2010 Global Safety and Health Briefing

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Introduction

From financial institutions to the auto industry, significant change is afoot. For example, the current economic stress is causing a global shifting with the top three automotive giants. Volvo, a Ford Motor Company brand, has been sold to China's Geely Holding Group. Spyker Cars, a small Dutch car company, now owns Saab, having recently purchased the company from General Motors (1).   The Toyota brand is suffering due to recall and safety issues, and according to Toyota President, Akio Toyoda, the issues with Toyota cars are due to " growing too quickly." This growth, without internal controls and alleged good decision-making, has resulted in an estimated six million cars being recalled in the United States to date (2).   The result, according to the New York Times, "G.M. and Ford have been handed a once-in-a-generation chance to make their case to an American buying public that is listening as never before" (3).

Amidst all of this activity, business and government continue to address matters related to climate change, sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR). Climate change is emerging as a catalyst for research into new, renewable energy alternatives as companies look to reduce their carbon footprint through energy efficiencies, cost reductions and reliance on carbon-based energy. The investment community is beginning to recognize that there is some the correlation between a company's sustainability/ CSR and economic performance. As sustainability and corporate social responsibility goals take hold in larger companies, those in the supply chain are feeling the impact of transparency and sustainability/CSR performance reporting requirements from these larger companies. The intersection of sustainability/CSR business models, chemicals/hazardous materials management and environmental regulations in the EU and Asia provides a snapshot of trends and issues impacting global workplace safety and health issues. This is an opportunity for the safety professional to work locally and globally with those in their organizations involved in R&D, management of change, operations, sustainability/CSR and environmental management to assure risks are not shifted from impacting the environment to the worker.

This ASSE Professional Development Conference paper will focus on key issues that are influencing global workplace safety and health:

1. Sustainability and Corporate Sustainability
2. Chemicals and Hazardous Materials Management
3. The Global Harmonization Standard
4. ISO 26000 SR
5. ISO 31000 RM

Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility

According to the study, "Attaining Sustainable Growth Through Corporate Social Responsibility" by the IBM Institute for Business Value, "Corporate Social Responsibility is the way companies manage their businesses to produce an overall positive impact on society through economic, environmental and social actions." In that same study, 49% of the 223 world business leaders reported that they have recently begun activities to create new revenue streams through CSR and 19% said these activities are "mature" within their organizations (4).
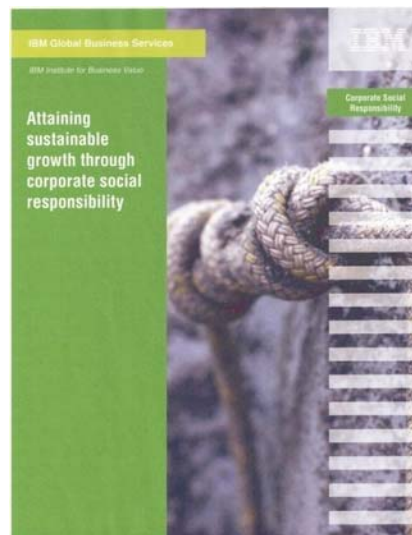
Figure 1. Attaining sustainable growth through corporate social responsibility. (*Source:* http://www-935.ibm.com/services/us/gbs/bus/pdf/gbe03019-usen-02.pdf)

Sustainability and CSR = Competitive Advantage
Many companies that manage their sustainability and CSR performance see it as a competitive advantage for their brands, products and talent management. Stakeholders, such as customers, general consumers, investors, supply chains (up and down stream), workers (unions), communities, governments and NGOs, are influencing an organization's response to sustainability and CSR performance management.

Two recent surveys were conducted around consumers and their purchasing habits. One found that over 50% of consumers polled are changing their buying habits due to concerns about environmental impact of the products they buy (5). The second poll found that 80% of consumers believe felt it is important to purchase products from "green" companies, with many of them saying they will pay the additional cost for those products (6).

