

REACH and Worker Protection Legislation

Two complementary pieces of law for improved worker protection?

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Some data

- In Spain there are 3,100,000 workers that are exposed to carcinogens at work, i.e. the 25 % of the workers' population (600,000 in Madrid)
 - CAREX: International database about labour carcinogen
- Between 4 - 6 % of cancer cases are originated at work
- Very few cases of occupational cancer are officially declared: 6-7 annually in Spain, 1-2 annually in Madrid
- In Madrid we estimate that around 700 to 800 workers die every year as a result of occupational exposure to carcinogenic agents

Mortality rates per 10.000 in males from 30 to 64 years old according to professional category

	Executives/ qualified staff	Manual workers	Agricultural workers
Any cause	23,3	42,6	53,3
Cancer	9,9	14,8	19,3
Cardiovascular	6,9	10,5	15,4
Accidents	1,5	3,3	2,7



Occupational exposure to carcinogens and mutagens

OBJECTIVES

- To promote the prevention and control of carcinogenic and mutagenic agents in workplaces of Madrid's Community.
- To encourage the participation of workers and their representatives in the prevention and control of carcinogenic agents

Prevention and control of carcinogens at work. Methodology

- Bibliographic revision
- Elaboration of educational material
- Elaboration of a check list in order to know the fulfilment of R.D. of carcinogens and mutagens
- Elaboration of protocols to carry out actions
- To carry out specific conferences
- Investigation of risk situations previously identified
- To create a database and produce results

ANALYSIS BY WORKPLACE

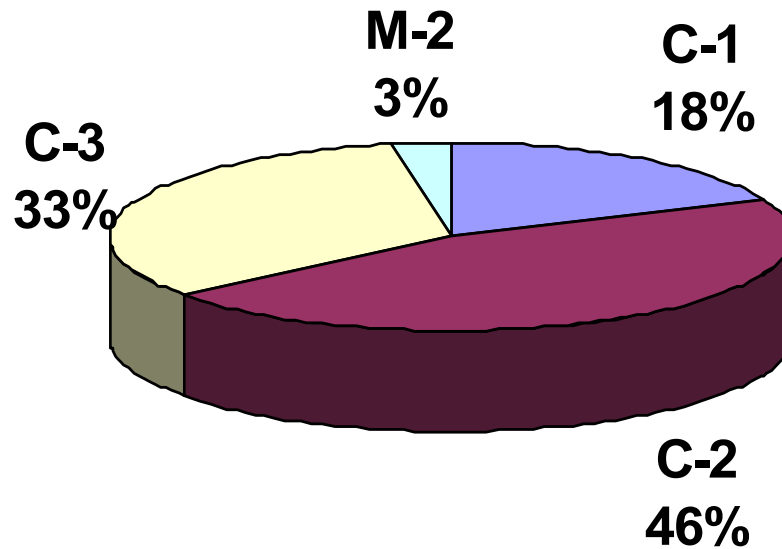
- We have visited a total of 222 workplaces, and have found carcinogens in the 44.1% of them
- The 23% of the workplaces visited had only one carcinogen, while the 22,2% used two or more
- The average is 2,2 per workplace

Carcinogens found at workplaces

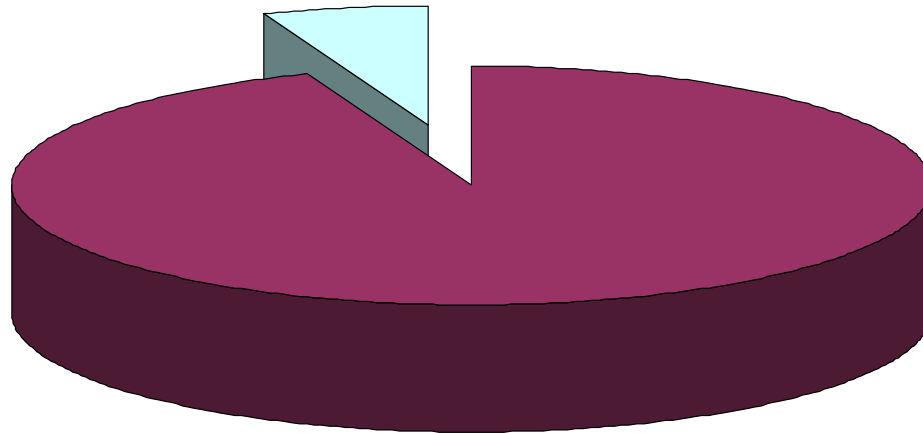
- We have found 217 carcinogenic or mutagenic agents
- The average is 2,2 carcinogens per work centre
- The following substances are the most frequently used at work: trichloroethylene, lead chromate, potassium dichromate, methylene chloride, and other hydrocarbons (gasoline derivatives, gas oil)

