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Developing a Strategy for Tomorrow's World of Work



Henrietta Orban, BAuA

We live in a time of huge economic and social changes. Those require a re-appraisal of objectives and approaches in all areas of government activities in order to ensure future sustainability.

The Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (BAuA) is the specialist authority for the Federal Government of Germany in all matters of safety and health at work. The institute functions as a knowledge service provider for government, industry, social partners and the wider public and it must also become integrated within the comprehensive process of change.

BAuA is a research institution which means that it must adhere to an internationally accepted level of scientific work but also acts as a 'service provider' at the same time providing customer-oriented solutions quickly and reliably. Since such a range of specialist tasks has to be performed, the Federal Institute has to set long-term objectives and focussed elements, to establish priorities, to concentrate resources and build up or expand the relevant competencies. This strategic orientation is one of the most important instruments to ensure its future success as a major player in the national, European and international spheres of activities concerning 'safety and health at work'.

During the long process of internal development and discussion, the employees of BAuA and also the representatives of social interest groups who are members of the Advisory Board of the

Federal Institute and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs were involved in developing the 'Strategies for Tomorrow's World of Work'.

The strategy describes the vision and specific mission of BAuA. It demonstrates the foreseeable effects of strategically significant developments within the national and international framework of action and the major competencies and activities of the specialist authority BAuA on the national and international 'occupational safety and health scene'. On this basis, specialist framework objectives and individual strategic work targets for the next ten years are being set with the strategic focal elements of the work explained in detail. In terms of its content, the strategy of BAuA adheres to the policy programmes of the EU and the Federal Government aimed at improving the quality of work, promoting a culture of prevention and sustainability, safeguarding the competitiveness of European industry. It is geared primarily to maintaining and promoting health, employment and competitiveness in a changing world of work.

It is intended that the strategy will not only form a basis for establishing the programmatic focal elements, but that it will also underpin the long-term orientation framework for the allocation of human and financial resources and the corresponding personnel and organisational development within the organisation. In particular, it is also intended to help enhance the central role and integration of BAuA in German, European and international occupational safety and health and to help ensure the future success of common social and economic policy endeavours.

Improving quality and productivity at work: Community strategy 2007-12 on health and safety at work

The new five-year strategy for health and safety at work has been adopted by the Commission. It sets out a series of actions at European and national levels in different areas. One of the main priorities is better **identifying and assessing potential new risks** through more research and exchange of knowledge. It also emphasises that more **coordination between national research programmes** is necessary.

For more information:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/news/news_en.cfm?id=209

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/news/2007/feb/commstrat_en.pdf

Promoting occupational safety and health research in the EU



In 2004, the European Commission requested that the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work should organise a series of seminars with two main, interrelated aims:

1. to reach a consensus on the main priorities for OSH research, so that a clear message could be conveyed by the OSH research community during the FP7 consultation; and
2. to stimulate networking amongst the major OSH research institutes in Europe, and to provide them with practical information on the funding opportunities available within FP7.

The first seminar took place in Bilbao on 1 and 2 December 2005, and brought together representatives from eight European OSH research institutes as well as from UNICE, ILO, the DG Research, the DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and the Agency.

The *Forum* publication "Promoting occupational safety and health research in the EU" summarises the presentations made during that seminar and the round table discussions that followed the individual talks.

http://osha.europa.eu/publications/forum/15/full_publication_en.pdf

A subsequent seminar took place in Berlin, 19-20 October 2006. The next seminar will be organised in the context of the NEW OSH ERA workshop *New and emerging risks in OSH - Overview of European OSH research programmes*, on 14 June 2007, in Warsaw, Poland.

Communication for prevention



Maria Castriotta, Valentina Bucciarelli, ISPEL

The Italian National Institute for Prevention and Safety at Work (ISPEL) has just published the proceedings of a national meeting held in Rome in 2005 on the topic of the "communication" of prevention and of the transfer of OSH research results. The meeting was hosted by the Italian Chamber of Deputies. It was a successful event being organised by the ISPEL magazine *Prevenzione Oggi* and the newsletter of the Italian Regions "Lavoro e Salute".



The aim of the meeting was to emphasize the importance of a shared model of prevention, based on an in-depth awareness of health risks in workplaces and living environments. Acting together for the implementation of a communication plan

means to create a place of interaction between all of the actors involved in the prevention sector, first of all the institutions, the research centres and the new "competent and skilled" citizens, in order to support the establishment of healthy lifestyles and the strengthening of the safety values. Nowadays this concept is increasingly true, indeed, regulations and contracts of labour market are rapidly changing and the difference between responsibility and rights is not very clear.

