

**Lessons from China:
ASSE's 2010 Delegation to Shanghai and Beijing**

**C. Christopher Patton, CSP
Director of the Safety Services Division
UT-Battelle at Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Oak Ridge,, TN**

**Kathy A. Seabrook, CSP, CMIOSH
President
Global Solutions, Inc.
Mendham, NJ**

**Pamela (Ferrante) Walaski, CSP, CHMM
President
JC Safety & Environmental, Inc.
Pittsburgh, PA**

Introduction

In recent years ASSE has expanded its reach beyond North America as the premier organization representing safety professionals worldwide. With members in more the 64 countries; an International Practice Specialty; six International Chapters and Society Sections; and alliances with the International Network of Safety Professional Organizations (INSHPO) and the International Labour Organization, along with Memorandums of Agreement with the Nigerian Institute of Safety Professionals, the Institute of Singapore Safety Officers and the Abu Dhabi Environmental Health and Safety Center, safety professionals around the globe are more united than ever in spreading the mission of safety and the core principles of ASSE.

In November of 2010, that reach expanded into China when a delegation of 37 safety professionals traveled to Beijing and Shanghai for nine days. Under the skillful leadership of Delegation Leader Chris Patton and Co-Leader Pam Ferrante the group had the opportunity to meet with several safety-related government organizations and nearly 50 SH&E professional colleagues. By all measures, the trip was a tremendous success and it is certain that the delegation has set the stage for future trips and activities designed to enhance ASSE's global brand as the premier organization for SH&E professionals.

The genesis of the trip began in 2009 when the executive committee of ASSE was approached by the People to People Citizen Ambassador Program about leading a group of SH&E professionals on a mission to China. Founded in 1956 by president Dwight D. Eisenhower as a vehicle to expand international relations beyond the structure of government

agencies, People to People International is a nonpolitical, private-sector organization dedicated to promotion of international peace and understanding (www.peopletopeople.com). Delegates pay a fee to the organization to arrange the trip. The fee pays for all of the costs of the trip including round trip airfare from the gateway city (in ASSE's case, San Francisco), all lodging, transportation, most meals and visits to several cultural sites. In addition, People, to People arranges all professional and cultural meetings and visits and provides national guides who accompany the delegation throughout the duration of the trip as well as local guides in each city. All of the guides act as formal interpreters and provide assistance with navigating the cultural norms of the country being visited.

Patton worked with the ASSE Executive Board to define the objectives of the trip, evaluate the opportunities and benefits to ASSE, and establish a charter. The Executive Committee was supportive of the concept, especially considering that individual delegates would be responsible for paying the costs of the trip on their own or with other non-ASSE sponsors (the trip costs for the Leader and Co-Leader were covered by People to People.). Invitation letters were then sent to a select group of ASSE members asking for their participation. The hope was that the delegation would reach the minimum of 15 participants required by People to People in order to support the trip. But, within a matter of a few weeks, the application process had to be closed at 40 professional delegates and 11 non-professional guests.

The final professional delegation numbered 37 and included representatives from the United States, Canada, Singapore, Trinidad and Germany. Most delegates were seasoned veterans with many years of experience, who worked in management level positions with large national and multi-national companies or ran their own consulting companies. Although a few members worked for multinational companies with established facilities in China, most of the group had never traveled to China before, for business or pleasure. The group represented all of the major sectors in which safety professionals practice, including construction, manufacturing, insurance, consulting and government.

Numerous reasons were given by the delegates for going on the trip, including wanting to know more about workplace safety in China, a desire to experience another professional culture, potential future business opportunities and others, but nearly all of the delegates understood that the one common purpose that united them all was a desire to represent ASSE in China and help to fulfill the mission of the trip which was to develop ongoing professional relationships that would lead to the improvement of workplace processes and reduce the number of injuries, illnesses and fatalities in both countries.

In addition, specific tasks of the delegation were to:

- Discuss mutual expanded educational, training, and networking opportunities to improve the professional proficiency of those engaged in the practice of protecting people, property and the environment.
- Share informational resources to support the knowledge and professional efforts of those engaged in injury and illness prevention.
- Demonstrate new and improved products and services meeting the needs of professionals managing occupational safety and health programs.

- Discuss current occupational safety and health trends impacting both countries.
- Identify emerging business and industry trends that impact workplace injuries, illnesses and fatalities, such as safety management practices for nanotechnology.
- Discuss existing workplace safety and health management practices.
- Recommend areas for ongoing mutual collaboration.

