems or health risks.

INITIATIVE 2

Determination of exposure limits for workers with regard to pollutants and harmful substances present or likely to be present at the workplace

Aim

With a view to the organization of disease prevention and to the monitoring of many occupational risks it is essential to have data on exposure limits for workers with regard to pollutants and harmful substances. It is therefore important for the Commission to achieve, at Community level, harmonization of the concepts, methodologies and references on the basis of which the Member States determine their permissible exposure limits.

There are already standards for protection against radiation at Community level which have been in force since 1959 (Directive) and which were recently revised by a Directive issued in June 1976. They are an example of a joint health policy concerned with an industrial risk facing workers and the general public and based on uniform standards for the whole Community. This example should be extended to other pollutants present at the workplace.

Moreover the studies carried out by the Commission over the past four years in particular in relation to the environment programme and the experience acquired with regard to certain environmental

pollutants now make it possible to present concrete proposals for action with regard to certain specific pollutants affecting workplaces in particular.

In addition to these short-term actions, however, the Commission plans to make an objective analysis at Community level of the harmful or undesirable effects of exposure to pollutants in given circumstances — taking account of the results already obtained at international level, in particular by the WHO and the ILO. From this analysis it is proposed to deduce criteria of noxiousness on which to base acceptable exposure limits for workers. Such a project would cover a large number of substances and would be extended as industrial toxicity studies currently in progress are completed.

The protection of human health against chemical substances requires a complex toxicological evaluation which at present is incomplete. The Commission must take priority action with regard to carcinogens, since it is generally accepted that a high proportion of human cancer is caused by external factors including chemicals present at the workplace.

Contents

The Commission is planning the following initiatives:

1. *Non-ionizing radiation and other physical agents*

With regard to non-ionizing radiation, proposals for directives will be submitted to the Council on microwaves, laser radiation, ultra-violet radiation and ultrasound, on the basis of the procedure followed for standards in protection against radiation.

2. *Harmonization of exposure limits*

The Commission plans, at the earliest possible opportunity, to make a comparative study of existing regulations and recommendations in Member States with regard to permissible exposure levels of workers to toxic substances or physically harmful substances.

The values adopted in different countries vary, the terminology used is not the same and the concepts used to determine the limits are not based on the same principles. Harmonization is therefore essential and a general Directive coordinating and harmonizing exposure levels, possibly updated later on in accordance with the latest scientific data and international information available to the Commission, could be prepared between now and 1979.

This short-term initiative would have the advantage of achieving harmonization at Community level and avoiding the delay of waiting for the completion of on-going research projects in the field of occupational toxicology, whether within the Commission or in the Member States.

3. *Directives on specific pollutants*

The general harmonization discussed in paragraph 2 must be supplemented by the preparation of specific directives such as those proposed by the Commission for vinyl chloride monomer and those shortly to be put forward on asbestos, lead, mercury, solvents, carbon monoxide, noise and vibrations. The studies in progress within the Commission and the state of knowledge have now reached the stage where they can be used to determine the permissible exposure levels for the abovementioned pollutants from the point of view of health protection.

4. *Carcinogens*

Specific Commission action with regard to carcinogens present at workplaces will consist in:

- collecting data on the distribution of carcinogens and their concentration at the workplace,
- collecting and analysing medical data,
- perfecting readily applicable detection tests,
- fixing the lowest possible levels or, if necessary, prohibit a certain number of carcinogens present at the workplace.

5. *Toxicological evaluation*

Toxicological evaluation is central to the assessment of the health risks due to the presence of many chemical and biological agents in the working environment. This can be carried out only if sufficient knowledge is available on the effects of the agents under consideration on man. The methodology adopted by the Commission for assessing the dangers from environmental pollutants in general is based on research into criteria for noxiousness from which permissible human exposure levels may be deduced. The data already collected by the Commission on the effects on health of urban atmospheric pollutants and

When the Commission has analysed these different methods, it will draw up intercomparison programmes and prepare reference methods for the determination of the major pollutants present at workplaces.

Special attention will be paid to promoting the development of new monitoring and measuring methods for individual exposure.

The Commission will make a similar effort to apply the human biological indicators already in existence and will carry out research for new indicators which will make it possible to detect any changes in the state of health at an early stage. The European list of occupational diseases will be used as a reference document for drawing up the priorities for this action scheduled to take place as from 1978. Account will have to be taken not only of individual sensitivity, which may be very high for some pollutants, and of workplaces so that groups with a high occupational exposure risk may be identified, but also of some special groups of workers such as adolescents and women.