An effective communication based on different instruments, both technological and traditional ones, is the optimal choice for the institutions that are expected to answer the growing demand for updated, precise and targeted information from workers and citizens. In this way, these subjects can become fully active participants in the prevention system. "Communication for prevention" means to fully realize this cultural process.

Speakers from different backgrounds brought their expertise to bear on a theme considered as strategic at both national and international levels: policy makers (representatives from the Ministry of Health and from the Ministry of Labour and Social Security), trade unions and workers' representatives, OSH managers and experts. Researchers in the different disciplines talked about how research results must be used in an effective way to spread a safety culture and that research projects must be planned in a coordinated way. The presence of Stefano Boy (ETUC-REHS) brought a European dimension to the meeting, and he emphasized the main issues of the new European OSH strategy.

One very successful session in the meeting was the showing of short films, which were made using different movie techniques trying to find new and different ways to stimulate risk perception. All of the participants agreed on the fact that the media, including television and cinema, play a crucial role in the sector of health and safety promotion at work, due to their potential to reach the masses. Greater efforts are needed to make the scientific community forge closer links with the mass media, in order to strengthen relations and propagate their research results.

The afternoon session of the meeting was dedicated to a round table where OSH stakeholders had the opportunity to bring their experiences, evaluations and new ideas to be interviewed by a journalist expert on OSH. The experiment was very successful because OSH topics were considered from a new point of view: in other words, speaking to a wider audience of workers and the general public is very different from discussing technical matters within the "usual" scientific community.

Prevenzione Oggi



The European Risk Observatory: EU experts forecast emerging risks at work



Emmanuelle Brun, EU-OSHA

Workplace environments are continuously changing leading to new and emerging risks for workers that need to be anticipated. In view of this, the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work has established a Risk Observatory and, through its Topic Centre, produced an expert forecast of emerging risks related to health and safety at work (OSH). The forecast was reached through four Delphi surveys on physical, chemical, biological and psychosocial risks. A total of 520 European experts were invited to participate in the surveys and answers were received from 188 respondents i.e. a response rate of 35%.

Many of the risks identified in the forecast reflect a growing concern of **multi-factorial issues**. Call centre jobs are a very good example of multiple exposures: where the staff may be exposed to a combination of interacting risks, such as prolonged sitting at desks poorly adjusted to their personal needs, background noise, inadequate headsets, poor indoor air quality, low job control and intense time schedule pressure. The respondents were particularly worried about combined exposure to **musculoskeletal and psychosocial risk factors**, and how this may have a more devastating effect on workers' health than exposure to one single factor.

With regards to psychosocial emerging risks, the experts highlighted more particularly the **new forms of employment contracts** – such as temporary work, part-time work and on-call work - and **job insecurity, work intensification, high emotional demands** at work, **poor work-life balance** and the **ageing workforce**. The forecast revealed that these are often related to technical and organizational as well as to some socio-cultural, demographic and political changes, including the phenomenon of globalisation.

With respect to dangerous substances, the forecast highlighted **nanoparticles** as a major emerging risk. Relatively little research attention has been paid so far to their health and safety impact. It is known that nanoparticles can enter the human body but their ability to evoke damage and the extent of this damage are still unexplored territory.

Carcinogens, mutagens and substances toxic to reproduction are also of great concern. The most common carcinogens found in the workplace are crystalline silica, diesel exhaust, radon, wood dust and environmental tobacco smoke. Even though there may be considerable amounts of information on dangerous substances available, there is still a need for **mapping of exposure** for even single work activities. This is especially the case in **small and medium sized enterprises** (SMEs) and in **outsourced activities** where chemical risks are viewed as being poorly controlled.

Combined exposure to chemicals and biological agents poses even more problems. Despite the obligation of **assessing**

biological risks ⁽¹⁾, knowledge of those risks is still relatively scanty and the risks are not yet adequately managed in the workplace - especially in SMEs, and in jobs where their presence is an unintentional consequence of the work, for instance in **waste management**. Exposure to biological agents also occurs in traditional workplaces. Indeed, some office workers suffer serious health problems such as asthma and allergies from **indoor moulds**.