Carcinogens found at workplaces

Distribution of carcinogens and mutagens by category



Starting point



At the beginning of the investigation only 13 workplaces had the adequate information; in the rest – 209 – it was insufficient, partial, not updated or simply non-existent.



Starting point

- In the 73,4% of the cases it was necessary to require measures according to appropriate procedures as well as a detailed and specific evaluation- previously they had not observed a chemical risk or there were simply no evaluations.

Conditions of use

	YES%	NO%
Closed system	21,7	78,3
To limit the number of workers exposed	34,6	65,4
Local extraction system	40,6	59,4
Individual protection equipment	54,4	45,6
Regular cleaning of floors, walls and other surfaces	52,5	46,1
Demarcation of risk areas	12,4	87,6
Plans to deal with emergencies	11,5	88,5



Information and training of workers

	SI%	NO%
About risks	18,4	81,6
About preventive measures to be taken, including the use of products, equipments and protective clothing	20,3	79,7



Conditions of use

- ▶ There are no differences of use according to the different agents categories
- ▶ The results don't depend on the category of the used agent

Analysis according to the sector

Workplaces with carcinogens

Printing Industry	17%
Metallurgical industry	73,2%
Wood industry	42,8%
Pharmaceutical laboratories	53,8%
Education	76,9%
Plastics	75%
Transportation	11,1%
Food processing occupations	25%
Commerce and hotel & catering industry	--
Glass industry	--
Street cleaning service	50%
Vehicle repairation	50%
Others	47,6%

Analysis according to the size of the workplace

- ▶ The sectors of pharmaceutical laboratories, plastics and wood industry represent the workplaces where we can find the best compliance of the legislation
- ▶ There are important differences on the availability of FDS, from 6,5% in the education sector to 80% in the plastic sector or manufacturing metallic products
- ▶ The personal hygiene measures and individual protective equipment are thoroughly fulfilled in the pharmaceutical chemistry sector



Analysis according to the size of the workplace

- ▶ Data are according to other indicators. We can ascertain that the workers' conditions for those who are exposed to carcinogens and mutagens are worse in accordance to the size of the workplace (worse in the small workplaces)
- ▶ Our results also depend on the size of the workplace

Results

	Frequency	%
Replacement by a substance, preparation or process	19	19,4
Improvement of conditions of use	19	19,4
Improvement of packaging and labelling	1	1,0
Improvements of personal hygiene measures and individual protection	4	4,1



Results

	Frequency	%
Improvement on health surveillance	3	3,1
Improvement on information and training of the workers	33	33,7
Without changes	19	19,4
In the process of replacement	16	16,3



Results

- ▶ Results don't depend on the carcinogen or mutagen category
- ▶ The replacement or elimination of carcinogens or mutagens is proportional to the size of the workplace
- ▶ The sectors where we can reach more replacements have been: education, manufacturing metallic products and plastics



Conclusions

- ▶ Carcinogens and mutagens are used without control and there is a clear infringement of the laws
- ▶ Results can be considered satisfactory
- ▶ The level of knowledge is very important
- ▶ It is required an immediate intervention
- ▶ Currently, the Spanish labour authority is visiting ex officio the workplaces

Some notes to take into account

- ▶ The specialists from the Labour Risk Prevention Services are not willing to cooperate in most of the cases
- ▶ Very often big companies subcontract tasks that imply the exposure to carcinogenic and mutagenic agents to smaller companies
- ▶ The workers' representatives are deeply committed

Thanks for your attention

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