Conference report

A wide-ranging debate on the progress made in the implementation of key Community health and safety directives took place during the TUTB Conference "The Working Environment in the European Union: the difficult transition from law to practice", held in Brussels last December. Almost 200 delegates from 27 European countries attended, including representatives of trade union and employer organisations, employee insurance bodies, enforcement agencies and safety consultancies.

The conference included a debate on the implementation of the whole range of Article 118A directives adopted since 1989. However, key conference sessions focused on three directives in particular - the Framework Directive (89/391/EEC), the Manual Handling of Loads Directive and the Display Screen Equipment Directive - and two themes which went beyond the scope of individual directives - musculo-skeletal disorders and carcinogens. One workshop was devoted to the follow-up and control of implementation. A closing round-table debate included reports from earlier directive-specific workshop sessions.

The Manual Handling of Loads and Display Screen Equipment (DSE) directives were chosen because they are the first for which detailed "implementation reports" are due to be submitted by Member States to the European Commission. Reports on their implementation, commissioned by the TUTB, were presented during the conference.

It was clear from these reports - and other presentations and debates - that many difficulties with implementation and harmonisation have arisen throughout the Community. The adoption of the directives nearly a decade ago and their subsequent legal transposition now appears a relatively straightforward process.

In both his introduction and his summing up of the Conference, TUTB director, Marc Sapir, suggested that the manner in which the directives had been transposed and

The Working Environment in the European Union: the difficult transition from law to practice

This report was written by John Manos, Editor of the *European Safety Newsletter*, Janine Delahaut and Laurent Vogel, TUTB.

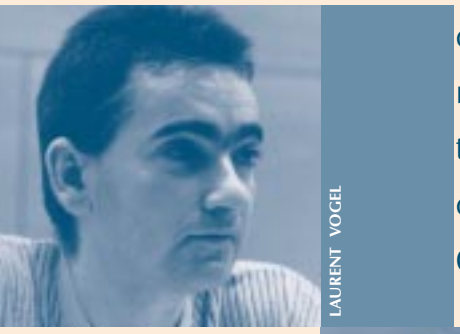
implemented falls short of the rigorous objectives set at the negotiating stage. There was a risk of their becoming "*cathedrals in a desert*" of minimalist and half-hearted implementation efforts.

Nevertheless, the conference represented a unique opportunity for specialists to assess the state-of-play on implementation. The TUTB is currently the main body active in monitoring the transposition and implementation of the Article 118A directives, and the December meeting was the first public examination of the information gathered to date. The European Commission is also involved in a similar activity, but its examination of national laws transposing the Framework Directive (89/391/EEC) and its first five daughter directives is limited to a legal examination of the transposing texts. More detailed national "implementation reports" describing the practical impact of the directives on national organisation and arrangements (of the which the Manual Handling of Loads and DSE directives are the first), have yet to be submitted to the Commission by Member States.

In his opening preliminary report on the transposition and implementation process (reproduced in this issue), TUTB researcher, Laurent Vogel, revealed that the unanimity among Member States when most of the directives were being adopted has given way to a less harmonious atmosphere during transposition and implementation. Vogel was critical of the delaying tactics and the minimalist approach adopted over many issues. However, he acknowledged "*the diverse realities of national preventive*

systems [which] complicate any attempt at harmonisation," concluding that, "*the challenge is less to bring all national situations into line with an abstract European ideal than to attain the substantive minimum objectives set by the directives while preserving the best of each national system ...*".

Loss of legislative momentum, it was suggested during the conference, was somehow to blame for the unsatisfactory way that the already-adopted directives were being implemented. Responsibility for this situation lay at the door of the Commission, the chairman of the European Parliament's Social Affairs Committee, Stephen Hughes, told the conference. However, speakers from the Commission, employers organisations and enforcement agencies suggested that the "legislative break" which had occurred was logical and that the problems created by the diversity of systems operating in Europe might take another decade to solve. Marc Boisnel who represented the French government, under whose presidency the Council adopted a resolution on the transposition of Community social directives, recalled the key role of the Commission. However, at the same time he highlighted the collective responsibility of the Member States, the social partners and the Commission itself for the current lack of political drive in implementing what they themselves had adopted and in dealing with the emerging issues in the field of the working environment (see our editorial).



LAURENT VOGEL

MARC SAPIR

DAVID WALTERS

The European Directives

The challenges of the Framework Directive

Consultative/participative principles

The common denominator underlying the entire meeting, on which there was no dissent, was the importance for occupational safety of the consultative and participative principles enshrined in the Framework Directive (89/391/EEC).

Workplace representative participation is now a feature of the legislation of all EU Member States, as required by Directive 89/391/EEC. That the effectiveness of this representation is greatest when trade unions are involved has been well-documented, in particular in the work of David Walters of South Bank University, who presented a paper entitled, "*Worker participation in health and safety: comparative data*".

Walters considered how safety representatives could become more effective, where they were most in need of support and what challenges they faced in the future. Trade unions had an impressive record in supporting safety representatives at the workplace, and trade union training had been crucial to their success, "*unmatched by any other source of provision*". But trade unions were also important "*outside the workplace ... as instigators of change at local, national and international levels*". For example, Walters referred to the progress made in Norway and the UK (as well as in Sweden) with the concept of regional safety representatives, which helps address the SME problem. He noted that such schemes "*could enhance the activities of other players in the organisation of preventive health and safety, such as the regulatory authorities*".

Indeed, in a generally unfavourable economic and political climate, it was logical for trade unions to exploit the fact that their activity in the field of workplace safety represented *"the acceptable public face of trade unions"*. At a time when "*it would be unrealistic to anticipate a sudden reversal in the crisis of representation faced by the trade union movement*", Walters noted that, "*surveys of public attitudes towards trade unions consistently report ... that* [they] *are perceived as playing a legitimate role in representation on health and safety, whatever the legitimacy of other aspects of their representational role.*"

Walters reviewed the research into the link between worker participation and safety performance, including recent work which used objective measures of "*outcomes of representation*", such as reductions in injury rates. One group of researchers reported that *"joint consultative committees with all employee representatives appointed by unions, significantly reduced workplace injuries relative to those establishments where the management alone determines health and safety arrangements*".

JAN POPMA

The full report "The hidden face of working conditions: stress, welfare and the Framework Directive", written by Jan Popma for the TUTB, will be published in 1998.
This report will be available in English.

Job content, well-being and avoidance of stress

Jan Popma, a Dutch consultant, described how the 1980 Dutch Working Conditions Act dealt with the issue of "well-being" at work. The Dutch legislation includes seven "criteria for healthy jobs" (e.g., reducing monotonous tasks, worker autonomy, information on the goals and results of tasks, etc.) which mirror the more limited provisions of Article 6 of the Framework Directive relating to job content (e.g., the importance of work being adapted to the individual).

