

Occupational Safety and Health in some Enterprises in Vietnam – Experience and Solutions

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, the work of occupational safety and health (OSH) in Vietnam has experienced many ups and downs. Thanks to economic development achievements, OSH activities have been paid more attention and investment by many enterprises than before. On the other hand, the Law on OSH, which was enacted in 2015 and took effect on July 1, 2016 also contributes to creating a legal corridor, bringing the development of OSH activities to a new height. Unfortunately, the occurrence of the global COVID-19 pandemic has brought all activities to a halt around the world and Vietnam is no exception. Currently, economic activities are gradually recovering, but have not been able to reach the level before the pandemic. OSH work is also being implemented again from 2022.

Method: The Vietnam National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (VNNIOSH) is a national scientific institute of Vietnam. The Institute was established by the Vietnamese Government on May 1, 1971 under the name National Institute of Labour Protection (NILP). VNNIOSH regularly conducts research, consulting and supporting activities for enterprises and production facilities to implement OSH work, implement solutions to ensure safety and health for workers. During the period from 2016 to 2022, the Occupational Safety Center (OSC) is a unit of VNNIOSH that has performed the task of consulting, inspecting and evaluating the implementation of OSH for a number of enterprises from the North to the South Vietnam. With the advice of OSC experts, enterprises have made progress in all aspects in complying with the requirements of the Law on OSH: Organization of the apparatus to perform OSH work; manage dossiers of machines, equipment, supplies and substances subject to strict OSH requirements; manage employees doing jobs with strict requirements on OSH; electrical safety management, chemical safety, pressure equipment operation safety; implement solutions to ensure safety, improve working conditions, take care of workers' health, etc. **Results:** Overall, we found that there has been progress in the implementation of OSH at the monitoring enterprises. Especially the following activities: Organizing the apparatus, assigning responsibilities, planning the implementation of the annual OSH work. Investment in all aspects for OSH has also increased continuously. The management and implementation of solutions on OSH and health care for employees are also done better. The propaganda and training on OSH and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) are not very good. Some businesses and employees still have difficulties in choosing and using the right PPE to prevent hazards in the workplace. The PPE has made progress, but it has not yet met expectations. Not the right type and not the required

quality. The working environment has been improved but not yet developed. In some places, dust, noise, temperature etc still exceed the allowable standards. Some difficulties in implementing OSH activities that enterprises often encounter are leaders of some enterprises have not paid due attention to OSH. Enterprises often change jobs, so it is difficult to organize and assign people to do OSH work in accordance with the law. The assigned person does not have enough time to get acquainted and experience to perform the task well. The reduction of management staff also makes it difficult to arrange specialized people. Especially the arrangement of medical staff in the enterprise. Safety work: Electrical safety, chemical safety and equipment operation safety with strict requirements on OSH are not really good because the technology used is old and outdated without funding to invest in upgrading. **Conclusion:** Through the above activities and assessments, we have drawn some experiences as follows. Enterprises need to pay more attention to OSH. Stable personnel must be arranged for OSH work, good and experienced personnel will ensure the system's good operation. The legal document system is often complicated, so to fully implement it, enterprises should consult with specialized units. Enterprises need to (1) require suppliers of materials, chemicals, personal protective equipment; (2) to provide a full certificate of goods quality when purchasing. It is necessary to apply advanced management standards such as ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001... and activities such as 5S... to maintain and improve the quality of the working environment. Enterprises need to cooperate with agencies, units and organizations... to strengthen propaganda, education and training for employees to raise awareness of OSH so that they have good awareness, consciousness and proactive implementation of OSH activities. To recommend State management agencies to strengthen the quality management of PPE and have solutions to support businesses in providing good quality PPE at reasonable prices for the market. In order to ensure good safety and health, and also improve working conditions, it is necessary to actively participate and coordinate with all three parties: the State, enterprises and employees with good advice from specialized agencies.

Keywords: OSH management, OSH in Vietnam