Beijing

The delegation left San Francisco on the afternoon of November 5th, travelling first to Beijing where they stayed for three days. The morning of the first day was spent meeting each other, organizing the delegation, hearing the trip itinerary, and learning a little about Chinese culture and history in order to be able to work more effectively with our Chinese counterparts. The delegation members, many of whom had never traveled to China before, had to learn the protocol for conducting business in Asian countries. Meetings are quite formal with a strict protocol, even including specific seating arrangements. There was a heavy emphasis on the importance of developing relationships, “saving face,” and observing Chinese customs and protocol during all business-related meetings and activities. The national People to People guides, David Liu-Yanxiang and Bruce Mengliangliang, proved to be extremely helpful in this respect and shepherded the delegation through the entire trip along with the assistance of local guides.

State Administration of Work Safety (SAWS)

That afternoon the delegation was fortunate to meet with representatives of the State Administration of Work Safety (SAWS), including Mr. Huang Yi, Chief Engineer, Spokesman and Deputy Director-General of SAWS. SAWS is the agency directly under the Chinese State Council and provides overall supervision and regulation of workplace safety throughout the country. SAWS is also the working body of the Office of the State Council Work Safety Commission. Its nearest US counterpart would be OSHA, as SAWS is the group that establishes and enforces workplace safety regulations.

Mr. Yi, expressed his opinion that China is 60-80 years behind the typical safety program in the United States and outlined the government’s view on present day working conditions and China’s goals for the future. Given the high number of fatalities in coal mine accidents, the Chinese primary focus has been in that sector through education, legislation and enforcement. Mr. Yi believes that good progress has been made as evidenced by the decrease in accidents from 130,000 to 80,000 annually since efforts began in 2003. Since the rule of the communist party, the government has organized its agenda in five year plans to develop goals and objectives for major agencies and initiatives. They concluded their Eleventh Five Year Plan in 2010. Highlights of the plan were to improve mine safety, increase emergency chemical rescue services, create a safe community system (program around communication to make workers aware of their rights), research into occupational disease, and violation of policy investigation.

Plans also included an initiative to improve the insurance system resulting in a greater role of insurance in funding work related injuries. Currently, all medical expenses associated with

work related injuries are paid by the government. Insurance and companies are liable for lost wages but not worker compensation as we know it in the US.

The SAWS meeting was by far the most formal meeting of the trip and the delegation was able to meet with several high ranking government officials in addition to Mr. Yi. Beginning with the protocol of formal introductions of the leaders and a scripted presentation by the Chinese representatives, the delegation was given a brief opportunity to ask questions. Most of the discussions and presentation focused on the state of workplace safety in China and the tremendous strides the representatives from SAWS believed had been made. Although some passing mention was made of the problems and high rates of injuries and fatalities, there was a definite air of “putting their best foot forward”.

The staff from SAWS appeared to see the meeting more as an opportunity to present information to us rather than exchange information with us. The meeting ended with the obligatory presentation of gifts from the delegation and the hosts to each other as well as numerous photographs. This meeting was not only videotaped but a government photographer took pictures for nearly the entire meeting. Tea was served by well-dressed young ladies who kept each member’s cup full.

China Academy of Safe Sciences and Technology (CASST)

On the second day in Beijing the delegation attended additional meetings with governmental agencies tasked with workplace safety; the China Academy of Safety Sciences and Technology (CASST) in the morning and the China Occupational Safety and Health Association (COSHA) in the afternoon.

CASST falls under the jurisdiction of SAWS and is a National Academy. Founded in 1980, it was originally named the Institute of Labour Protection of Labour Administration, and its closest relative in the US would be NIOSH, as its staff performs research on workplace safety and makes recommendations to SAWS. Major roles played by CASST include providing technical support to SAWS; promoting the development of safety science and technology, education, and trade; providing services for enterprises related to work safety technology (In China private, for-profit companies are called enterprises); and information and management. CASST is broken up into six general management departments and twelve special sections. CASST staff all possess strong science and technology backgrounds, many of whom possess graduate and post-graduate degrees from top Chinese universities; the staff boasts 47 senior research fellows, and 20 members with doctoral degrees.

Dr. Wu Zungshai, President and Deputy Secretary, in his opening speech said that over 200 scientific projects have been completed by CASST and the focus of their Twelfth Five Year Plan would mirror SAWS’ efforts to improve safety via education, legislation and enforcement. Dr. Zungshai acknowledged that a safety culture takes time to develop and the “enterprise leader must drive the culture change from the bottom of his heart “and that “the highest level of leader committing to this culture is determinant to the level of success”. The new agencies will also have greater control with the authority to shut down plants due to unsafe conditions or in the event of a fatality. He noted that small improvements will not insure success, major changes are necessary and showed his sense of humor by quipping that “removing hair from the monkey does not make it human”, a remark that elicited chuckles and smiles from the delegation members and seemed to have the effect of joining us all together with the same struggles. Several delegates noted that after the comment was made, the mood in the room became noticeably more relaxed and congenial.