1 workshop
The Challenges of the Framework Directive
Moderated by Françoise Piotet, Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, Paris

WORKER PARTICIPATION IN HEALTH AND SAFETY: COMPARATIVE DATA
David Walters, South Bank University, London

THE HIDDEN FACE OF WORKING CONDITIONS: STRESS AND WELFARE AT WORK, THE DUTCH EXPERIENCE
Jan Popma, Consultant, The Netherlands

MULTIDISCIPLINARY PREVENTION SERVICES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY AND FUTURE PROSPECTS
Thora Brendstrup, CASA, Denmark

Multidisciplinarity of prevention services

A third presentation on the Framework Directive 89/391/EEC concerned the key provisions of Article 7 on protective and preventive services. The results of a survey[1], carried out by the Danish Work Environment Service on behalf of the European Commission (submitted to an ad hoc working group of the Commission's Luxembourg Advisory Committee), were summarised by Thora Brendstrup, of the Centre for Alternative Social Analysis (CASA), Denmark.

Brendstrup's report on the survey, prepared in collaboration with her colleague Hans Jorgen Limborg, described how Article 7 was implemented in the Member States (the extent to which preventive services exist, their tasks and what motivates employers to use them, etc.) and made recommendations for their future development.

A focus of Brendstrup's presentation was the multidisciplinarity of services, although, in fact, Article 7 does not specifically refer to this aspect of preventive services. For the purposes of the survey, multidisciplinary services were defined as services within which "*a variety of academic and /or technical disciplines ... collaborate to solve problems in the work environment*". The report concludes that an appropriate mix of expertise would combine competences in the assessment of medical, technical, ergonomic and psycho-social factors and that there should be international discussion on qualifications in this composite field. As a first step in this direction, the curricula of various existing training programmes should be collated.

THORA BRENDSTRUP

Brendstrup acknowledged that a "*thorough knowledge of the actual practical implementation*" of Article 7 could not be gained by questionnaires alone. But the survey showed how differently the wording of Article 7 was being interpreted, with the result that there were great differences between national arrangements. For example, in many countries preventive services were required by law, while in the UK and Sweden they were entirely voluntary. Services also varied widely in their scope and the extent to which labour inspectorates, social partners, insurance organisations or other official/expert bodies were involved in their supervision.

[1] *Multidisciplinarity services in Occupational Health and Safety in the European Union*, Danish Working Environment Service, Copenhagen, March 1997.

The manual handling of loads

Two surveys commissioned by the TUTB on the Manual Handling of Loads Directive (90/269/EEC) were the subject of presentations: one European survey, by Valeria Uberti of the Spanish Trade Union Institute on Work, Environment and Health (ISTAS), and one on the UK situation, by Rory O'Neill of De Montfort University, Leicester. A third presentation, from Catherine Teiger of the French National Scientific Research Centre, CNRS, dealt more generally with the prevention of musculo-skeletal disorders by applying ergonomic principles in hospital work-situations.

VALERIA UBERTI

Some of the findings of the European research (see full report, published in the *TUTB Newsletter*, No. 5, February 1997) were reviewed in Ms Uberti's presentation. One notable feature of the transposing legislation, she said, was the fact that, in several cases, specific weight limits had been included in the transposing instruments themselves or in supporting documentation. This was the case in France, Italy and Portugal, even though the directive had adopted an "ergonomic principles" approach which included weight as only one of 19 "reference factors" to be considered when assessing manual handling risks. Such numerical limits could lead to confusion, Uberti said, because they could either be interpreted as maximum allowable weights for manual handling, or simply as trigger weights above which the provisions of the directive come into force.

Another aspect of the transposing legislation which varied widely was its scope. French legislation excluded the transport and mining sectors and many government officials from its scope. Fishing and mining were excluded in Norway; government officials, agriculture and forestry in Austria; and sea transport in the UK.

Transposition of Directive 90/269/EEC in the United Kingdom

The UK study found that there was consensus on the fact that the UK implementing regulations had been successfully implemented. Rory O' Neill of De Montfort University, Leicester, presented the results of the survey, which had been directed at prevention practitioners in 48 UK organisations (including employers, trade unions and insurance companies).

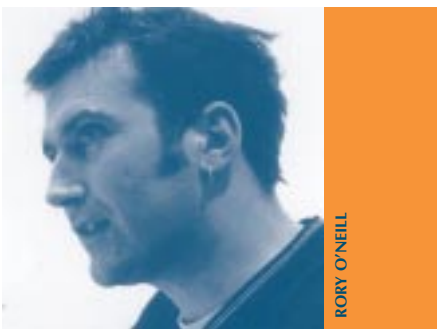
A large majority of respondents supported the implementing regulations (the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992), most reporting that they had led to improvements in workplaces. More than 60% considered that the cost of the measures taken to comply had been out-weighed by the benefits. Overall, the regulations were popular among employers as well as trade unions and insurance companies, and have led to financial savings and fewer accidents, the survey showed.

Specific examples of measures which proved their worth were brought to light by the survey. In the health services, for example, the regulations had encouraged a trend towards the introduction of "minimal lifting" and "no lifting" policies. O'Neill referred to one health authority where a £130,000 investment in lifting aids led to an 84% reduction in time lost due to manual handling injuries.

He reported on other practical responses to the regulations, such as the modification of the nature of loads to be lifted. One trade association reduced by half the size of cement bags to a more manageable 25 kg. The "Tesco" supermarket chain required suppliers to deliver fresh food products in smaller units (bags of no more than 25kg and boxes of no more than 35 kg). The Royal Mail postal service introduced a maximum weight of 11kg for airport mail bags.

However, O'Neill claimed that some employers could ignore the UK regulations with impunity because of the low-key approach to enforcement which had been official government policy. Five convictions out of seven Factory Inspectorate prosecutions during the three months after implementation (January 1995 - March 1995) represented a poor enforcement record, O'Neill considered. He complained that government pre-occupation with deregulation had coincided with reduced funding for the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and that some employers had exploited this situation. Also, unscrupulous employers had used the regulations "*to justify discrimination against certain groups such as women, older workers and those with disabilities, including disabilities caused by poor manual handling work methods*".

O'Neill's assessment of implementation in the UK was endorsed by a HSE official from the floor of the conference. Malcolm Darvill referred to a separate, larger HSE survey of companies which came to the same conclusions as the TUTB survey. He also noted the "bad press" that the British regulations had received. This was partly because they had been "manipulated" by some organisations (such as a privatised rail company and a local authority) which used them as an excuse for cutting back on services, citing the EU regulations as the reason why services involving lifting operations could no longer be offered.


