



NEWSLETTER

On Occupational Safety and Health & Working Environment

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Viet Nam National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health - CIS/ILO Collaborating Center

RENAME OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF LABOUR PROTECTION TO VIETNAM NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

Tran Thi Dong

On 11th July, 2017 Vietnam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL) held ceremony to announce the Decision No. 17/2017/QĐ-TTg of Prime Minister on organization and activity of Vietnam National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (VNNIOSH) under VGCL.



TỔNG LIÊN ĐOÀN LAO ĐỘNG VIỆT NAM

LỄ CÔNG BỐ QUYẾT ĐỊNH CỦA THỦ TƯỚNG CHÍNH PHỦ
VỀ CHỨC VÀ HOẠT ĐỘNG CHỨC



On authorization of Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister Mr Vu Duc Dam attended and gave the Decision to the VNNIOSH leaders. Participated and observed in the ceremony there were Mr Bui Van Cuong - member of Central Committee of Communist Part of Vietnam, VGCL President; Mr Chu Ngoc Anh - Minister of Ministry of Science and Technology; Deputies President of VGCL: Mr Mai Duc Chinh, Mr Tran Van Thuat; representatives of Government Office, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Labour - Invalid and Social Affairs and entire staffs of VNNIOSH.



In the Decision, VNNIOSH which is renamed from the National Institute of Labour Protection (NILP) established in 1973 is a public scientific and technical organization under VGCL, with scientific research function to manage, implement and apply scientific and technical findings of OSH in accordance with the law.

The task of VNNIOSH is to carry out scientific researches to serve state management in occupational safety and health; guaranteeing workers' safety and well-being; protecting the working environments. Particularly, VNNIOSH will do research, develop and apply science and technology in occupational safety and health; preventing and treating environmental pollution in order to guarantee workers' safety and health; researching and constructing assessment methods and procedures for code compliance and conformity of personal protective equipments, safety devices; researching, finding and petition for supplementation of the list of insured occupational diseases entitled to social insurance in Vietnam.

Besides, doing research VNNIOSH will serve activity of VGCL for providing scientific evidence when it participates in governmental agencies to form policies and other legal documents on occupational safety and health, insurance for accidents and diseases; helping VGCL in guiding and improving effectiveness of implementation OSH in trade union system.

In addition, VNNIOSH also carries activity on monitoring working environment; evaluating, inspecting, predicting pollution of working environment; providing OSH information and knowledge; co-operating with other agencies to set up norms, standards and criteria on occupational safety and health, environment impact assessment; strengthening international co-operation in OSH and environmental protection; building and developing resources to satisfy demand and requirement of rise of science and technology of occupational safety and health and environmental protection.

VNNIOSH also has function to providing OSH training and education; assessing risk on occupational safety and health and diseases; providing consultation on setting up OSH management at enterprise; checking for code compliance and conformity of personal protective equipments and safety devices; carrying monitoring and environment impact assessment; taking measurement of factors of environment pollution; providing consultation, design, appraisal and evaluating systems of pollution control of working environment; providing personal protective equipments and safety devices; investing and transferring technology, providing control system and cleaning devices; providing services of examination of occupational diseases and work – related diseases.

On organizational structure, VNNIOSH has a director and no more than 3 vice directors. Director and vice general directors are appointed by VGCL Presidium. Director is responsible before law and VGCL Presidium for all activities of the Institute. The vice directors help director in the field that director assign and is responsible to the law, director and VGCL Presidium for the assigned tasks.

Giving speech at the ceremony, Deputy Prime Minister Vu Duc Dam highly appreciated the contribution of the Institute's staff, employees and scientists for over 45 years. The change of name indicates the development in quality which the Government and VGCL expect, and also the demand for the scientists. The Government has high expectation in the development of VNNIOSH, as the Institute is the leading scientific research institute in OSH. Thus, more than ever, the demand for sustainable development is established in all social classes, being worker-centered, covering and using workers as motivation for sustainable development. The Government also expects all workers-related factors, which are already being delicately taken care of, will receive even better consideration. Protection should be extended from environment, anthropometry and healthcare services. In present situation, occupational diseases and features of occupations of each industry have to be studied very carefully and deeply. He suggested that VNNIOSH should be a pointed venue to do research on policy to help Party and government to give solutions of technology to ensure safety of workers and contributing to sort out existed problems.