Monitoring of workers' health

In accordance with the terms of Article 118 of the Treaty establishing the EEC, occupational medicine must be considered as an area in which the Commission has the task of promoting close cooperation between Member States in the social field, particularly in matters relating to working conditions and to the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases. The term 'occupational medicine', as stated in the 1962 recommendation on occupational medicine in the undertaking, refers to a service established in or near a place of employment for the purposes of:

- (a) protecting the workers against any health hazard which may arise out of their work or conditions in which it is carried on;
- (b) contributing towards the workers' physical and mental adjustment, in particular by the adaptation of the work to the workers and their assignment to jobs for which they are suited; and
- (c) contributing to the establishment and maintenance of the highest possible degree of physical and mental well-being of the workers.

In addition, Recommendation 112 of the ILO stated that the role of occupational health services

should be essentially preventive and defined their functions so as to include the prevention of accidents and occupational diseases, the rehabilitation of workers, job analysis in the light of physiological and psychological considerations, surveillance of hygiene, advice on the placement of workers, medical supervision, emergency treatment and research in occupational health.

Consideration must be given to closer harmonization of the methods used by occupational health services in undertakings in order that the work of the industrial medical officer may be more fully integrated into the system for monitoring workers' safety and health, as recommended in this programme.

This revision will be carried out with effect from 1978 by consultation with the relevant bodies and should culminate in a directive on the organization of occupational medicine in the Member States of the Community, to be proposed in 1979.

4. Special monitoring

In many undertakings there are some jobs which present higher than average risks; certain types of casual work may also involve exposure to risk which is higher than that present in normal working conditions or than the exposure levels laid down. Such jobs are done, for example, by members of rescue teams or of maintenance and repair teams and by workers in virology laboratories and in institutes producing sera or viruses, etc.

Exchanges of information and experience for cases involving these aspects should be organized at Community level and should lead to a definition of the principles and criteria for this particular type of monitoring.

5. Industrial toxico-vigilance

The Commission plans to set up an industrial toxico-vigilance system along the lines proposed by the ILO and which is aimed at establishing a central information system for all observations made in industrial activity concerning the harmful effects of toxic substances. This system should be based on a network of highly specialized centres which could analyse information received from occupational health services and transmit it when required to interested persons or institutions.

The Commission will make an appropriate proposal to the Council, after holding the necessary consultations.

certain water pollutants provide a basis for the action planned in industry, but it needs to be considerably extended and developed. Priority will be given to the following substances: arsenic, cadmium, chromium, iron oxides, nickel, vegetable dusts, ozone, nitrogen oxides and biological pollutants.

The Commission, while taking account of studies already carried out and projects being planned at international level, is to give priority to the extension and development of information relating to the objective evaluation of risks associated with toxic substances present at the workplace. This action will lead to directives on exposure levels for workers and also to the compilation of handbooks on the safe handling of such substances at the workplace. The Commission intends to carry out this action by means of a series of studies and scientific and technical consultations. It will be assisted in this action by a Scientific Committee on Toxicology planned for the end of 1977.

INITIATIVE 3

More extensive monitoring of workers' safety and health

Aim

Whereas exposure limits for workers and safety and health protection measures are essential factors in the organization of accident and disease prevention, various permanent and well-adapted methods are also required with which to monitor the measures adopted and the exposure levels prescribed for the workplace.

These monitoring methods must be harmonized and coordinated at Community level.

The monitoring of workers' health and safety depends upon several types of monitoring which complement each other:

- (a) monitoring of the effectiveness of individual or group safety and protection measures with regard to machinery, equipment and plant;
- (b) monitoring of hygiene and working conditions from which the types of exposure to different physical, chemical and biological agents present in the working environment are derived;

- (c) monitoring of the state of health and behaviour of the worker as part of occupational medicine;
- (d) special monitoring as a result of work entailing special risks;
- (e) industrial toxico-vigilance;
- (f) inspections.

The Commission feels that it is essential to harmonize at Community level principles and methods applicable to monitoring. Moreover, efforts should be made to interest workers in monitoring within the undertaking, either by direct means or by means of existing bodies or institutions.

Any proposed solutions must allow workers' and employers' representatives to play a fuller part in the practical organization of such monitoring at various levels of action and responsibility.

Contents

1. Monitoring of the effectiveness of safety and protection measures

Planning and execution of this form of monitoring varies at present from country to country and according to the regulations and activities concerned. Once the provisions currently governing such monitoring have been analysed, suitable proposals will be submitted to the Council for adoption in order to harmonize and strengthen the organization of this type of monitoring in which the workers' and employers' representatives should play a greater role.

2. Monitoring of hygiene and working conditions

Monitoring of pollutant concentrations at workplaces and the intensity of environmental factors is essential for the organization of disease prevention and monitoring.

Measuring programmes do exist in Member States but they are based on different methods and sometimes different principles. These measures must be harmonized at Community level with regard to sampling, techniques and measuring intervals.