RORY O'NEILL

A report on the European survey on the Manual Handling of Loads directive (90/269/EEC) was published in the *TUTB Newsletter*, n° 5, February 1997.


CATHERINE TEIGER

The prevention of musculo-skeletal disorders

Catherine Teiger of the CNRS, France, presented a case study of the health sector, which was based on an ergonomic analysis of the workplace. The study entailed an experiment on how to prevent cases of MSD in cleaning ladies working in a hospital, particularly those who had to collect the dirty linen. The methodology involved analysing the work station and the organisation of work in order to identify potential problems and to come up with solutions which would allow the user herself to regulate the situation. This type of hands-on experiment based on a real familiarity with the job is more effective in preventing musculo-skeletal disorders than the more traditional prevention methods which make adjustments to the work station based on an *a priori* risk and safety assessment, and provide training which aims to teach the workers, *a priori*, how to adopt the "correct movements and postures" from a biomechanical and physiological point of view.

Risk assessment

The Manual Handling of Loads Directive makes provision for a risk assessment related to the prevention measures required where manual handling involves risks and cannot be avoided. Annex 1 to this Directive sets out a list of reference factors which are to be taken into account for the prevention measures. These are also criteria by which to decide whether a handling operation entails a health risk for the workers concerned. The necessity of this risk assessment and the way in which it should be carried out was a subject for much debate at the close of this session. Enrico Occhipinti from the University of Milan, who moderated this workshop, stressed the importance of having reference documents and guidelines for carrying out technical risk assessments, so that the directive can be correctly and harmoniously implemented. A number of states have drawn up documents covering all branches of industry: the United Kingdom, Sweden and Italy. Enrico Occhipinti is a member of the group of experts that produced the Italian guide on the assessment of risks. This guide expressly refers to the NIOSH[2] evaluation method for lifting loads, but uses differential ideal weights rated by sex and age[3].


ENRICO OCCHIPINTI

[2] US National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

[3] An article on the method of assessing risks used in Italy for the application of Directive 90/269/EEC was published in the English journal, *Ergonomics*: A. Grieco, E. Occhipinti, D. Colombini, G. Molteni, "Manual handling of loads: the point of view of experts involved in the application of EC Directive 90/269", *Ergonomics*, 1997, vol. 40, n°10, pp. 1035-1056.

Work with display screen equipment

In the second of two transposition reports (see report on the Manual Handling Directive, above), Valeria Uberti reviewed national laws transposing the Display Screen Equipment Directive (an article based on her report was published in the *TUTB Newsletter*, No. 4, December 1996).

Uberti critically examined weaknesses in the directive, in particular the fact that the definition of workers covered (anyone "*who habitually uses display screen equipment as a significant part of their normal work*") had inevitably led to widely differing interpretations in national laws. The most restrictive definition was in Italy (and was the subject of a European Court of Justice challenge, still unsettled at the time of the conference) and placed the great majority of Italian DSE workers outside the scope of the law. France, too, had a very restrictive definition, exempting all civil servants from the legislation. The UK definition, on the other hand, went beyond what was required by the directive. The Swedish requirements applied to the widest range of workers, giving them the benefit of advanced provisions on monotonous work and the software ergonomics requirements of Swedish technical standards.

The Swedish experience with technical standards for display screen equipment

The Swedish situation was elaborated in further detail by the following speaker, Monika Breidensjö of the Swedish trade union confederation, TCO. Only one of several already-enacted Swedish regulations and ordinances concerned with visual display units had to be amended in order to transpose directive 90/270/EEC, namely the VDU ordinance of the National Board of Occupational Safety and Health. But the Swedish Work Environment Act itself was as important as the directive and the ordinances, particularly in its provisions relating to VDU operators being able to influence their working conditions, Breidensjö said.

Breidensjö's presentation focused on the considerable activity of Swedish trade unions in influencing the working conditions of those using DSE. The TCO confederation's "*screen checker*", a simple guide for checking the physical parameters of particular workstations and DSE terminals, was widely used in Sweden and elsewhere, and had been translated into eight languages. The TCO also administered a DSE "eco-label" scheme whereby hardware complying with the latest TCO standards could carry a "TCO '95" marking.

The Swedish arrangements were not perfect, however. Principal problems were that the regulatory system lagged behind rapid technological developments and the fact that the incidence of musculo-skeletal disorders amongst TCO members was rising, Breidensjö said.

The transposition of Directive 90/270/EEC in Germany

A second national report on the DSE directive, presented by Gottfried Richenhagen of the German trade union confederation, DGB (North Rhine-Westphalian Regional Technical Advisory Office), provided details of the much delayed German DSE transposing instrument, the *Bildschirmarbeitsverordnung*.

Richenhagen explained the disputed issues which had caused Germany to be the last country to transpose 90/270/EEC. Transposing this directive, like the Framework Directive 89/391/EEC itself, had required fundamental changes to existing German requirements, both in respect of federal legislation and the important sectoral technical regulations of the *Berufsgenossenschaften*[4] (BG). The *Bildschirmarbeitsverordnung* transposed the directive into German law but there was still no formal agreement on whether 90/270/EEC could be translated into BG accident prevention regulations.

In contrast, the experience of the UK - the only Member State to have abstained from the Council vote on the Directive in 1990 - was one of coming to terms with an initially unwanted set of requirements. Malcolm Darvill of the Health and Safety Executive told the conference that despite the UK's initial scepticism about the directive, it had not only been implemented on schedule, but the UK transposing regulations had also proved a success. A detailed evaluation of the UK implementation, commissioned by the British government, showed (to the surprise of those who commissioned it, Darvill said), that the 1992 implementing regulations were popular and had been successfully implemented by the majority of employers who understood the risk of musculo-skeletal injury associated with DSE work. It was unfortunate that many employers still thought that there was a potential for permanent effects on eyesight associated with video display unit work, rather than only temporary eyestrain. However, the importance of the link between the incidence of musculo-skeletal disorders and psycho-social conditions prevailing in DSE workplaces was being increasingly recognised in the UK.

A report based on the results of the survey on the national transpositions of the Display Screen Equipment Directive (90/270/EEC) was published in *TUTB Newsletter* n°4, December 1996.

The report by Monica Breidensjö on the application of Directive 90/270/EEC in Sweden will be published by the TUTB in 1998, together with Gottfried Richenhagen's presentation on the transposition of this directive in Germany. This report will be available in English.

[4] Employers' Liability Insurance Associations.

