



**Senior Labour Inspectors Committee
(SLIC)**

Resolution on

**The role of SLIC in the Community Strategy
on health and safety at work**

2007-2012

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG

Rights, Working Conditions, Adaptation to Change
Health, safety and hygiene at work



I

INTRODUCTION

1 The Committee of Senior Labour Inspectors (SLIC), in co-operation with representatives from the national labour inspectorates of Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway assembled for SLIC's 53rd Plenary Session in Lisbon, Portugal:

- recognises that safety and health at work is a highly developed and important area within the framework of EU social policy, and that the Framework directive (89/391/EEC), the 19 separate directives, and the essential health and safety requirements in the directives on the internal market constitute the core of the legal basis;
- recognises that the legislation on safety and health at work is based on a double objective: firstly, to create a minimum level of protection for employees and, secondly, to ensure free and fair competition in the internal market;
- recognises that the Commission, in its Communication for a Community Strategy 2007-2012 on health and safety at work (COM(2007)62), has emphasised that an effective application of Community law is a prerequisite to increase employment and productivity through greater competitiveness and to improve the quality of the working environment;
- recognises that the Commission reports that in close co-operation with national authorities it will promote correct and consistent implementation of Community directives, with the Committee of Senior Labour Inspectors (SLIC), set up by Commission Decision of 12 July 1995, playing a central role;
- recognises that the Council, via Resolution of 25 June 2007 on a new Community Strategy on health and safety at work (2007-2012) welcomes the Commission Communication and, in particular, calls on the Member States to ensure better and more effective enforcement in all Member States;
- has with satisfaction noted that the Commission, within the framework of the powers provided under the Treaty, has set out its prime objective of the Community strategy for the period to reduce by 25% the total incidence of accidents at work per 100,000 workers in the EU27.

2 Notes in particular the importance of pursuing the specific goals in the strategy to:

- Guarantee proper implementation of EU legislation
- Support SMEs in the implementation of the legislation in force
- Adapt the legal framework to changes in the workplace and simplify it, particularly in view of SMEs
- Promote the development and implementation of national strategies
- Encourage changes in the behaviour of workers and encourage their employers to adopt health-focused approaches
- Finalise the methods for identifying and evaluating new potential risks
- Improve the tracking of progress
- Promote health and safety at international level

3 Declares readiness to play the central role that both the Commission and the Council call for and notes in this context that the Commission invited SLIC to

- Examine the reasons for the different incidence rates of occupational accidents in the Member States and discuss their experience of innovative solutions which have proved effective
- Examine the role of labour inspectorates in implementing the REACH Regulation and develop synergies in cooperation with other inspection bodies responsible for market surveillance and environmental policy
- Develop methods of exchanging information on the problems of applying the legislation which allow the problems to be addressed jointly
- Strengthen cooperation with the ACSH particularly with regard to preparing legislative initiatives and evaluating the implementation of directives

4 Find that the further development of Labour Inspectorate approaches to address new and emerging health and safety challenges confirms the importance of their preventative role and function in relation to safety and health at work in a broad context. Contemporary challenges about how best to target not only specific work-related health problems but also particular groups of vulnerable or exposed workers (including the young, migrant, elderly, sub-contract or so-called self-employed) figure prominently in this regard.

5 Reaffirm that labour inspectorates vary from country to country, and that their areas of competence are also different, and that it is each Member State's sovereign right to enforce in accordance with its own legislation and tradition.

II

PROGRESS SINCE THE RESOLUTION ON THE ROLE OF SLIC IN THE COMMUNITY STRATEGY ON SAFETY AND HEALTH AT WORK 2002-2006 (BILLUND, NOVEMBER 2002)

6 SLIC has achieved progress on topics addressed in the Billund Resolution as follows:

Common principles for inspection

7 Initiated, proposed and agreed a set of revised Common Principles for labour inspection throughout the EU in 2004 based on lessons learned from evaluations undertaken in candidate countries and Member States. The Common Principles have since been applied in the evaluations of the labour inspection arrangements in all (27) MS.

Common inspection objectives

8 Identified and agreed on the value of running a joint campaign within the building and construction sector in 2004/2005. Following this work, and building on the experience generated, SLIC subsequently developed further common objectives for inspection and organised additional European campaigns on asbestos (2006) and musculoskeletal disorders (2007).

Evaluation

9 Completed the evaluation of all MS to improve the transparency and quality of inspection of health and safety regulation in each MS. These evaluations have enabled Member States to review and, where necessary, to reorganise and renew their legislation, methodology and procedures for labour inspection and to make specific links to wider community strategy.

Co-operation between Labour Inspectorates/ Information/basis of knowledge

10 The establishment of networks to exchange information on problems encountered in the control and monitoring of the application of the (Community) legislation on worker protection and internal market e.g. WG: Enforcement, MACHEX.

Co-operation with other partners

11 Collaborated with the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work in promoting safer working practices to combat the risks associated with asbestos and the

manual handling of loads. The lessons learned from implementing the Billund Resolution have been carried forward into the objectives set out beneath.