Two further major concerns - the OSH risks linked to **pandemics** and to **drug-resistant organisms** in the workplace - illustrate how important it is that biological risks are dealt with in a global manner including cooperation of experts and authorities from many disciplines, e.g. OSH, public health, animal health, environmental protection and food safety.

The expert forecast on emerging physical risks ⁽²⁾ was published in 2005. The report on biological risks will be published during the first half of 2007 and the surveys on chemical and psychosocial risks in the second half of 2007. The results of these forecasts represent the first steps in a process of debate and consolidation with policy-makers and social partners aimed at exploring concrete ways to tackle these novel problems. Future forecasting studies are planned in order to monitor the continual changes in the world of work that may lead to emerging risks. All the results from the Risk Observatory can be read in a separate web site ⁽³⁾.

(1) Directive 2000/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 September 2000 on the protection of workers from risks related to exposure to biological agents at work (seventh individual directive within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC). *Official Journal* L 262, 17/10/2000, pp. 21-45

(2) http://riskobservatory.osha.europa.eu/risks/forecasts/physical_risks/

(3) <http://riskobservatory.osha.eu.int/>

What are “emerging OSH risks”?

An “emerging OSH risk” is any occupational risk that is both “new” and “increasing”.

“New” means that:

- the risk was previously unknown and is caused by new processes, new technologies, new types of workplace, or social or organisational change; **or**,
- a long-standing issue is newly considered as a risk due to a change in social or public perceptions (e.g. stress, bullying); **or**,
- new scientific knowledge allows a long-standing issue to be identified as a risk (e.g. Repetitive-Strain-Injury (RSI) where cases have existed for many years without being identified as RSI because of a lack of scientific knowledge).

The risk is “increasing” if the:

- number of hazards leading to the risk is growing, **or** the
- likelihood of exposure to the hazard leading to the risk is increasing, (exposure level and/or the number of people exposed), **or** the
- effect of the hazard on workers' health is getting worse (seriousness of health effects and/or the number of people affected).

Definition by EU-OSHA

Probing risk trends of new technologies and industrial processes



Marita Luotamo, FIOH
Kai Savolainen, FIOH
Work Environment Development,
New Technologies and Risks team

Following the successful example of the Risk Observatory set up by the European Agency to monitor emerging risks (<http://riskobservatory.osha.eu.int>), the New Technologies and Risks team at the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health have initiated the Risk Observatory survey in Finland with sponsorship from the Finnish Work Environment Fund.

The aim of this Delphi-survey is to identify the possible physical and chemical risks present in Finnish enterprises attributable to the new technologies and/or new processes and to create a database to follow up possible risk trends. One of the goals is to achieve the widest possible applicability of the results of this survey for enterprises all over Finland. Therefore the survey will cover quite a wide range of industrial sectors in Finland. These include the chemical, pulp and paper industries, electronic industries, recycling of electrical equipment, the cosmetics and textile industry, the rubber and leather trades, the food processing industries as well as the telecommunication sector. In addition, the survey will also cover non-ionising and high magnetic field technologies used in hospitals. It is important to clarify in advance if there are any new risks involved with these new technologies and new industrial processes. The survey will also review the nanotechnologies since they are novel technologies which, in addition to standing alone, also provide possibilities for numerous applications in other industry sectors.

Background information will be collected from the scientific open literature, surveys carried out by a number of public and private organizations, as well as searching through the cancer and occupational diseases registers in Finland. The expertise present in the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health concerning allergies, non-ionising radiation and high magnetic fields will be utilized in the survey.

The results of the three-round Delphi-survey will be used when planning and creating the risk data base. Different sized enterprises in Finland as well as the authorities can use the survey results in prevention and managing of these possible new emerging risks. In those cases where there does seem to be indication of possible risk, then risk management measures such as minimising the exposures and/or changing the production processes already during the planning stage could be introduced before it is too late. This would both benefit worker safety and the enterprise as well as guaranteeing safe products for consumers.

The overall success of this survey is guaranteed since it enjoys the cooperation of both employers and trade union organisations as well as worker safety authorities and representatives from enterprises all over Finland.



