MINISTRY OF LABOUR, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

REPORT

FOR

RIAL COOPERATION FUND (IACML) OF THE ORGANISATION OF AMERICAN STATES

PROJECT

On-site visit (Study Tour) to Trinidad & Tobago

To obtain knowledge and experiences from the legislative framework, systems and function of the Occupational Safety and Health Authority and Agency in Trinidad and Tobago

March 15 – 19, 2010

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF BELIZE AND THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SMALL AND MICRO ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Prepared by: The Labour Department, Ministry of Labour, Local Government and Rural Development

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The success of this Study Tour (On-site Visit) to Trinidad & Tobago to analyze the Occupational Safety and Health Authority & Agency was principally due to the support, industriousness and incessant efforts of numerous individuals and organizations. The Ministry of Labour, Local Government and Rural Development of Belize wishes to express its appreciation to the Inter-American Network for Labour Administration (RIAL) Cooperation Fund for providing financial support for the realization of this project. The hard work and dedication of Ms. Maria Claudia Camacho and Ms. Carolina Mejia from the Organization of American States (OAS) Office in Washington and Ms. Kim Osborne and Ms. Lupita Thompson of the OAS Office in Belize. Their efforts in providing logistical and administrative support throughout the duration of the project were extremely valuable. In addition to this, the coordination of the travel and accommodation arrangements for the Belizean delegates to Trinidad & Tobago would not have been successful without their continued input.

The Ministry of Labour Local Government and Rural Development of Belize would like to give special thanks to the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago for its collaboration and for making this project a realization and success.

The Honourable Minister of Labour, Gabriel Martinez (Minister of Parliament), the Honourable Minister of State in the Ministry of Labour, Local Government and Rural Development, Michael Hutchinson (Member of Parliament) and the Government of Belize are particularly grateful to the Occupational Safety and Health Authority and Agency and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, the Honourable Minister of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development Rennie Dumas, Permanent Secretary – Mrs. Roslyn Khan-Cummings and OSHA’s interim Executive Director Mr. Harry Sooknandan, whose support has been instrumental in the implementation, execution and successful completion of this collaborative project. Special thanks to Ms. Marcia Rampersad who has significantly contributed to the production, facilitation and coordination, from Trinidad and Tobago, of the activities under this project.

The Belizean representatives who travelled to Trinidad & Tobago would like to put on record that they greatly appreciated being selected to participate in this Study Tour to the Ministry of Labour, Small and Micro Enterprise Development. The Ministry of Labour, Local Government and Rural Development of Belize, is grateful to Mr.
Mark Allen for preparing the programme of activities and keeping to it. Also, special thanks to the Ministry’s support team including Ms. Arlene Billingie who contributed significantly in coordinating and facilitating the activities in the programme. Thanks to all the presenters for imparting the knowledge of their subject area (Unit) in such a professional manner. Finally, thanks to everyone who supported this collaboration and in some way contributed to the realization and execution of this project to be a success.

INTRODUCTION

The activities were organized by the Ministry of Labour, Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad & Tobago and fully funded by the Inter-American Network for Labour Administration (RIAL) Cooperation Fund through the Organization of American States, with the aim of strengthening human and institutional capacities of the ministries of Labour of the region through Cooperation activities. The Onsite Visit took place from March 15\textsuperscript{th} to 19\textsuperscript{th} 2010 during which site visits were made to various business enterprises that were leading the way in best practices in Occupational Safety and Health in Trinidad & Tobago and that understood the importance of having an OSH Act. The site visits were carried out after the various units under the OSH Agency gave their presentations. This was done in an effort to maximize the learning process of receiving the theoretical learnings and then going out to do the practicum. Three delegates from the Ministry of Labour, Local Government and Rural Development of Belize participated in this collaborative project, namely Mr. Jorge Matus, Ms. Aida Moh Reyes and Mr. Domingo Pau.

