

HSS Safety Improvement Task Group
April 9, 2009 9:00am – 11:30am
20300 Century Blvd., Ste. 105 Germantown, MD

Attendees:

Mark Petts
Candy Sanchez
Mary Haughey
Ken Stein
Dave Smith
Bert Davis

Not Present:

Sherry Main
Cecelia Kenney

Call to order

9:08am meeting started.

Candy called the meeting to order and roll call was taken.

Review and approval of minutes

It was agreed that the following changes needed to be made to the meeting minutes from the 3/26/09 meeting:

Remove “video” from the minutes where it states that team members are to review the “FEOSH training video” because it was a slide show, and not an actual video.

Mary stated that her original intention regarding the combination of communication and education should be combined, but we agreed to keep them separate, so that was corrected as well.

Changes were also made to the charter’s “Membership” section via a change to the meeting minutes. A request was made to clear up confusion by changing “The group agreed to revise the charter to state in the membership section that the union representative will not vote ...” to “The group agreed to revise the charter to state in the membership section that the union representative will vote ...” and to remove the sentence that says, “ There are HSS employees who are members of the union who do have a vote.”

Mark made a motion to approve the minutes as amended and Ken seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Review and approval of agenda

After agreeing to remove “video” from “Discussion on FEOSH training video” in item a. in the Old Business section of the agenda, and updating item b. to indicate that Mary is looking into this more, as she is trying to decipher what it says, the group agreed to approve the agenda as revised.

Old Business

Education/Training

Mary indicated that a number of people have expressed difficulty with finding information on DOE webpages because there’s so much information on the pages. She stated that we need a better way to actually find things. DOE search engine is not user-friendly. Search engine may be a systemic issue/problem. Mary stated that it’s like having a library without a card catalog. All the info is there, but there’s not clear path on how to find it.

Candace asked the question about whether or not we had identified training resources. Mary stated that Arnold Guevara had agreed to work with us. We probably have training all over the place, but no central repository to access it all.

Dave Smith stated that the major sites have their own training program for FEOSH regarding COOP, emergency response, etc. because they are site-specific.

A discussion of the revised goals from 3-26-09 followed. Mark suggested that we put the FEOSH training into a .pdf file and review it in one of our meetings. Mary stated that she’d like to add hotlinks at the top of the webpage for specific topics. Mark agreed. He felt we could include several hyperlinks or a table of contents for those hotlinks. Bert stated that he is working with Dave on a SOP on hazard reporting to make it easy to report. Currently, they are working on a flowchart to use when an employee is injured. It will be about 2-3 weeks until that is completed. Mary asked if we go through drills on how to handle when an employee gets injured. Dave stated that he is not aware of drills for this. Bert suggested that the flowchart could be a “job aid” and be located on the desktop. We could also add an “employee safety info button” to the main DOE page to get to the FEOSH webpage in just 2 clicks. Mary and Candace both liked the idea of a desktop link. Mary doesn’t like hand-outs, but thinks it would be good for hall monitors. Dave reminded the group not to underestimate the power we have as a group. If we make recommendations, Glenn Podonsky will probably go with it. Bert will follow up with the request. Mary and Candy are in agreement. Mary also stated that she would like to see training for the union board and stewards.

Next a discussion took place about the FEOSH training. Candy stated that she was impressed with it and asked if we could make it mandatory. Dave stated that it already is mandatory, and was made so about 18 months ago. This was changed from an employee

orientation course to mandatory training. We should also have an annual DOECAST, which was done in August last year. This training has been mandatory for one year.

Candy asked about drills and lessons learned. She wanted to know where we could access that info. Dave stated that info such as that could be accessed via DOE summaries, accident reports, etc. to find info on reportable injuries. There is also a lessons learned database. Dave suggested that we extend an invitation to Mr. Roege to attend the next meeting regarding lessons learned so we understand how the database works.

HS-30 puts safety bulletins together to push info out to employees regarding lessons learned.

Mark will send the link to Candy.