4 workshop
Technical Standardisation: the Case of Musculo-Skeletal Disorders
Moderated by Andrea Tozzi, TUTB

THE DEVELOPING TRADE UNION INPUT TO CEN'S STANDARDISATION WORK
Enrico Gibellieri, Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL), Italy

THE DEVELOPMENTS IN STANDARDISATION IN THE FIELD OF MSD
Vicente Verde Peleato, University of Valencia, Spain

ERGONOMICS AND MSD: A TUTB APPROACH TO RISK ASSESSMENT
Aleid Ringelberg, co-ordinator of the biomechanics working group of CEN/TC122, The Netherlands

The instruments of implementation

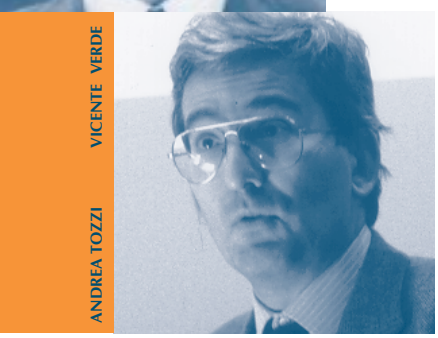
The domain of musculo-skeletal disorders and design ergonomics has been central to the TUTB's activities for the past two years. Several publications presenting the results of this work will be printed in 1998:
- **a guide on risk estimation for MSD, by Aleid Ringelberg ;**
- **a report on trade union initiatives to combat MSD, "Europe under Strain", by Rory O'Neill;**
- **a special issue of our *Newsletter* will be dedicated to this subject in Autumn (our tenth issue). This issue will also report on the campaign for the prevention of MSD, led by the ETUC and its affiliated organisations throughout Europe.**

Two parallel sessions were then held to focus more specifically on the instruments of implementation, such as European technical standardisation and the procedures established by the Member States to substitute carcinogens. These two sessions dealt with themes which went beyond the scope of individual Article 118A directives: musculo-skeletal disorders and carcinogens.

Technical standardisation: the case of musculo-skeletal disorders

Workshop 4 charted the recent developments in European technical standardisation in the field of Musculo-Skelatal Disorders (MSD), one of the most common work-related health complaints. Illnesses linked to the organisational aspects of work, such as stress and MSD, are becoming more and more widespread. Indeed, they currently top the league of work-related illnesses, highlighting the gulf between work organisation, work design, workload, pace of work and individual capacities.

VICENTE VERDE



ANDREA TOZZI

In his introduction to this workshop, Andrea Tozzi from the TUTB presented the European legal framework for MSD, which consists of both the very general provisions of the Framework Directive and the more specific provisions of the Manual Handling of Loads Directive, which, however, are limited to certain types of MSD. He also highlighted the dual European approach to this field of standardisation. On the one hand, it sets essential health and safety requirements for machinery design that allow the free movement of goods on the market (article 100A of the Treaty), and on the other hand it establishes minimum health and safety requirements for the use of these machines at the workplace (article 118A). The boundary between these two different worlds - that of standardisation and design and that of rules for use directed at employers and workers is often difficult to distinguish. It is precisely on this border that the TUTB has focused its recent work, with the aim of forging closer links between product design and real-world use. The TUTB has already published a guide for standardisers on integrating ergonomic principles into C-standards for machinery design. It is going to carry this work forward with the publication of a guide on risk estimation for MSD, destined for both the designers and users of machinery. The approach in this guide was developed by A. Ringelberg, co-ordinator of the biomechanics working group of CEN/TC 122[5].

Four European standards mandated by the Machinery Directive and currently under development in CEN deal with aspects related to MSD. These are: prEN 1005-1, prEN 1005-2, prEN 1005-3 and prEN 1005-4[6]. Broadly speaking, these draft standards cover three major biomechanical aspects of the use of machinery: general rules for manual handling; acceptable limit values for forces exerted by the worker; and acceptable ranges for postures of the body segments. Vicente Verde from the University of Valencia in Spain pointed out their limits, which stem mainly from the fact that forces and postures are dealt with rather independently, without taking into account quantitative time pattern factors such as breaks, cycles and repetitions. These drafts only apply to situations where a relevant force is exerted. So, although they can help assess the acceptability of tasks in rather extreme situations, they are not at all suitable for assessing the complex reality of "normal" tasks. What is more, none of the four drafts consider repetitive movements as a main causal factor of MSD[7].

Here again, the borders need to be more clearly defined; in this case, the border between acceptable and unacceptable working conditions. Vicente Verde argues that a different type of CEN document is needed if progress is to be made in the risk assessment of repetitive work. He suggests a *guide* as opposed to a *standard*, as a guide would allow the use of more flexible, adaptable and exhaustive tools, namely: observational methods for assessing repetition in manual tasks, anthropometric guidelines and checklists for a detailed examination of tasks and criteria to score them.

[5] We will discuss this guide in greater detail in the next issue of our Newsletter, to be published in Autumn 1998. This issue will be entirely devoted to musculo-skeletal disorders, particulary in the framework of the ETUC's campaign for the prevention of such risks.

[6] PrEN 1005-1: Safety of machinery - Human physical performance - Part 1: Terms and definitions; Part 2: Manual handling of objects associated to machinery; Part 3: Recommended force limits for machinery operation; Part 4: evaluation of working postures in relation to machinery.

[7] Editor's note: these aspects will be dealt with in a fifth part to the draft standard, prEN 1005-5: risk assessment for repetitive handling at high frequency. It should be noted that, although research into this subject is considered a priority within CEN's STAR research programme, it is being held back by a lack of financial resources from the Commission.

ALEID RINGELBERG

Women are the main victims of MSD at work. However, the issue of how to integrate gender-related aspects into risk assessment methods, legal provisions or technical standards is far from being resolved. A recurring question during the debates was: how can one account for the physiological differences between men and women when designing and using work equipment without encouraging discrimination?

Up until now, trade union participation in both national and international standardisation has been minimal and unbalanced. Ten years on from the adoption of the Machinery Directive, the European institutions and European standardisation bodies should react to this state of affairs by creating a more favourable climate for the participation of trade unionists. On the national level, this could be achieved by means of agreements. Enrico Gibellieri from the Italian trade union confederation, CGIL, and a member of the TUTB's Standardisation Network, gave an overview of trade union participation in European standardisation (see inset).

In his conclusion to this Workshop, Andrea Tozzi stressed the importance of filling out the existing legal framework, either by improving Annex I to the Manual Handling of Loads Directive or by drawing up a directive dealing specifically with MSD. However, the question as to the necessity of a new directive on MSD remains open. In any case, the transposition of the existing directives, in particular the Framework Directive, must be stepped up. This requires European-level co-ordination and the drafting of guides on how to assess risks and find practical solutions. All possible interpretations of the legislation should be exploited at national level. To this end, trade unions should be actively involved and training on MSD should be provided for both workers and employers. Finally, it is important to ensure that all workers are covered by this legislation - including women, part-time workers and workers on fixed-term contracts - while at the same time taking into consideration the difficulties faced by SMEs, both in terms of participation and training.