The program included a series of meetings with the various Units under the OSH Agency and field experiences to various enterprises that are leading the way in their respective industry to promote and implement Safe and Healthy work practice in an effort to provide decent work to workers in their workplaces. The Belizean Representatives were also met by lead persons in the Ministry of Labour, Small and Micro Enterprise Development including Honourable Rennie Dumas, Minister of Labour.
OBJECTIVE
For the Belizean Representatives to obtain knowledge and experience from the legislative framework, system and function of the Occupational Safety and Health Authority and Agency in Trinidad and Tobago.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
In 2002, Belize began to build the framework for an Occupational Safety and Health Act. It has undergone several modifications throughout the years. In 2006 a push was made for the OSH legislation to go to cabinet but there was no political will to move on it. The Labour Department has made a drive towards the passing of the law; it has involved stakeholders, such as Employers Organizations, Workers Organizations, and other agencies. Several meetings have taken place resulting in the modification, changes, and recommendations being taken into consideration as it pertains to the Occupational Safety and Health proposed Act. The proposed Act is to be implemented by an autonomous statutory body and enforced by an OSH Agency. In these final stages the proposed legislation is to be revised by the Attorney General Ministry, and then sent back to the stakeholders to ensure that they form part of the process before being sent to the House of Representatives to be read, and then sent to the Senate for it to be passed as a Law.

During the latter part of 2007 and in 2008 the Labour Department found it necessary to prepare its Labour Officers/Inspectors in the field of Occupational Safety and Health and thus provided each officer with two technical trainings as it pertains to OSH. The trainings made Labour officers/Inspectors, at best, generalists in the field of Occupational Safety and Health.

As Belize Labour Department looks to the future for a country that implements and supports decent work in the workplace and the final draft of the OSH legislation being nearly completed, the department found it necessary to build the competencies of its officers as it pertains to OSH.

With the call of proposals by the Inter-American Network for Labour Administration (RIAL) Cooperation Fund
under the auspices of the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour of the Organization of American States, Belize drew on its relationship with the CARICOM sister nation Trinidad and Tobago to host a delegation of Belizean Officers/Inspectors to be attached to the OSH Agency of Trinidad and Tobago with the objective of obtaining knowledge and experience of the legislative framework, system and function of the aforementioned Agency. This request by Belize was entertained and supported by the RIAL Cooperation fund and the project was executed during the 15th to 19th March of 2010 with the OSH Agency in Trinidad.

RIAL COOPERATION FUND OF THE IACML OF THE ORGANISATION OF AMERICAN STATES

Occupational Safety and Health Training Project for Belize – A collaboration between the Governments of Trinidad and Tobago and Belize

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES
The project consisted of an On-site Study Tour (attachment) to the Occupational Safety and Health Agency of Trinidad and Tobago.

The Study tour to Trinidad and Tobago took place on March 15th to 19th, 2010. The RIAL Cooperation Fund covered travel and accommodation costs for the Belizean delegation. The Occupational Safety and Health Agency hosted the Belizean delegation at the San Fernando Branch Office.

DELEGATION

The Belizean Delegation comprised the following Officers/Inspectors:

1. Jorge Matus – Labour Officer/Inspector I
2. Aida Aura Luz Moh Reyes - Labour Officer/Inspector I
3. Domingo Pau - Labour Officer/Inspector II

Mr. Jorge Matus was the Head of the Delegation.
The Belizean delegation made its way to Trinidad on Sunday March 14th 2010 at 11:30 am and arrived in Trinidad at 10:30 pm on the same day.

Monday, March 15th 2010 a formal opening for the project was made by Mr. Harry Sooknanan, Consultant (Administration) for the Occupational Safety and Health Agency, followed by a presentation from Mr. Devnath Roopnarine being a comprehensive overview of the OSH Authority and Agency, and presentations from Safety and Health Inspectors II (Unit Heads) and lastly a presentation by Mr. Jorge Matus who gave an overview of Belize’s legislations as it pertains to Occupational Safety and Health. The Safety and Health Inspector II’s gave informative presentations as it pertains to the OSH Legislation, best practices and enforcement measures taken by their respective units while keeping with the overall mission and vision of the OSH Agency and the protocols set by the Agency.

The Occupational Safety & Health Agency of Trinidad and Tobago unlike the Labour Department Officers/Inspectors of Belize, that undertake labour administration, industrial relations, HIV/AIDS in the workplace, OSH, Child Labour and others, is divided into six units encompassing all of Trinidad and Tobago’s industrial establishments.

At the end of each day a summation of the day’s activities was made.

On the days of March 16th to 19th 2010, Units’ Safety Inspectors II and their subordinates Inspectors I made informative presentations and thereafter took the Belizean delegates to carry out field work at pre-selected workplaces. Inspections of the pre-selected workplaces began with a meeting with Management, Workers representatives and Health and Safety Officers to discuss Safety and Health policies and procedures, followed by a tour of the shop floor, and lastly a closing meeting.