For some companies, positive sustainability/CSR performance is reflected in their business model and planning processes, key performance indicators and on their branding campaigns. This can be seen with companies publishing annual sustainability (CSR) reports, and through third-party recognition and assessment organizations such as CERES, *Corporate*

Responsibility Magazine, RiskMetrics, or the Dow Jones Sustainability Index. This recognition has a positive impact on both the company's brand and the investment community. CERES, for example, is a national network of investors, environmental organizations and other public interest groups. Since 2002 they have worked in conjunction with the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) to award companies in North America who have the "best" sustainability reports. According to CERES, they look to acknowledge and publicize best practice sustainability performance reporting. The 2009 Ceres-ACCA winners in their class were GE Corporation, Ball Corporation and Symantec (7).

The overall premise of transparent sustainability/CSR reporting is to demonstrate good corporate citizenship for people, planet, and profits. Third-party acknowledgment of exemplary disclosure identifies who those "good corporate citizens" are for the public and those who are making investment decisions based upon sustainability/CSR performance.

Corporate Responsibility Magazine recently released their 11th annual "100 Best Corporate Citizens" List. This list ranked the world's top corporate responsibility companies based on publicly available information.   The top 10 of the 100 companies include HP, Intel Corp., General Mills, IBM Corp, Kimberly Clark Corporation, Abbott Laboratories, Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, Coca-Cola Company, Gap, Inc., and Hess Corporation. These companies represent an industry cross section of technology, food and beverage, pharmaceutical, apparel and petrochemical distribution companies, further demonstrating the trend that good sustainability/CSR performance is becoming more widely accepted in the general business (larger company) community (8).

The Hewlett-Packard (HP) Company believes their commitment to good global citizenship, including providing a safe and health place to work, is a competitive advantage for talent recruiting and retention and, as noted below by Paul Chin, HP's Environment, Health, Safety and Security Manger for their Asia- Pacific region (see Figure 2):

"HP has a reputation for its quality of management and workplace. We've been named one of the 'best places to work' in Asia/Pacific. Our reputation helps with recruiting and retention – it makes it possible to compete on more than just a salary basis. Our commitment to an injury-free workplace and to the communities in which we operate are core to that reputation."

Paul Chin, Environment, Health, Safety and Security Manager, Asia-Pacific Region

Figure 2. HP Global Citizenship Report (9)
(*Source:* http://www.hp.com/hpinfo/globalcitizenship/gcreport/employees/health.html)

Sustainability and CSR = Safety
For the investment community, the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI) provides asset managers who manage sustainability portfolios with objective benchmarks. According to the DJSI, over 70 DJSI licenses are held by asset managers in 16 countries, and these licensees

represent management of over $8 billion, based on the DJSI (DJSI website). DJSI bases its information on results of the *SAM Corporate Sustainability Assessment (CSA) Questionnaire*, which is self-reported by companies. The assessment questionnaire requests information on a company's economic, environmental and social performance. Figure 3 provides the SAM CSA questions related to workplace safety and health.

Labor Practice Indicators

Question 44: "Please complete the table and indicate which of the following performance/management indicators your company use regarding the following labor relations related issues?" The Health and safety indicators are based on the ILO codes of practices (SafeWork) SAM also requires documents/web address in their assessment.

Health and Safety Indicators:
-Tracking of safety performance
- Tracking of work-related fatalities
- Tracking of near misses or similar crisis events
- Other indicators, please specify:

Figure 3. *SAM Research Corporate Sustainability Assessment Questionnaire* (10) (*Source*: DJSI (http://www.sustainability-index.com))

The default global framework for developing a corporate sustainability /CSR report is the global reporting initiative (GRI). It has become one of the most common ways to measure and report on a company's CSR and Sustainability metrics and resulting performance. Figure 4 shows the specific GRI framework and guidelines for occupational safety and aspects of a sustainability/CSR performance and reporting. While workplace safety and health is considered a part of an organization's sustainability/CSR performance, currently the GRI only focus on lagging performance indicators (incident rates), joint management-labor safety committees, and risk management for occupational illnesses. The opportunity for the safety professional is in working with their organizational leadership to identify and report on leading performance indicators (successes). This includes leadership commitment, a risk based workplace safety and health management system and progress towards reducing significant risks identified in operations or industry sector (e.g., fleet, ergonomics, chemicals management.).