At the Ceremony, VGCL President Bui Van Cuong suggested that VNNIOSH has to undergo even more dynamic reforms contributing to establishing legal policies on guaranteeing the best working condition for workers. Especially, the Institute should have study in details to protect employers from the risks at hazardous workplaces. Besides, VNNIOSH has to build and strengthen staff resource so that to have good experts and leading professional specialists deserving a leading National Institute of OSH in the country. Now, VGCL assigns VNNIOSH to prepare a set of criteria to evaluate working environment and occupational safety and health. This is one of the tasks to protect the right and benefits of workers. VGCL expects that with new name, the Institute will do its best in implementing assigned tasks.

On behalf of the staff of VNIOSH, Director Do Tran Hai thanked the Government and Deputy Prime Minister Vu Duc Dam for their concerns. This is a great honor and great responsibility, an important milestone signifying the advancement of the Institute; the Institute will follow the directives of the Deputy Prime Minister and the President of VGCL, striving to improve profession, insight and effectively carry out the tasks given by the Party, the State and VGCL. The Institute will establish and develop science and technology capabilities equal to the regional level, contributing in protecting workers' safety and health, as the exclusive scientific research institute of OSH.

THE YEAR DESERVED FOR BENEFIT OF UNION MEMBERS

Bui Thi Xuan Dai

Taking care for union members and workers is the first task of every trade union organization; the 9th Conference of Central Committee of Vietnam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL) (session XI) has decision to choose year of 2017 as “Year deserved for benefit of union members”. According to Mr Bui Van Cuong, VGCL President, this year, trade union of all levels should concentrate on building up infrastructure that can serve union members and workers at industrial and exporting parks such as homes, kindergartens, supermarkets; cultural-sport centers, consultant services, clinics and consider it as breakthrough step, also is innovative step in activity towards to achieving real benefits of union members and workers.

Besides, VGCL has signed program of welfare with 9 big partners in the sake of union members. According to that agreement, when using union member card for shopping or using services of those corporations, union members can have special treatment. Some trade union organizations in provinces also follow that model to sign agreement with partners in order to have privilege for their members.





Mr Bui Van Cuong President of VGCL giving gifts to the workers

In addition of implementing “Year for benefits of union members”, the key task of all level of trade union is to co-operate with appropriate agencies to protect the rights of employees; raising the effectiveness of signing Bargaining Collective Agreement; actively co-operate with social insurance to bring those enterprises that violate law of health, social and unemployment insurance and not pay union fee to the course.

VGCL also issued guidance No 284/HD-TLĐ for implementing the subject in 2017 “Year for benefits of union members” in which the main benefits of union members and measures to achieve are as follows:

1. Taking care of material benefits for union members.

1.1. Care of benefits of union members through participating in forming legal policy

In the process of forming legal policy, especially those relating with employees including union member, it needs to concentrate on proposals of articles which benefit to employees who are union members. Attention have to be more on policy of salary, bonus, social insurance, health care insurance, unemployment insurance; policy on education, improving professional skill for employees.

1.2. Care of benefits for union members through bargaining and signing Bargaining Collective Agreement

Trade union should actively propose and bargain the items that benefit for employees and put them to Bargaining Collective Agreement. Often checking and monitoring the

implementation of signed Bargaining Collective Agreement. Suggestion of measures for effective implementation of Bargaining Collective Agreement.

1.3. Care of benefits for union members through dialog, setting up and implementing democratic statute at grassroots level

Actively propose to employers to hold the dialog; listen to workers to find out what they want and need for preparing the talk with employers; prioritizing the items that will talk first and requiring employers to hold dialog in urgent to solve problems that cause angry to employees. Trade union shall have responsibility to set up internal regulation, especially those that directly relates to the rights and benefits of employees and Union members such as internal labour regulation, salary and bonus regulation; regulation on emulation and rewards; regulation on welfare usage; regulation on improving vocational training; regulation on recruitment, etc.