6. Inspections

Inspections carried out for the purposes of occupational safety, medicine and hygiene should be organized so that they assume full responsibility and control by placing the emphasis on preventive measures. With this end in view the necessary provisions must be made in close collaboration with the competent authorities in Member States for the strengthening and development of the work of inspection at national level. The Commission intends to review the role of the inspectorate responsible for implementing in each Member State the regulations of occupational health, hygiene and safety. This review will cover diplomas, certificates and other qualifications, and the powers and scope of their responsibilities in this field.

INITIATIVE 4

Accident and disease aetiology and assessment of risks connected with work

Aim

The risk of accident or disease may be estimated objectively only if reliable methods are available which make it possible to determine the scope, seriousness and development in time and, in a general way, to acquire greater knowledge of the various factors involved in the cause of accidents at work and of diseases due to work.

Statistics are essential tools for the analysis and interpretation of facts and for assessment of the results obtained from an accident and disease prevention policy.

The improvement of statistics and their comparability, the harmonization of methodologies and the more precise interpretation of the data they provide are important steps in the development of an improved organization of work with regard to accident and disease prevention. Since so many different approaches are used a distinction must be drawn between action in respect of accidents at work and action in respect of disease due to work.

Such actions must provide a clearer picture of the different causative factors of accidents at work and of diseases due to work and must use them as a basis for practical preventive and protective measures

against hazards connected with work. It will then be possible to provide preventive-type protection for men at work, on an objective and realistic basis.

In addition, special attention will be paid to calculating the economic and social cost of accidents at work and diseases due to work so as to establish the order of priority for preventive measures.

Account will be taken of the harmonization work already carried out by other international organizations and of work completed or in progress, particularly by the ILO.

Contents

These initiatives deal separately with accidents at work and diseases resulting from work.

As regards accidents at work the two sectors for which Community statistics are already available are the iron and steel industry and mining. Drawing on the experience gained in these sectors the Commission plans to draw up Community statistics concerning other sectors, to launch sectoral in-depth studies and to harmonize accident definitions and methods of reporting accidents in order to establish more precisely the aetiology of accidents. Preparatory surveys are in progress and the first results will be available in 1979.

With regard to diseases due to work, statistics collected at national level usually concern only occupational diseases and are drawn up on different bases so that it is not possible to compare them. There are no Community statistics in this field and it would be appropriate to devise a joint methodology as soon as possible so that existing national statistics may be processed. The Commission therefore plans to gather and analyse national statistical information and to draw up proposals for methodologies with a view to a common approach, so that calculations may be made of mortality, sickness and absenteeism rates and their evolution over a period of time.

Close collaboration must be instituted with the national statistical offices and the national social security offices with regard to these new problems.

This is a medium-term initiative and the first results will become available only after two or three years.

INITIATIVE 5

Coordination and promotion of research on occupational safety and health

Aim

The action planned in the programme must find its scientific support in a research programme which is coordinated and/or carried out jointly and which deals on the one hand with the measurement and effects on health of pollutants and harmful substances and, on the other hand, with the development within undertakings of safer, 'cleaner' technologies which do not threaten the general environment.

Collaboration must be organized and strengthened between the institutes and laboratories of Member States in order to avoid duplication of work, to derive greater benefit from the financial resources available and where necessary to bring together highly specialized laboratories to work on problems which cannot be solved in a single Member State.

Moreover, research must be carried out in fields where little or no work has been done, such as agriculture and the tertiary industries.

Contents

Two permanent inventories of research in progress or planned (occupational safety and medicine) at national level are already being prepared at Community level. From 1978 the inventories will make it possible to set up a reciprocal information system on responsible bodies in order to promote the exchange of knowledge and create conditions for close collaboration between research institutes. These permanent inventories will also mention fields in which there are gaps. Three pilot studies are in progress on inflammable substances, occupational risks in the building industry and certain carcinogens. During 1978 these studies will also indicate which subjects should be covered by joint research.

On the basis of these inventories the data bank being compiled within the Commission should be progressively supplemented and should include details of new research; account is taken of the fact that this data bank will subsequently be linked to the information system on medical research which is being set up at Commission level.

Research work aimed at closing the gaps in knowledge on toxic agents and their effects on health

or at improving methods for measuring these agents is of major importance for the success of several parts of the programme — in particular the section on the determination of criteria for harmfulness. It will also help to determine as accurately as possible the potential and actual effect on health of pollutants and nuisances present or likely to be present at the workplace.

The results of the implementation of the various initiatives making up the programme will be analysed by the Commission with effect from 1979 and could form a basis for the preparation of a detailed and precise Community research and development programme which could be the subject of a future Commission proposal for adoption by the Council.