Inspection visits were made to the following businesses:-
Day 1 – Monday, March 15\textsuperscript{th} 2010

The day’ activity began with Jeffrey Millington, Supervisor of the Manufacturing Unit, giving a safety orientation of the San Fernando Office and what to do in case of an emergency. The Official Introduction was done by Senior Inspector, Mark Allen. Harry Sooknanan (Administration Consultant) proceeded to give the official welcome to all present. This was followed by a presentation of the Organizational Structure and Operation of Trinidad and Tobago Occupational Safety and Health Agency that was done by the Chief Factories Inspector, Mr. Devanth Roopnarine.

The Belizean Delegation, headed by Mr. Jorge Matus, gave an overview of the experiences, issues, challenges and opportunities of Occupational Health and Safety in Belize.
Session 1

Gaekwad Ramoutar, Chemicals, Petrochemicals and Ports Units, Safety and Health Inspector II of the Trinidad and Tobago Occupational Safety and Health Agency gave a presentation on conducting inspections of industrial establishments that handle, store, transport, use, treat and dispose of hazardous materials/chemicals. He gave an overview of the Chemicals, Petrochemicals and Ports Unit, the challenges that the unit faces and the legal requirements for employers. He detailed the approach to inspections, what to inspect for in the workplace and gave examples of recent typical incidents that occurred in the workplace.

Session 2

Rabinath Ramoutar, Oil and Gas Unit, Safety and Health Inspector II of the Trinidad and Tobago Occupational Safety and Health Agency delivered his presentation on the principles relating to inspections of Service Stations, the regulatory approvals needed for Service Stations and the environmental controls effected on these Service Stations in Trinidad and Tobago. In addition to this, Mr. Ramoutar provided delegates with a sample service station inspection checklist that is used by the Oil and Gas Unit.

Session 3

Ronald Hunte, Occupational Health and Hygiene Unit, Safety and Health Inspector II of the Trinidad and Tobago Occupational Safety and Health Agency presentation was based on defining Occupational Health and Industrial Hygiene, he then followed with outlining the enforcement approach utilized by the Occupational Health and Industrial Hygiene Unit, highlighting observed local industrial establishments with Occupational Health and Industrial Hygiene characteristics, and lastly highlighting apparent local industry Occupational Health and Industrial Hygiene Management trends and deficiencies.
DAY 2- TUESDAY, MARCH 16th 2010

On the second day the Occupational Health/Industrial Hygiene Unit was introduced and each inspector gave their presentation. This unit consists of five inspectors: Mr. Ronald Hunte, Occupational Safety & Health Inspector II, Ms. Arlene John Seow, Occupational Safety & Health Inspector 1, Ms. Ranu Persad Doctor, Occupational Safety & Health Agency and Mr. Jason Lookhoor, Occupational Safety & Health Inspector.

SESSION 1

This session was facilitated by Mr. Ronald Hunte (OSH Inspector II) of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago. Mr. Hunte’s presentation was on Occupational Health & Hygiene Characterization in Industry in Trinidad & Tobago and conducting a workplace light survey.

The objective of the presentations was to define Occupational and Industrial Hygiene at the workplace. The mission is to promote and ensure the highest degree of physical, mental and social well being of workers in all occupations by preventing departures from health, controlling risks and the adaption of work to people or people to their jobs. Mr. Hunte stressed that industrial hygiene is very important at the workplace. It is the science and art devoted to anticipating, recognizing, evaluating, and controlling environmental factors that arises at the workplace that may cause sickness, impaired health of a person or significant discomfort and inefficiency among workers or citizens of the community. The OH/IH units are responsible for ensuring that all workplaces enforce the Occupational Safety and Health Act 2004 and Occupational Health & Hygiene Legislative Provision. The role of the OH/IH Unit is to sensitize stakeholders, educate the public and give recommendations on how to maintain safety and health hygiene at the workplace. At the presentation it was mentioned that the World Health Organization estimates that only about 3-5% of Occupational Diseases are actually reported. The Industry OH/IH are facing challenges on Occupational health and Industrial Hygiene because there are few qualified or certified occupational health physicians, no local industrial hygiene laboratories, Section 25k of the OSH Act 2004 is not well understood by employers, and tracking of employees health status over a period of time to discern patterns or trends in changing workers.
The second presentation of Mr. Hunte was on conducting a workplace light survey. There are several factors to take into consideration when conducting a workplace light survey such as luminance, reflection, intensity and lumen. Direct light exposure over time can lead to a higher risk of acquiring cutaneous infections. It is important that in workrooms there is adequate lighting be it artificial or natural light. There is a special method to calculate the measurement of light in a workroom.

