



“Conference on Occupational Health and Safety Management in East Africa”
27TH – 29TH SEPTEMBER 2006

BACKGROUND

In recent years there has been increased emphasis on the need to improve on the occupational health and safety status of the work environment as a response to a marked increase in the number of work related accidents. Public awareness of these accidents has provided a driving force for industry and allied activities to improve on their safety records. Local and national governments including the insurance industry are keenly taking a hard look at safety in industry as a whole and the chemical industry in particular, and there has been a marked increase in the amount of government regulation in this area. It is against this background that this conference has been organized for the East African region. The conference aims to enable industrialists and other stakeholders to appreciate the purpose of an occupational health and safety (OH&S) management system; explain its enabling legal and regulatory framework; and also explore the purpose and intent of Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series (OHSAS) 18001/2. Measures for the management of health and safety risk should reflect the principle of the elimination of hazards where practicable, followed in turn by risk reduction (either by reducing the likelihood of occurrence or potential severity of injury or damage), with the adoption of personal protective equipment (PPE) as a last resort. This underscores the conference theme that is **“The Role of Cleaner Production in the furtherance of the provisions of OHSAS 18001/2 for Purposes of Enhanced Competitiveness for Kenyan Enterprises within the East African Community (EAC) Framework”**.

Whereas developed country industrialists take OH&S issues very seriously, their counterparts in the developing world do not do so with the same gravity. This is largely due to lack of awareness, non-enforcement of relevant safety laws and regulations, and a lack of a systematic structure that guides the establishment of sound OH&S management systems. The end result has been an uncoordinated approach to safety issues, a development that exposes workers to high levels of risks and hazards. Although hazard elimination is the goal, experience has taught us that guaranteed, failure free designs and devices have so far eluded mankind, despite astonishing advances in knowledge and technology. Certainly all of us in our personal experiences have had many opportunities to reconfirm the wisdom of admonition, **“Plan for the best, but prepare for the worst”**. There is therefore an urgent need for developing country industrialists and key stakeholders to be exposed to OHSAS specifications that give requirements for an OH&S management system and enables organizations to control their full range of risks and hazards. This OHSAS specification is applicable to any organization that wishes to establish a functional OH&S management system that seeks to eliminate or minimize risks to employees and other parties; implement,

maintain and continually improve on its OH&S management system; assure itself of its conformance with its stated OH&S policy; demonstrate such conformance to others; seek certification of its OH&S management system and make a self declaration of conformance with OHSAS specifications.

PURPOSE

By the end of the conference, participants will have gained familiarity with the following:

- Purpose of an OH&S management system in managing health and safety risks resulting from their business operations;
- Outlining of the concept and approaches to OH&S risk management;
- A Summary of relevant national and local OH&S legislation in the context of the development of modern OH&S management systems, and based on the principles of risk assessment and self-regulation;
- An understanding and appreciation of the purpose of OHSAS 18001 Specification and OHSAS 18002 Guidelines, how they interrelate and the benefits to organizations that use an effective OH&S management system;
- An outline the content of OHSAS 18001 and OHSAS 18002; its description with reference to the Plan, Do, Check, and Act Cycle;
- An in-depth explanation of the role of Cleaner Production in the realization of the ideals of OHSAS.

Throughout the East African Region, the training of Health and Safety Experts for key industrial sectors is not well developed and coordinated. This has resulted in chemists and other professionals doing the safety work in industry with limited skills, expertise and knowledge. Accidents and incidents are therefore not fully investigated to determine their root causes. The vast majority of workplace accidents are entirely preventable and can be directly attributed to failure in management systems. We believe that this conference will empower all key health and safety stakeholders with skills necessary for adopting a systematic and comprehensive approach to the management of health and safety issues at plant level.

VALUE JUSTIFICATION

a) Stakeholders

Stakeholders from the business community will be exposed to cost-effective approaches that will enable them set up occupational health and safety (OH&S) management systems with the sole aim of eliminating, reducing or minimizing their full range of (OH&S) risks for purposes of meeting their legal requirements and also avoiding any employee compensation claims. The forum will also create an environment in which lessons and experiences learnt in the region will be shared. The registration fee for this category will be **KES 3,000.00** per business representative to cater for the costs of meals and venue.

b) Exhibitors

Exhibitors will have an opportunity to exhibit their Capability Profiles to a wide range of clientele that will be falling within the range of 250 – 300 industrialists in total. The Exhibition Fee for this 3-day event is **KES 150,000.00** per exhibitor.

c) Participants

Individual consultants will be exposed to the theory, philosophy and practice of designing and implementing functional OH&S management systems. The registration fee for this 3-day event is **KES 3,000.00** per participant.

This 3-day conference is jointly organized by the Kenya National Cleaner Production Center (**KNPCPC**) and the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (**KAM**) with seed funding from the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (**IUPAC**).

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