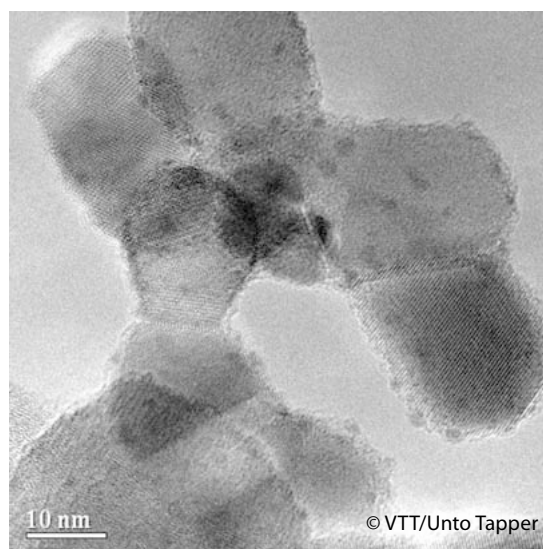
Sponsored by the Finnish Work Environment Fund

The *New Technologies and Risks* Team aims to identify and investigate existing health risks at work as well as potential risks resulting from new technologies and production processes, and in this way contribute to the implementation of the strategic goals of the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. By monitoring and examining constantly changing workplaces and working conditions and by participating in national and international networks the team produces and provides new information on emerging risks which can be implemented to control the hazards and increase the safety of workers.

New Technologies and Risks Team

Nanotechnologies - A challenge for quality work environments and a risk to the health of workers?

Kai Savolainen, FIOH



Nanotechnology is about the use and manufacture of matter at the near atomic scale. These materials are called nanoparticles and today they are used in many industrial processes and are now appearing in novel consumer products. The nanotechnologies utilize recent technological developments that allow the production of nanoparticles and structures. The kinds of industrial applications which make extensive use of these structures are the semiconductor technology and packaging materials. Nanoparticles can also be found today in more than 300 consumer products including cosmetics, drugs, textiles, even in sports wear such as jogging shoes, tennis rackets and balls (Maynard et al., 2006, SCENIHR, 2006).

In the future, companies working with nanotechnologies are expected to reach huge economic benefits; it is estimated that the turnover of manufacturing based on these technologies will exceed 1000 billion € by the year 2011. Typically, the diameter of the nanoparticles being used in these applications ranges from 0.1 to around 100 nm. Metal nanoparticles such as gold or silver particles are 1 nm or more in diameter, and metal oxides such as zinc oxide or titanium dioxide have a diameter of about 10 nm. Due to their small size, these particles gain access to virtually all cells in the body, not just humans but also other living organisms. Since next to nothing is known about the possible effects of nanoparticles, exposure to these materials has evoked considerable media attention and public

concerns. These concerns have prompted several countries and international organizations including the European Union to initiate steps to develop testing methods and procedures to evaluate of the potential toxicity of nanoparticles, and to assess the possible risks of exposure to these particles not only in occupational environments but also to the general consumers of these products. (see Maynard et al., 2006, SCENIHR, 2006).

There are currently no reports about how nanoparticles can affect human health. However, findings from studies with experimental animals and cells do suggest that exposure to different types of nanoparticles including titanium dioxide does have consequences, e.g. leading to pulmonary inflammation in animals and activation of inflammatory pulmonary cells. The ability of manganese oxide nanoparticles to gain access to the forebrain by being transported down the axons of olfactory nerves which innervate the nose has also raised concerns that nanoparticles may cause brain damage. Other studies have demonstrated that gold nanoparticles, once in the circulation, can cross the placenta and reach the fetus. There are also reports that some nanoparticles, such as carbon nanotubes, can interact with DNA and evoke chromosomal damages. Therefore the scientific community, regulators and the industry will have to find innovative solutions to these challenges, e.g. how to validate the methods for testing of the safety of nanoparticles, how to assess exposure to these materials. (Donaldson and Borm, 1998; Kreyling et al., 2006; Oberdörster et al., 2005, Donaldson et al., 2006; Long et al., 2006).

There is thus a growing need to explore and define the risks of nanoparticles to humans and the environment. It is essential that research into nanoparticle safety is increased to maintain public confidence in the safety of nanotechnology. (SCENIHR, 2006).

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European Commission SCENIHR (2006): *Opinion on the appropriateness of existing methodologies to assess the potential risks associated with engineered and adventitious products of nanotechnologies*. Brussels, European Commission. Health & Consumer Protection Directorate-general, Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks.

Donaldson K and Borm PJA (1998): *The quartz hazard: a variable entity*. *Ann Occup Hyg*. 42:287-94. Review.

Kreyling et al (2006): *Health implications of nanoparticles*. *J Nanoparticle Res* 8:543-62.