INITIATIVE 6

Development of safety and health consciousness by means of education and training

Aim

This initiative is aimed at developing safety and health consciousness by means of education and training. It is of paramount importance for the success of the promotion of safety and hygiene at workplaces. It is based on instruction and training and involves various levels of education and the undertaking itself. It also concerns in a general way occupational and social sectors involved in problems of accident prevention and health protection at work.

This is a medium and long-term initiative in view of the different sectors involved and of the absence to date of any real methodology and common principles. Various studies and consultations will be required before results and concrete proposals are obtained at Community level.

This action concerns educational bodies, undertakings and society in general.

As for education the basic principles of safety and of health education must be taught in schools. Knowledge of and the correct attitudes towards occupational safety and hygiene must be taught at various levels of education as an integral part of the curriculum and at the same time attention must be paid to the requirements of prevention in relation to real life situations. The question is one of establishing at Community level a safety training scheme which takes account of the differences between national

characteristics and traditions but which is based on common principles and a common approach.

Within undertakings steps for the elimination of risks must be systematically organized and coordinated at all levels of responsibility and management. Principles of safety must be consolidated, developed and made public. Action designed to sharpen the awareness of industrialists and heads of undertakings must be taken together with the campaign aimed at workers.

For the training of society in general the action taken in education must be supplemented by action aimed at certain population groups. The use of audiovisual aids is one of the most modern and most effective means of informing the public of the importance and significance of accident and disease prevention.

Contents

1. Education

The Commission plans to carry out, together with the bodies responsible for national education, preparatory studies for the purpose of defining harmonized planning at Community level.

In general education — starting at the earliest age and continuing throughout school life — instruction must be on two levels:

- theoretical and practical instruction to give children and young people an awareness of the risk of accidents,
- instruction to develop a sense of moral and public responsibility with regard to safety and health protection.

In technical education relevant training in safety and health protection should accompany all levels of technical instruction and vocational training. Special attention should be paid to the training of persons particularly concerned with safety and health protection who have a specific task or responsibility in this field.

The Commission plans to propose Community training models for persons in certain occupations and concerned with specific tasks, such as industrial medical officer, occupational safety officer, engineer, architect, member of a company safety committee or union official.

2. Undertaking

Within an undertaking training in safety must be under the control of the undertaking itself since general and technical training cannot take the place of appropriate action at the workplace. This type of training must supplement the instruction received in schools and it must also be given to those who have not previously received any such instruction.

Such training, to be carried out within industry, will be more specialized and more detailed. In many cases it will be organized by specialist bodies whose work must be coordinated at Community level. It should be remembered that education covers a broad span of learning situations — for example instruction given by experienced workers and learning on-the-job.

Beginning in 1978, the Commission intends:

- to draw up Community models for safety training and refresher courses for certain categories of staff: administrative grades, executive grades, instructors for courses on safety and health education and safety delegates,
- to draw up Community models for presenting various aspects of safety to newly recruited workers, migrant workers and workers who have changed jobs,
- to draw up manuals and codes of practice with regard to sectoral activities or dangerous jobs,
- to organize safety campaigns of limited duration with a specific aim, in which workers will feel fully and actively involved,
- to extend the group training courses already in existence to other groups of persons concerned with accident prevention and safety measures.

This action will be furthered by making available to both management and labour knowledge or concepts acquired either by exchange of experience within specialist groups in the relevant sectors or by research projects jointly agreed and financed. Such knowledge could be included in instructions, regulations or codes of practice, to be distributed with commentaries in the appropriate quarters and to be kept constantly up to date.

The Commission will support this type of cooperation and promotion of safety by providing

information gathered from specific aspects of the action programme, such as information on accidents and on technical progress in the design, manufacture and use of machinery and plant, and by making available the industrial toxicovigilance results.

3. *Population groups*

In addition to the action taken in education, general information for certain population groups

(such as parents' associations, professional bodies, women's associations) must be organized with regard to the importance of accident and disease prevention. Some steps have already been taken in this field at national level. Audiovisual aids are already used to provide this information. The Commission plans to coordinate these initiatives and develop them jointly, to produce films and set up a permanent file on audiovisual aids available on an exchange basis.

RESOLUTION

The Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection at Work, meeting in Luxembourg on 19-20 April 1977;

Whereas the Council Resolution of 21 January 1974 concerning a social action programme provided for an action programme for workers with particular reference to the improvement of safety and health conditions at work;

Whereas the Advisory Committee, meeting in Luxembourg on 25-27 October 1976, approved a Draft Community Action Programme on Health and Safety at Work;

Whereas the study of the First Progress Report of the Advisory Committee clearly revealed that the inadequate staffing of the Secretariat was a serious hindrance to the proper functioning of the Committee's activities;

Strongly requests, in connection with the above-mentioned Draft Programme, that the Secretariat be adequately equipped by January 1978 at the latest.