

# SAFER PORTS INITIATIVE 2

## Assessing Worker Involvement



### Quick checklist – how do you shape up?

Use this checklist to get an idea of the extent of worker involvement in your organisation.

#### **Question**

**Yes / No**

Have workers as well as management been involved in determining the company safety policy?

Do you have representatives of employee safety and a health and safety committee?

Is your health and safety committee dealing with strategic matters or burdened with day-to-day problems that are better resolved elsewhere?

Are all health and safety committee members equal partners?

Have safety representatives, supervisors and other staff been trained to enable them to play an equal role in the health and safety committee?

Can employees set the health and safety agenda during team meetings?

Is there a system for staff to make a positive input to improve health and safety performance?

Do ideas for health and safety initiatives come from the workforce?

Are your employees involved in long-term health and safety initiatives?

Does your company provide cover for workers to enable attendance at safety meetings or training courses?

Are the people who carry out particular tasks involved in the risk assessment of those tasks?

Are workers involved in writing safe working procedures?

When changes are planned are workers fully involved?

When accidents are investigated are safety representatives fully involved?

Do health and safety audits actively include safety representatives as well as managers?



## Simple assessment tools

- Table 1: Key questions and examples of good practice
- Table 2: Suggested format for collecting information and recording actions

**Table 1** contains questions to help you carry out an assessment of the extent of workforce involvement in your organisation. The table includes illustrative examples of good practice for use in judging the responses. Not all these will be relevant to everyone. You may choose to use these examples and/or add further questions based on issues that are specific to your organisation. Where the term ‘employees’ is used in the table it includes your own employees and other workers such as contractors.

**Table 2** shows the suggested format for the assessment that can be used for review and recording follow-up action. You should involve the workforce in this exercise. You may wish to involve your health and safety committee or other work groups that include workers or their representatives. It may be helpful to carry out a joint exercise with the trade unions safety representatives. The professional health and safety advisors retained by some trade unions may be able to help develop such joint initiatives.

### Table 1: Key questions and examples of good practice

Question	Examples of good practice
<b>Policy</b>	
To what extent is the workforce involved in the development and review of your health and safety policy statement or policy for specific risk control systems?	Workforce representatives are actively involved in preparation and revision of general health and safety policy statement and key risk control system statements, e.g. statement for maintenance of plant.  Commitment to involvement is specified in the general policy statement.
<b>Organising: control</b>	
Are employees being empowered and given specific health and safety roles as individuals or as part of teams?  (This is not replacing management duties for health and safety).	Employees take on new roles, e.g. secondment to safety department, or act as champions for specific topics, e.g. permit to work, confined spaces.  Employees and contractors are involved in continuous improvement teams tackling health and safety topics.
<b>Organising: co-operation</b>	
Is the entire workforce co-operating to enable staff to carry out their health and safety functions?	Managers and colleagues provide resources, e.g. fund and attend meetings in overtime periods, change individual shift patterns, provide additional cover to release staff for meetings or training.
Have changes been made to the health and safety committee and management arrangements to enable effective, active workforce involvement?	The committee focuses on strategic health and safety matters; management roles reflect this. Day-to-day problems are resolved as they occur and solutions drawn to the attention of the committee.

Table 1 continued

<b>Organising: communication</b>	
Is there good communication involving workers throughout the organisation?	<p>Employees are involved in delivering the message. For example, at a launch of a programme, workforce representatives/ improvement teams are involved in 'tool box' talks, newsletters, posters or suggestion schemes which enable active involvement.</p> <p>Employees are kept informed and are able to contribute.</p>
<b>Organising: competence</b>	
Are employees actively involved in the design and delivery of health and safety training?	An improvement team prepares training material and trains the workforce. Training is provided for staff that require new skills as the result of changing roles from increased involvement.
<b>Planning and implementing</b>	
Is the workforce involved in setting your overall objectives and plans for health and safety (the detail of which implements the strategic policies)?	Employees are involved in setting workforce involvement objectives. Teams/departments set their own annual health and safety targets/plans based on strategic policies and these are reflected in individual job objectives
Do safety specialists or other managers carry out the risk assessments without involving the relevant employees?	The employees are actively involved, consulted or are trained to enable them to play a full part in the assessment process.
When new equipment, materials, services or contractors are being procured, is the workforce actively involved?	Employees form part of a design/engineering team assisting in identifying hazards and providing process/operational information and suggestions.
Is the workforce actively involved in the design of, or changes to your equipment, work layout, systems of work, rules and procedures?	Operators, engineers and fitters assist in talking to staff, redesigning equipment and preparing briefings.
How is the workforce included in problem-solving activities?	Workers participate as equals in teams to solve problems.
<b>Measurement</b>	
Is there active monitoring involving the workforce?	Employees are actively involved in workplace inspections, behavioural observations, checking progress with plans, team health and safety performance, assessing risk control systems and suggestion schemes.
How is your workforce involved in the investigation of accidents and ill health?	Safety representatives investigate (and analyse root causes) of accidents and cases of ill health.

Table 1 continued

Audit and review	
Does your health and safety committee review strategic health and safety matters, e.g. operation of your risk control systems?	The health and safety committee carries out fundamental performance review, i.e. audits performance of the health and safety management system and key risk control systems, and takes action as necessary.
Are your workers involved in the review of risk controls?	Teams include active workforce participation during activities such as process hazard review and review of operating procedures.
Do your managers include the workforce in the review of departmental health and safety matters?	Team review their own performance and suggest action
To what extent is your workforce actively involved in the audit process?	Employees and safety representatives form part of the audit team.

## Table 2: Suggested format for collecting information and recording actions.

This table shows a suggested format for the assessment (compiled using the questions in Table 1.) This can be used as a tool for reviews and follow up action.

Question	Examples of good practice	Evidence at your company	Suggested action or solution	Improvement actions with date and responsibility
<b>Assessment of workforce involvement</b>				
Is there workforce involvement in active monitoring of health and safety?	Workforce takes part in inspections, behavioural observations and checking application of risk control systems.	Some inspections of workplace precautions by supervisors.	Introduce systematic inspections involving supervisors, maintenance staff, management, safety representatives or other employees	Plant manager to raise at next meeting of health and safety committee. Committee to consult workforce on proposals

### Acknowledgement

HSE – Worker involvement in health and safety management.