

**MINISTRY OF LABOUR  
HUMAN SERVICES AND SOCIAL SECURITY**

**REPORT**

**FOR**

**INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FUND (IACML)**

**Of The ORGANISATION OF AMERICAN STATES**

**PROJECT**

**Occupational Safety and Health  
Training for Guyana –**

**Part I – Study tour to Trinidad and Tobago  
June 23 – 27, 2008.**

**Part II – Occupational Safety and Health Seminar  
July 21 – 25, 2008**

**A COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF  
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND GUYANA**

**Prepared by: The Labour Occupational Safety and Health Department. Ministry of  
Labour Human Services and Social Security**

**Date: August 12, 2008**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**The** success of this Occupational Safety and Health Training Seminar was due largely to the support, hard work and endless efforts of a number of individuals and organisations. The Honourable Minister of Labour, Manzoor Nadir M.P. and the Government of Guyana express their gratitude to the RIAL Cooperation Fund for providing financial support for this project. Sincere appreciation goes to Director Francisco Pilotti of the OAS for his continued interest in and support of the work of the Ministry of Labour. The hard work and dedication of Ms. Maria Claudia Camacho and Ms. Ana Angarita of the OAS Office in Washington cannot go unnoticed. Their efforts in providing logistical and administrative support throughout the duration of this project were invaluable. Also, coordination of the travel and accommodation arrangements for the participants and facilitators to Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana respectively, would not have been successful without their input.

**The** officers who travelled to Trinidad and Tobago would like to place on record their deep appreciation for being selected to participate in the attachment to the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad & Tobago. The Honourable Minister of Labour, Manzoor Nadir M.P. and the Government of Guyana are particularly grateful to the Occupational Safety and Health Agency and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, the Honourable Minister of Labour Rennie Dumas, Permanent Secretary—Mr. Carl Francis and OSHA's Chief Executive Officer—Mr. Paul Huijzendveld, whose support has been instrumental in the implementation, execution and successful completion of this project. Special thanks to Ms. Marcia Rampersad who has also contributed significantly to the production, facilitation and coordination, from Trinidad and Tobago, of the activities under this project.

**The** Honourable Minister of Labour, Manzoor Nadir M.P. and the Government of Guyana are particularly thankful to the facilitators from Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and the United States of America for imparting their knowledge of the subject area in such a professional manner. Also, thanks to the Minister of Public Service Dr. Jennifer Westford for her valuable comments and suggestions during the feature address. In addition to the other guest speakers, whose contributions we highly value, thanks to everyone who supported this initiative and in some way contributed to its success.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In 2007, the Occupational Safety and Health and the Industrial Relations Departments of the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security were merged. The new initiatives of the Government of Guyana recognised:

1. The need for training of the basically unexposed new staff;
2. The need to be aggressive in the area of Occupational Safety and Health;
3. The need to be more proactive in enforcement; and
4. The need to set the stage for the labour department of the future.

In light of this, it became necessary for a comprehensive system to be developed. A system with the capacity to produce quantitative as well as qualitative information aimed at generating awareness thus, promoting a culture of workplace safety and health at the national and enterprise levels. To do this however, those officers without formal Occupational Safety and Health training needed to receive exposure in this field. The Labour Department therefore embarked on a programme to provide the officers with the necessary training. The general objective of this initiative was to create a unit whose members have the capacity to effectively and efficiently address the work of the department, allowing inspectors to quickly understand the workflow, identify workplace hazards and provide competent advice to workers and employers. The specific objective however was to build the Ministry's capacity in educating and raising the awareness level of the employers with regard to the existing labour legislation as well as to develop a well organised inspection strategy, focused on conducting more workplace inspections and taking corrective action whenever breaches are identified.

Consequently, the Labour Department made a formal request to the RIAL Cooperation Fund for assistance in this area. This request was granted on May 14, 2008 and a two-part cooperation project was approved between Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago. Phase one consisted of an on-site visit by Officers from the Ministry of Labour of Guyana to the Occupational Safety and Health Agency of Trinidad and Tobago, and phase two was designed to have the experts from Trinidad and Tobago conduct a training seminar in Guyana in the area of Occupational Safety and Health.