Aspect: Occupational Health and Safety

LA6 Percentage of total workforce represented in formal joint management-worker health and safety committees that help monitor and advise on occupational health and safety programs. (ADD)

LA7 Rates of injury, occupational diseases, lost days, and absenteeism, and total number of work-related fatalities by region. (CORE)

LA8 Education, training, counseling, prevention, and risk-control programs in place to assist workforce members, their families, or community members regarding serious diseases. (CORE)

LA9 Health and safety topics covered in formal agreements with trade unions.Health and safety topics covered in formal agreements with trade unions. (ADD)

Figure 4. Global Reporting Initiative, Labor Aspects (11)
(*Source:* http://www.globalreporting.org/NR/rdonlyres/B52921DA-D802-406B-B067-4EA11CFED835/3882/G3_GuidelinesENU.pdf)

Not all companies have chosen to stick to the GRI guidelines for mostly reporting lagging workplace safety and health performance indicators. As an example, HP (identified as number one in *Corporate Responsibility Magazine's* "Best Corporate Citizen" in 2010) reports on workplace safety and health leading performance indicators, including their Occupational Health and Safety Policy and integrated Occupational Environmental Health and Safety Management system (see Figure 5).

Working Safely, Staying Healthy

"Providing a safe and healthy work environment for our employees is an integral commitment at HP. Our goal is simple: to enable our employees to work injury-free.

To achieve this goal, we have established an Occupational Health and Safety Policy and implemented an Environmental, Health, and Safety Management System. All managers and employees are required to support implementation of our policy in accordance with their roles and responsibilities under the management system.

Risk reduction, together with workforce education and involvement, are our tools of choice. We proactively identify and reduce occupational health and safety risks in our facilities, processes, and work practices, and provide all employees with an effective and continuous program of health and safety information and training. For example, our workplace ergonomics program educates employees on the importance of healthy work practices and proper adjustment of their equipment and work area. We have made great strides toward our goal of an occupational injury-free workplace. The improvement is the result of such programs as workplace ergonomics and employee risk reduction. We continue to seek even greater improvements."

Source: HP- 2008 Global Citizenship Report.

Figure 5. "**Working Safety, Staying Healthy.**" **2008 HP Corporate Social Responsibility Report** (12)
(*Source*: http://www.hp.com/hpinfo/globalcitizenship/gcreport/employees/health.html)

Sustainability = Risk Shifting

Regulatory and economics incentives for implementing renewable energy alternatives are also driving sustainable development. Success in this area includes reducing an organization's CO_2 emmisions, waste (hazardous) and energy-related costs. But what are the occupational health and safety risks associated with these new renewable energy technologies? Are they even being considered in the design and development of these new technologies? The safety professional's role is in influencing and providing input during the design, construction and use of these new

energy solutions to the benefit of the worker. In a case study posted on their website, the World Business Council, GE, and the President of Mexico hailed the new 12 MW project at the Simeprode landfill in Mexico (March 2010). Using gas engines, the landfill is converting waste gas into electricity, not only for the plant operations but for the local city use as well (see Figure 6). But what are the unintended safety and health risks associated with this new technology? In process, during maintenance of the equipment and the distuibution lines?   This is a good example of an economically viable, sustainabile development project and an opportunity for assessment of its risks, during the design phase, to the workers involved in installation, construction and operation of the new technology.