**SESSION 2**

This session was facilitated by Ms. Arlene John-Seow, Occupational Safety Health Inspector 1 of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago. Ms. John-Seow presentation was on Industrial Hygiene Principles and Use of Monitoring Equipment.

There were four objectives in this presentation:

The first objective was to give a brief overview of industrial hygiene. Basically industrial hygiene and occupational health is the anticipation, recognition, evaluation, and control of environment conditions that may cause adverse effect on health or upon the ability of individual to perform their works.

The second objective was to define the roles and functions of the industrial hygienist. The role and functions of the industrial hygienist is anticipation of health hazards in new plant construction and new process review. The recognition of health hazards requires familiarizing oneself with the work operations and processes such as the use of materials, the processes involved in the workplace and frequent major stresses be it chemical, physical, ergonomic or safety hazards. Evaluation of health hazards are done by taking measurements either by direct sampling or by using instrumentation to get direct readings. Most important factors in exposure potential is how the material is used and what controls, if any, are in place, be it through engineering or by use of personal protective equipment.

The third objective was to indentify types of Industrial Hygiene Equipment. The goal of the industrial hygienist is to implement preventive interventions, eliminate or reduce employee’s exposure to potentially harmful substances
or conditions.

The fourth objective was to explain and illustrate the use of industrial hygiene monitoring equipment. The cornerstone of Industrial Hygiene lies with monitoring methods used to quantify the nature and extent of the hazard. The monitoring/sampling detection equipment fall into two categories: direct reading instruments and indirect sampling analysis instrument. Direct reading instruments are valuable tools for detecting and measuring workers exposure to noise, gases/ vapors, aerosols and fine particulates suspended in air. Examples of direct reading instrument are explosive meter, halide meter, sound level meter, light meter, mercury vapor meter analyzer, organic vapor meter analyzer, particle counter and photometer. Delegates were given the opportunity to use the colorimetric detector tubes, which is a simple method to quickly detect airborne gases. In addition, we had the opportunity to use the sound level meter and know how to read it.

**SESSION3**
Ms. Ranu Persad Doctor, Occupational Safety & Health Agency of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago and Ms. John-Seows’ presentation was on Industrial Hygiene Principles and Use of Monitoring Equipment. The objective of this presentation was to learn how to effectively use the sound level meter. The sound level meter identifies noise sources, evaluates the effectiveness of noise control and estimates employee’s noise exposure when a noise dosimeter is not available.

**SESSION4**
Mr. Jason Lookhoor, Occupational Safety & Health Inspector presented on how to use a Quest Noise Meter. The participants were taught how to properly utilize the Quest Noise Dosimeter. Each participant then carried out an exercise using the Quest Noise Dosimeter.

After the sessions, the delegates were taken to visit a work site to carry out a Noise Level Survey. The site visited was Universal Foods Limited in Couva in San Fernando. The findings at the site were discussed with regard to breaches and levels of compliance with OSH standards. At the end of the day a summation of the major learning
Day 3, Wednesday March 17th 2010

Construction Unit of the Occupation Health and Safety Agency, Trinidad and Tobago

Senior Inspector, Mark Allen began the morning session with a recapitulation of Tuesday’s learning with the Construction Unit of Trinidad and Tobago O.S.H. Agency and the Belizean delegates. Thereafter aims and objectives were set beforehand as to what the Belizean delegates would hope to achieve at the end of the day.

The first to present was Mr. Colin Gaskin, OSH Inspector II, Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro-Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago. Mr. Gaskin is the head of the construction unit and gave an overview presentation based on regulating the Construction Industry in an Industrializing State particularly in Trinidad and Tobago. He discussed the many challenges faced with Migrant workers and also compliance of the OSH Act by Multinational Companies. He illustrated, using a bar graph, the trend of Industrial Accidents that would occur on a yearly basis in Trinidad and Tobago. There are more fatalities and deaths occurring in the construction industry than any other industry in Trinidad and Tobago.