## **PHASE 1**

On June 23, 2008, five (5) officers of the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security of Guyana began a five-day attachment with the Occupational Safety and Health Agency (OSHA) of Trinidad and Tobago – in that country. The officers were exposed to the fundamentals of the topic of Occupation Safety and Health as well as to all aspects of the operations of that agency. A general overview of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of Trinidad and Tobago was conducted and the visiting officers were apprised of the strategy behind dividing OSHA into six departments – one for each of the sectors in Trinidad and Tobago. The roles and functions of the Occupational Safety & Health Agency were addressed and the visiting officers were allowed to accompany OSHA officers on Inspection Visits to six (6) workplaces. The attachment concluded on June 27, 2008 and the visiting officers were invited to a meeting where the activities of the past five days were reviewed and future endeavours were discussed.

## **PHASE 11**

This phase of the project commenced in Guyana on July 21, 2008 with a formal opening ceremony, after which the working sessions of the OSH Training Seminar began. Facilitators from Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and the United States of America reviewed areas such as Inspections and Inspection Strategies, Compliance and Enforcement, Ergonomics, OSH Management Systems, Manufacturing, Safety and Health in the Health Care Sector, Monitoring Workplaces, HIV/AIDS Workplace Education, General Construction/Safety and Health Protocols, Noise and Noise Monitoring and Agriculture and Pesticides. A field trip was arranged and participants visited three (3) construction sites. This allowed them to apply the knowledge acquired in the classroom to an actual situation. The training seminar concluded on July 25, 2008 with a one hour evaluation session. There was also a wrap-up session, which sought to consolidate everything that was done over the five-day period. A formal closing ceremony followed this at which tokens of appreciation were given to the facilitators and certificates were awarded to all participants.

The objectives of this initiative, as stated earlier, were achieved and this has placed the Ministry in a position to acquire the level of competence required for making the International Labour Organisation's "Zero accident/incident vision" a reality.

**RIAL COOPERATION FUND OF THE IACML OF THE  
ORGANISATION OF AMERICAN STATES**

**Occupational Safety and Health Training Project for Guyana – A collaboration  
between the Governments of Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana**

**BACKGROUND**

With the recent merger of the Industrial Relations and Occupational Safety and Health Departments of the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security of Guyana in 2007, it became necessary for those officers without formal Occupational Safety and Health training to receive exposure in this field – since the Ministry has placed great emphasis on building the capacities of its staff. In light of this, Guyana made a formal request to the RIAL Cooperation Fund for assistance in this area. This request was granted on May 14, 2008 and a two-part cooperation project was approved between Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago. Part one consisted of an on-site visit by Officers from the Ministry of Labour of Guyana to the Occupational Safety and Health Agency of Trinidad and Tobago, and part two was designed to have the experts from Trinidad and Tobago conduct a training seminar in Guyana in the area of Occupational Safety and Health.

The visit to Trinidad and Tobago was scheduled for June 23 to June 27. The RIAL Cooperation Fund covered travel and accommodation costs and per diem for the delegation from Guyana, while the OSHA of Trinidad and Tobago hosted the delegation in its agency. The visit from experts from Trinidad and Tobago to conduct a training seminar in Guyana was scheduled for July 21-25, 2008. The RIAL Cooperation Fund covered the travel and accommodation expenses and per diem for the Caribbean based facilitators of the training seminar and the Ministry of Labour of Guyana covered the expenses for hosting the activity. As an added incentive to the activity, Guyana was permitted to incorporate the expertise of an additional Occupational Safety and Health expert (in Ergonomics) from Barbados into the training seminar. Additionally, Guyana accepted the offer made by an Occupational Safety and Health expert (in the Construction Industry) from the United States of America, to contribute to this event.

## **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES**

The project consisted of the two phases, the Study tour to Trinidad and Tobago and the Training Seminar in Guyana.

### **PHASE I**

The visit to Trinidad and Tobago was set for June 23 to June 27. The RIAL would cover travel and accommodation costs for the delegation from Guyana, while the OSHA of the twin island republic would host the delegation in its agency.

## **DELEGATION**

### **The Delegation from Guyana Contained The Following Persons:**

1. Charles Ogle – Senior Labour, Occupational Safety & Health Officer
2. Michelle Baburam – Labour, Occupational Safety & Health Officer
3. Bibi Saudia Sultan – Labour, Occupational Safety & Health Officer
4. Jason Narain - Labour, Occupational Safety & Health Officer
5. Marioye Rawana - Labour, Occupational Safety & Health Officer

Mr. Ogle was the Head of the Delegation.