The meeting with CASST was decidedly less formal than the previous days' meeting with SAWS. The hosts from this group seemed as eager to ask questions and learn from us as they were to showcase their country's workplace safety programs and initiatives. They were particularly interested in the various certification processes and requirements for CSP and CIH. China currently has had a similar process for safety professionals in place for over 14 years and uses the term Certified Safety Engineers. Candidates for certification must possess the equivalent of a Bachelor's degree, although no professional experience is required and it cannot be exchanged for the lack of a degree. Obtaining the certification requires passing an exam and maintaining it requires continuing education credits earned over a three year period. It is estimated that there are 3,300 safety professionals in China eligible or have initiated this certification process.

China Occupational Safety and Health Association (COSHA)

COSHA is part of the China Association for Science and Technology and is a nationwide specialized, non-profit social organization. Formerly known as the Chinese Society for Science and Technology of Labor Protection, it is composed of workers and institutions relevant to the national occupational safety and health efforts. COSHA is administratively led by SAWS and operates under the instruction of CASST in terms of business operation. It functions as an important social force in boosting national workplace safety and occupational safety and health, and in protecting the safety and health of laborers. COSHA would be similar to ASSE, AIHA or any of the various SH&E membership organizations. A key difference, however, is the connection and oversight of COSHA by SAWS. Delegates met with Mr. Ren Shukui, Vice President of COSHA and Mr. Yi Lie, Secretary-General of COSHA, essentially the first and second in command of the organization.

Following the first two days of intense professional meetings, the delegation was able to use the last day in Beijing to kick back and relax, enjoying some of the most famous cultural sites in the world, including Tian'an Men Square, The Forbidden City and The Great Wall. It was also a time of bonding among the group as the delegates had the longest stretch of unscheduled time to enjoy the sights of China.

After a brief domestic flight from Beijing to Shanghai, the second leg of the journey began. While there, the delegates toured a hospital construction site and held a meeting with the project's Chief Engineer, Superintendent and Safety Officer, learning about best practices in construction in the country with an incredible building boom. The delegation observed the uniqueness of the bamboo scaffold planking as well as the on-site living quarters for the laborers and noticed that green hard hats are not worn by safety staff which is sometimes typical in North America. In China, green hats are a sign of bad luck and so blue are worn instead.

In addition to the construction site tour, the delegation also toured the sprawling 25 square kilometer Bagoing Steel Plant, the largest in China with a current capacity of 35 million tons per year. The steel plant has been operational since 1985 and through process improvements and mechanization has reduced the need for the number of workers from 15,000 to 8,000. It is a city in itself with a full fire department, police force and schools. While most of this plant was viewed from inside the bus, delegates did have the chance to walk along the catwalk of a large rolling mill and drive down to the harbor where the raw materials were unloaded and sent along a vast conveyor system as well as the loading of the rolls bound for other parts of the country.

Consistent with the government message in Beijing these visits showed an industrializing country struggling to prioritize safety. The old ways were being traded out for best practices that increased safety and obviously production. Labor intensive unsafe equipment was being scrapped for newer machines that allowed operators to be farther from the hazard and reduce exposure. Fueled by the realization that safe work practices can increase throughput, more changes were in development.

Shanghai

The highlight of the Shanghai visit, and possibly the entire trip involved a 4-hour meeting between the 37 delegates and nearly 50 fellow SH&E professionals from in and around Shanghai. Joey Yang, a member of ASSE, the ASSE Global committee, China liaison to the ASSE International Practice Specialty (IPS), was the ASSE point person in Shanghai who assisted in coordinating the meeting. The meeting was held in a local hotel and began with general introductions and presentations, after which the delegates and the Shanghai Safety Professionals networking group, as they called themselves were able to meet for several hours in small working groups focused on four major sectors – construction, manufacturing, insurance/loss control, and consulting, to engage in discussions about best safety practices and challenges of the profession. The small group meetings began with asking members to engage in dialogue focusing on five key questions which included:

- What are some typical worker safety and health best practices you use in your company?
- What are the biggest challenges you deal with in your work as a safety professional?
- What changes do you see happening for safety professionals in the next five years?
- What opportunities can you suggest for future collaboration between the two groups who are meeting here today?
- Are you interested in learning more about the Certified Safety Professional qualifications/exam and OSHA training courses?

During the meeting, the Shanghai representatives shared concerns about the lack of safety focus and awareness in China, expressing that the Chinese culture rewards productivity at the expense of safety, something many from the delegation could relate to. However, with a population exceeding 1.3 billion and the availability of low-cost unskilled labor, the obstacles expressed by the Shanghai representatives seem more difficult. They did, however, express that more government agency staff is beginning to realize the path to a better safety environment is through education of their own as well as corporate leaders in the awareness of the value of a safety program.

