

Manager/Supervisor Risk Management

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A twice weekly e-mail training for YCPARMIA members

TOPIC: SAFETY – IIPP – SAFETY COMMITTEE

In 2011 YCPARMIA published a 24 part guide for forming and maintaining a Safety Advisory Committee; it is available at the YCPARMIA home page under the Risk Management tab. Rather than going over the same information, we will concentrate on common safety committee issues that a number of our members' committees face. In no particular order:

- The purpose of the committee is sometimes forgotten, or not understood. It is a communications tool, or advisory team, not the management team tasked with managing safety.
- It should be remembered that generally the committee has no authority to do anything about safety other than gathering information and reporting to the individual with the responsibility and authority for the entity's overall safety program (IIPP).
- The "product" of the committee is its report to upper management that identifies safety issues and recommended actions; to this end it is essential to recognize the importance of the individual who is assigned the task of preparing the committee's reports.
- It is not a management or supervisor team – it is a committee that is supposed to be made up of all levels of the organization. It needs to maintain an independence to avoid being perceived as token. Since it is outside the management system, it cannot remain effective if it is controlled, directed, or unreasonably limited by management.
- It is a committee, not one strong safety individual, working together across the various departments and levels of the organization. It is a committee of equals (who have other ongoing job responsibilities) with each carrying its share of the weight; occasionally one individual takes on too much or tries to dominate.
- The committee is supposed to respond to communications from entity workers, and from management. It needs to function as an independent conduit between the two on safety issues.
- The committee needs the support and authority of upper management to address individual managers and departments that want to avoid its activities.
- Any departmental safety committees should be required to report to the entity's safety committee, and these "sub-committees'" actions and recommendations should be reviewed and included in the safety committee's report to upper management.

Next Topic: IIPP – Safety Committee - Continued