Our Second presenter for the day was Mr. Rishi Williams, OSH Inspector I who spoke about Scaffolding and Working at Heights. He gave a description of the various types of scaffoldings and its components which are required by law. Also, Mr. Williams explained what the outcomes are, if certain components in the different types of scaffolding are not placed. Further explanation was given as to work done on scaffolding, especially at heights. He gave a report extracted out of a Local Newspaper named, “Guardian” that on July 12th 2006, a worker fell from a height of approximately 100 feet. This however, resulted in the death of the worker and it was found that the worker was not wearing any fall arrest equipment. Mr. Williams described a typical Harness and its function and importance in construction. He gave a brief talk on some serious accidents that resulted in loss of life.
Because of time, Mr. Mark Gillette OSH Inspector decided to give us an on-site presentation indicating to us, Belizean Delegates, the different types of Trenching and its components.

Immediately after lunch we all headed to TGU, Trinidad Generation Unlimited. The construction site is about an hour drive from San Fernando. Upon our arrival we were welcomed by the Mr. Gogoul who gave us a brief description of the Plant and its future function. However, this mega construction is being sub-contracted to several companies, two of the companies being DAMUS AND PIHL. All this took place in the TGU’s conference room. The Health and Safety Personnel gave their presentation as to how they prevent accidents on the job. After the presentations, a layout was given and also we were debriefed as to procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. Thereafter we proceeded with our tour. It was a good experience seeing the level of safety measures being practiced and in place for the protection of all workers.

**Day 4 March 18th 2010**

On the fourth day, the Scope of Operation and Functioning of the Manufacturing Unit was introduced and each inspector gave their presentation. This unit consists of six inspectors: Mr. Jeffery Millington, Occupational Safety & Health Inspector II, Mr. Ryan Rambaran, Occupational Safety & Health Inspector I, Mr. Sherwin Charles Occupational Safety & Health Inspector I, Mr. Mark Superville, Occupational Safety & Health Inspector I, Ms. Marsha Ramial, Occupational Safety & Health Inspector I and Ms. Nadia Khan, Occupational Safety & Health Inspector I.

**SESSION 1**

This session was facilitated by Mr. Jeffery Millington (OSH Inspector II) of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago. Mr. Millington presented the mission and vision statement of OSHA. He spoke about the previous Factories Ordinance and the move towards the OSH Act 2004 as modern legislation. The manufacturing unit faced challenges that were overcome with the building of positive relationships.
with stakeholders, the use of protocols for example prioritizing, preparing for and conducting inspections and the development and use of an enforcement policy. Inspections are done in large, medium, small enterprises and the informal sectors. It was also mentioned that it is important that every employer should have a safety plan. A good plan will be able to make use of poor resources and may well achieve the target.

1. Planning, Preparing & Conducting Inspections- Companies are targeted by the amount of accidents and complaints. The primary responsibility of inspections is to enforce the law. It is very important to be prepared for each visit, follow procedures, reports and follow up inspections.

2. Accident Investigation - The objectives of accident investigations were to recognize the need for an investigation, to investigate the scene of the accident, interview the victims and witnesses, to distinguish facts from friction and to determine root causes.

3. Accident Investigation - A practical approach to identifying immediate and root causes of accidents was shared with the participants.

4. Occupational Safety & Health Management System - Benefits of the OSH management system were shared with the delegates. It is an integrated approach to the prevention of occupational risk which anticipates changes, improve business responsiveness and performance in OSH, reduce OSH failure and ensure overall consistency with other management policies.

5. Risk Assessment- is good management practice at the workplace. There are different types of hazards which are:

   1. Physical hazards are the most common and will be present in most workplaces at one time or another. It is considered unsafe that may cause injury, illness and death. For instance, in electrical hazards such as frayed cord, missing ground pins, improper wiring, unguarded machinery and moving machinery parts that a worker can accidentally touch.

   2. Biological hazard come from working with animals, people or infectious plant material. This can be present in hospitals, day care, hotel laundry, and room cleaning.

   3. Ergonomic Hazard occurs when type of work, body position and working condition puts strain on your body.

6. Incident Investigation/Root Cause Analysis- it was shared with the delegates that defining the facts of the accident is very important in order to avoid frequent accidents. Moreover, one needs to determine the causes and
develop proposals for corrective actions.

