
OWLinks is brought to you by the Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Institute to enable leaders and professionals to keep abreast of the latest WSH developments and trends from around the world.

SPOTLIGHT

New Executive Director for WSH Institute from 1 Jan 2014



Dr Jukka Takala, our current Executive Director (ED), will assume the role of Senior Consultant with effect from 1 January 2014.

Since joining WSH Institute in Dec 2011, Dr Takala has been instrumental in setting strategic directions for the Institute in raising WSH capabilities in Singapore and in supporting Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and WSH Council in making informed WSH policies and programmes.

WSH Institute has made significant progress under Dr Takala's leadership, in establishing a solid foundation for the Institute and in using best evidence for

WSH policies and practices through the national WSH research framework. In his new capacity as Senior Consultant, Dr Takala will participate and advise in the formulation, review and implementation of WSH initiatives, policies and programmes.

From 1 January 2014, Dr Gan Siok Lin will be appointed as Executive Director, Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Institute.



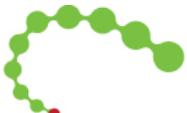
Dr Gan has about 30 years of experience in WSH in the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), spanning from enforcement, industry engagement, standard-setting, capability building to research. She has been the Deputy Executive Director of WSH Institute since Nov 2011.

In assuming the role of ED of the WSH Institute, Dr Gan will continue to build upon Dr Takala's achievements and steer the Institute in raising WSH

capabilities in Singapore and in supporting MOM and WSH Council in making informed WSH policies and programmes. She will also lead efforts in the delivery of quality applied research programmes, impactful continuing education initiatives for WSH professionals and business leaders as well as relevant information services for industry stakeholders to address new and emerging WSH issues.

With Dr Gan's well-established network with the local industry and the WSH professional community, she will be able to bring the Institute to new heights in achieving its vision of being a leading Institute for WSH knowledge and innovations.

Singapore WSH Conference 2014 – Call for research posters



THE SINGAPORE WSH CONFERENCE 2014

7-8 May 2014 | Suntec Singapore

The Singapore WSH Conference 2014 is a biennial event that serves as a platform for top business leaders, government officials, international and local WSH thought leaders and professionals to congregate and share new WSH developments and exchange ideas to enhance the WSH landscape in Asia.

The theme of the conference is *'Integrating safety and health: Towards a holistic approach'*. Eminent speakers will discuss the 'why', 'what' and 'how' for adopting a holistic approach when managing the safety and health of workers at the

workplace.

We are inviting submission of posters on research conducted on Singapore's WSH landscape. The posters will be displayed during the Conference and authors will be allocated time to interact with the conference participants.

The deadline for the submission of the abstract is **17 January 2014, Friday**

For more information, please visit The Singapore WSH Conference 2014 website [here](#).

Articles Reviewed In This Issue:

- 1. Economic cost of work-related injuries and ill-health in Singapore**
 - 2. Leading indicators of system safety – Monitoring and driving the organizational safety potential**
 - 3. Noise levels created by common construction tools**
 - 4. Reducing musculoskeletal disorders among computer operators: comparison between ergonomics interventions at the workplace**
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Economic cost of work-related injuries and ill-health in Singapore

Date of publication: October 2013

Source: Research Publications, Workplace Safety and Health Institute (Singapore)

Author: Loke Yoke Yun, Tan Wee Jin, Kathiresan Manickam, Peggy Heng, Caleb Tjong, Lim Guan Kheng, Samuel Lim, Gan Siok Lin, Jukka Takala

Synopsis:

WSH Institute conducted a study to estimate the economic cost related to injuries and ill-health in the workplace. Through this study, we can better understand the economic impact of such injuries and ill health on employers, employees and the community.

- The study was based on available statistics and other information for the year 2011. It considered the costs linked to staff training, loss of output, medical treatment, rehabilitation, loss of future earning, social payouts, loss of human capital and other relevant items.
- The total cost of work-related injuries and ill health to workers, their employers and the community for Singapore is estimated to be SGD 10.45 billion, equivalent to 3.2% of the nation's GDP for 2011.

To read more, click [here](#).

Leading indicators of system safety – Monitoring and driving the organizational safety potential

Date of publication: December 2012

Source: Safety Science 50 (2012) 1993–2000

Author: Teemu Reiman, Elina Pietikäinen

Synopsis:

This paper described how leading indicators can be used to monitor and drive safety potentials in an organization. The 3 types of safety performance indicators described were:

- **Drive indicators:** leading indicators pertaining to safety management and leadership, strategic management, supervisor activity, proactive safety development, competence management, change management, work conditions management, work process management, contractor management, hazard control and contingency planning and emergency preparedness
- **Monitor indicators:** leading indicators related to work and safety motivation, controllability of work, understanding of hazards, understanding of safety, sense of responsibility for the entire organization, mindfulness and vigilance, special interaction and activities, technology and environmental variability.
- **Outcome indicators:** lagging indicators such as industrial safety accident rate, maintenance backlog, staff turnover, capacity/load factor of the power plant unit, number of reported near misses, number of unplanned automatic scrams, availability of safety systems, equipment forced outage rate, hospital-acquired infections, number of safety events and loss of primary containment.

The paper emphasized the importance of leading indicators to anticipate and develop organizational performance.

To read more, click [here](#).

Noise levels created by common construction tools

Date of publication: November 2013

Source: Factsheet

Author: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (New Zealand)

Synopsis:

A large variety of tools and machinery are used in construction work. Prolonged exposure to the loud noise generated by their usage can cause permanent hearing loss. This article presents information on estimates of noise levels in a simple tabulated and pictorial format, to provide users with a quick means of gauging workers' exposure to noise from different equipment and activities for indoor and outdoor work.

Examples of exposure levels for some activities, with lower end of the range for outside work and upper end of the range for indoor work, are:

- Hammering nails into timber: 93 – 97 dB (peak = 131 dB)
- Electric grinder on aluminium: 98 – 102 dB (peak = 123 dB)

To read more, click [here](#).

Reducing musculoskeletal disorders among computer operators: comparison between ergonomics interventions at the workplace

Date of publication: December 2012

Source: Ergonomics, Vol. 55, No. 12, December 2012, 1571–1585

Author: Levanon Y, Gefen A, Lerman Y, Givon U, Ratzon NZ.

Synopsis:

The article discusses the effectiveness of a workplace intervention programme for reducing musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) among computer workers. The study evaluated MSDs, body posture, upper extremity kinematics, muscle activity and psychosocial factors, before and after intervention.

- 66 subjects with and without MSDs were assigned to 3 groups: (i) ergonomics intervention with biofeedback training, (ii) ergonomics intervention without biofeedback and (iii) control group who received only a short presentation on general ergonomics instructions
- Significant reduction of the MSD scores were observed for participants in the intervention groups as compared to the control group. 14 (64%) participants in the ergonomics with biofeedback group and 11 (55%) participants in the ergonomics without biofeedback group reported improvement compared to three (14%) participants in the control group.
- No significant differences in MSD scores, pain symptoms and muscle activity were found between the two intervention groups

To read more, click [here](#).

Other Useful Resources:

- [Workplace Safety and Health Guidelines: Hearing Conservation Programme](#)
(Workplace Safety and Health Council)
- [Workplace Safety and Health Guidelines: Statutory Medical Examinations](#)
(Workplace Safety and Health Council)