

Manager/Supervisor Risk Management

#163–8/1/13

A twice weekly e-mail training for YCPARMIA members

TOPIC: SAFETY – INCONSISTENT SAFETY COMMITTEES, CONTINUED

As explored in the last three offerings, the most serious concerns involving Safety Committees are:

- Failure to fulfill its role by submitting written reports to upper management;
- Failure to have a cross-section of workers represented on the committee; and
- Failure to meet regularly.

The last area of concern involves planning and organization. There are certain agenda items that should always be present, including:

- Management’s response to the previous Committee report,
- Accident investigations,
- Inspection reports,
- Policy reviews and updates,
- Unfinished business from the previous meetings, and
- Communicated concerns.

Most of these items require work prior to the Committee meeting. Materials for the accident investigations need to be accumulated and if necessary enhanced for the Committee’s consideration. Investigations need to be conducted and reports made. Chosen policies need to be reviewed with recommended updates. The quality of the Safety Committee’s work is largely determined by its activity before and after the meeting.

The problem that some Safety Committees face is that duties are not delegated, and too much of the responsibility falls on one or two individuals. Work on the Safety Committee is “extra duty” that is in addition to the employee’s normal work load. It will often be the last thing that these people get to, so investigations, inspections and reviews just don’t get done. As a result, YCPARMIA has always recommended that:

- Leadership of the Safety Committee rotate after a short (one year) term;
- That someone be charged with coordinating accident investigations;
- That someone be charged with coordinating inspections;
- That someone be charged with organizing policy reviews;
- That someone be responsible for creating the written Committee report, and
- That the work be spread among all Committee members.

It has been argued that this is over-structuring a small committee, but the alternative has often been the overburdening of selected members, and issues not getting addressed.

Next Topic: Safety – YCPARMIA’s Role