The delegation left Guyana on Sunday June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008 and arrived in Trinidad & Tobago one hour after departure. The attachment was for five (5) days ie. Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Friday 27<sup>th</sup>.

On Monday June 23<sup>rd</sup> there was a formal opening of the attachment with introductions from the Chairman and Executive Director of Occupational Safety & Health Agency and presentations by their Safety & Health Inspectors and one by Mr. Charles Ogle who gave a perspective of Occupational Safety & Health in Guyana. The presentations by the Occupational Safety & Health Agency inspectors were comprehensive and informative of Occupational Safety & Health legislation, practices and enforcement in the various sectors in Trinidad & Tobago. All the lecturers displayed a high knowledge of the Occupational Safety & Health Act.

The Chief Inspector, Mr. Devnath Roopnarain, gave an overview of their legislation and comparisons were made with Guyana's Occupational Safety & Health Act.

The Occupational Safety & Health Agency of Trinidad and Tobago unlike the Labour, Occupational Safety & Health Department of Guyana is divided into departments - one for each sector in Trinidad & Tobago.

The programme ended at 4:00 pm with a discussion and a question and answer session.

Every morning before commencement of the field trips various Occupational Safety & Health Agency inspectors would brief the delegates to give an outline of their procedures. Upon arrival at the preselected workplaces a meeting was held with the management to discuss Occupational Safety & Health policies and programmes which would end with question and answer segments.

Inspection visits were made to the following businesses:-

<b>Names of Businesses &amp; Location</b>	<b>Date Visited</b>
1) Caribbean Bottlers Ltd. Macoya Industrial Estate	2008/6/24
2) Trinidad Cement Ltd. Southern Main Road Claxton Bay	2008/6/24
3) Brian Lara Academy/Stadium Taruba	2008/6/25
4) Chancery Lane Complex San Fernando	2008/6/25
5) JTA Supermarket Couva	2008/6/25
6) Port Development Corporation Ltd. Point Lisas Industrial Sites	2008/6/25

## **Overview**

The Occupational Safety & Health Act No. 1 of 2004 of Trinidad & Tobago was passed by parliament in 2004. The Act was implemented on February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2006 which led to the establishment of the Occupational safety & Health Agency on 17<sup>th</sup> August, 2007. The Occupational Safety & Health Agency inspectorate is divided into six (6) departments, one for each of the sectors in Trinidad and Tobago, which are:-

1. Construction & Quarry
2. Agricultural Services
3. Petroleum Chemicals & Ports
4. Hygiene
5. Oil & Gas
6. Manufacturing

The Occupational Safety & Health Agency is an autonomous agency and consists of thirty two (32) inspectors who conduct inspections, investigate complaints, accidents and hold awareness seminars.

## **Roles & Functions of the Occupational Safety & Health Agency**

1. Regulatory
2. Investigative
3. Preventative
4. Advisory
5. Informational

### **Regulatory**

1. Law enforcement- factories, wharves/docks & electrical.
2. Applicable legislation.

### **Investigative**

1. Fatal or serious accidents
2. Toxic escapes
3. Complaints- employees
4. Contingency – explosive at a plant

### **Preventative**

1. Examination of reports of competent persons eg. steam boilers, hoists/lifts and air pressure containers.
2. Some reports in respect of cranes and other lifting devices are also examined from the stand point of good safety practices.

### **Advisory**

1. Advice given to other government agencies eg. Bureau of Statistics.

### **Informational**

1. Industrial accidents statistics are sent to the Central Statistical Officer.
2. Lectures are conducted within the public and private sector.
3. Persons reporting accidents and making complaints are not required to give their personal information.

### **Conclusion**

In concluding, much knowledge was gained from this visit. While Guyana is not as endowed with the resources of Trinidad and Tobago, the lessons learned can be readily implemented to improve the effectiveness of the LOSH Department. For example, the implementation of a Safety Hotline and the need for our officers to be fully conversant with the OSH Act of Guyana, which is 10 years old. Much was also learned from the pride of the OSHA Officers of T&T in their work.

The last day of the attachment the delegates of Guyana met with Mr. Carl Francis (Permanent Secretary), Honourable Rennie Dumas (Minister of Labour) along with

the Executive Director, the Chief Inspector and other senior inspectors. The Guyanese delegation made their comments and requests for the training to be held in Guyana. The Executive thanked all delegates for being a part of the Occupational Safety & Health training in Trinidad & Tobago and welcomed future training in greater collaboration and harmonisation.