1.4. Implementing “Welfare program for Union members”

Based on Agreements signed between VGCL and corporations, companies or enterprises, the union organization of all levels should actively co-operate with partners to implement the Agreement; also proactively work with local companies that have essential products or services to bargain and sign the agreement to bring the benefits for union members such as food products, everyday items, consumption products; the services like holiday resorts, clinical, cultural and sport venues, equipment for children education, etc.

1.5. Care of benefits for union members through existing infrastructure of Trade Union organizations.

The Vietnam Trade Union Organization has many establishments of travel, tourism, relax, sport and vocational training and education that are in operation. Therefore, these infrastructure should have privilege for union members.

1.6. Through social and charitable activity of Union

The social activity of Trade Union includes program “Union Warm Home”, landing money for creating jobs through National Foundation for Jobs; Fund Supporting Poor Workers Self Employ; activity assisted employees through fund supporting trade union children; activities of visiting and support for sick workers through Charitable Fund or Fund of Gold Goodness of trade union.

2. Taking care of mental interest, political right for union members.

2.1. The mental interests of union members are those that union members participate in cultural, sport activities; go for sightseeing, taking relax.

2.2. Ensuring the political right for union members, creating favorable condition for union members to have chances to improve professional skill and political opportunity.

2.3. Creating condition and opportunity for union members to participate in courses of training or vocational education, skill; involving union members to participate in competition movement organized by trade union, especially movement of good workers, creative workers from which they can have chance to get promotion.

VOICE OF VIETNAM GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF LABOUR: THERE IS A NEED OF ROAD MAP TO STOP USING CHRYSOTILE

Tran Thi Dong



Mr Mai Duc Chinh Vice President of VGCL presides over the workshop

On 21st July, 2017 in Hanoi in co-operation with Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad (APHEDA) Vietnam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL) held seminar with title: “Information Sharing Workshop On Chrysotile Stop In Vietnam by 2020” in order to exchange and share valuable experience between Canadian, Australian, Japanese and Vietnamese experts, scientists as well as trade union staffs. Mr Mai Duc Chinh, Vice President of VGCL and Mr Sharan KC-manager of APHEDA for Mekong region were co-chairmen in this seminar.

Due to its wonderful property such as heat resistance, electric isolation, good duration of abrasion and low price Chrysotile has been used as raw material for production of many products in construction and heavy industries. Asbestos is used to produce more than 3,000 products namely roof sheet, pipes, wall petition, friction materials, thermal isolation in ships and boilers, accessories of computer, missile, etc. Asbestos has been exploited and used for long time ago but in the past, it has been known for its good properties but not adverse effects.

Giving opinion at the workshop, Mr. Mai Duc Chinh said, even asbestos has a lots of benefits but it also gets much bad effects on human health causing lung cancer, mesothe-

lioma, asbestosis, etc. These are recognized by many organizations such as Health Environment Management Agency (MOH), World Health Organisation (WHO) and International Research Agency for Cancer. The developed countries such as USA, Germany, Japan, Australia and EU issued series of directives, regulations which have legislative manner for production and use of asbestos. These countries confirm that all kind of asbestos (white, blue or brown) are carcinogen agents for human and no safety limit in use; the safest method of use for eliminating related-asbestos diseases is to stop using all kind of asbestos.

According to researches of WHO, up to now asbestos has been recognized as one of the most hazardous occupational related - carcinogen agent which cause more than half number of death for occupational cancers. It is estimated that production and use of 170 tons of asbestos bring in at least one death by Mesothelioma. WHO warns that at present there is about 125 million workers exposed to asbestos at workplace and annually there are 107,000 people died for asbestos related diseases including 41,000 for lung cancer, 7,000 for asbestosis and 59,000 for Mesothelioma. Among them, 80% of mesothelioma are asbestos related cases.

