

# **Professional Practices**

**“Health and Safety at  
Work”**

# Contents

- The Problem
- Background
- Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) laws in Pakistan

# The Problem

- Health and safety at work only hits the headlines when there is a major disaster.
- The number of fatal accidents at work has fallen sharply since the beginning of 1970s but a significant number of employees and members of public still die each year as a result of accidents at work.

# Background

- During and after World War I, Industrial Revolution occurred
  - rapid introduction of new industries
  - Increasing demand of products and production activities
  - Indiscriminate hiring of workers to run the manufacturing processes
- This brought about
  - Poor and unsafe working conditions
  - serious dangers not anticipated
  - exposure to various occupational diseases and serious accidents aggravated by endemic diseases like malnutrition, worm infestation, malaria and others
- Hence the origin of Occupational Health and Safety as means of protecting the health and welfare of employees.

# Benefits

- A safe work place ensures less accidents.
- Keeps the workers focused on the tasks rather than worry about chances of mishaps.
- Increases productivity and efficiency of workers.
- Managing the work force becomes easy and the workers remain motivated.
- A healthy and sound worker is an asset and contributes towards economic development of organization.

# **Occupational Health and Safety Laws in Pakistan**

# Occupational Health and Safety

## **Definition**

- Means by which to control aspects of work production that involve any degree of risk or danger that may cause injury or harm.
- This process eliminates such elements to ensure employee safety & health.

# Occupational Health and Safety

- The Reasons for OH & S:
  - Eliminates possible danger
  - Safeguard employee productivity
  - Means to promote workplace processes
  - Protect employee rights
  - Maintain work health For all Employees



# Management's Role in Employee Safety

- There are a number of strategies that can be used by organizations to ensure a healthy and safe workplace and insure compliance with legal requirements, some are
  - Design safe and healthy systems for work
  - Exhibit strong management commitment

# **Management's Role in Employee Safety**

- Inspect workplace for health and safety problems
- Establish procedures and controls for dealing with health and safety issues
- Develop training program
- Setup health and safety committees
- Monitor safety policies
- Draw up action plan and checklist

# **Safety and Health Laws in Pakistan**

- In Pakistan, the occupational health and safety in different sectors is covered in various laws.
- There is no single comprehensive law covering occupational health and safety.

# Safety and Health Laws in Pakistan

- The following pieces of legislation deal with different aspects of occupational safety and health in the whole country
  - Factories Act 1934
  - Punjab Factories Rules 1978
  - Sindh Factories Rules 1975
  - KPK Factories Rules 1975
  - West Pakistan Hazardous Occupations Rules 1963
  - Mines Act 1923
  - Dock Laborers act 1934

# **Factories Act 1934**

- This act consolidates and amends the laws relating to the regulation of labor in factories in the country.
- It includes preliminary including definitions, role of labor inspection, restrictions on the working hours, holidays with pay, special provisions for adolescents and children, penalties and procedure.

# Factories Act 1934

- This act also contains a chapter (Chapter 3) on health and safety of workers and hygiene conditions at the workplaces.
- Chapter III of this act provide factory inspections, hygienic conditions (ventilation and temperature, dust and fumes, artificial humidification, lighting, overcrowding, drinking water, sanitary facilities), precaution in case of fire, machine guarding, pressure vessels, precautions against dangerous fumes, eye protection, safety of building, machinery and manufacturing process and so on.

# **Provincial Factories Rules (Punjab 1978, Sindh 1975, KPK 1975)**

- Three provinces of Pakistan Punjab, Sindh and KPK under the authority of "The Factories Act 1934" of Pakistan made their rules and regulation to govern labor legislation which are almost similar to each other.
- They provide detailed rules for factory inspections, hygienic conditions (ventilation, temperature, dust and fumes, artificial humidification, overcrowding, lighting, drinking water, sanitary facilities)
- They also consider role of the welfare officer, precautions against fires, machine guarding, eye protection, dangerous fumes, working hours, notification and investigation of accidents, pay holidays and so on.

# **West Pakistan Hazardous Occupations Rules 1963**

- These rules issued under the authority of Factories Act 1934 prescribe medical certification and examination by certifying surgeons, prevention activities (exhausts, washing facilities, protective clothing), prohibition of employment (women, young persons) and the issuing of certificates of fitness in the case of dangerous jobs involving exposure to certain substances (lead, rubber, chromium, sodium, and potassium dichromate)



# **West Pakistan Hazardous Occupations Rules 1963**

- One of the regulations of the "West Pakistan Hazardous Occupations Rules 1963 specifies a large number of processes (either manufacturing or utilizing of a large number of harmful or explosive substances) as hazardous.
- It also permits the Chief Inspector of Factories to declare other processes hazardous as well

# Mines Act 1923

- This act concerns the laws relating to the regulation and inspection of mines.
- Its contents include role of the chief inspector of mines and of inspectors, operation and management of mines, provision as to health and safety (powers of inspectors in the case of dangers arising to mine workers, accident reports, notice of occupational accidents, accidents investigation) working hours, employment of women (prohibited in underground work) and children (absolutely prohibited to work in mines) and so on.

# **Dock Laborers act 1934**

- The Directorate of Dock Workers Safety is responsible for ensuring the safety and health of dock workers employed at Karachi, Gwadar and Pasni seaports, through the practical enforcement of relevant provisions of the Dock Laborer's act.

**How does government ensure that the above-mentioned provisions are followed at the workplaces?**

- All the above laws require the appropriate government (Federal or Provincial) to appoint qualified individuals as inspectors. It is the duty of inspectors to enforce these laws. The usual powers of inspectors include the right to enter and inspect any workplace, taking evidence from persons for carrying out their duties. A person can't be appointed as inspector or continue to hold the office of inspector if he or she becomes directly or indirectly interested in the workplace (it is factory under the Factories Act, a dock or a ship under Dock Laborers Act and a mine under the Mines Act).

**Does Employer or Government  
provide any training to the workers  
regarding workplace health and  
safety issues?**

- Various government agencies like National Institute of Labor Administration and Training, **Directorate of Workers Education** provide training to workers on these issues. **Directorate of Dock Workers Safety** (DDWS) and **Central Inspectorate of Mines** provide training to dock workers and mine workers respectively. The Centre for Improvement of Working Conditions and Environment (CIWCE) is a pioneering institution in Pakistan (working under the Directorate of Labor Welfare, Punjab) which provides training, information and research facilities for promotion of safety, health and better work environment in the industries and businesses.