

SAFE TIME

Establishing the Line



by Ir. Shum Keng Yan

NOW that the person-in-charge is in place, and the Safety and Health Policy and Safety Management System framework has been set up by the management, there is a need to establish the safety and health related business risks and determine how to deal with it. I have taken the liberty to add "Environmental" and "Reputational" into the concept. In order to arrive at our business strategies, we will need to take into account the following:

- 1) Business Risk Assessment (Reputational, Environmental, Health and Safety Risks)
- 2) Corporate Values, Vision and Policies
- 3) Legislation

This can be represented graphically as indicated below:



In addressing business issues pertaining to safety and health, the management needs to run a risk assessment on the business processes. Using the analysis from the risk assessment, we then need to consider what are the corporate requirements on the actions that we need to take.

The next step is to then look at what the local regulations stipulate. Frequently, there are differences in, for example, the Corporate Safety and Health Programme Requirements versus what the local regulations state. The process is to then take the stricter of the whole equation and taking into account Practicability (refer to the October 2010 issue of JURUTERA) to arrive at an informed decision.

This way, we are able to make a balanced decision during the planning of our business. We can also take the appropriate control measures to match the analysis that we have done. Next, let us have a quick look at our own readiness.

- (a) Corporate values, vision and policies are usually in place for multinational companies and large corporations. If we have yet to put this in place, we need to do it in order to set the guiding principles. The Safety and Health Policy is one such instrument.
- (b) We have already discussed EHS Risk Management principles in the articles that were published in the May 2010 to August 2010 issues of JURUTERA. This is the foundation that needs to be established.
- (c) The third part is the legal requirements. We need to understand the legal requirements and how it impacts our business (and the respective functions within the business). One such tool is the Legal Register. I will discuss this in the next article.

So let us get started in determining if we have actually looked at our Safety and Health business risks properly. Share your risky moves at pub@jem.org.my. ■

Far too often, Senior Managers tend to take the least stringent of the above 3 to arrive at the control measures. Is it then a case of shortsightedness in addressing safety and health issues? Perhaps the concept is too deep for those who are too close to it.