## **PHASE II**

This phase was conducted in Guyana and was attended by all the staff of the LOSH Department, along with participants from Labour, the private sector and specially invited persons. The OSH Training Seminar held in Guyana was conducted over a five-day (5) period. It began with an opening ceremony with messages from members of the government, the private sector and international organisations, and concluded with a light repast. The working sessions commenced directly afterwards.

### **OPENING CEREMONY**

The seminar was launched at an impressive opening ceremony which was addressed by several dignitaries and attended by leaders in the Labour movement, the Private Sector and the Diplomatic Corps. The feature address was delivered by the Hon. Minister of the Public Service, Dr. Jennifer Westford. Other speakers included the Head of the Pan American Health Organisation, the Private Sector Commission and the Minister of Labour. In the Appendix is an excerpt from one of the national newspapers.

### **The Facilitators Of The OSH Training Seminar In Guyana Were As Follows:**

#### **Trinidad and Tobago**

1. Mr. Jeffery Millington (OSH Inspector II) - Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago.
2. Mr. Colin Gaskin (OSH Inspector II) - Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago.
3. Mr. Mark Allen (OSH Inspector II) - Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago.

## **Barbados**

1. Ms Claudette Hope-Greenidge (Senior OSH Officer) - Ministry of Labour and Civil Service of Barbados.

## **The United States of America**

1. Mr. Freddie Shivdat Business Owner, Contractor and Court expert witness on construction safety.

## **Guyana**

1. Mr. Sean Wilson (National Programme Coordinator) - ILO/USDOL HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme in Guyana
2. Ms. Genevieve Blackman (Focal Point) - HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme in the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security.
3. Ms. Paulette Henry - Behaviour Change Communication Officer - Guyana Safer Injection Project (GSIP).

## **DAY 1**

### **SESSION 1.**

#### **Inspections and Inspection Strategies:**

This session was facilitated by Mr. Jeffery Millington (OSH Inspector II) of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago.

The focus was on planning, preparing and conducting inspections in a way that provides compliance assistance to the employer and employee and at the same time, complying with the benchmarks for effective inspections under the universal standards established by I.L.O Convention No. 81. Emphasis was placed on balancing the dual function of enforcing the law and providing advice and information to employers.

#### **Compliance and Enforcement:**

This session dealt with a structured approach to effective enforcement and compliance. It had as its focus, a network of compliance programmes such as Effective Voluntary Compliance Programmes, Self Regulatory or Non-Statutory Internal Control Schemes and similar Self-Inspection regimes, aimed at assisting the employer in being complaint. It was clear however, that these regimes complement but do not substitute effective statutory enforcement.

## **SESSION 2.**

### **Ergonomics:**

This session was facilitated by Ms Claudette Hope-Greenidge (Senior OSH Officer) of the Ministry of Labour and Civil Service of Barbados.

The focus of this session was on fitting the workplace to the physical and mental capabilities of the worker. Participants were advised on the various standards that should be present at workplaces they inspect. It was noted that this compliance with standards also applies to the inspector's own work environment. Practical scenarios were done to help participants identify more clearly with the information provided.

## **DAY 2**

### **SESSION 3**

This session was facilitated by Mr. Colin Gaskin (OSH Inspector II) of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago.

#### **OSH Management Systems**

The significance of OSH Management Systems was addressed, especially in the context of its relevance and applicability to Third World Countries. Emphasis was placed on how and where the systems could be used as tools to improve the safety and health culture, reduce accidents & illnesses and improve productivity by involving every level of worker in the organisation. The fundamental structure, development and implementation of management systems were also discussed using HS(G)65, BS 8800: 2004, OHSAS 18001 and ILO-OSH 2001 as illustrations.

### **SESSION 4**

This session was facilitated by Mr. Jeffery Millington (OSH Inspector II) of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago.

#### **Manufacturing – 1:**

These sections were actually a number of individual presentations that were presented in the following order:

1. ***Manufacturing*** - a presentation that outlined the Employer's General Duty - This was intended to set the backdrop for the elements that will be focused on during the inspection

2. **Machine Safety** - An outline of the types of hazards that are associated with machinery, the various types of safeguards and warning devices, safe systems of work and permit to work systems.

3. **Electricity** - Hazards associated with electricity were discussed both in terms of injury and the potential to cause fires. The importance of using properly/appropriately designed electrical tools and the need for periodic inspection of these tools was also discussed. Control measures against the various risks were discussed; these included safe systems of work and the use of **Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters** (GFCI).