**DAY 5 March 19th 2010**

On the fifth day, the Scope of Operation and Functioning of the Agriculture Unit was introduced and each inspector gave their presentation. This unit consists of five inspectors: Dr. Rosalie Holder, Occupational Safety & Health Inspector II, Mr. Yudhi Ramkhelawan, Occupational Safety & Health Inspector I, Mr. Victor Salazar, Occupational Safety & Health Inspector I, Ms. Nisha Baksh, Occupational Safety & Health Inspector I and Ms. Annabel Seepersad, Occupational Safety & Health Inspector I.

The Agriculture Unit presented on their 2009 – 2010 targets, the strategies employed to achieve compliance, the Units Action Plans, how the Unit will track its activities, key assumptions and challenges that the Unit projects to encounter and how they will overcome any encumbrances.

**Agriculture and Pesticides**

**Pesticides:**
An overview of pesticides was provided in terms of what they are, the different types of pesticides and how they impact the environment. Safe use of pesticides was also discussed from the point of view that they are chemicals and the protocol for safe use of chemicals to be applied. The Registration process for pesticides was discussed and the risk that end users face. Methods of control were also discussed.

Towards the end of the theoretical applications for the Agricultural Unit a work site visit was conducted at the Sugarcane Feeds Limited whereby the practical applications of the morning teachings were set into motion.
OVERVIEW

The **Occupational Safety and Health Authority** is a multi stakeholder Board, advising the Minister.

Composition of the Board is as follows:

- Chairman - appointed by the Minister
- Deputy Chairman - appointed by the Minister
- Executive Director of the Agency
- Representatives of the Ministries responsible for OSH, Public Health and Energy Industries
- Representatives of the body responsible for standards in Trinidad and Tobago
- Representatives of the Tobago House of Assembly
- Nine other members appointed by the Minister from key stakeholder organizations on OSH, among which are Trade Unions and Employers Associations.

The **Occupational Safety and Health Agency** is currently managed by Mr. Harry Sooknanan, Consultant (Administration).

The OSH Agency, officially established August 17, 2007, is built upon the old Factories Inspection Unit of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro enterprise Development.

Whereas the OSH Authority has the primary function of policy formulation, the OSH Agency is responsible for the implementation and execution of those policies.

The new OSH Act (in effect since February 2006) extended the work area, the legal powers of the inspectors and the obligations for employers and employees as well.

OSHA is basically an enforcing body of the OSH regulation (OSH Act and OSH regulations) vested with legal powers for the inspectors, to access every industrial establishment, to require any information needed to carry out investigations and to use their legal intervention powers. The inspectors report to the Chief Inspector (Mr. Devnath Roopnarine) and are currently operating in the following (6) sub units:
1. Oil and gas (headed by Mr. Rabinath Ramoutar, Safety and Health Inspector II)
2. Ports, chemicals and petrochemical industry (headed by Mr. Gaekwad Ramoutar, Safety and Health Inspector II)
3. General Manufacturing (headed by Mr. Jeffery Millington, Safety and Health Inspector II)
4. Construction and quarries (headed by Mr. Collin Gaskin, Safety and Health Inspector II)
5. Agriculture and Services (headed by Dr. Rosalie Holder, Safety and Health Inspector II)
6. Occupational Health (headed by Ronald Hunte, Safety and Health Inspector II)

Albeit being the enforcing body, the main objective of OSHA is compliance with the OSH Act, rather than primarily sanctioning or prosecution. As such, public awareness raising, the involvement and sensitization of tripartite partners and other stakeholders and close cooperation with other ministries and institutions, as well as supporting OSH training structures and provision of accessible OSH information are considered critical in promoting a preventative safety and health culture in Trinidad and Tobago.

**Roles & Functions of the Occupational Safety & Health Agency**

1. Regulatory
2. Investigative
3. Preventative
4. Advisory
5. Informational

**OSHA performs the following major functions:**

- **Regulatory** (Enforcement of safety and health requirements based on the OSH Act and regulations)
- **Preventative** (Review of Machinery reports i.e. Boilers, Air Pressure Vessels, Hosist and Lifts, to ensure legal compliance)
- **Investigative** (Investigation of serious accidents at work, serious working conditions complaints)
- **Informational** (Providing lectures and promotion material on how to comply with the OSH legislation, Data supply to i.e. ILO)
• **Advisory** (Advises to institutions, ministries, authorities and stakeholders)

In order to enhance safety and health culture and to improve compliance, also activities will be developed:

- Cooperation and partnerships with stakeholders;
- Awareness raising programs;
- Outreach programs (exhibitions, lectures, workshops, promotion materials, etc);
- Consultation programs for small businesses;
- Alliances

