

CSB Hearing about safety performance indicators as an effective way to prevent accidents

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Mr. Furre began in the Norwegian union, SAFE, in 1996.

He was first elected to the federation as an organization secretary in the tariff section. At the SAFE Congress in 2000, he was elected as the second deputy leader with responsibility for HSE in SAFE and he has represented the union in several tri-partite arenas and forums in the Norwegian oil industry.



SAFE is a trade union for personnel working in the Norwegian oil & energy sector, onshore and offshore, established in 1977. The union organizes 11.000 workers in the Norwegian oil industry.

SAFE is a strong union that is capable of safeguarding the rights of personnel in this industry. The union is committed to safety, maintaining focus on the working environment, and works hard to insure that the phrase “An inclusive working life”, used by the Norwegian government, should be more than just fine words. SAFE has managed to put high focus on HSE and especially working environment matters in the petroleum industry.

Presentation by Roy Erling Furre

First, on behalf of SAFE, I will give my regards to CSB for the invitation.

Key points in the presentation:

- Establish and use tri-partite arenas
- Establish working environment committees and safety delegate system based on union and collective system
- Address the importance of job safety and unions
- Secure good quality of the indicators
- Avoid use of individual incentives towards outcome of indicator or weighting of HSE reports
- Honesty and transparency around incentives and bonus
- Standardize the reporting and weighting of incidents
- Issues regarding power and relations between employer, employees, subcontractors and other stakeholders

SAFE's most important arenas to give our influence to collect and indicators in Norwegian oil industry are through the risk level project, www.ptil.no/RNNP and through the participation in Safety Forum, our most important tripartite arena, where all the parts is represented. It is necessary that all parts give their input to this work.

Most of us occupied with safety in the oil industry are eager to increase the quality of the indicators we use. A major problem is that many external forces are influencing the quality. Banks, insurance companies, boards and governments ask for lost time injuries statistics and indicators, (LTA/LTI). Combined with behavior-based safety, where rewards and punishment is used, the LTA numbers is highly underreported. Therefore LTA/LTI is the most useless indicator we have. Sadly, it is also the most used indicator!

Deepwater Horizon had 7 years without any reported LTA. This gave us no indication that a major accident would occur the same day as the prizes was to be handed out.

When an indicator is important to the reputation of a company, the human resource department, HR, starts using personal bonuses and incentives in order to make the indicator look good. This will always lead to underreporting and manipulation of the indicator.

A close involvement of the unions, tri-partite arenas, safety delegates and workers, is a good way to counteracting indicator manipulation.

What if a parking guard would get bonus if there were zero/few wrong parking's? He probably would not write so many parking fines as he should! The same could happen in an investigation, were you shall weight the severity of an incident. If someone in the investigation team can get, or keep a personal bonus when the incident is reported as a minor incident, then the chance for manipulation will increase.

Recommendation: We need to demand honesty and transparency around any payments or bonus to anyone involved in reporting, or evaluating the report and weighting of incidents and indicators.

Getting good indicators:

We are always in need for new and better indicators and ways to improve the ones we already got. We need to keep away the human resource, HR department and their incentives, in order to secure the quality of the indicators.

Some new good indicators to avoid major accidents could be:

- 1 Well control and well incidents, kicks
- 2 The level of, and resources used on training and competence
- 3 Working hours and fatigue management. The understanding of human limitations is important to avoid accidents.
- 4 Working environment: the activities to avoid hearing damage, chemical exposure, and ergonomics will tell us something about the quality of the HSE activities in any company.
- 5 The level of union and workforce involvement together with transparency will be an indication on what quality we can expect of the indicators.
- 6 Backlog of maintenance
- 7 Make an indicator measuring the relevance between causes and measures

The quality of investigations and the competence of the investigation team are important when it comes to good learning and improving based on the report. In Norway, we have often seen that there is no connection between causes and actions, causes of events, and the measures that is used afterwards. Inexpensive solutions as rewriting procedures are often chosen instead of improving the direct and underlying causes of the accident or incident. If the causes are technical, lack of planning, lack of competence, then these lacks is often not corrected.

Recommendation: An indicator measuring the relevance between causes and measures could be useful in order to see if the causes are corrected, as they should be.

Standardize the reporting and comparison of indicators:

Most companies have their own ways to do reporting and weighting of the incidents. A new standard developed in a tri-partite arena, could be useful to do the reporting in the same way in all our companies. This will make any comparison or analyzes easier.

Issues regarding power and relations between employer, employees, subcontractors and other stakeholders

If the difference in strength is too big, it will make it difficult to bring up HSE issues. Who will dear to push the stop button when big costs is involved?

By giving the safety delegates more authority, and right to stop work, it is possible to level out some of the differences in power.

The importance of job safety and unions:

In order to stop dangerous work and bad conditions, it is important with good job safety. This will prevent a worker from being sacked if he/she intervenes with unsafe conditions.

Good workforce involvement is always necessary to get involvement and information from those who are “hands on” in the operations.

In order to make it safer for a worker to be outspoken and involved, the HSE involvement must be based on safety delegates based in union representation. It is much easier to speak out on behalf of the collective workforce than on behalf of yourself alone.

The Norwegian Safety delegate system can only function because all parts want it, and support the system. It is based on our very good working environment act, strong unions and the safety delegate`s right to stop unsafe activities, no matter how expensive it could be. It is forbidden to retaliate against a safety delegate.

The working environment committees are among the most important arenas inside the companies. They shall study any HSE reports, accident reports, and can give advice and demands to the company management in order to improve HSE.

Where to anchor the good work and processes:

Tri-partite arenas between the organizations of the unions, companies and government are necessary to bring up, and solve the challenges in the industry.

Recommendation: The oil industry in all countries should establish a central tri-partite arena as the Norwegian Safety Forum, in order to let all parties in the HSE work come together to debate what measures and improvements that needs to be addressed. In order to make this happen, a political demand is necessary.

Thank you very much for the attention!