

Risk Management Bulletin

ASSIGNING RESPONSIBILITIES

Top management has the overall responsibility for providing a safe work environment for employees. However, since top management cannot carry out all aspects of the loss control program, partial responsibility has to be delegated to others.

Top management must retain the responsibility to motivate employees to get the program initiated and to oversee its operation. This can be accomplished by setting objectives and policy. The objectives will determine what action is needed, and the policy will establish who has been assigned the responsibility and authority to see that they are accomplished.

All employees will have some responsibility for carrying out parts of the loss control program. An effective loss control program involves all staff functions, all levels of management, and the labor force.

Those who manage the production operations and supervise the labor force are responsible for producing in the most efficient manner possible. It is a proven fact that accidents and injuries greatly reduce efficiency. Therefore, an efficient operation must be a safe operation.

Plant managers, department heads, and supervisors should be assigned the responsibilities to:

1. Ensure that all materials, equipment, and machinery are hazard-free or that adequate control measures have been instituted.

2. Ensure that equipment, tools, and machinery are being used as intended and are properly maintained.
3. Be aware of accident and injury trends and take necessary corrective actions to reverse trends.
4. Assist in the investigation of accidents.
5. Ensure that all safety rules, regulations, and procedures are enforced.
6. Require that hazard analyses be done for operations, especially dangerous ones.
7. Require that hazard recognition and control be included in all training.
8. Actively participate and support the safety administrator, safety committee, and their functions.

The safety director should be responsible for:

1. Identifying and analyzing the accident-producing practices and conditions and evaluating their potential severity.
2. Developing accident prevention methods, procedures, and programs.
3. Communicating accident and loss control data to those who are directly involved in controlling losses.
4. Measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of the loss control system and recommending modifications to achieve optimum results.

All employees have basic responsibilities. They must look out for their personal safety and that of their fellow workers. They are expected to follow all safety regulations and instructions just as seriously as any other company directives. They also have to realize that safety is an important part of their job.

Non-production or safety functions also have related safety responsibilities.

The engineering department must design and plan workplaces and processes with safety as their first concern.

Maintenance should be charged with the responsibility for making sure that their work is conducted in a safe manner so that temporary hazards caused by their activities are well controlled and do not hinder the safety of the production operations.

The purchasing departments should consider safety when buying machinery, equipment, and supplies.

The personnel department should have the responsibility for proper selection, placement, education, and counseling of employees, with safety in mind.

To be effective, a loss control program must have the commitment and cooperation from everyone in the organization. The safety responsibilities assigned by top management must be carried out by all, and in a manner that complements one another.