

Manager/Supervisor Risk Management

#160–7/23/13

A twice weekly e-mail training for YCPARMIA members

TOPIC: SAFETY – INCONSISTENT SAFETY COMMITTEES

As a reminder, the purpose of this short series of topics is to address traditional safety practices where some of our members come up short. Possibly the most serious safety issue is the inconsistent nature of a number of our Safety Committees. Addressing this issue represents the proverbial low hanging fruit; with a minimum of effort and little cost, industry practices suggest that there is a probability of significant benefits. All that is really required is a more focused structure, and a consistent effort.

The biggest issue facing some of the Safety Committees is confusion of purpose. The Safety Committee has no managerial responsibility for safety; it does not manage the entity's safety programs. Its purpose is to:

- Gather information,
- Recognize issues, and suggest possible solutions, and
- To advise the individual that does have overall responsibility and authority for the entity's safety programs.

Its role is to communicate bottom up, and to accept direction top down.

Its product is the written report that it makes to management.

Management can use it as a tool to accomplish certain tasks that management directs.

It is a conduit of information from the field to the person in charge.

Failure to make meaningful formal written reports to the manager with safety responsibility and authority essentially negates the purpose for Safety Committee's existence. Similarly, management's failure to communicate direction back to the Safety Committee can cause it to lose focus and value.

It is not enough that an entity has a Safety Committee; it has to actually meet, function, and report to have credibility with workers and management.

Next Topic: Safety – Inconsistent Safety Committees, Continued