

SMILE AND CARE

(YOUR NEWSLETTER FROM CGAS)

July 2021

Edition 2, Volume 7



Corporate Governance
Advisory Services

MANAGING WORK RELATED PSYCHOSOCIAL RISKS IN TODAY'S WORLD

DR VINIT KUMAR MISHRA
AVP
Corporate Governance
Advisory Services



Psychosocial risks and work-related stress are among the most challenging issues in occupational safety and health. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Frontline workers, such as health care and emergency workers, those involved in the production of essential goods, in delivery and transportation, or in ensuring the security and safety of the population are facing many stressful situations at work.

If not appropriately assessed and managed, psychosocial risks may increase stress levels and lead to physical and mental health problems. Psychological responses may include low mood, low motivation, exhaustion, anxiety, depression, burnout and suicidal thoughts. A range of physical reactions can also occur, such as digestive problems, changes to appetite and weight, dermatological reactions, fatigue, cardio-vascular disease, musculoskeletal disorders, headaches or other unexplained aches and pains. There may be changes in behaviours, such as a change in activity level or increased use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs as a way of coping, in addition to changes in the person's ability to relax or level of irritability. These and other psychosocial risks may arise or increase as a result of the COVID-19- crisis.

In addition, a poor psychosocial working environment may have a considerable impact on workplace productivity, through increased absenteeism and presenteeism, lower job engagement and reduced job performance. The accumulation of stress and fatigue may reduce the

accuracy of work and increase the possibility of human error, heightening the risk of work injuries and accidents.

Risk Assessment Process

In the specific situation of the COVID-19 outbreak, the potential sources of exposure to the novel coronavirus should be identified, considering all work areas and tasks performed by workers. Psychosocial risk factors, for example, long working hours, reduced rest periods, increased workload and pressure, violence and harassment. In epidemic contexts, external factors affecting mental health and well-being should also be considered, such as fear (of being infected, losing one's job, seeing revenues reduced and experiencing lower quality of life), social isolation and the weight of domestic responsibilities being increased in the absence of schools and services. The individual characteristics of workers should be considered when assessing the psychosocial risks, since each individual has a different response to stress.

Effective management of psychosocial risks can lead to benefits such as improved worker engagement, enhanced productivity, increased innovation, and organizational sustainability. To help organizations to manage psychosocial risks, the world's first International Standard ISO/ DIS 45003: 2021, Entitled: Occupational health and safety management — Psychological health and safety at work — Guidelines for managing psychosocial risks, has been introduced. It gives guidance on managing psychological health and safety risks within an occupational health and safety management system. It addresses the many areas that can impact a worker's psychological health, including ineffective communication, excessive pressure, poor leadership and organizational culture. ISO 45003 is intended to be used together with ISO 45001, which contains requirements and guidance on planning, implementing, reviewing, evaluating and improving an OH&S management system.

The author can be reached for any clarifications at vinit@corpgov-advisory.com



We have a **single** mission: to **protect** and **hand on** the planet to the next generation

- **Francois Hollande**, former President of France.

RECENT UPDATES

CGAS successfully completed an Environment and Social Due Diligence (ESDD) for an outsourced design manufacturer (ODM) of home appliance & original equipment manufacturer (OEM) of Room Air Conditioners having manufacturing facilities in Dehradun.

THE IMPORTANCE OF AVOIDING & REPORTING NEAR MISSES

NARENDRA PATIL
AVP
Corporate Governance
Advisory Services



They should be trained to recognize and identify potential hazards and allowed to turn in their reports anonymously. That way, the focus will be on lessons learned rather than assigning blame. Reporting incidents can get a bad reputation because it creates an opportunity to snitch, thus creating peer pressure to avoid reporting incidents, which prevents reaping the benefits of a near-miss program.

What is a near miss?

We can define it as an *unplanned event that did not result in damage, illness, injury, or fatality but had the potential to do so*. While not causing harm, they can precede accidents in which an injury or loss could occur. As lead indicators to an accident, they can be used to prevent incidents from happening in the future, if scrutinized and used correctly.

Collecting near-miss reports

Some people tend to write a near miss as a “no harm, no foul” situation. However, by tracking near misses - when, why, and how they happen, we get an opportunity to proactively identify and control workplace hazards to prevent incidents.

Near misses can teach valuable lessons that should be shared with personnel at individual project sites and company meetings and use to update the company's safety policies. Supervisors should pay attention to these situations every time they go on a routine safety walkthrough.

The importance of involving your personnel

The vital factor in any near-miss program is the participation of personnel. They are always present in the workplace, and they witness these situations.

To encourage near-miss reporting, employers can set quotas or offer incentives to those who report hazards. Some experts advise against these strategies because they could negatively affect the quality of received information, but they can encourage a reporting culture better than offering rewards for zero- or low-injury rates. People are more inclined to contribute to the prevention of hazards by discussing a near miss than if a serious accident has already happened. According to OSHA, incentive programs must be carefully structured to encourage workplace safety without discouraging the reporting of incidents. Being open and transparent is critical, and supervisors and managers need to show that it is okay to have these conversations. After all, it is all about making the workplace safer for everyone.

Takeaway

Everyone throughout all levels of the organization should support and promote the near-miss program. Otherwise, it is not going to be effective because the success of the program largely depends upon the entire organization's commitment to safety. Employers should show that they are committed and taking action. If the team does not think anything is going to happen, they will not take the time to report any issues.

The Author can be reached for any clarifications at narendra@corpgov-advisory.com

ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

TECHNICAL DUE DILIGENCE

We are looking for professionals who want to pursue their career in a growing field of Technical Due Diligence both in Operations and Environment, Health & Safety areas. They will be trained under our team of six professionals, each of whom have experience of more than 25 years in multiple countries

Smile News

Meet 6 Amazing Healthcare Heroes Who Risk Their Lives Daily to Fight COVID-19 [Click to read](#)

Care News

Bhutan king treks across mountains to hold down COVID-19 fatality count [Click to read](#)

EHS News

How a Great Green Wall could help Africa combat climate change [Click to read](#)



MESSAGE

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has resulted in changes to the working arrangements of millions of employees who are now based at home and may continue to work at home, in some capacity, for the foreseeable future. Decisions by leadership on how to promote employees' mental health whilst working at home through socio-psychological assessment will play a key role in their productivity and work life balance, a much-needed element in the new normal.



CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ADVISORY SERVICES

To Make “Smile and Care” a Key Enabler in the global arena of Corporate Governance

CONTACT US

www.corpgov-advisory.com
ajay@corpgov-advisory.com
Mobile: +91-9810144822