Assisting companies with occupational risk assessment and the implementation of an appropriate prevention plan

A case of the National Social Insurance Fund for Employees

National Social Insurance Fund for Employees
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Summary

The response capabilities of the National Social Insurance Fund for Employees (Caisse nationale des assurances sociales des travailleurs salariés (CNAS)) in the area of prevention of occupational accidents and diseases is based mainly on a knowledge of the world of work and the risks likely to affect workers.

Since 2010 in order to increase efficiency in promoting the prevention of occupational risks, the CNAS has implemented a new targeted approach to assisting companies that have recorded a significant number of occupational accidents over a period of three years (2007 to 2009 for the 2010 programme).

This practice, which aims to reduce occupational accidents and diseases provides customised assistance to employers through: funding studies that evaluate occupational risks by measuring work environments; informing and raising the awareness of workers on site of identified risks, and providing support for the company during implementation of the prevention plan.

These actions are carried out by the CNAS in collaboration with contractual experts.

A posteriori monitoring is carried out by CNAS prevention auditors.

CRITERIA 1

What was the issue/problem/challenge addressed by your good practice?

Analysis of statistical information on occupational accidents and diseases collected by the CNAS has revealed that some companies have had a significant number of accidents (in frequency and/or severity) for several years and generate considerable social and financial costs.

This problem prompted the CNAS to devise a targeted assistance programme for these companies, aimed at reducing occupational accidents, enforcing hygiene, safety and occupational medicine regulations, and emphasising or introducing a culture of prevention at these companies.

CRITERIA 2

What were the main objectives and the expected outcomes?

This practice is primarily aimed at improving occupational safety and maintaining a healthy labour force. The objective is to reduce 2 to 50% of occupational accidents in the targeted companies as rapidly as possible, as well as lowering the related expenses.
After identification of the causes of the frequency and severity of occupational accidents, other expected results are:

- implementation of the prevention plan developed and adopted in conjunction with the company during the assistance programme;
- application of health and safety legislation by the company;
- effective prevention bodies within the company (Health and Safety section, inter-company H&S committee);
- an improvement of worker awareness of the risks involved and how to protect themselves.

**CRITERIA 3**

**What is the innovative approach/strategy followed to achieve the objectives?**

After identification of the most accident-prone companies in the statistical database, the CNAS prepares an annual action plan and calls in specialists in the area of occupational risk prevention (prevention institutions and organisations, such as the National Institute for the Prevention of Occupational Risks (Institut national de prévention des risques professionnels (INPRP)), the Organisation for Prevention in Building, Public and Hydraulic Works (Organisme de prévention dans les activités du bâtiment, des travaux publics et de l'hydraulique (OPREBATPH)), the Scientific and Technical Research Centre into Physico-chemical Analysis (Centre de recherche scientifique et technique en analyse physico-chimique (CRAPC)), or the National Labour Institute (Institut national du travail (INT))) to evaluate and assist the company as well as offering CNAS-funded training.

The programme developed by the CNAS has three priorities for intervention which are: assessing the risks through measurement of chemical pollutants and physical environments; providing information about and raising worker and employer awareness of identified risks and the necessary means of prevention; guiding the company through the implementation process of the prevention plan.

Its implementation is dependent on:

- gathering information on work situations at the companies concerned;
- establishing a customized diagnosis for each company and each identified risk situation;
- investigation of workplaces considered "dangerous";
- notification the employers concerned of results by the Director General of the CNAS;
• providing information and raising awareness of workers and employers at the workplace of the company concerned;

• monitoring and guidance of companies, especially during implementation of the recommendations and in establishment of prevention bodies;

• training staff responsible for prevention in the case of companies with limited financial means.
Illustration: Assistance approach for companies

**Phase 1: Planning**

Targeting the most accident-prone companies (CNAS occupational accidents and diseases statistical database)

Prior monitoring of the company by CNAS prevention auditors
Establishment of specifications and agreements with stakeholders

**Phase 2: Implementation at company**

Occupational risk assessment using metrology

Delivery (by the CNAS) of evaluation documents, measurements and recommendations to the employer

Informing and raising awareness of workers about the identified risks and the means of protecting themselves

Assisting companies with the implementation of the prevention plan

**CRITERIA 4**

**Have the resources and inputs been used in an optimal way to achieve the set objectives and the expected outcomes? Please specify what internal or external evaluations of the practice have taken place and what impact/results have been identified/achieved so far.**

The assistance programme is funded through the prevention fund administered by the CNAS. It consists of a portion of employer contributions earmarked for the financing of occupational-risk prevention actions taken by the Fund. The assistance programme for companies is implemented using the resources available to the CNAS (occupational accidents and diseases statistical database, and human resources of structures for the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases), contracted partners (expertise, metrics and information support), and the companies themselves (human and logistic resources).

Combining the resources of the various stakeholders to implement the programme in question allows an optimal level of effectiveness in achieving its main objectives.

The CNAS occupational risk prevention mission is carried out under the auspices of a commission for occupational risks. The commission is represented on the board of directors of the CNAS and:

- approves the action plan to be implemented;
- approves the budget needed to finance the activities of the prevention fund;
- evaluates the actions taken and the monitoring of results by CNAS services.

The action plan is submitted to the board of directors for approval and adoption.
This procedure has been repeated each year since 2010 and has benefited 185 companies using occupational accident and disease statistics from the previous three years.

Recorded results are considered satisfactory. There has been a reduction in occupational accidents in 75% of the companies implicated in the project, as well as a reduction in their frequency and severity indicators. The subsequent monitoring of the companies by CNAS services has shown an overall improvement in those companies, especially in terms of organization of prevention, working conditions and collective and individual protection of workers.

For greater reliability, the results of action taken in companies during the 2013 programme will be evaluated in 2015.

CRITERIA 5

What lessons have been learned? To what extent would your good practice be appropriate for replication by other social security institutions?

The affirmative action programme focuses targeted actions by companies and aims to reduce occupational accidents and diseases, and the costs generated by these risks. Owing to the high level of expertise on offer, the support process proposes individual guidance to a small number of companies. This is made possible through funding from the CNAS and the synergy between the various prevention stakeholders (the company targeted by the programme, social security agencies, prevention institutes, metrology laboratories and work inspectors) who work together for the success of the programme.

In the long term this investment by the CNAS will bring significant improvement in terms of prevention at the company level which will benefit workers, employers and social security agencies.

This action can be reproduced by social security institutions depending on both the availability of the resources needed to implement the programme and an adequate organisation of the project.