Vietnam is in top ten countries uses Chrysotile in the world (annually import about 65,000 to 70,000 tons of Chrysotile) and one of seven in the world in average use by capita. About 90% imported Chrysotile is used for producing roof sheet and 10% is used for other purposes such as manufacturing brake pad, thermal isolating material for boilers, fire resistant fabric, etc.

There are 40 enterprises throughout country producing fibre roof sheet with capacity of 106 million square meter of sheet and employing more than 5,000 people. The working environment in these enterprises are affected by many factors such as dust, exhaust gases, wastewater and solid wastes. However, management of these enterprises does not actively take measures for health care of workers and risk assessment on occupational safety and health; does not regularly have checked health and diagnosis for workers with 5 years of work and more if they often are exposed to asbestos; no enterprises legally enforced to have asbestos dust decontamination after work; these enterprises also do not warn workers about hazards of asbestos and how to avoid its effects; workers are not aware about bad effects of asbestos on their health, ect. All shortages of occupational safety and health management of these enterprises accompanied with the development of construction material industry pose workers to the risk of asbestos related disease. In near future, the symptom of these diseases may not appear because incubation period of disease is rather long, normally from 20 to 30 years, even 50 years while roof sheet industry in Vietnam just is 20 years of age but for long time, it will bring a disaster - a lots of workers will go on pension or move to another workplaces and get diseases; only themselves, their families and society suffer these pain and loses.

In 2007, Vietnam approved Rotterdam Convention on prior informed consent procedure for certain hazardous chemicals and pesticides international trade to protect human health and the environment. According to this Convention Blue and Brown asbestos (amosite and crocidolite asbestos) are put into annex III - the toxic chemicals, but not Chrysotile because 7/154 members did not approved, included Vietnam (6 other countries are those who exploit and export asbestos; only Vietnam is imported country). In

2017, the conference of Rotterdam Convention was held in Geneva, Switzerland from 24th April to 5th May, 2017. Vietnam agreed to put Chrysotile into Annex III and action of road map related with chemicals and pesticides in international trade.

At the Conference, the scientists showed the data approving the hazards that cause bad effects not only for workers, the environment but also for those who use asbestos containing materials.

Mr Phillip Hazelton, APHEDA co-ordinator of campaign for elimination of asbestos related diseases said by June, 2017 there has been 65 nations who banned asbestos totally or partly. In 2017, Ukraine continues banning using and importing asbestos; Canada will also totally ban asbestos by 2018. Based on new data of asbestos use with more than 65,000 tons per year, it can be estimated that in 25 coming years Vietnam will have about 300 Mesothelioma per year, 1,200 to 1,800 cases of lung cancer due to expose to Chrysotile. Sharing experience with Vietnamese colleagues, Mr Hazelton believes if Vietnam will ban asbestos by 2020 and push promotion in public about elimination of asbestos containing materials, many casualties will be avoided and save corresponding expenses.

In conclusion of the workshop Mr Mai Duc Chinh emphasized that all contributed opinions will help VGCL Presidium while participating in forming policy on elimination of asbestos - related diseases and road map of stop using Chrysotile in Vietnam based on scientific and practical evidence. Also, VGCL will propose to the Vietnamese government to consider carefully and scientifically steps towards to stop using Chrysotile in Vietnam by 2020.

EVALUATING WORK LOAD THROUGH CRITERIA OF HARD WORK AND STRESS DURING THE WORK OF SEAFOOD PROCESSING WORKERS IN MIDDLE AREA OF VIETNAM

Nguyen Thi Thuy Trang

The characteristics of work in seafood processing is manual and hard work; workers have to expose to many hazardous factors that may result in risks of accidents and diseases. According to data measured by staff of the Vietnam National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (VNNIOSH) when implementing projects on seafood industry in Middle area of Vietnam it shows that more than 90% workplaces have high humidity, 80% to 90% have low



ventilated circulation; most workers are exposed to cleaning chemicals and moisture. The percentage of female workers occupies for 83%. Most the time female workers are in standing position, from 8 to 12 even 14 hours depending on season of catching and processing seafood. This position lasts entire shift of work, day after day making workers tired and hurt in many parts of body. The popular sickness that workers normally often get are ear, nose and throat pain, skin and eye disease, musculoskeletal disorder.

