



Malama O Pa! Take Care Lest You be Hurt!



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Notes from the HIOSH Advisory Committee

November 17, 2011

By Les Onaka

Having previously received a copy of the letter from Governor Neil Abercrombie restoring the remaining eight HIOSH positions, I walked into the HIOSH Training Room 427 for the HIOSH Advisory Committee (HAC) meeting feeling somewhat upbeat and confident that things were looking up for worker safety in Hawai'i. When I left more than two hours later, I took some positives with me, but mostly felt that the committee had a lot of work to do. Key players from HIOSH and the HAC were leaving and the HAC itself would be evolving in terms of membership to expand industry and worker representation. Some of what happened at the meeting:

- ◆ **Mahalo to Joaquin Diaz.** Out-going chairperson **Joaquin Diaz** received a plaque and kudos for a job well done during his year in office;
- ◆ **Mahalo to Dan Vasilash.** **Dan Vasilash** has tendered his resignation to the Committee and he was also

recognized for his many contributions throughout the years;

- ◆ **New Vice-Chairperson.** The Committee elected **Walter Chun** Vice-Chairperson to succeed **Chuck Beneke**, our 2012 Chairperson, in 2013;
- ◆ **HIOSH Staffing.** **Jennifer Shishido** announced that HIOSH

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Outgoing HIOSH Advisory Chairperson **Joaquin Diaz** was presented with a plaque for his outstanding services to the Committee during 2011.

Editor's note: A Job Well Done

Like many families across the nation, we counted our many blessings this past week. Despite all the negatives in 2011 so far, we had a lot to be thankful

for when we thought about it. Around the dinner table on Thanksgiving Day, I did not consider my blessings as an

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HIOSH Advisory Committee (continued)

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currently were interviewing for the eight vacant positions and that interns from HCC would likely apply;

- ◆ **Key HIOSH Employees Retiring.** Jennifer also announced that she will be retiring as of December 31, 2011 along with Training and Consultation Manager **Ellen Kondo**;
 - ◆ **Worker fatalities.** Jennifer discussed the four worker fatalities since our last meeting three months ago: (1) a driver on a private road hit a tree and died from the injuries; (2) accident on the zipline structure collapse on the Big Island where one worker died and one seriously injured; (3) a tree-trimmer died when a coconut tree fell on him; and (4) a construction worker died after falling about 20 feet from a roof. Jennifer pointed out that the HIOSH investigations now involve the families of workers to see if they can provide any information regarding the worker and his or her job. They also inform the family regarding their rights under the Hawai'i Worker's Compensation statutes. HIOSH also issues a press release and puts information on their website regarding what happened and what can be done to prevent future similar incidents.
 - ◆ **OSHA's Honolulu Area Office.** Our OSHA Honolulu Area office now has five compliance officers who cover not only Hawaii, but also the entire Pacific region. **Galen Lemke** has met with military safety organizations and works with them to improve their operations. They have been working with a VPP applicant from Pearl Harbor.
 - ◆ **Workplace Violence Directive.** With regard to the OSHA Workplace Violence compliance directive, OSHA will only investigate incidents of third party violence against workers and not acts of one co-worker against another co-worker or reports of hostile work environments.
- They will focus on late-night retail operations, especially those involving younger workers such as those performing pizza deliveries. They also will include an emphasis on healthcare and social service industries where workers may be attacked by patients and/or their families.
- ◆ **Crane Standard.** HIOSH has been working on its comprehensive Crane Rule Standard and will hold a hearing in early February of 2012 for interested parties.
 - ◆ **Recomposition of the HIOSH Advisory Committee (HAC).** Throughout the 2011 meetings, discussions have focused on the composition of the HAC and how many public and private sectors of industry and government were not represented at the table. The Committee voted to accept the Proposed August 2011 Membership Composition table with a few amendments to bring the membership to 35. Jennifer Shishido stressed the importance of having individuals at the table that could serve as two-way vehicles for organizations with a large number of stakeholders. With the acceptance of the proposed changes, HIOSH will now communicate with the organizations not represented to urge them to participate at the table for the February 16, 2012 HAC meeting. Previously, members needed to be accepted by the HAC, but current practice does away with the formality and lets the member organization send the individual of their choosing.
 - ◆ **Subcommittee on Future Issues.** **Jim Peck** agreed to head an HAC subcommittee to examine past safety trends and determine future ones to place on the HAC agenda for 2012. Members of the subcommittee include: **Jon Kumashiro, Lani Bjork, Walter Chun, Pane Meatoga, Jr., Paul Chang** and **Joseph O'Donnell**.