The developing trade union input to CEN's standardisation work

Directive 89/392/EEC, known as the "Machinery Directive", represents the fundamental legal basis for the participation of union experts from all Member States of the European Economic Space (EU and EFTA) in the standardisation process, both at a national and a European level. To facilitate the co-ordination of union experts and to give adequate support to national unions who have no previous experience in this activity, the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) established a technical body, the European Trade Union Technical Bureau for Health and Safety (TUTB), at the end of the 80's.

In 1995, the TUTB undertook research into the participation of union experts (their number and origin) in the European standardisation activities of the Technical Committees (TC) and Working Groups (WG) of CEN, the most important European standardisation body.

The main results of TUTB's research

The TUTB study, carried out by means of a questionnaire sent to all the European trade unions and members of the network of experts, showed that only about 100 union experts participate in the activities of CEN's Technical Committees (mainly TC 122 "Ergonomics" and TC 114 "Safety of Machinery"), and less than 100 participate in the Working Groups (see figures 1 and 2).

FIGURE 1 - UNION EXPERTS IN CEN's TCs

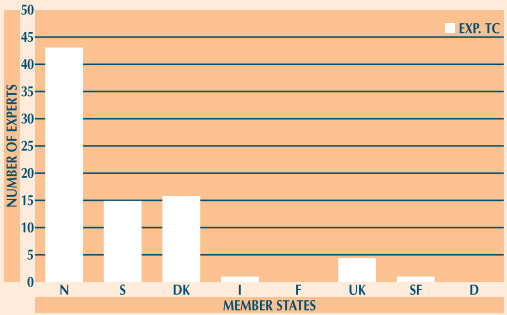
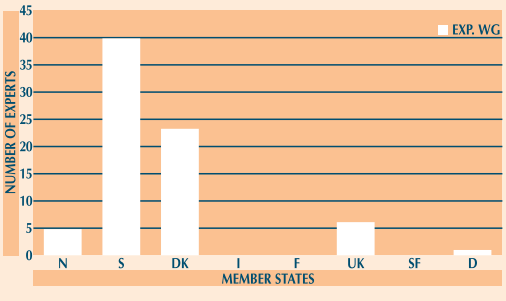


FIGURE 2 - UNION EXPERTS IN CEN's WGs



Over 90% of these union experts come from Denmark, Sweden and Norway, where they were participating in the standardisation activities before the introduction of the "new approach" which extended the participation of union experts to all the EES countries.

Compared with the thousands of experts from enterprises and public bodies, the handful of union experts have little chance of influencing the contents of the European harmonised standards and, as a result, the level of safety and environmental compatibility of the machines and products which are introduced onto the Single European Market.

ENRICO GIBELLIERI

Obstacles to participation

In order to collect workers' experience and to translate it into technical proposals, standardisation work requires knowledge of production cycles as well as competence in polytechnical, biomedical and organisational sciences, ergonomics and social sensitivity.

Furthermore, this activity demands the constant involvement of the experts, their availability to attend meetings and to maintain continuous contacts with the other members of the committees and working groups in which they must actively participate during the long and complex standardisation process.

The involvement becomes even more demanding when the participation passes from the national to the European level - the most important level for obtaining concrete results for workers. In order to be involved in standardisation on a European level, the expert needs to know English or, failing that, French or German. On a national level, it is also necessary to write comments on European technical standards in English, before they are adopted and published at national level.

While the participation of the enterprise's experts is in conformity with the enterprise's interests, union experts, who pursue objectives which are sometimes in conflict with those of the enterprises or bodies in which they work, often encounter difficult obstacles.

The European Trade Union Confederation and the national trade unions must exert a strong political pressure on the European Commission and the Governments of the Member States to encourage them to plan legal and financial instruments to enable real union participation in the European standardisation process.

Proposals

To improve the participation of union experts both quantitatively and qualitatively, the national union confederations and the ETUC must treat standardisation as a priority objective. They should recruit experts through sectoral and white-collar unions or associations and develop a national co-ordinating structure which is in constant contact with the TUTB at the European level.

Agreements between social partners

■ In order to promote the participation of professional and competent workers in union standardisation activities, it is first of all necessary to create favourable conditions (i.e., no negative consequences on the expert's career or on the costs sustained by the enterprises where s/he is working).

■ Agreements between national union confederations (with the assistance of the sectoral unions) and employers associations in all the Member States would be useful for defining rules for experts' participation, in particular the requirements for time-off, protecting the experts against any retaliation by the entrepreneurs.

■ It would also be useful to establish a solidarity fund among enterprises in order to share the costs of standardisation, avoiding the concentration of costs in those enterprises where the union experts are working.

Role of Governments

■ The Governments of the EES Member States should take in charge part of the costs of the participation of union experts (travel and allowance costs), particularly when they must attend European meetings in the head-offices of CEN or other European standardisation bodies.

■ They should also take in charge the costs of the experts' training, particularly for the improvement of their spoken and written English, which is a fundamental working tool for drafting European standards, as well as the costs of the experts' co-ordination both at a national and international level.

In Denmark, Sweden and Norway - European countries with a longer tradition in the participation of union experts in standardisation activities - these instruments already exist and have proven to be efficient (see TUTB study).

Although unions' contributions to technical standardisation have brought about considerable improvements, it is necessary to use these results to redefine the general legal framework and to encourage the Commission and the Governments of the Member States to determine the conditions for equal opportunities for all the interested parties.

National and European union confederations must consider union participation in standardisation activities as a priority for the improvement of workplace conditions. TUTB is a point of reference for the co-ordination and the training of union experts from various European countries and acts as the unions' interface with the CEN and the other European standardisation bodies.

Enrico Gibellieri
Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL), Italy

KAROLA GRODZKI

National implementing instruments: the case of carcinogens

In workshop 5, three presentations described the national arrangements for the control of carcinogens in Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands.

The German experience with replacing carcinogens

In her introduction to this session, TUTB moderator Karola Grodzki reviewed the multiplicity of EC-level instruments that aim to identify, classify and control cancer hazards associated with chemicals, both inside and outside the workplace. This includes not only the Article 118A Directive 90/394 and the arrangements for the promulgation/establishment of indicative limit values, but also the body of legislation emanating from Article 100A Directives 67/548/EEC and 88/379/EEC on the classification and labelling of dangerous substances and preparations, respectively.

Grodzki touched on the controversial subject of what proportion of total cancer incidence can be attributed to occupational exposures. Even using conservative extrapolation techniques, the figure was generally acknowledged to be between 4 and 5%. In Germany in 1994, Grodzki noted, 50% of recognised occupational fatalities were from occupational cancer diseases.