4. **Fire prevention** - An outline of sources of ignition and the properties of substances that should be considered in evaluating the risk of fire was discussed. Storage and dispensation of flammable chemicals, the importance of proper housekeeping and the concept of bonding and grounding was also discussed. An outline of different types of fires and fire extinguishers was provided.

## **SESSION 5**

### **Manufacturing – 2:**

1. **Materials Handling** - This presentation included a number of photographs. What was highlighted was the need to use mechanical devices to assist in the moving of heavy loads and the need for ergonomic considerations.

2. **Accident Investigation - 1.** The objectives of accident investigations and some of the issues that must be given consideration were addressed in their entirety.

3. **Accident Investigation - 2.** A practical approach to identifying immediate and root causes of accidents was shared with the participants.

## **DAY 3**

## **SESSION 6**

### **Safety and Health among the Health Care Sector**

This session was facilitated by Ms. Paulette Henry. The Behaviour Change Communication Officer of the Guyana Safer Injection Project. (GSIP).

This presentation focused on reducing the occupational risks in order to make the workplace safer especially in relation to monitoring the healthcare system to enable the healthcare employees to operate in a safe environment. Monitoring for compliance was also stressed. The participants were appraised on the many operating procedures that they are to look for in health care facilities when doing OSH Inspections.

## **SESSION 7**

### **Monitoring Workplaces**

This session was facilitated by Mr. Mark Allen (OSH Inspector II) of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago.

This presentation focused on the fundamentals of Industrial Hygiene, including recognition of health hazards such as noise, ventilation and indoor air quality, temperature, vibration, lighting and radiation, and workplace stress.

The participants were advised on the various survey instruments that can be used to measure these parameters. Direct reading instruments and sampling equipment including IAQ monitors, dust monitors, photometers, transducers, voc monitors and aerosol sample collection media (filters, cassettes, tygon tubing and personal and area sampling pumps) were discussed. Monitoring equipment was not brought to Guyana but a 35 minute video footage was provided demonstrating set-up and use of the above mentioned equipment.

## **SESSION 8**

### **HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme – Ministry of Labour / ILO/USDOL**

This session was facilitated by Mr. Sean Wilson (National Programme Coordinator ILO/USDOL HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme and Ms. Genevieve Blackman (Focal Point- HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme – Ministry of Labour.

This session focused on the importance of building capacity in the Ministry of Labour through providing policy guidance, technical advice, monitoring and training on HIV/AIDS prevention in the world of work.

## **DAY 4**

## **SESSION 9**

### **General Construction / Safety and Health Protocols**

This session was facilitated by Mr. Colin Gaskin (OSH Inspector II) of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago and Mr. Freddie Shivdat - OSH Specialist in the Construction Industry in the USA.

This session addressed labour inspections in the Construction Industry. General characteristics and trends were discussed. Experiences in Trinidad and Tobago, an industrialising state which is experiencing a construction boom were shared. The effects of globalisation on the industry were also addressed. Relevant Conventions that were ratified, regulations and standards that were developed, and are in the process of being developed were also discussed.

## **SESSION 10**

### **Site Visits**

This session took the form of a site visit. Participants were grouped and three construction sites were visited. A one-hour discussion / feedback session was held after the site visits. The findings at each site were discussed with regard to breaches and levels of compliance with OSH standards. The sites visited were.

1. Guyana Bank for Trade and Industry – Seawall Road, Kingston, Georgetown
2. Colonial Life Insurance Company - Camp Street, Cummingsburg, Georgetown
3. Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security, High St, Georgetown

## **DAY 5**

### **SESSION 11**

This session was facilitated by Mr. Mark Allen (OSH Inspector II) of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago.

#### **Noise and Noise Monitoring**

Noise survey methodology was discussed and reference was made to the equipment studied earlier. The use of equipment was discussed with regard the layout of the facility and the nature of the process, physical characteristics and amount of hazardous substances used, ventilation characteristics, and location of employees in relation to toxicants etc. Applicable standards and legislation was discussed as the basis for all enforcement actions.

### **SESSION 12**

This session was facilitated by Mr. Jeffery Millington (OSH Inspector II) of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago.

## **Agriculture and Pesticides**

### **Pesticides:**

An overview of pesticides was provided in terms of what they are, the different types of pesticides and how they impact on the environment. Safe use of pesticides was also discussed from the point of view that they are chemicals and the protocol for safe use of chemicals to be applied. The Registration process for pesticides was discussed and the risk that end users face. Methods of control were also discussed.

