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## SAFETY COMMITTEE ORIENTATION NOTES

**Abstract:** These Safety Committee Orientation Notes address the Mission Goal of the Safety Program and the Safety Committee. Included in the Mission Goal there should be a definition of Safety Performance, the written health and safety program, how to identify and monitor hazards, abatement methods, and how to identify benchmarks to evaluate effectiveness.

### **Mission Goal of Safety Program & Safety Committee -**

*A well-conceived and defined mission goal will help keep the Safety Committee focused and properly drive appropriate activities. It will help you from losing track, stalling, and getting lost.*

It clarifies the role of the Committee, usually as a conduit of information, and driver for setting goals, agenda, actions, reviews, and assessment summaries of its efforts. This in turn drives the Safety Program.

- The Committee decides *what information it should look at and for.*
- It reviews this information to *determine the status and goals.*
- It creates *and follows* an agenda of activities to: better monitor performance; determine underlying root causes of losses, incidents, accidents and inefficiencies; *address underlying root causes; assess the effectiveness of actions taken.*
- It *communicates* its activities and findings both upstream and downstream.

### **Define Safety Performance -**

Consider the meaning of this term. It is not nearly the absence of losses or incidents. Those are merely a symptom of good safety performance. Safety performance is the *strong and enduring presence of proactive activities*, as defined by a *positive safety culture*. It encompasses: the review of protocols to ensure that they are indeed optimal; the consistent adherence to proper protocols; the continued vigilance, awareness, involvement and participation of all individuals throughout the organization on maintaining and improving work systems, plans, and habits.

On a practical level, it involves identifying and describing actual work behaviors that is desirable. Train and strongly coach and motivate for these behaviors through recognition, simple but effective incentive systems, and good supervisory coaching is essential in this respect.

### **The Written Health & Safety Program**

Ensure that the Committee is in alignment with the written Health & Safety Program, which the Committee itself must be defined and organized from. Meanwhile, the Committee's work can in turn shape and mold the written Program.

### **Identify & Monitor Hazards**

- Self Inspections
- Subject Specific Inspections
- Employee Feedback via Suggestions & Perception Surveys
- Close Review of Losses & Accident/Incident Reports

### **Abatement Methods**

- Employee Training or Re-Training
- Employee Counseling
- Improve Work Procedures
- Improve Equipment
- Improve Logistics
- Improve Organization
- Improve Communication
- Improve Teamwork
- Increased Supervision

### **System of Follow-Up**

- Did the corrective action take place?
- Was it done correctly in a timely manner?
- Was it effective? If so, what else can we apply this to?
- If not, what should we do next?

### **Identify Benchmarks to Evaluate Effectiveness**

- In-house assessment tools (OSHA PEP, Program Evaluation Profile)
- Comprehensive Checklist
- Loss data (beware of how to interpret these)
- Workers' Compensation Insurance Data
- Employee Perception Survey Results
- Review of issues & numbers resolved, and pending and average time taken to resolve