A comprehensive study of the situation in Germany, commissioned by the TUTB, was presented by Grodzki on behalf of the author, Ulrike Westphal of the Technik Center Lübeck. Using data drawn mainly from BG *Berufsgenossenschaften*[8] reports and records, Westphal's paper highlighted the imperfections in the German regulatory regime built on the Dangerous Substances Regulation (*Gefahrstoffsverordnung*), which came into force in 1986, and the various BG technical regulations.

"*Occupationally-related cancer diseases have been increasing continuously for a number of years in Germany, according to BG statistics. Experts regard the BGs' official industrial safety statistics as being only the tip of the iceberg and assume a very large number of undetected occupationally-related cancer cases*", according to Westphal. "*The level of knowledge of the trade supervisory authorities with regard to carcinogenic substances in the work environment differs greatly ...; the lack of systematic information-gathering, the absence of central statistics and the frequent failure of companies to report in this regard, ... leaves very much to be desired.*"

One of the residual problems with the implementation of Directive 90/394 (not only in Germany), Westphal's paper suggested, is that the three-category classification of substances/preparations is still based on criteria established primarily to determine how they should be labelled (before being placed on the market). The EU decision-making procedures, involving the Commission's Working Group on the Classification and Labelling of Dangerous Substances, were modified in 1993 to introduce exposure-related considerations (through the 18th adaptation of 67/548/EEC), but the system is still unsatisfactory, according to Westphal.

Also, there are different classifications for substances under the three different control regimes operating in Germany (an EU-derived list of 907 substances, another list of 52 substances evaluated by a national committee on dangerous substances, and the annually-published list of the scientific MAK[9] Commission). "*Increasing divergences in the classification of carcinogenic substances are leading to a distinct deterioration of working conditions for employees. Contrary to earlier expectations, it is anticipated that classifications and the setting of limit values by the EU will fall even further behind the national classifications of the MAK Commission in the future*", Westphal concluded. Substances for which there were different classifications in different lists included nickel, pentachlorophenol and trichloroethylene.

[8] Imployers' Liability Insurance Associations.
[9] Maximum Allowable Concentration.

5 workshop
National Implementing Instruments: The Case of Carcinogens
Moderated by Karola Grodzki, TUTB

THE GERMAN EXPERIENCE WITH REPLACING CARCINOGENS
Ulrike Westphal, Technik Center Lübeck, Germany

THE SWEDISH EXPERIENCE WITH REPLACING ASBESTOS
Bertil Remaeus, National Board of Occupational Safety and Health, Solna, Sweden

RISK-BASED THRESHOLD LIMIT VALUES (TLVS) FOR CARCINOGENS:
DO THEY ADD TO WORKER PROTECTION AND SHOULD EUROPE FOLLOW THE DUTCH LEAD?
Marcel Wilders, Dutch Trade Union Confederation (FNV), The Netherlands

Ulrike Westphal's report evaluating the application of the Carcinogens Directive (90/394/EEC) in Germany will be published by the TUTB in 1998.
It will be available in German and English.

Westphal looked at one particular provision of the Carcinogens Directive (90/394/EEC), as implemented in Germany via the *Gefahrstoffsverordnung*: the requirement that the possibility of replacing carcinogenic substances (and processes) should always be examined. Although there was evidence (from a study by the German Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, BAU) that there was widespread ignorance about this and other aspects of the directive in small and medium-sized companies, significant initiatives had been taken in some sectors (in construction and printing) and in some regions (notably Hesse).

The printing sector initiative aimed at reducing harmful emissions by substituting vegetable cleaning agents for organic solvents was the most significant sectoral project of its type, involving the relevant BG, the social partners, state safety authorities and producers. However, there was a need for European-level, trade union co-operation on such substitution campaigns. Westphal suggested that cadmium and nickel should be priority candidates, as well as trichloroethylene. The last substance, she noted, had been placed in the "parking lot" C3 "suspect carcinogen" category for 15 years because of its economic significance, before being unequivocally classified as a human carcinogen by the MAK Commission.

BERTIL REMAEUS

The Swedish experience with replacing asbestos

A Swedish paper on asbestos reminded delegates of the scale of the occupational health disaster associated with the fibre's past use as an insulation and friction material. Bertil Remaeus, Director of the Swedish Board of Occupational Safety and Health, described the implementation of Europe's first across-the-board ban on all forms of asbestos, introduced in Sweden in the early 1980s, why such a radical approach was adopted and the lessons learned from the operation of the ban. (Sweden decided to ban all types of asbestos at a time when other countries, such as the UK, considered it only practicable to ban the most dangerous form, crocidolite).

In the late 1970s, partial restrictions in Sweden (and in other countries) were aimed at eliminating asbestosis rather than the cancers which appear after a longer (20-year) latency period, Remaeus noted. These measures included: prohibiting first-time installation of asbestos-cement products (in 1976), limit values, progressively stricter handling rules and a policy of encouraging substitution.

In 1982, however, pressure from trade unions and public opinion persuaded the Swedish government to introduce a comprehensive ban. This was against a background of a rapidly declining import and use of raw asbestos (from 20,000 ton/year, mainly of "white" chrysotile from Canada in the late 1960s, to 2,000 ton/year in 1980), a declining incidence of new cases of asbestosis (which peaked at around 40 cases/year in 1980) but a rapidly increasing, delayed incidence of asbestos-related cancers. Remaeus said that, today, asbestos cancers such as mesothelioma are still responsible for more fatalities in Sweden than occupational accidents, although asbestosis incidence has been virtually eliminated.

The Swedish government opted for a ban on all types of fibres so as to avoid scientific debate about the relative risks of the different forms and to pre-empt the commercial exploitation of the market that would otherwise develop for laboratory analytical services to distinguish between different fibre types.

In order to be effective, the ban had to be accompanied by supporting measures, Remaeus stressed. For example, asbestos substitutes such as man-made mineral fibres were regulated to pre-empt arguments about their safety. The labour inspectorate and trade unions were also "activated" to be made aware of the risk of commercially exploiting the public fear of asbestos (for example, the creation of a market for unnecessary encapsulation and removal services which would encourage inappropriate high-risk removal operations). It was also important that employers be in agreement with and committed to the ban, since "*they are the only ones who can check whether asbestos is being used*".

A significant administrative burden on the labour inspectorate resulted from the ban, particularly associated with the regulation of work on *in-situ* asbestos, which had to be licensed. There was a steady 1,000 applications per year for permits to carry out such work in Sweden and about 6,000 notifications a year of such work being carried out.

Remaeus also acknowledged that Sweden's ban, 15 years previously, had involved "*relatively heavy administrative inputs from companies and trade unions*". However, today, such a banning measure would be less onerous because of the greater availability of substitutes. In the case of friction materials, he said, "*Sweden's experience is that less dangerous products are technically available for every conceivable application.*" There were several areas, nevertheless - industrial gaskets, for example where, for technical reasons, exemptions had been allowed after the original prohibition was introduced.