OSHA Update

While not announcing any new rulemaking efforts, in November, OSHA did announce activities to support employers in maintaining safe workplaces.

- ◆ **New Informational Booklets.** In their November 1st QuickTakes, OSHA announced the publication of: (1) a booklet on Worker's Rights and Employer's Rights and Responsibilities Following an OSHA Inspection; (2) a Construction Industry Digest; and (3) a Small Entity Compliance Guide for Respiratory Protection Standard. Copies may be ordered on-line on OSHA's Publications page or by telephone at 1-800-321-OSHA.
- ◆ **New Compliance Guidelines for Pyrotechnics Facilities.** In their November 1st QuickTakes, OSHA announce the release of "Compliance Policy for the Manufacture, Storage, Safe-handling and Use of Pyrotechnics. This document clarifies in what situations OSHA may issue citations. It cancels the previous 1986 OSHA Instruction CPL2.73—Fireworks Manufacturer: Compliance Policy.
- ◆ **ROC-United Alliance.** In a November 1st Trade News Release, OSHA announced an alliance with the Restaurant Opportunities Centers—United, a national restaurant worker's organization with about 7,500 members. Restaurants and eating and drinking establishments employ about 11.6 million people in the U.S. Almost 30% of these are below the age of 20 and many have their first jobs in the restaurant industry. The alliance will create and distribute fact sheets and booklets to help prevent worker exposure to slip, trip and fall and cut and burn hazards. They will also address

workplace safety issues related to young workers and small businesses.

- ◆ **Protecting Whistleblowers.** In the November 3rd Federal Register, OSHA published a call for comments on regulations protecting whistleblowers who report financial fraud against shareholders. The new regulations will address the amendments to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 based on the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010. Comments must be received by January 3, 2012.
- ◆ **Construction Education Videos.** In a November 14th Trade News Release, OSHA announced the release of 12 educational videos about the potential hazards in the construction industry. Each year about 800 construction workers die from injuries on the job and many more injured. The videos, based on real-life incidents, depict the hazards and continue to discuss the safety measures that would have prevented the incidents. Included in the videos are five on falls in construction, two on sprains and strains, two on being struck by something, two on excavations and one on carbon monoxide poisoning.



NIOSH Report on the Future Safety Workforce

In October of 2011 NIOSH released their report on their National Survey of the Occupational Safety and Health Workforce. NIOSH has their full 246-page report dated October 3, 2011 on their cdc.gov/niosh website. They selected 7,602 establishments that according to their North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes employ 75% of the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) professionals and collected their data from January through April of 2011.

According to their report, employers intend to hire

about 5,000 OSH professionals each year for the next five years. In 2011, academic programs graduated 2,845 students. This may result in a 13,000 gap in the profession in the next five years.

Most likely, individuals to fill this gap will come from the workforce to perform the OSH duties either collaterally or as a dedicated assignment and presumably this may leave temporary gaps in OSH expertise as these individuals ramp-up their knowledge and skills.

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government for a safer tomorrow!**

Editor (continued)

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ASSE and Hawai'i Chapter member, but when I sat down to write this, many came to mind.

The first one that came to mind involves the little logo on the top left-hand corner of the first page. It may look old and familiar by now, but we actually only received it a couple weeks ago from the Society. Not all chapters get one of these because they have to be earned. It takes chapter members willing to commit their time and energy and working together to plan and attend events. This Chapter Star's for you, fellow Chapter members. No matter how big or small your role was, you helped the Hawai'i Chapter earn it. Good job!

The second thought that came to mind had occurred earlier at the HIOSH Advisory Committee meeting. As I listened to the discussions of safety people leaving I at first felt these great big pukas forming inside me. After thinking about it, I felt thankful at what these giants of the safety profession taught me. **Joaquin Diaz** aggressively pushed through a tough agenda that included getting HIOSH back on its feet staffing-wise

and reorganizing the HAC in the face of ruffling some feathers. These needed to be done and through dogged pushing and cajoling he got both done in one year—his term as HAC Chairperson. Fortunately, Joaquin will still be a presence for at least another year and hopefully more. Since I have been attending the HAC meetings, **Dan Vasilash** served as the second Chairperson of the committee. Despite all the politics going on during his term, he showed what a leader can do to minimize the distractions and keep his or her group focused on the facts. **Jennifer Shishido** was also there when I first began to attend the HAC meetings. Then she was not there for a while, but came back with HIOSH in a crisis (remember when they were down to only two or three compliance officers?). When someone really believes in the good of what they are doing, they can endure much adversity and be ready to jump in and strive to preserve their goals when the opportunity arises.

I am extremely grateful to the Chapter to have had that opportunity to learn from the best.