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**OBSERVATIONS**

1. The Occupational Safety and Health Act was developed from the Factories Ordinance in response to more complex issues arising from rapid industrialization.
2. The Occupational Safety and Health Agency has, in so far, not prosecuted any employer for breaches as it promotes voluntary compliance instead of direct prosecution.
3. The Occupational Safety and Health Act is Goal Setting and only a portion of the Act is prescriptive.
4. The Occupational Safety and Health Agency has a legal department which provides advice, drafts charges and conducts prosecutions.
5. The Occupational Health and Industrial Hygiene Unit overlaps with all other subunits.
6. Each Inspector is given a telecommunication device to be able to respond quickly to any happenings and to be readily available to give support and information to clients.
7. Each Inspector is provided with shirts that have the OSH logo embroidered on the shirt.
8. Inspectors follow a set regimen as it pertains to carrying out an inspection.
9. Inspectors follow a set protocol as it pertains to investigation of accidents.
10. Clients have at their disposal the Inspectors to provide them with information and educational awareness building seminars.
11. Each Inspector has access to transportation, as transportation is, in management’s point of view, important to get the job done.
12. Albeit it is obligatory for employers to report accidents, encumbrances are still found as employers claim being ignorant of the legislation.

13. Existence of an OSH hotline to report accidents, receives information, and makes inquiries.

14. Training is essential for there to be a highly qualified Health and Safety Inspectorate. In fact, further development for the inspectors is encouraged by management.

15. Inspectors of the OSH Agency command a high degree of understanding and knowledge of the Act and the manner in which it is implemented and executed.

**MAJOR FINDINGS/RESULTS:**
The main lessons learned from Trinidad and Tobago Occupational Safety and Health Agency are as follows:

OSH Agency is an autonomous enforcement body that was born from rapid industrialization and obsolete laws. It was founded on the UK factories Act. Similar to Belize’s Factories Act that stems from the old UK Factories Act and which has now become obsolete with the creation of newer industries, Belize now moves to have its OSH Act go to parliament to be passed as law, and the Act will be enforced by an Autonomous OSH Agency of Belize.

OSH Inspectors follow an inspector’s manual that clearly states the procedures and practices that should be followed in the execution of their duties. The OSH Committee within the Labour Department Belize has recently vetted a final draft for a Belize Labour Inspectors Manual which details the manner in which inspectors are to carry out their inspections, investigate accidents, and investigate complaints.

The Belize Labour Department holds annual national consultations with employers, employer’s organizations, worker and workers organizations, and other stakeholders to disseminate, inform, and sensitize all stakeholders as
to their rights and obligations under the Belize Labour Laws and the proposed OSH legislation and other related legislations. Trinidad and Tobago OSH Agency provides stakeholders with awareness building seminars, direct working relationships between small and micro enterprises and the agency’s resources, annual safety awards and safety week, all the previously mentioned are to make all stakeholders be informed and be involved in OSH in Trinidad and Tobago.

The management and staff of the OSH Agency find it pertinent and absolutely essential for each inspector to be provided with transportation or a transportation allowance to carry out inspections, investigations and to be readily available to any happenings in major industries. Belize may want to advocate for a greater transportation allowance to be provided for its Labour Officers/Inspectors or to further develop its vehicular fleet so that each Officer has direct access to transportation to be able to mobilize whenever necessary.

The members of the OSH Agency Inspectorate are all provided with shirts that are embroidered with the OSH Agency’s Logo. This, according to the inspectors, assists them in getting compliance from employers, and it has been found that a greater degree of respect is gotten from the use of the Shirts. Belize may want to revisit the policy of having their inspectorate wear Shirts that readily identify the officer and the Ministry he/she works for.

The T&T OSHA Inspectorate is highly trained and is even encouraged to continue undertaking studies to ensure that inspectors are trained, qualified and knowledgeable in the work they conduct on a daily basis. Belize may want to consider investing in the training of its human resources to have suitably qualified and certified individuals within the Ministry of Labour.

TT OSHA has an OSH hotline whereby accidents are reported and other complaints are received from clients that wish to remain anonymous or go on record. It may be useful for Belize to replicate such a hotline service to its clients and for clients and the information received to remain anonymous. This would lead to more clients reporting accidents and major happenings within their workplaces and for inspectors to build a better working environment.
knowledge of things to look for while conducting an inspection/investigation of the workplace.