A unique arrangement for national-level setting of maximum exposure limits for occupational carcinogens was discussed by Marcel Wilders of the Dutch trade union confederation, FNV. In the inset, we provide a more extended report of his presentation.

The setting of risk-based threshold limit values for carcinogens in the Netherlands

Marcel Wilders described negotiations between the FNV and Dutch employers which resulted in an agreement on maximum acceptable occupational risk levels for unsubstitutable carcinogens, values which are now applied across the board to materials in the Netherlands. For the trade unions, Wilders said, the agreement meant "*getting their hands dirty*" as they had to accept a specified risk of fatal disease incidence among the workers involved. However, the agreement had the advantage of replacing the previous, *ad hoc* substance-by-substance approach to carcinogen control in the Netherlands and produced recommendations for Dutch threshold limit values (TLVs) which were stricter than those promulgated by other agencies.

The Dutch scheme elaborates on Directive 90/394/EEC which includes only the general requirement that exposure to carcinogens must be reduced to as low a level as technically possible, if it is technically impossible to prevent exposure entirely.

MARCEL WILDERS

Many genotoxic carcinogens, such as benzene in petrol, could not be eliminated or substituted and the only alternative to a total ban on a substance was to apply a threshold limit value associated with a finite level of residual risk, Wilders said.

There was an over-riding requirement in the directive to apply the ALARA principle ("as low as reasonably achievable") but, at the same time, there was great uncertainty about what this actually meant. In certain cases it was desirable to have particular levels of exposure, which were deemed to be acceptable.

Wilders noted various methodologies used in different countries to determine TLVs for carcinogens:
- the ACGIH (American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists) class 1 (confirmed human carcinogen) category operating in the USA;
- the three-category Swedish system (encompassing class A carcinogens which are totally banned, class B which are allowed some dispensations from a general ban, and class C for which TLVs are set),

■ the TRK (Technical Reference Concentration) values set in Germany based on technical feasibility. Some of the TRK values were high, Wilders said.

The ALARA concept was now supposed to be applied in Europe at both national and company level, but the reality was that this "*general, goal-setting principle*" provided no point of reference for labour inspectorates and therefore was unsatisfactory in itself for enforcement purposes. "*As a result*", Wilders said, "*as we have seen in some European countries, companies have no fear of the directive being properly enforced*". The Dutch trade unions concluded that risk-based TLVs were preferable to such a vague criterion.

There were negative aspects of discussing TLVs for genotoxics: it gave the impression that cancer risks always had to be accepted and that TLVs might be misused (for example, they could be applied as targets for exposure reduction rather than maximum allowable concentrations). However, on the positive side, TLVs provided a means of putting greater pressure on employers than did the ALARA principle alone, and with proper enforcement, they could be applied as true limits on exposure, thus helping to achieve real reductions in disease levels.

Having accepted the concept of TLVs, the Dutch trade unions rejected the idea of considering the feasibility of control measures for each carcinogen, as is done with German TRKs, because this involves lengthy debate on a substance-by-substance basis. The social partners set out to determine maximum acceptable levels of fatalities per year in exposed populations, which could be applied in a consistent way across the board. The starting point was the fatal accident frequency rate of 10^{-4}/year which is manifest in relatively "safe" sectors of industry (i.e. one person in 10,000 suffers a fatal accident per year).

Another input came from the parallel debate on environmental health hazards. At the same time as the discussion on occupational risk levels, risks associated with environmental pollutants were also being publicly debated in The Netherlands.

In the environmental pollution context, the Dutch parliament had accepted that a substance-related risk level of 10^{-8} fatalities/year/substance should be regarded as "negligible", and that a 10^{-6} fatalities/year/substance risk should be regarded as "permissible". It was agreed that this range of maximum acceptable risks for the public should also be applied to the workplace situation.

Based on this agreement between the social partners, the government has asked the Dutch Scientific Expert Group, responsible for putting forward health-based recommendations for official TLVs to the government (in the form of criteria documents), to provide their future recommendations with two time-weighted average TLVs for the carcinogenic substances under consideration: one based on a residual risk of 10^{-6} fatalities/year and one based on 10^{-4} fatalities/year.

Employers agreed that in substance-specific, national-level standard setting, the higher risk level of 10^{-4} fatalities/year would only be acceptable where economic and technical data were available to show that it was impossible to comply with a limit based on the 10^{-6} fatalities/year risk level. TLV's based on the 10^{-4} fatalities/year risk level, it was agreed, would be acceptable only when occupational hygiene data were available to demonstrate that they could reliably be complied with. Where these requirements could not be met, use of the substance concerned would be prohibited.

A National Advisory Committee (made up primarily of social partners) then advised the government to establish a legal TLV with a risk rate between 10^{-4} and 10^{-6}. Although the government has not legally adopted this risk-based approach, it always follows the opinion of this Committee.

Those values that were first developed under the terms of the agreement described by Wilders were standards for benzene (1 ppm), 1, 3-butadiene (21 ppm), ethylene oxide (0.5 ppm) and 1, 2, 3-trichloropropane (17.7 ppb). In these four cases, the TLV is equivalent to the higher, 10^{-4} fatalities/year risk level,

6 workshop
Follow up and Control of Implementation
Moderated by Klaus Lörcher, Deutsche Postgewerkschaft, Germany

THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION AND COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONTROL MACHINERY
Rudy Delarue, Confederation of Christian Trade Unions, Belgium

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE APPLICATION OF THE EQUAL TREATMENT DIRECTIVES: THE ROLE OF THE EXPERT COMMITTEE IN THE EUROPEAN UNION
Dominique Devos, Belgium

SOCIAL INDICATORS: SHEDDING LIGHT ON WORK SITUATIONS
Pascal Paoli, Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Dublin

DEVELOPING A EUROPEAN WORK ENVIRONMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM
H. H. Konkolewsky, European Agency for Health and Safety, Bilbao, Spain

i.e., it has not yet been possible to apply the lower risk level of 10^{-6}/year. Nevertheless, Wilders was emphatic that in the absence of the negotiated risk-related criteria, the promulgated TLVs would have been higher. Instead, not only was there an agreed limit value in each case, but this constituted a binding maximum which employers now have a legal duty to comply with and which the labour inspectorate was able to enforce. Currently some carcinogens are under debate for which there is a good chance that a risk level below 10^{-4} will be proposed. Through the acceptance of finite risk levels, Wilders said, the trade unions had ensured that, in reality, exposures were being controlled.

Follow up and control of implementation

The programme of the sixth workshop was particularly full. This workshop, chaired by Klaus Lörcher from the German postal workers' trade union, was dedicated to the follow up and control of directives. It focused on two subjects linked to the evolution of the directives.