Oberdörster G et al. (2005): *Principles for characterizing the potential human health effects from exposure to nanomaterials: elements of a screening strategy*. *Part Fibre Toxicol*. 2:8.

Donaldson K et al (2006): *Carbon nanotubes: a review of their properties in relation to pulmonary toxicology and workplace safety*. *Toxicol Sci*. 92:5-22.

Long TC et al. (2006): *Titanium dioxide (P25) produces reactive oxygen species in immortalized brain microglia (BV2): implications for nanoparticle neurotoxicity*. *Environ Sci Technol* 40:4346-52.



EMF-NET - "Effects of exposure to electromagnetic fields: From science to public health and safer workplace"

Dr. Maila Hietanen, FIOH

EMF-NET is a Coordination Action funded by the European Commission 6th Framework Programme on Scientific Support for Policies. The 4-year project started on March 1, 2004 and will end on February 29, 2008.

The aim of the Action is to provide a framework for the coordination of the results of the research activities related to the biological effects of electromagnetic fields. The Consortium involves 41 participants, including coordinators of research projects at the European national level (Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, UK), and the representatives of EC and international activities, such as the WHO EMF project, associations of industries and manufactures, regulatory bodies, scientific associations, and trade union associations. The coordinator of the Action is Dr Paolo Ravazzani from Istituto di Ingegneria Biomedica CNR, Milan, Italy.

EMF-NET consists of 5 Main Tasks, one of them being specifically focused on potential risks related to occupational exposure (MT2: *EMF exposure related risk in the working environment*).

The principal objectives of EMF-NET Main Tasks are to

- provide a framework for the coordination and collation of the results of the studies
- provide a framework for the coordination of the results conducted on the measurement methods and computer simulations used for EMF exposure assessment for occupational risk evaluation
- support "informed decision-making" for regulation and risk communication
- monitor emerging technologies
- monitor EMF research plans
- provide a framework for the co-ordination of the dissemination activities in the European Union provide an inventory of ongoing EMF research and identification of research priorities and needs

EMF-NET Project has organized several seminars and conferences on different EMF topics. The next workshop "Current Trends in Health & Safety Risk Assessment of Work-Related Exposure to EMFs", will discuss problems involved in the implementation of the Directive 2004/40/EC on minimum health and safety requirements regarding the exposure of workers to the risks arising from electromagnetic fields. Special attention will be given to the compliance testing and uncertainties in measurements and numerical dosimetry. The workshop will be organized in co-operation with the WHO and the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) on February 14-16, 2007 in Milan.

Further information:

<http://www.jrc.cec.eu.int/emf-net/>
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Occupational exposure limits exceeded near base station antennas



Finnish Institute of Occupational Health

*Dr. Tommi Alanko, FIOH
Dr. Maila Hietanen, FIOH*

The density of the mobile phone base stations has increased rapidly which has caused concerns about the occupational safety risks related to radiofrequency (RF) fields. For example, base station maintenance personnel may have to work for extended periods close to the antennas. According to a study conducted by the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH), occupational exposure limits for RF fields are exceeded at a distance of less than 1 m away from those transmitting antennas, which are sited on building rooftops. The general public usually never has such close access to antennas so the limits for the general public should never be exceeded.



Figure 1. Working on a roof in front of a base station antenna.

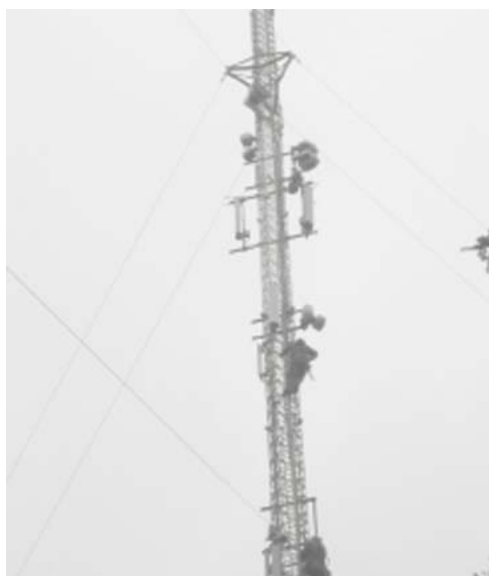


Figure 2. Two mast maintenance workers climbing an antenna tower.