### **Agriculture:**

The approach taken by the UK was looked at briefly and strategic approaches to broadening awareness were outlined. The concept of risk assessment was re-emphasised as a tool to identifying the associated hazards in the various areas of Agriculture was also discussed.

### **Manufacturing: - Bottling Plant**

This presentation was aimed at tying all the concepts together. The various processes at a bottling plant were highlighted. The risks associated at the Input Stage, The Process Stage and the Output Stage was given much attention and this brought into focus all issues discussed during the week.

At this point, there was a one hour evaluation and wrap-up session. Both facilitators and participants reviewed and clarified various areas of the training seminar.

Closing remarks and the presentation of gifts and certificates by the Hon. Minister Manzoor Nadir brought the training seminar to an end.

*\*Handouts and other reading material were distributed throughout the seminar. Videos were also viewed.*

## **Observations**

1. The provisions of the Trinidad & Tobago and Guyana Occupational Safety & Health Acts are mostly similar.
2. The agency has a legal department to give advice, draft charges and conduct prosecutions.
3. Inspectors use a check list which quotes various parts of the Occupational Safety Act to conduct inspections.
4. Annual risk assessment by employers is a requirement of the law.
5. Parts of the Act are prescriptive.
6. Measuring of light air flow, noise and vibration is done solely by the Hygiene Department.

7. Because of time constraint it was not possible for every aspect of Occupational Safety & Health to be covered.
8. Inspectors displayed a high knowledge of the Act.
9. The Occupational Safety & Health Act does not only apply to the safety of employers and employees but also covers the safety of patrons and customers of businesses as well.

### **MAIN RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

The results and findings of both phases of this cooperation activity were quite similar. The main lessons learned for Trinidad and Tobago are as follows:

1. The Occupational Safety & Health Agency of Trinidad and Tobago (OSHA) has a clear mission and vision, and the daily operations of the agency are developed in accordance with same. Replicating this in Guyana could mean a more streamlined and organised approach to the day-to-day operations of the L.O.S.H. Department.
2. The Occupational Safety & Health Agency of Trinidad and Tobago (OSHA) is an autonomous body and is divided into six (6) units. Each unit is designed to target a specific sector in the country, in this way officers specialise in particular areas. The current system employed by Guyana mandates officers to be generalists. This is going to be the case until the resources allow for more officers and perhaps a replication of the Trinidad system.
3. O.S.H.A has a legal department which gives advice, drafts charges and conducts prosecutions. Guyana has recently employed, as Deputy Chief Labour Occupational Safety and Health Officer, the services of an attorney with many years experience. Thus, the operation of the L.O.S.H department could mean more errant employers being prosecuted. By extension, this could result in an upsurge in the level of compliance to OSH standards by employers.
4. Inspectors of O.S.H.A use a check list to conduct inspections, which quotes various parts of the Occupational Safety and Health Act. This system greatly enhances the quality of the inspection since, it allows the inspector to have accurate information at all times. Guyana is in the process of streamlining its checklist and inspection form. The exposure from the O.S.H.A will enhance the

5. The Occupational Safety & Health Act of Trinidad and Tobago does not only apply to the safety of employers and employees, but also covers the safety of patrons and customers of businesses. Guyana may want to embrace this concept.

### **NEXT STEPS**

There is need to build the Ministry's capacity in educating and raising the awareness level of the employers with regard to the existing OSH Legislation. The relatively large, unregulated Informal Sector presents particular challenges for the inspectorate as it relates to enforcement. The general objective therefore, is to "Strengthen the enforcement capabilities of the Guyana's LOSH Department and develop a well organised inspection strategy."

The Ministry of Labour of Guyana therefore plans to examine the information received with a view to possibly adopting some of the practices that may be of benefit. With the current reforms and in addition to those which may arise from the adoption of any of the lessons learned from Trinidad and Tobago, the Ministry will commit to ensuring that these reforms yield the desired results.

To this end, the Ministry plans to continue to focus on prevention as a way of decreasing the number of injuries and fatalities in workplaces and improve the image of the department in a general sense. It intends to conduct more workplace inspections and take corrective action whenever breaches are identified. It also plans to increase the number of Education and Awareness programmes and continue the training of Inspectors, as this will ensure that the department has a cadre of L.O.S.H professionals both at the head office and in the outlying regional offices.