Firstly, it set out to define the extent to which the Community legislative framework is attuned to concrete experiences. Although the working environment has evolved, traditional risks continue to cause serious health hazards. At the same time, new risks have started to emerge, both as the result of material production factors and the organisation of work. How can this situation be conveyed to the Community legislator? This question is far from being resolved. The future of Community legislation on the working environment hinges on a conflict between opposing interests. One could argue that Community legislation should be determined in economic terms, in which case a cost-benefit approach is adopted. This results in the suspension of further legislative activity until existing measures have proven to be economically effective (criteria used to assess this efficiency are often couched in vague terms like competitiveness, job creation and productivity). Alternatively, one could argue that the main purpose of Community legislation on the working environment is to enshrine the public authorities' responsibility towards citizens - especially workers - in the field of health and safety. In this case, it is essential to have accurate indicators which can clearly identify problems and determine the burning issues. Pascal Paoli, from the Dublin-based European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, presented the Foundation's key study on the evolution of working conditions and their impact on health. His presentation revealed the crying needs in this domain

PASCAL PAOLI

HANS-HORST KONKOLEWSKY

ERIK CARLSLUND

MARJUT HANONEN

and highlighted the growing trend towards the casualisation of the labour market. He also put forward some methodological propositions which would enable a regular follow up of these issues by the Community. Hans-Horst Konkolewsky, from the long-awaited European Agency for Health and Safety in Bilbao, outlined the tasks the Agency has set itself (the founding of this Agency was originally planned for 1992 to coincide with the 1992 European Year for Health and Safety).

Secondly, it reflected on how the experience gained from observing the implementation of the directives could be used to improve Community measures in the field of health at work. To date, Community control mechanisms have been rather inefficient. With the exception of the proceedings initiated against Member States for the non-implementation of directives, no proceedings regarding the quality of transpositions and the efficiency of their implementation have been brought before the Court of Justice for public trial. Yet, it is no exaggeration to say that the problems are rife. A spokesman for the Belgian Confederation of Christian Trade Unions, Rudy Delarue, assessed the experience of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Council of Europe. He discussed particularly interesting aspects of the control machinery for the implementation of ILO standards, which is based on a Committee of Experts and a Tripartite Body. These non-judicial proceedings enable one to clearly establish the actual import of a rule and open up the path for trade unions to submit complaints in blatant cases of non-implementation. The limitations of these provisions lie in the fact that they entail no legal sanctions and that the member states of the ILO have the option not to ratify the conventions (or even to denounce the ratification). Dominique Devos, contributor to *Chroniques Féministes* and expert on equal opportunities for the Belgian government, gave an overview of the follow up of the equal treatment directives. In this domain, the European Union set up a network of experts in 1982, the role of which is to analyse the national situations (anything from legislation to concrete cases of discrimination) and to report back to the Commission. Her assessment of this situation was mixed. On the one hand, the network of experts carried out a thorough examination of the mechanisms of discrimination and identified numerous failings in the directives. On the other hand, this work has rarely prompted the Commission to act, be it in the judicial domain or by introducing new legislative measures. The detailed work of the experts does not carry much weight in the face of a political climate which is increasingly unfavourable to an ambitious social policy.

RUDY DELARUE

Round-table debate

The main theme of the round-table discussion at the end of the conference was the importance of there being an "evaluative debate" on implementation. Marc Sapir, introducing the final session, said that the information on implementation gathered by the TUTB observatory so far showed that a wide range of implementing instruments was being used by Member States. This gave the impression that the original aim - harmonisation and the introduction of minimum standards - was being lost sight of in many cases. Member States seemed to be "*going in all directions*" on implementation, Sapir said.

Valérie Corman of UNICE, spokesperson for the Employers' group at the Luxembourg Advisory Committee, thought it was "*a good thing to acknowledge that differing cultures will lead to differences in implementation.*" Indeed, she made the opposite point: far from expressing concern about the diverging styles and content of national implementation instruments, she questioned whether the post-1989 European legal framework was flexible enough to deal with changing patterns of employment and, in particular, the needs of SMEs. The fundamental principles of the directives had been accepted by employers, but a break in the law-making process was needed so that there could be an open debate on the efficiency of the existing directives.

Stephen Hughes, chairman of the European Parliament's Social Affairs Committee, disagreed. Loss of legislative momentum, he suggested, was not unconnected to the unsatisfactory way that the already-adopted directives were being implemented. Responsibility for this situation lay at the door of the





STEPHEN HUGHES

PAUL WEBER

MARC BOISNEL

VALÉRIE CORMAN

Commission, Hughes said. Other speakers suggested that the "legislative break" which had occurred was logical and that the problems created by the diversity of systems operating in Europe might take another decade to solve.

A French government spokesman, Marc Boisnel, said he was amazed that the TUTB should be the only body to carry out comparative research on the implementation of EU safety legislation and that there was an urgent need for public debate on the issues. The existing instruments (be they material, methodological or actual indicators) and authorities (notably the Bilbao Agency) are not in a position to carry through such a debate. Marc Boisnel therefore asked the Commission to either set up a new tripartite body or use the existing Luxembourg committee as a forum for debate.

There was broad support for an open debate on the implementation process within the Luxembourg committee. Erik Carlslund, Deputy Secretary General of the ETUC, pointed out that, after the intensive tripartite debate on the directives at the negotiation stage, it was totally inappropriate to have no more in the way of an official evaluation of their effectiveness than the legal analysis carried out by the European Commission alone.

Round-table and conclusions

Participants:

ERIK CARLSLUND
Deputy Secretary General,
European Trade Union Confederation;

MARJUT HANONEN
DGV, European Commission;

STEPHEN HUGHES
President of the European Parliament Committee
on Social Affairs;

PAUL WEBER
Labour and Mines Inspectorate, Luxembourg;

MARC BOISNEL
Labour Ministry, Paris;

VALÉRIE CORMAN
UNICE, spokesperson for the Employers' group
at the ACSH.

The European Parliament also has an important role to play. On the occasion of a parliamentary hearing on the new risks related to repetitive movements, which took place last March, the TUTB demanded that a parliamentary committee of enquiry be set up to examine the transposition and application of Community directives (see Editorial). The Member States' national reports will clearly be decisive for developing procedures to analyse and evaluate the directives.

The TUTB is continuing its work within the framework of its Observatory and will soon publish a second volume to its initial review on the implementation of the Framework Directive and its impact on national prevention systems. This second volume will cover the three new Member States of the European Union (Sweden, Finland and Austria) as well as Norway and Switzerland (see page 36). Together with the ETUC, we will be organising a seminar during the summer of 1998 in order to further develop and define the role of trade unions in the transposition and application of Community health and safety directives.