Mary mentioned that reviewing drills and lessons learned gives you a memory tool because you're physically engaged in a drill rather than recalling something you've read.

Dave mentioned that drills could be given that are similar to CPR or first aid classes (resuscitate, call, do compressions, etc.) The question came up as to who is trained for CPR/AED administration. That may be something else we should look into. Dave gave an example that one department had red crosses on office doors so anyone in the hallway can find help quickly and easily. HSS should recognize those who take voluntary training on safety as people who go above and beyond.

Candy mentioned that 0 out of 130 in her offices are First Aid/CPR certified. It was also mentioned that these courses meet the Good Samaritan clauses for all surrounding states (MD, VA, DC, WV) around DC. We need to encourage folks to take this training. The certification is good for 2 years. A shortened refresher course may be available, but there is no existing contract at this point in time to provide this training.

We need an inventory of what training courses we have available and set targets for how many out of our population should be certified and then communicate who is certified, such as by using a red cross on the door or having a list of AED-qualified people next to the AED. Se should do exercise drills every couple of months.

Safety Evaluation Process

It was stated that there is a website for people to put in a request for ergonomic evaluations. The problem is that people have trouble finding it on the FEOSH website. She also stated that we could leave cards at the nurse's office regarding ergonomics. Bert mentioned that there is a walk-down of the workspaces being done by Bert and Dave. Plan to identify people who need immediate ergonomic help. To develop the SOP, we will task people to do things and when they should be done. Then, brief managers that we're ready to hand everything off and include a timeline, etc. It should be about 2-3 months to hand off.

Assessments – for self-initiated, this involves using the websites to try and figure out on our own what might help. For formal, this involves managers recommending formal ergonomic workstation evaluations.

Employees should be encouraged to alternate between sitting and standing regularly. Managers should know that employees need regular breaks (sit, stand, walk, stretch, etc.) DOE VPP webpage has example programs from sites, such as “istretch” in Idaho. Time intervals for moving/stretching are different for all people and is variable with how your workstation is set up.

Communication

Ergonomics we addressed

Lack of communication

Tracking system: Microsoft Sharepoint process, put up concern or safety event to include concern and what the progress is on resolving it. People are more likely to use a product if they can see that it's successful. System is set up for testing for FEOSH group. Group is evaluation it now. Hope to pilot it in 30 days and get comments for improvement.

10:10-10:20am break

Brief discussion held on feeding info to HSS managers for safety meetings by using safety shares at beginning of each meeting.

To encourage managers to have a safety share at meetings, we need to recommend that that be included in their annual review/goals for managers. That is something quantifiable that we could set metrics for.

Regarding pop-up boxes- Ray Holmer to be asked by Bert or Dave to see if it's possible to do. We can use pop-up boxes to deliver web addresses to employees. Ken suggested that maybe we should have the system require a couple of safety slides before allowing logon.

Employee Involvement

FEOSH training shows how to report and possibly link to the system that is being set up by Bert and Dave. Recommendations by the task group could be:

- Setting up a Standing Safety and Health Committee
- Rewards System – Candy shared this possibility with co-workers and they thought it was a good idea. Work will fall to FEOSH group or a manager who volunteers to take this on.

Dave mentioned that we need to also set goals and methods for measuring accomplishing those goals.

Facilities Management

Ken thinks we should draft an invitation to the Facilities Management Head to get info. We should also include the cafeteria to be evaluated, as well as the water. We should ask Facilities Management if they have a self-assessment, preventive maintenance program.

We need to have the buildings managed properly or we'll all get sick or injured. If Facilities Management refuses to cooperate, then HS-1 can contact MA.

Ken is to draft an invitation to Facilities Management Head and give to Candy. We need to get HS-1 concurrence.

Mary mentioned that, regarding clutter, we used to have warehouses for old furniture, but don't have one anymore. Candy mentioned that for excess furniture, we could go through GSA excess.