Resources

12 The Committee acknowledges the Commission's expressed intention to continue to promote the work of the Committee. The Committee will utilise its resources to optimum effect, including those provided to it by the Commission, to deliver its contribution to the strategy.

III

SLIC CONTRIBUTION TO THE 2007-2012 OSH STRATEGY

13 In light of the objectives set out in the 2007-2012 OSH Strategy and to maintain involvement and influence in this important and highly developed aspect of EU policy on employment and social affairs, SLIC will carry forward and build on the progress made under the Billund Resolution by addressing the following themes in the forthcoming strategy period.

14 Promoting OSH at the workplace/Mainstreaming

SLIC will:

- Continue to seek effective ways to integrate OSH arguments into the wider public health debate, drawing on the contributions of others such as WHO where appropriate
- Work to initiate and improve wider understanding of risk concepts in education
- Publicise and disseminate OSH successes in promoting the idea of 'safe and healthy work'
- Promote the social and economic (business) case for OSH
- Consider the value of improved co-operation with the Risk Observatory to anticipate new OSH challenges or opportunities for new approaches

15 Better Regulation

SLIC will:

- Strengthen cooperation with the ACSH, particularly on legislative initiatives and evaluating the implementation of directives

- Reinforce the importance of worker protection as the core component of better regulation
- Make effective use of its existing information exchange networks to secure good cooperation and understanding between MS
- Make particular use of the skills and knowledge of its information exchange networks to inform and direct future cross-community Campaigns
- Ensure that new legislation is effectively embedded (or integrated) in MS through active management and oversight of activity via e.g. CHEMEX to aid compliance, and develop synergies in cooperation with other inspection bodies, where appropriate.
- Make links to the outcomes of the Common Principles evaluations to reflect on any specific challenges that are apparent in MS

16 Targeting interventions

SLIC will:

- Publicise examples of where the complexities of targeting have been successfully addressed as an improved way of focussing labour inspectors' work
- Make links between effective targeting approaches and tailored interventions to achieve greatest impact in worker protection
- Share knowledge and learning on the value of different approaches to hazard or sector-based targeting and influencing the management of risk
- Set priorities based on a sound (national) evidence base
- Coordinate and analyse the outputs of existing SLIC Working Groups to further improve performance in this area

17 Quantitative targets to deliver outcomes

SLIC will:

- Seek ways of encouraging and strengthening target-based approach to intervention in MS as an essential element of the Commission's planned 25% incident reduction target
- Share knowledge and experience on outcome-based targeted effort in individual MS

18 Evidence base

SLIC will:

- **Continue to cooperate with other partners in the collection and use of improved statistical evidence for ill health and injuries**
- **Make effective use of the accumulated experience and knowledge emerging from the evaluation of MS labour inspection arrangements**

IV

CONCLUSIONS

19 The Committee welcomes this opportunity to contribute to the Commission strategy. This contribution will be delivered through the Committee's three-year programme(s) of work (see Annex 1) and reported in its annual reports to the Commission.

Committee of Senior Labour Inspectors

Lisbon

Portugal

October 2007

COMMITTEE OF SENIOR LABOUR INSPECTORS (SLIC)

Plan of Work, 2007-2009

Activity	Timetable			Responsible Group (s)	Strategic Theme(s)	Outcome(s)
	2007	2008	2009			
Evaluation of the national labour inspectorates (NLIs) to the Common Principles				REFOCUS	<i>Mainstreaming, Targeting</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Publication of an Evaluation Handbook; 2) Agreed evaluation programme; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1) rota for NLI evaluations; 2.2) rota for team leaders; 3) Questions set on Commission OSH strategy.
	Ireland	Netherlands Denmark Sweden	Malta Estonia Cyprus	SLIC	<i>Mainstreaming, Targeting</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Completion of planned national evaluations to timetable; 2) Evaluation outputs <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1) evaluation summary for SLIC Members; 2.2) evaluation report for NLI; 3) Delivery of a lessons learnt Thematic Day.

Annex 1 to Resolution

Activity	Timetable			Responsible Group (s)	Strategic Theme(s)	Outcome(s)
	2007	2008	2009			
Information and inspection campaigns				MANUAL HANDLING	<i>Targeting, Evidence base</i>	1) Delivery of a European campaign on manual handling of loads in transport and healthcare sectors; 2) Publication of campaign report.
				MANUAL HANDLING	<i>Targeting, Evidence base</i>	1. Delivery of a European campaign on manual handling of loads in the construction and retail trade sectors 1.1) communication campaign on manual handling of loads using the Internet and mass media; 1.2) training for labour inspectors conducted at a national level based on a common European auxiliary methodology and training materials; 1.3) publications for the construction and retail trade sectors; 1.4) an inspection campaign implemented on the basis of common guidelines on the strategy of preventing the risk of injury during the manual handling of loads; 1.5) a seminar to sum up the campaigns carried out in the years 2007 and 2008.
				ENFORCEMENT <i>(risk assessment)</i>	<i>Targeting, Mainstreaming</i>	1) Examine the feasibility of a campaign on risk assessment; 2) Prepare proposals for discussion and a decision at SLIC plenary, March 2008.
				ASBESTOS	<i>Targeting, Evidence base</i>	1) Publication of campaign report.