## **EVALUATION OF THE ACTIVITY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The general objective of this activity was to “Develop systems and a higher level of staff competence for making the International Labour Organisation’s *Zero accident/incident vision* a reality.”

The initial objectives and expectations of the cooperation have been met in a significant way. The exposure to this very comprehensive one-week training seminar has enabled, not only the participants to operate at a higher level of competence, but the administrators to possibly emulate an established system. This may have positive implications for the Ministry’s efforts at programme formulation and systems improvement since, the current system is a work in progress and presents particular challenges with regard to efficiency and effectiveness.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Occupational Safety & Health Agency of Trinidad and Tobago has a hotline for lodging complaints and reporting accidents. It is therefore recommended that the Ministry of Labour of Guyana establishes a hotline since, it is envisaged that this could assist the Ministry in having more data at its disposal which can be used by the Ministry to adopt a more pro-active stance.

With the advent of globalisation and more specifically, the Caricom Single Market and Economy (CSME), the implications for labour and all the related factors make it necessary for the Ministry of Labour to be well equipped to deal with the concomitant issues. This makes it necessary to have a cadre of L.O.S.H professionals ready for this challenge. It is therefore recommended that continuous contact among the region’s OSH practitioners be encouraged and facilitated.

It is recommended that the Ministry conducts research in specific areas of Occupational Safety & Health and publish the findings of same. This initiative could serve both to inform the general public as well as a teaching tool for L.O.S.H officers.

Trinidad & Tobago will be creating a code of practice under the Occupational Safety & Health Act, the intention of which is to make prescriptions relating to Safety & health at the workplace. It is recommended that we consider emulating this since, it would be advantageous in enforcement of the Occupational safety & Health Act.

Finally, the staff in Guyana has been afforded these opportunities and they need to emulate their Caribbean colleagues in terms of executing their tasks with professionalism and knowledge.

## **APPENDIX I**

### **Report from the Guyana Chronicle Newspaper of July 23**

#### **Labour inspections to intensify**

##### **- OSH workers receive training**

THE Ministry of Labour has embarked on a training programme that will equip its occupational safety and health (OSH) officers to efficiently carry out their duties in a rapidly changing labour environment.

The programme, which began on Monday last and is slated to be concluded on Friday at the Ocean View Convention Centre, will see participation from local OSH officers, a senior safety and health officer from Barbados, and three safety and health inspectors from Trinidad and Tobago.

It is the second part of a course that was held on June 23 - 27 where five labour officers visited Trinidad for a study tour.

Delivering the feature address, Minister of Public Service, Dr Jennifer Westford, said occupational health and safety is the backbone of the existence of all workers.



Participants at the seminar

“The purpose of these practitioners is to ensure that, in so far as possible, every working person within his/her sphere of operation shall have safe and helpful working conditions, free from recognised hazards and to preserve the country’s human resources.”

She said the prevention of accidents and occupational diseases and abiding by rules and regulations are the responsibility of both the employer and the employee.

Practitioners were encouraged to ensure equal efforts are taken in the private and public sector to ensure employers conform to rules and regulations governing workplaces.



Minister of Public Service, Dr Jennifer Westford, delivers the feature address at the seminar.

“To improve workplace health and safety there is ever greater reliance on the involvement and participation of all parties in the workplace in decision-making and action taking.”

Minister of Labour Manzoor Nadir said his Ministry is striving to ensure that the service provided is the best that can be given.

“Labour has as its target population the entire workforce of Guyana numbering some 230,000. Those workers are the backbone of this economy. It is not about the machinery, the land and the risk that the entrepreneurs take but, it is about how we treat our workforce,” he

said.

He noted that this year the Ministry will place tremendous emphasis on safety through intensification of numbers and quality of inspections carried out by inspectors so as to prevent accidents and injuries.

Chairman of the Private Sector Commission, Captain Gerry Gouveia said the private sector has been embracing the concept of corporate social responsibility, which is not just a strategy but a way of doing business. He said it stands committed to taking care of its workers and the environment in which they work to ensure the purpose of business is not defeated.

And in brief remarks, the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) Resident Representative, Dr Kathleen Israel, said OSH has been neglected in the Caribbean region for a very long time, despite the efforts of Non-Governmental Organisations, and Ministries of Health and Labour.

“World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that 25% of the global burden of disease is attributed to occupational and environmental risk factors. In response to the magnitude of this problem, global plans have been developed to address workers’ health,” she said.