The results of the above study indicated that the occupational exposure near the base station antennas sited on the building rooftops is generally low, so that the exposure limits are exceeded

only in front of the antenna (Figure 1). The safe distance from the antenna is generally 1 m for the workers and 2 m for the general public. These estimates are based on instantaneous measurements.

The RF fields generated by the antennas were measured in different occupational situations. The mobile phone networks employed by the antennas were the present GSM network, the rapidly growing UMTS network, and the TETRA network used by various civil authorities.

The minimum health and safety requirements regarding the exposure of workers to the risks arising from electromagnetic fields are presented in the Directive 2004/40/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council. This directive places obligations on employers regarding the risk assessment of workplaces and corrective actions to be taken should the limits be broken. The research results produced by the FIOH project can be used for risk assessments concerning exposure to RF fields from base stations.

Based on the FIOH research, a guide on "Working safely near base stations" was prepared for distribution to Finnish workplaces. The work tasks should be planned so that the worker does not need to work within the main beam, i.e. directly in front of the antenna.

One group of workers that has to work continuously very close to transmitting antennas is the antenna tower maintenance staff (Figure 2). The exposure conditions in large masts with powerful transmitters are generally well-controlled, but the situation is different in small and medium sized masts. Therefore the FIOH will start a project in 2007 focused to assess the RF exposure of the mast maintenance staff working in small and medium size masts.

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Links

European Risk Observatory
<http://riskobservatory.osha.europa.eu/>

HSE Horizon scanning –
Future health and safety issues
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/horizons/>

Horizon scanning is the process by which HSE ensures that it is aware of developments, trends and changes in the medium to long-term future that could have an impact on its ability to act as an effective and efficient promoter and regulator of health and safety in Britain.

A Canadian Discussion - Emerging Health & Safety Issues in Changing Workplaces
<http://www.ccohs.ca/events/forum07/about.html>

The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) will host a national forum to explore health and safety issues that are emerging from changing workplaces, on September 17th and 18th 2007 in Vancouver, British Columbia. With "Emerging Health & Safety Issues in Changing Workplaces: A Canadian Discussion" as the theme, this two-day event will bring together subject experts, workers, employers and governments to share their knowledge and experience around this issue and to discuss problems and solutions.

Closing of the National Institute for Working Life in Sweden



Mette Holmberg, NIWL

The Swedish National Institute for Working Life is a national centre of knowledge on working life issues, operating under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications. Since 1995, the institute in its present form has conducted research into occupational safety and health. Its research efforts will now be discontinued following a proposal from the new Swedish government.

Research on occupational safety and health (OSH) at the institute includes a broad spectrum of issues. Some examples of ongoing work are the development of guidelines and methodologies for measuring electromagnetic fields in occupational settings, rapid determination of microorganisms in the air and user-friendly methods for chemical exposure assessment. Work on

identification and reduction of work-related disorders caused by vibrations or noise is also being performed at NIWL.

The connection between people, technical solutions and work organisation is another aspect on OSH, where research is being done at NIWL. In the EU-funded project, ErgoWood, researchers from NIWL contributed to developing European ergonomic guidelines for machine operators and their employers, as well as for manufacturers of forest machinery. In collaboration between NIWL and Volvo Powertrain, studies on how ergonomics can be integrated into a company's daily development work have been performed. The focus on development and prevention is important for all research on OSH at the institute.

On 20th of December the Swedish parliament voted in favour of the government's bill to close the National Institute for Working Life from the 1st of July 2007. When the Institute is closed down, a substantial part of the national research on OSH will lose its funding, and Sweden will be one of the few European countries that do not have an institute focusing on issues related to occupational safety and health.

Upcoming events

Workshop — Exchange on good management practices

26-27 April 2007, BAuA, Dortmund, Germany



The EU Member States are striving to create a European Research Area. To achieve this ambitious aim, it is not only necessary to gather information about research priorities in the Member States, but also to find out how European institutes and ministries are managing their OSH research programmes.

The upcoming workshop from 26th to 27th of April in Dortmund will present systematic information on some major national research programmes in the area of new and emerging OSH risks. The programmes will be evaluated and compared so that the participants can learn about each others' programmes.

The aim is to collate the experiences of the partners and to provide fresh ideas for the development of an action plan for future joint programmes.

Project partners are now called to register at BAuA (contact person: Ms. Orban, orban.henrietta@baua.bund.de). The agenda of the workshop will soon be available at <http://www.newoshera.eu>.