Annex 1 to Resolution

Activity	Timetable			Responsible Group (s)	Strategic Theme(s)	Outcome(s)
	2007	2008	2009			
SLIC 'Resolution' and Plan of Work				STRATEGY		1) Publication of Resolution and 3-year Plan of Work on SLIC website; 2) Mid-point review on implementation of 'Resolution' by SLIC Members.
Information exchange and sharing knowledge	Germany	Slovenia	Czech Republic	SLIC	<i>Targeting</i>	1) Delivery of Thematic Days to support the delivery of the OSH strategy and to inform future direction and approaches in the areas of risk assessment, vulnerable workers, etc
	Portugal	France	Sweden			
				ENFORCEMENT	<i>Better regulation</i>	1) Design improvements to rapid information sharing website; 2) Training syllabus and Manual for national coordinators published (23 languages); 3.1) Examine the reasons for the different incidence rates of occupational accidents in Member States; 3.2) Identify innovative solutions which have proved effective; 4) Evaluation of bilateral inspector exchange programme and recommendations made.
			VIOLENCE		1) Guide to Good Practice on 'Managing violence against inspectors' published. <u>COMPLETED</u>	

Annex 1 to Resolution

Activity	Timetable			Responsible Group (s)	Strategic Theme(s)	Outcome(s)
	2007	2008	2009			
Information exchange and sharing knowledge				CHEMEX	<i>Better regulation</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Survey on NLI status in relation to the implementation of REACH carried out, and report published by end 2007; <u>COMPLETED</u> 2) High level framework setting out the key components of an effective NLI approach to REACH 'downstream' enforcement, and plan for implementation by NLIs developed by end June 2008; 3) Evaluation of tensions and synergies between REACH and OSH 'chemicals directives' completed, and recommendations for action to assist the NLIs more effectively deliver REACH activity published by end 2008; 4) Member State (and EFTA) network for rapid exchange of information, experience and best practice on enforcement (market surveillance) established by October 2009.
				MACHEX	<i>Better regulation</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Information network established with market surveillance authorities; 2) Publication of European guidelines on cross-border crane operations; 3) Outcome of survey on plant (lift truck) operators.

Annex 1 to Resolution

Activity	Timetable			Responsible Group (s)	Strategic Theme(s)	Outcome(s)
	2007	2008	2009			
Coordination with partners				STRATEGY	<i>Better regulation, Mainstreaming</i>	1) Strengthened cooperation with the ACSH, in particular, in respect of national strategies and the Scoreboard; 2) Identify opportunities for co-operation with the Risk Observatory to anticipate new OSH challenges or opportunities for new approaches.
				SLIC (BUREAU)	<i>Evidence base, Mainstreaming</i>	1) To provide an exchange of information with partners* that supports the activities of SLIC and its working groups, specifically in the areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1) statistics on accidents and ill health; 1.2) promoting campaigns and evidence on the business case for occupational health and safety; 1.3) commissioning research, surveys and other services to enhance SLIC's decision-making and delivery; * for instance, European Commission, Eurostat, European (Bilbao) Agency, European (Dublin) Foundation, ILO, WHO. 2) Preparation of the annual report on SLIC's activities.

COMMITTEE OF SENIOR LABOUR INSPECTORS (SLIC)

Committee and Working Groups (2008)

<u>Committee of Senior Labour Inspectors</u>			
Chair	Commission		
Secretary	Commission		
Membership	All EU Member States and EFTA countries		
<u>WG: Refocusing the national evaluations</u>			
Chair	UK		
Secretary	Commission		
Membership	Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden		
<u>WG: Strategy</u>			
Chair	UK		
Secretary	UK		
Membership	Austria, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Sweden		
<u>WG: Enforcement</u>			
Chair	Denmark		
Secretary	Denmark		
Membership	All EU Member States and EFTA countries		
<u>WG: CHEMEX</u>			
Chair	UK		
Secretary	Commission		
Membership	Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Netherlands, Slovakia, Sweden, UK		
<u>WG: MACHEx</u>			
Chair	Sweden		
Secretary	Sweden		

Annex 1 to Resolution

Membership	All EU Member States and EFTA countries		
WG: Manual Handling 2007			
Chair	Netherlands		
Secretary	Netherlands		
Membership	All EU Member States and EFTA countries		
WG: Manual Handling 2008			
Chair	Poland		
Secretary	Poland		
Membership	All EU Member States and EFTA countries		
WG: Asbestos Campaign 2006¹			
Chair	Germany		
Secretary	Commission		
Membership	All EU Member States and EFTA countries		

¹ To be disbanded once campaign report received.