O.S.H.A has a legal department which gives advice, drafts charges and conducts prosecutions. Belize’s Labour Commissioner is a trained attorney that gives his educated interpretation to officers when dealing with matters relating to OSH and the wider Labour Legislations that are enforced by the Labour Department’s Inspectorate. This allows for inspectors to have a person within the department to rely upon when dealing with establishments that would want to draw questions pertaining to the direct interpretation of the law.

T&T O.S.H.A has recently embarked on developing M.O.U.’s with other governmental agencies to give greater effect to their daily operations. Belize’s Labour Department should work with other governmental agencies and develop M.O.U.’s to have better working relationships with its sister agencies.

**NEXT STEPS:**

Belize must carry on the following:

There is need for the Belize Ministry of Labour (MOL) to become more proactive and aggressive as it pertains to the passing of the Occupational Safety and Health Act in Belize. As in Trinidad and Tobago, the Workers Unions were instrumental in the passing of the OSH Act of that country. Belize Ministry of Labour must provide that impetus to the major workers unions of Belize for them to advocate for and on behalf of the OSH Act and changing the political will of cabinet.
The Ministry of Labour of Belize therefore plans to examine the information received with a view to possibly adopting some practices that may be of benefit to yield the desired results. The Ministry of Labour Belize will incorporate the lessons learnt from OSHA Trinidad and Tobago into the Labour Inspectors Manual that is being vetted by the OSH Committee within the Ministry of Labour Belize; to have those of this Ministry of Labour follow a proven and tested system from the Trinidad and Tobago OSHA.

Individuals that demonstrate a high level of commitment to undertake training and certificate programs in OSH will be entertained to pursue such advancements to increase the level of competency of its inspectorate.

Ensure that individual files are kept for each establishment for as long as the establishment exists instead of opening and closing files as it pertains to complaints and investigations the beginning or ending of each year.

There is need to build the Ministry’s capacity in educating and raising the awareness level of the employers with regard to the existing legislation (ILO Conventions that have been ratified and passed as law in Belize) and the proposed OSH Legislation.

The Ministry of Labour of Belize continues its efforts to preventing major accidents and fatalities in the workplace and revitalizing the drive to attain an Occupation Safety and Health Act as it is seen as both a move towards greater economic prosperity through a healthy and able workforce and providing decent work in all workplaces.

The MOL of Belize intends to conduct more inspections and make inspections more of a proactive approach to deal with claims and accidents than a reactive approach of waiting for a claim or accident to occur then to mobilize.

The MOL of Belize will increase the number of Labour Education (Laws, Regulations, ILO Conventions and Recommendations) and other National Consultations, Media programs for awareness building to ensure all stakeholders are knowledgeable and up to par with Labour Legislations, inclusive of Occupational Health and
Lastly, to drive this OSH Legislation home, there is need for the input of our stakeholders and for them to buy into the concept of Health and Safety.

**EVALUATION OF THE ACTIVITY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The general objective of this project is to garner knowledge and experience from the Legislative Framework, system and function of the OSH Agency of Trinidad and Tobago. This bilateral cooperation’s initial objectives and expectations have been substantially met. The information gathered from the week of intensive presentations on the OSH Agency has been enveloped by each member of the Belizean delegation and an even greater appreciation for Safety and Health in the workplace has been imparted on them due to the experience gained from the field visits. The overall understanding of how the OSH Authority and Agency came about, issues and challenges that the Agency faces in its enforcement and the day to day operations of the agency and the strict adherence to best practices was greatly enhanced.
RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Ministry of Labour of Belize seek to strengthen its human resources capacity in OSH and also promulgate the passage of the OSH Act through providing impetus to other agencies that could have an effect on the political will within Belize as it relates to the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

Firstly, the Ministry of Labour of Belize must seek to develop the competency of all officers and ensure that individual officers that show high levels of interest in the field and are qualified to undertake the necessary training and certificate courses for OSH be sent for training. Secondly, through working with agencies such as the SSB, Public Health, Pesticides Control Board, Employers, Workers, Employer Organizations, and Workers Organizations, to advocate for and move on behalf of the passage of the OSH Act by parliamentarians. Lastly, ensure all stakeholders are mindful and knowledgeable of the Ministry’s initiatives in the undertaking of such a legislation, and how the passage of that legislation will greatly impact the health and safety of the more than a hundred thousand workers in Belize and their employers in an economical and profitable way.