NFPA – this is a national fire protection standard violation if furniture is in the hallway and not in compliance with required egress measurements. It was recommended that we send a letter to MA, suggesting that furniture no longer be stored in the hallway anymore, and get HS-1 to sign. H wing on ground floor in Forrestal is notorious for having furniture/bins, etc. in the hall. It was suggested that we invite HS-1 and MA to come to a meeting in the H-wing to see the conditions. If we don't get improvement by contacting the lower levels, we should kick it up to the Secretary. It was also mentioned that we should give them a chance to explain/make improvements before making an example out of the situation.

The question came up about who is in charge of furniture moves, and the answer was that it would be a counterpart of Cherylynne Williams's within MA.

Discussion with MA – we need to find out who we should send info to regarding constraints on furniture in hallway and combine with checklist for moves. It was decided that a letter should be sent to Cherylynne's boss, Brian Coslow, via a memo under Candy's signature. Ken will draft the memo and forward to Candy.

Mark to inventory what's in the hallway at Forrestal and let Ken know so he can include it in his memo to MA. Bert to do the same for Germantown. The tone of the memo should be that we'd like to communicate with MA to figure out how we can solve the problem of furniture in the hallway. There is an Nation Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards specify the minimum width of exit access (e.g., hallways). The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) also has requirements for the wheelchair bound—it may be over 60 inches. Dave may have the ADA measurement and will email it to Mark.

Change to charter's voting and quorum section

In the sentence, "Each task group member shall have one vote" take out "with the exception of the bargaining unit representative(s)."

Asbestos issue

For areas that are currently being cleared of asbestos, each evening, they take small pieces of asbestos from ceiling while employees are still in workspaces. The areas utilize plastic sheeting and HEPA vacuums to contain the asbestos. Levels are below .01. The

procedure includes cleaning the material and double bagging it, and finally sending it to a special dumpsite for hazardous waste.

GSA must have asbestos remediation plans at each building that contains asbestos. This information only seems to be available if an employee requests it.

It was agreed that a Q&A session with MA would be a good thing to get some clarification on issues.

New Business

There are no new comments from members regarding co-workers' comments.

Regarding the next meeting, it was agreed the next meeting would take place on April 27th for 9:00am-11:30am. Ken felt that we needed more time, such as from 9am-2pm, but the group felt that would be a long stretch of time. It was recommended that, in order to reduce the amount of time used on approving minutes and the agenda, that those things be handled via email prior to the meeting so that the task group could take full advantage of the time available. Everyone agreed to this. Any changes to the minutes that members feel are necessary are to be emailed to Vicki Kelly, Candy Sanchez and Mark Petts so that Vicki may make changes and communicate with the group.

The group settled on three main goals:

1. Communication – things we want more visible on webpages.
2. Training – Definition of subject matter for training covered.
3. Employee Involvement – tie in issue regarding recognition program to include peer awards as well as manager awards. Also include Sharepoint software.

What's next?

(round bullets are for items to be completed. Check marks are items that have been completed.)

- Bert and Mark to send info to Ken to enable him to draft letters to Facilities Management and MA
- Ken to draft letters to Facilities Management and to MA Dave Smith to invite Mr. Roege for next meeting to discuss the operating experience program
- ✓ Vicki to update charter and send to Candy
- ✓ Candy to sign charter and fax to Dave Smith's office for HS-1 signature
- ✓ Vicki to send revised minutes from 3/26/09 meeting to Mark and Candy and to be posted to the website
- Dave to send ADA guidelines for aiseways to Mark
- ✓ Mark to send link re: lessons learned to Candy
- ✓ Mark to set up call for next meeting
- ✓ Vicki to secure meeting room for next meeting in Germantown
- Candy to send email regarding deliverables for next meeting (Vicki to draft)
- ✓ Vicki to ask Mark about getting minutes posted to the website

Next meeting to be held Monday, April 27, 2009 from 9-11:30am in Germantown. Call-in number will be 301-903-6065. The agenda will be circulated for comments/changes.

Ken moved to adjourn the meeting and Mark seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 11:25am.