Jenbacher Engines Turn Waste into Value: GE

Customers all over the world are turning to new ways of capturing and using gas to meet their energy needs through onsite power generation. Many of these customers are using GE's Jenbacher gas engines to generate power reliably while in many cases cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

In Mexico, Jenbacher engines are at the heart of a newly expanded landfill gas-to-energy project, hailed by President Felipe Calderón as "a model renewable energy project" for Latin America. The 12 MW project converts gas from the Simeprode landfill near Monterrey into electricity, which is used to support the solid waste facility's operations as well as Monterrey's light-rail system during the day and city street lights at night.

Figure 6. Source: World Business Council for Sustainable Development (13) *(Source:* http://www.wbcsd.org/plugins/DocSearch/details.asp?txtDocTitle=GE&txtDocText=GE&DocTypeId=-1&ObjectId=Mzc2NjA&URLBack=result.asp%3FtxtDocTitle%3DGE%26txtDocText%3DGE%26DocTypeId%3D-1%26SortOrder%3D%26CurPage%3D1)

Another example of risk shifting was most recently experienced by the U.S. toy industry involving their Chinese toy imports. Conflicting pressures of cost and safety on factory managers, and a lack of robust systems to monitor the integrity of supply chains, resulted in the use of lead-based paints in the manufacture of toys in China.   Because of the lead levels, the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) mandated the recall of over 17 million toys in 2007 (14). Lead paint found its way into the toy manufacturing process because it can be up to one third cheaper than non-lead paint (15).

Hazardous Chemicals and Substances Management

Chemicals are a part of life no matter where you are in the world. They are used in our food, in healthcare remedies, and to support our lifestyles. They are transported and used in manufacturing, the workplace, agriculture, trade, and consumer products. According to the Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the global chemical business is over a $1.7 trillion per year industry and in the U.S., specifically, it is over a $450 billion business, with exports greater than $80 billion per year (16).

In order to assure that the production, transport, use and disposal of chemicals are managed safely, readily available information on chemical hazards and control measures is essential. Therefore overarching chemicals management regulations have been developed in the European Union and in some Asian countries, including China.

EU environmental (chemicals management) regulations on the Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS); Registration, Evaluation and Authorization of Chemicals (REACH) ; Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE); Packaging and recycling are influencing product, process and packaging R&D in companies manufacturing, importing or distributing into the EU. Manufacturing efficiencies and costs also mean that for some companies, these product, process and packaging changes are being implemented in markets other than the EU. This is where environmental sustainability, chemical management and worker safety and health intersect. Restricted hazardous substances in products and processes mean reduced toxicity exposure to workers, customers, end users, communities and the environment.

China

According to a report by Farrell, China introduced their draft version of the EU RoHS regulations, the "Administration and Control of Pollution Caused by Electronic Information Product" (EIP), in February of 2006. This has been referred to an "EU RoHS type" regulation. In October 2009, an EIP draft catalogue was published and lists EIPs which will be subject to the hazardous substance restrictions. Packaging marking will be required for all EIPs containing the following six substances (17):

- Lead
- Cadmium
- Mercury
- Hexavalent chromium
- Polybrominated biphenyls (PBB)
- Polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE) but not Deca-BDE

Unlike the EU RoHS regulations, the China regulation does not currently restrict the six substances noted above. They do, however, require companies to provide disclosure information and markings on EIPs. In the future, these substances in specified EIPs *will* be restricted to the same maximum concentration values as required in the EU-RoHS regulations. At some point in the future, some form of premarket EIP testing and certification will also be required (18). This is where the safety and health professional should be prepared to assist their organizations to the benefit of the workers.

Figure 7. EIP Packaging Marking with None of Restricted Substances Present Above Permitted Levels

Figure 8. Packaging Marking for EIPs with Any of the Six Substances Above Permitted Levels

Figures 7 and 8 depict the EIP markings required by the regulation. Figure 7 applies to EIPs with none of the restricted substances present above permitted levels listed in the regulations; Figure 8 applies to the marking for EIPs having any of the six substances (noted above), which are above listed permitted levels . The number within the orange circle label is the number of years of safe use (environmentally friendly) of the EIP (19).

