

Country Report on

OSH Legislation , inspection system and other OSH-related issues In Myanmar

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Introduction

In the process of the economic and social development of our country , the protection of workers from occupational hazards and promotion of their health and well-being have been given priority .In the Union of Myanmar ,The Factories and General Labour Laws Inspection Department (FGLLID) ,under the Ministry of Labour ,is one of the public agencies responsible for occupational safety and health of workers. In FGLLID ,Inspectors of Factory (IF) conduct the workplace inspections.

Objective and Functions of the Department

The objective of the Department , FGLLID , is to enhance the productivity of labour by ensuring workers to enjoy their legal rights regularly and fully under the existing labour laws.

The main functions of FGLLID are -

- Enforcement of Labour laws.
- Provision of occupational Safety and Health training and advisory services.

Enforcement of Safety and Health Standards

The standards regarding safety , health and welfare including the improvement of working environment are laid down in: -

- (a) The factories Act, 1951
- (b) The oilfields (Labour and Welfare) Act, 1951

for factories and oil fields respectively. The factory inspectors are responsible for the enforcement of those standards.

Enforcement of Safety and Health Standards

The inspectors inspect factories and workplaces according to the existing labour laws especially " The Factories Act, 1951". This Act includes ten main chapters such as Health, Safety, Welfare, Special Applications and Extensions, Working Hours of Adults, Employment of Young Persons, Punishments and Procedure, etc.

Some important sections under the chapter of "Health" are-

- Cleanliness,
- Disposal of waste and effluences,
- Ventilation and equable temperature
- Dust and fume
- Artificial humidification
- Overcrowding
- Lighting and artificial
- Drinking water, etc

Enforcement of Safety and Health Standards

Some Sections under the chapter of "Safety" are -

- Fencing of Machinery
- Work on or near machinery in motion
- Employment of young persons on dangerous machinery
- Devices for cutting off power
- Cranes and such other lifting and hoisting machinery
- Revolving machinery
- Pressure plant
- Floors, passages, stairs and means of access
- Pits , sumps, openings in floors, etc
- Excessive weights
- Protection of eyes
- Precaution against dangerous fumes
- Arrangement to be made against fire
- Explosive or inflammable dust, fumes, etc

Inspection System

There are at present over 6700 industries, including modern large and medium export oriented ones, employing about 170,000 workers in the industrial zones. In addition there are about (100,000) small and medium scale industries all over the country, outside the industrial zones.

All inspectors regularly visit factories and workplaces in accordance with the quarterly programme (the inspection programme which is drawn up every three month). Each inspector has to inspect at least twenty factories or workplaces per month (20 nos/month) and two-hundred and forty per year (240 nos/yr) . Workplaces are allocated to the inspectors according to their concerned – areas. The target frequency of inspections is two times per year for a factory but we can inspect one time per year, actually, because of the number of inspectors.

Inspection System

In doing inspection the priority is given to larger establishments and hazardous processes using factories. In addition to regular inspection to the factory, there are some special visits to investigate serious or fatal accidents. Therefore, the inspectors of factories are required to -

- Inspect factories and oil field at regular intervals and follow up with instructions, consultation and prosecution.
- Investigate accidents, occupational diseases and other dangerous occurrences.
- Conduct group surveys of workplaces by using field equipments to promote working environment if necessary.
- Maintain records of accidents and occupational diseases in good statistical order.
- Provide technical and information services to employers and employees particularly with surveillance of working environment.
- Take part in educational and training programme for employers and employees, etc

Future Directions

The future plans of the Department are –

- To train the staff of the department to enable to provide advanced technical services for the improvement of working conditions especially in the field of safety and health in the industrial establishments.
- To develop the capacity and capability of Occupational Hygiene Laboratory in the department.
- To upgrade the capacity of the department to carry out practical measures to improve working conditions, workers' welfare, occupational safety and health and productivity in small and medium enterprises.

Future Directions

- To establish an " Occupational Safety and Health Center (OSHC) " under the department to train the workers, supervisors, safety officers, members of safety and health committees from the industrial establishments in various safety and health courses.
- To establish a statistics and information unit to enhance the capacities of the department, in planning , evaluating and coordination of safety and health policies and programmes.
- To accept technical and financial supports from the some agencies such as ASEAN – OSHNET member countries to upgrade capacities of the department.