To evaluate work load that workers often get, research team carried out survey and evaluate the criteria for hard work and stress during the work of 144 employees at 6 seafood processing enterprises, in particular at 8 sections including raw material receiving, primary processing, finishing processing and size classification, weighting and setting mold, freezing, dismantling the mold, packaging and cold storage.

The result of survey shows that 46/48 surveyed workplaces have work load of class 3 that corresponded to heavy work; work load of class 2 occupies for 89.6%. Only 2/48 surveyed workplaces have work load of average. Most workplaces of all 6 enterprises are evaluated as heavy work because workers suffer at the same time many factors such as heavy load, much repeated movement during the shift and bad posture of work (more than 80% working time is at standing position). The travel during the work is very rare. At the raw material receiving and cold storage, workers also have to lift and transport very heavy things; the high number of bending up and down movement. The average weight of the things to lift is about 7 to 10 kg.

The operations at most workplaces are manual. During the work, employees don't have to think much, the tasks are not so complicated, load for emotion and sensation is low. However, the monotonousness is high due to workers have to do repeated movement much time. In the season time or urgent contract, workers have to work for long shift with 9 or more hours.

Most workplaces at surveyed sections are evaluated as occupational stress of allowable (class 2 - work stress of average). Only 4/48 surveyed workplaces have stress of level 3.1, occupying 8,3% and these workplaces belong to raw material receiving and weighting and setting mold. At these workplaces workers have to concentrate on selecting raw seafood and half - processed products on strict requirement of customers. That's why workers easily suffer from stress and pressure at work.

To reduce work load, some sections should implement immediately measures to reduce the risks that can affect on workers' health. They are cold storage, dismantling mold, freezing and raw material receiving. In these sections, except uncomfortable position of work that is standing workers also have to lift and transport heavy things with high number of bending up and down movement. The measure can be applied are using equipment and devices to help lifting and transporting heavy things; re-arranging the time of work and break also helps to reduce the risks due to lifting heavy load and bad postures of workers.

When season of catching and processing occurs, the raw material receiving is high and extended shift is applied, the enterprises should re-arrange the time of work and break so that workers can have good health for challenging days. With the jobs requiring high attention, for example at checking raw material and haft processing product, it needs to have solution such as special table for checking with good enough lighting. This can help to do the job easily and reduce pressure during the work.

STRENGTHENING ACTIVITIES IN THE INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION OF THE VIETNAM NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH IN NEW PERIOD

Tran Bich Ha

According to the Decision No. 17/2017/QĐ-TTg dated 29th May, 2017 of Prime Minister, the National Institute of Labour Protection (NILP) is officially renamed to the Vietnam National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (VNNIOSH). This is considered a big change, marking a new period of development of the Institute and suitable with the tendency of development of the region and the world in the field of Occupational Safety and Health. In coming time VNNIOSH continues implementing the tasks on OSH science and technology given by the government and VGCL; also proactively applies new achievement of technology into practice, accompanied with VGCL to ensure safety for employees, improving quality of working environment as well as taking care of and protecting workers' health.

In the complicated and unpredicted international situation, globalization develops deeply and widely in many fields; internationally economic integration continues facing challenges, the dependance between countries is increasing. The multilateral relations and international organizations increase their role in many aspects of the life of the world. Grasping thoroughly the policy, stipulations and regulation of the Party, Government and VGCL, the VNNIOSH continues push forward the international co-operation activity on the field of OSH in the mind of save of money and time and taking opportunity to study and exchange experience, intergrating co-operation with improving the quality of researching staff, raising effectiveness and sustainable development of the VNNIOSH in the future.



Meeting between VNNIOSH and KOSHA

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Some pictures of VNNIOSH's international cooperation activities in 2017



Receiving delegation of KOSHA



Cooperation activity with KISA



Receiving delegation of China Institute of Industrial Relations

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