In addition to the restriction of the six hazardous substances, the Chinese Ministry of Environmental Protection published Ordinance Number 7: "Measures on Environmental Management of New Chemical Substances" regulations. This regulation is similar to the EU REACH regulation, requiring registration and a management control process for chemicals used above a designated threshold. According to Young and Global, an Asian-based global EHS research and advisory consultancy, the amendment to the 2009 proposed regulations includes: 1) chemicals in products, 2) reference to the Global Harmonization Standard; 3) chemical classification; 4) a pollutant release and transfer register/ toxic release inventory; and 5) phasing out of hazardous chemicals (20).

RoHS, REACH, and WEEE regulations are incenting companies to find alternatives to known environmental health risks, such as lead, mercury and others. This environmental intersection with safety and health for workers, communities and consumers is focusing researchers and regulators on staying one step ahead of new EIP technologies, raw materials and products that are being developed in the wake of these regulatory trends. Using lifecycle analysis tools, organizations are able to determine the impact of hazardous materials/chemicals risks on the consumer, environment, worker and community from research and development to production, use and disposal.

The correlation between environmental sustainability and worker safety and health is evident in the regulation and management of chemicals and hazardous substances. By restricting hazardous materials through the regulations in the EU and China, EIPs around the world will be impacted and risks to the workers who are manufacturing, using and disposing these products are reduced. This is an area where the safety and health professional is advised to stay current.

New and Emerging Risks

Safety professionals are increasingly asked to identify and assess worker safety and health risks in a changing world of work. New materials, technologies and processes are continually researched, developed and implemented, which have implications on new workplace safety and health risks. In 2009, the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work published their European Risk Observatory Report: *Expert Forecast on Emerging Chemical Risks Related to Occupational Safety,* based upon a literature review and survey of one hundred seventy four (174) experts from nineteen (19) countries in the European Union. Figure 9 highlights ten main new and emerging occupational safety and health related risks that were identified. These are the risks where the

number of hazards and likelihood of exposure leading to the risk is either growing or the effect of the hazard on workers' health is getting worse (e.g., number of people affected or increased health effect.) (21):

## 10 Main New and Emerging Occupational Safety and Health

1. Nanoparticles and ultra fine particles;

2. The risks resulting from the poor control of chemical risks in small and medium enterprises (SMEs);

3. Outsourced activities performed by subcontracted workers with poor knowledge of chemical risks;

4. The increasing use of epoxy resins; the construction of wings for wind turbines as power generators or in the cabins of large aircraft, or on construction sites).

5. The exposure to dangerous substances in the treatment of domestic, clinical and industrial waste;

6. Dermal exposure leading to skin diseases;

7. Diesel exhaust;

8. Isocyanates -- at the production stage but also during further processing (e.g. thermal or chemical degradation of polyurethane, grinding and welding of products containing polyurethane, for example, in car repair shops).

9. Man Made Fibers.

10. Dangerous substances in the Construction Sector

Figure 9. Expert Forecast on Emerging Chemical Risks Related to Occupational Safety. (*Source:* http://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/reports/TE3008390ENC_chemical_risks#4_main_emerging _chemical_risks_identified)

Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS)
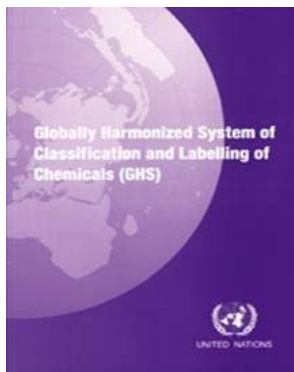
Figure 10. Global Harmonization Standard
(*Source*: http://www.osha.gov/dsg/hazcom/ghs.html)

The Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, the Global Harmonization Standard (GHS for short), has been adopted into regulations in the EU, Japan, Korea, Canada, and Australia. In the U.S., it has been voluntarily adopted by many multinational organizations that manufacture, import or distribute hazardous chemicals into Europe and other areas of the world where the GHS is a regulatory requirement. For these U.S. multinationals, adopting the GHS provides global consistency and continuity of their product labeling, MSDS documents and associated information, while reducing duplicate documentation and cost. In March of 2010, the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) will begin hearings on a proposed regulation to integrate GHS into the existing U.S. *Hazard Communication Standard*. The standard will apply to U.S. businesses of all sizes across industry sectors (22).

The GHS includes the following criteria (23):

1. **Hazard classification**: Classification criteria will be specified for health and physical hazards and mixtures.
2. **Labels**: Chemical manufacturers and importers must provide labels that have a harmonized signal word, pictogram, hazard statement for each hazard class and category and precautionary statements as applicable.
3. **Safety Data Sheets**: The SDS must align with the 16-section format.
4. **Information and training**: There is a worker training requirement.

For a more detailed explanation of the GHS into the existing Hazard Communication standard, go to: http://www.osha.gov/dsg/hazcom/ghs.html

International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Standards

Figure 11. ISO Logo (*Source:* www.iso.org)

ISO 26000 SR
According to the ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility, the final *Draft* International Standard (DIS) ISO/DIS 26000 *Guideline on Social Responsibility* has been published. After review and discussion of comments during the May 2010 meeting in Copenhagen, the working group hopes to approve, then publish, the final standard by the end of 2010 (24). ISO develops standards by consensus. For the social responsibility guidelines, Brazil (ABNT) and Sweden (SIS), both ISO members, lead the working group, which represents over 80 countries and 42 liaison organizations (non-members) throughout the world. The overall working group includes stakeholders from industry, consumers, labor, government, NGOs, research, and so forth. (25).

The standard provides voluntary guidance and is intended for large and small organizations in both the public and private sectors.

For more information on working activities and a copy of the ISO Draft International Standard 26000, go to the ISO/TMB ISO Working Group Social Responsibility website: www.iso.org/wgsr.

ISO 31000:2009, *Risk Management—Principles and guidelines*
Another key ISO standard that may have an impact on the safety community is ISO 31000:2009: *Risk Management—Principles and Guidelines*. This standard was published in November 2009 and recommends that organizations develop, implement and continuously improve a risk management framework as an integral component of their overall organizational management system.

Kevin W. Knight, Chair of the ISO working group that developed the standard, explains: "All organizations, no matter how big or small, face internal and external factors that create uncertainty on whether they will be able to achieve their objectives. The effect of this uncertainty is 'risk' and it is inherent in all activities" (26).

The same questions arise with this management standard as with other management standards published by ISO in the past (e.g., ISO 14001 and ISO 9001): "Is the standard intended for third party certification?" According to the working group, ISO 31000 is meant for benchmarking against a globally recognized framework and management process; it was not developed with certification in mind. As with previous ISO management system standards, stakeholders and "the market" will determine the value of certification.

Conclusion

The investment community, consumers, regulations and customers are directly and indirectly driving the trend for larger multinational companies to report on workplace safety and health performance as part of their sustainability and CSR performance.

Safety professionals who understand the business environment in which they operate will be the winners. They are the ones who will find ways to make worker safety and health relevant in the areas of sustainability, environmental regulations, product stewardship, "green" technologies,   and the ISO world of standards. They are the ones who are expanding risk-based approaches to include sustainability and CSR and contribute to their company's business planning, research and development and management of change processes.

Safety professionals bring a unique set of experiences, background and skills in the areas of management systems and risk assessment to the corporate dialogue and priority-setting processes within their organizations. Safety professionals who understand and get involved in sustainability/CSR activities, global environmental regulations, new renewable energy alternatives and technologies, and sustainable business practices will become the thought leaders for the future of the safety profession.

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