Workshop — New and emerging risks in OSH - Overview of European OSH research programmes

14-15 June 2007, Warsaw, Poland



The workshop on: *New and emerging risks in OSH - Overview of European OSH research programmes* will be organised by the Central Institute of Labour Protection – National Research Institute in the context of the NEW OSH ERA project, co-ordinated by the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health.

The workshop aims to verify and to evaluate the results of the overview of the national research programmes on new and emerging risks in OSH, carried out in NEW OSH ERA partner Member States.

The organisers intend to invite to the workshop the current Project Partners, representing nine Member States, potential future members as well as representatives of the European Commission, policy-makers, social partners and researchers from all 27 Member States.

Since it brings together so many different stakeholders, the workshop will provide an opportunity for sharing knowledge and experiences and discussing ideas and in this way create the foundation for future joint research activities aimed at improving the workplace and well-being at work.

The Workshop language will be English.

The Workshop preliminary programme and the registration form will be available in February from the NEW OSH ERA website.

About NEW OSH ERA

NEW OSH ERA is an ERA-NET project funded by the European Commission within the ERA-NET scheme in the context of the specific programme 'Integrating and strengthening the European Research Area'. NEW OSH ERA aims at building a European dimension in research on new and emerging risks in the workplace by rationalising and pooling of resources. The NEW OSH ERA consortium, coordinated by the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, is a partnership of 18 research institutes, funding agencies, ministries from 9 EU Member States, and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work.

The official starting date of the project was April 1, 2006. The *Constituting Conference* of NEW OSH ERA was held on 11-12 May, in Rome, jointly with the first meeting of the Steering Committee of the NEW OSH ERA Consortium. At the meeting, a consensus was reached about the initial steps of collaboration as well as defining the work plan for the first 18 months.



Constituting conference of NEW OSH ERA

The work started with collecting information on national occupational safety and health (OSH)-related research activities devoted to new and emerging risks in the workplace in NEW OSH ERA partner countries. A questionnaire has been prepared by CIOP-PIB, Poland to collect national data. The results of the questionnaire will provide a starting point for mapping OSH research landscape in the participating Member States, analysing which risk factors are identified as emerging in each country and cataloguing what research programmes are underway to tackle those risks. A *Workshop on New and emerging risks in OSH - Overview of European OSH research programmes* will be organised by CIOP-PIB on 14-15 June 2007 in Warsaw, to discuss national research priorities in the area of OSH and also to explore potential areas and priorities for future collaboration.

Information is being also gathered to identify good practice in OSH related research programme management. A questionnaire to collect information on national programme management

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approaches was prepared by PT-DLR. The German Partners of NEW OSH ERA will host a *Benchmarking workshop* facilitating the exchange of information on management practices. The workshop will take place in Dortmund on 26-27 April 2007. The outcomes of the Benchmarking workshop as well as the Workshop on New and emerging risks in OSH will be reported in the next issue of the NEW OSH ERA Newsletter.

The NEW OSH ERA webpage <http://www.newoshera.eu> was launched in December 2006. It includes general information about the project and its goals as well as information on the project partners. It also provides information on the upcoming NEW OSH ERA events and useful links related to new and emerging risks in OSH.

Members of the Consortium

Co-ordinator

- Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, FIOH, Finland

Partners

- Finnish Work Environment Fund, TSR, Finland
- Finnish Ministry for Social Affairs and Health, Finland
- Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, BAUA, Germany
- Central Institute for Labour Protection - National Research Institute, CIOP-PIB, Poland
- Project Management Organization at DLR, Project Management Organization for the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, PT-DLR, Germany
- German Federation of institutions for statutory accident insurance and prevention, HVBG, Germany
- National Research Centre for the Working Environment, NRCWE, Denmark
- Research Unit for the Improvement of Working Conditions (DiOVA/DiRACT), General Directorate for the Humanization of Work, Ministry of Labour, FOD WASO, Belgium
- Italian National Institute for Prevention and Safety at Work, ISPESL, Italy
- National Institute for Working Life, NIWL, Sweden
- Fodor József National Center for Public Health, FJOKK, Hungary
- European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, EU-OSHA, Spain
- Hellenic Institute for Occupational Health & Safety, ELINYAE, Greece
- Ministry of Employment and Social Protection, Greece
- Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Germany
- Ministry of Health, Italy
- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Poland

Extension of the NEW OSH ERA Consortium by the end of the project by 3-4 members is planned.