



Safety and Health at Work

SMALL ENTERPRISES



Identifying hazards and strains
Implementing measures

English

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Foreword

Supporting small enterprises in the area of employee protection is a core task of the national prevention services.

The main responsibility for implementing the prevention lies in the hands of the entrepreneur. As the correct implementation of this task demands fundamental knowledge, it is essential that appropriate information material is available to the entrepreneur. This brochure is intended to contribute to this requirement.

As this brochure is drawn up in the form of checklists, it should facilitate entrepreneurs in small enterprises to determine hazards in their facilities and lay down measures to eliminate hazardous situations.

Typical hazards are shown and measures for their elimination proposed.

This brochure represents a procedural documentation compiled on an international level. It was jointly compiled by members of the Vereinigung der Metall-Berufsgenossenschaften, the Asociación para la Prevención de Accidentes and the Allgemeine Unfallversicherungsanstalt. The work was supported by members of the ISSA sections

- iron and metalworking industry,
- electricity, gas, distant heating, water, and
- machinery safety.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all those who contributed towards compiling this brochure.

I wish all readers every success and hope this brochure will support the implementation under the motto “Safety is entrusted to the boss”.

Generaldirektor Mag. Helmut Pichler
Chairman of the Section Iron and Metalworking Industry

Introduction

Initial situation:

In small enterprises the entrepreneur is closely involved in all activities. He is the “key figure” and carries the responsibility for his enterprise – even for safety and health.

The entrepreneur is the addressee for the requirements regarding many legal standards. For this reason he is obliged to take care of the safety and health of his employees, as is mandatory according to the Framework Directive on Health and safety at Work*) and the respective individual directives for all enterprises in the EU.

The challenge:

Even if the entrepreneur – depending on the national regulations – is supported by internal and external experts in carrying out his duties regarding safety and health, it is in all cases important and essential for him to be well versed in the appropriate basic knowledge.

This brochure affords an overview of possible hazards and strains in enterprises. It assists the entrepreneur in overcoming challenges he has to face.

Objective of the brochure:

Based on the as-is situation, all measures regarding safety and health are to be determined in the enterprise. Determining the as-is situation must be carried out systematically and cover all areas, if the objective “safe workplaces” is to be achieved. This brochure enables the entrepreneur to determine hazards and strains at individual workplaces of his enterprise, to recognise shortcomings and define the required measures. The brochure does not, of course, cover every hazard or strain that may occur in the enterprise. It depicts typical hazards and strains that occur in practice.

Assistance and consultation:

One can not deal with all aspects of health and safety above. Certain tasks must be handled by external consultants. Experts from the fields of safety engineering and occupational medicine can be considered, as well as independent safety specialists and experts from the various individual professional fields. The results of the consultations are documented and implemented in the enterprise.

Documentation:

The investigation and assessment of hazards which according to the frame directive is mandatory for every enterprise must be documented. For this purpose the varying requirements in the individual EU countries need to be considered.

Benefit:

This brochure is meant to make the entrepreneur aware of how he can actively involve him-self in the improvement of health and safety in his enterprise.

When the entrepreneur of a small enterprise is convinced of the importance of his personal involvement regarding safety and health, then targeted necessary measures are implemented, employees motivated and positive effects regarding economic efficiency and competitiveness of the enterprise will materialise.

Experience:

Safety and health and economic efficiency go hand in hand. Entrepreneurs having “invested” in safety and health for their workers confirm the importance of safety and health for the success of their enterprises. The effects of, for example, improvements in safety standards contribute directly towards lowering overheads by a reduction of employee absenteeism. And the performance of an employee privileged to work in a safe and healthy work environment is apt to be better – which, in turn, means higher profitability.

*) Council Directive 89/391/EEC “on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work”