WHO has developed a Workers’ Health Global Plan for 2008-2017 which addresses all aspects of workers’ health including prevention of occupational hazards, protection and promotion of health at work, employment conditions and better response from health systems to workers’ health.

The OSH training seminar is being held in collaboration with the Inter-American Network for Labour Administration (RIAL) Cooperation Fund, (Organisation of American States (OAS) - Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour (IACML)) and the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development of Trinidad and Tobago.

**APPENDIX 2**

**Programme of Events for OSH Training Seminar, July 21 to 25, 2008 at Ocean View Convention Centre**

	<b>Monday July 21</b>	<b>Tuesday July 22</b>	<b>Wednesday July 23</b>	<b>Thursday July 24</b>	<b>Friday July 25</b>
<b>8:30</b>	Registration	Agriculture & Pesticides (T&T)	Safety and Health among the Health Care Sector - Safer Injection Project (Guyana)	General Construction Safety and Health Protocols (USA Expert)	Review/Discussion of Field Visit
<b>9:00</b>	Opening Ceremony <i>(Special Programme)</i>	Agriculture & Pesticides (T&T)	Safety and Health among the Health Care Sector - Safer Injection Project (Guyana)	General Construction Safety and Health Protocols (USA Expert)	Noise & Noise Monitoring (T&T)
9:45	Opening Ceremony <i>(Special Programme)</i>	Agriculture & Pesticides (T&T)	Safety and Health among the Health Care Sector - Safer Injection Project (Guyana)	General Construction Safety and Health Protocols (USA Expert)	Toxic Substances (T&T)
<b>10:15</b>	<b>Coffee Break</b>	<b>Coffee Break</b>	<b>Coffee Break</b>	<b>Coffee Break</b>	<b>Coffee Break</b>
10:30	Inspection and Inspection Strategies (T&T)	O.S.H Management Systems (1) (T&T)	Occupational Diseases – PAHO (Asbestos/ Diseases/HIV & AIDS)	Construction/ Scaffolding (T&T)	Manufacturing (1) (T&T)
10:45	Inspection and Inspection Strategies (T&T)	O.S.H Management Systems (1) (T&T)	Occupational Diseases – PAHO (Asbestos/ Diseases/HIV & AIDS)	Construction/ Scaffolding (T&T)	Manufacturing (1) (T&T)
11:30	Compliance & Enforcement (T&T)	O.S.H Management Systems (2) (T&T)	Ensuring Compliance with O.S.H Standards in the Health Sector (Guyana)	Excavations/ Trenches (T&T)	Manufacturing (2) (T&T)
12:00	Compliance & Enforcement (T&T)	O.S.H Management Systems (2) (T&T)	Ensuring Compliance with O.S.H Standards in the Health Sector (Guyana)	Excavations/ Trenches (T&T)	Manufacturing (2) (T&T)
<b>12:30</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>
13:00					
13:30	Ergonomics (Barbados)	Accident Investigation (1) (T&T)	HIV & Aids Workplace Program (Guyana) PAHO	Field Visits (2 groups)	
13:45	Ergonomics (Barbados)	Accident Investigation (1) (T&T)	HIV & Aids Workplace Program (Guyana)	Group 1 - Construction Site, CLICO Camp St.	
14:00	Ergonomics (Barbados)	Accident Investigation (2) (T&T)	HIV & Aids Workplace Program (Guyana)	Group 2 - Construction Site, Bank, Sea Wall Rd.	Evaluation/ Conclusion of Seminar
15:45	Ergonomics (Barbados)	Accident Investigation (2) (T&T)	Monitoring Workplaces (T&T)	Both Groups - MLHSSS New Site	Distribution of Certificates
<b>17:00</b>	<b>CLOSE</b>	<b>CLOSE</b>	<b>CLOSE</b>	<b>CLOSE</b>	<b>CLOSE</b>



**THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, HUMAN SERVICES AND SOCIAL SECURITY /  
THE RIAL COOPERATION FUND (OAS – IACML) and  
*The Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development  
of Trinidad and Tobago***

# **Certificate of Participation**

This is to certify that

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has participated in the

**OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH TRAINING SEMINAR  
July 21 – 25, 2008**

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**Permanent Secretary  
Ministry of Labour, Human Services  
and Social Security**

**Ocean View International Hotel and  
Convention Centre, Liliendaal, Guyana**