

ONE DAY SEMINAR ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

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The above seminar was held on 24 April 2004 at IEM Conference Hall A in Bangunan Ingenieur, Petaling Jaya. A total of 22 participants attended the seminar, which featured 5 speakers from the Occupational Health and Safety industry. The seminar was aimed at giving participants a broad but comprehensive education in the legal requirements, selection, operation and maintenance of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) for industrial, construction and other occupational uses.

The first speaker was En. Anuar bin Mohd. Mokhtar, the Deputy Director for Industrial Health at the Department of Safety (DOS). His talk "PPE – Legal Requirements" started by describing the principle of personal protection: that is to prevent injuries by acting as a barrier against hazards. PPE also encompasses items such as life jackets, buoyancy aids, safety harnesses and high visibility clothing. He emphasized that a worker's safety and health should be of prime concern to employers. He added that other methods of controlling risk are generally preferred, before resorting to PPE.

En. Anuar also covered the regulations and requirements of the Factories & Machinery Act 1967 and the Occupational Safety & Health Act 1994 and the procedures for approval of PPE. He highlighted that the use of PPE necessitated the implementation of a comprehensive program to ensure effective protection of the worker against



risks and that legal requirements are the minimum standards to be complied with.

Next, representatives from manufacturers in the Occupational Health and Safety industry talked about the various types of protection available. Mr Kim Kek Seong, a 3M Technical Specialist covered Eye, Face, Head, Hearing and Respiratory Protection, while Ms Yvonne Wong, a 3M Accounts Specialist deliberated on Ergonomics. Mr Chan Cheng Cheong, a Regional Sales Manager for TopSafe spoke about safety footwear; while Mr Yeo Keng Seong, the South East Asia Territory Manager of the Occupational Healthcare Division for Ansell Healthcare spoke about safety gloves.



During this time, case studies of incorrect and non-usage of PPE as well as National Accident Statistics were reviewed, followed by the design and utilisation of each type of PPE. The useful Four-Step Method for protection can be described as follows:

1. Identify the hazards
2. Ascertain the hazards' effects on the worker
3. Select the PPE
4. Use and maintain PPE

Samples of PPE were passed around with individual demonstrations of the fitting and usage of certain items on each participant.

All sessions were lively and stimulating with participants asking many questions. Further elaboration and discussion were requested on various aspects including the DOSH approval process for PPE and decibel calculations for Hearing Protection. Participants warmly applauded the speakers as a gesture of thanks and mementos were presented to the speakers for their invaluable contribution and support of IEM G&S.

NOTE TO READERS:

Mr. Kim Kek Seong's article on Respiratory Protection will be featured in the next issue.