In addition to dealing with the difficulties of establishing safety program in local Chinese companies, North American-based companies with facilities in China are facing the same frustrations. Over 20 other companies were represented in the meeting by their local staff who

talked about the difficulties of achieving a safe workplace unless there is leadership and cultural support. During the roundtable sessions, the Shanghai safety professionals asked for assistance in finding ways to gain acceptance and support for their efforts. One delegate's suggestion was to present to their leaders the 'cost of failure' by demonstrating how safety pays dividends over the long run, which has proven to be a successful approach in the United States.

From that meeting came a series of future activities that include developing a LinkedIn Site for the meeting participants to continue to discuss and network. At the end of our meeting the Delegation and Shanghai safety professionals created a list of action items to further their cooperation together going forward. The list included:

1. Working to create opportunities to network with US ASSE members.
2. Creating a system to track ASSE professionals who travel to Shanghai and would be willing to provide presentations on EHS topics at Shanghai Safety Professionals networking events.
3. Exploring a more formalized relationship with ASSE
4. Working with the Delegation/ASSE to provide training programs/seminars on OSHA regulations.
5. Working with the Delegation/ASSE to provide training programs/seminars on preparing for the CSP exam.

The rest of the stay in Shanghai involved cultural activities that included a performance of the world-famous Shanghai Acrobats, visits to a Silk Museum and the Shanghai Museum, a tour of Old Town and the Yu Gardens, and a visit to a silk rug factory. Shopping was also plentiful in Shanghai's many silk and pearl markets. More than one delegate discovered the need to purchase an extra suitcase in order to bring the various gifts and souvenirs home.

The View from the Delegates

This paper would be remiss if it did not contain some of the opinions and observations of the delegates.

What was the most interesting thing you learned about workplace safety in China?

I was pleasantly surprised at the extent of commitment by the Chinese government to improve safety conditions in the workplace. There is a long road ahead but the steps have been taken to move the safety conditions forward. And if we know anything about the Chinese, when driven to excel they can accomplish great things as demonstrated by their economic growth these past 25 years.

Frank Hashimoto
Director, Treasury & Risk Management
Elkay Manufacturing

However, the safety programs in China are similar to those in more developed economies such as the U.S. because, as is always the case where individuals risk personal wealth in pursuit

of financial rewards, fear and greed will occasionally cloud the decisions of some participants. When that happens, regardless of which emotion is at issue, some of those values we often consider to be core to our beliefs are temporarily sacrificed. Throw the dimension of time into the mix, and the quick reward and/or deferred adverse consequence, can further motivate poor choices. Thus, although the laws in regard to worker safety may permit the authorities to impose punitive consequences, expediency of the moment or even probability of consequences will influence decision makers to different degrees. Those of us in the safety profession have heard all the excuses, but we must realize that even in the best of systems, the freedom to err and make poor choices will occasionally result in adverse outcomes. We're never going to create that injury-free work environment, but we must strive for continuous improvement.

Jim Bishop
President
American Workplace Consultants, Inc.

In many respects, the workplace safety program is on a track which seems to be 2-4 decades behind the USA – not as many standards and/or not enforced. China has the governmental structure to drive improvements in their safety at a more rapid rate than the USA, but also the problems of doing so in the face of tremendous growth, differences in the way that urban vs. rural workers are currently employed, regional/provincial/local differences, and restrictions on organizations (NGOs) that could advocate, promote and be resources for safe work practices.

Richard Rosera
Environmental Specialist
Reckitt Benckiser

What are your impressions from the meeting with the Shanghai Safety Professionals?

I personally found our meeting with your group to be the most rewarding and informative part of our professional agenda during our time in China. I am very impressed with the initiative of the Chinese Safety Professionals to come together and share information with the goal of improving safety processes within China. We have common objectives and our meeting demonstrated common obstacles even though our two countries are half a world apart. I hope you found our initial meeting as beneficial as I, and I look forward to corresponding with this group when needed. I trust the ASSE can be an asset to your efforts and I appreciate the e-mails received thus far. I personally welcome any updates you have regarding safety processes in China, and it is my desire to return sometime in the future.

Paul E. Edler
Technical Services Manager
Chartis Global Loss Prevention

What Did You Enjoy Most About the Trip to China?

I have to admit that I had many preconceptions about China and I am very happy to see how wrong I was. It is a colorful and vivid country, strong and self-confident, but also a country of weaknesses and faults, and aware of those.

Bernd Freibott
Corporate VP HSE and Head of Service Sales SAP
Konstanz Area, Germany

I also really enjoyed the hospitality of the Chinese at every place that we visited along the way. I still think Bruce was really a stand-up comedian traveling incognito with the group. The trip had many highlights and I'll have to look back on it in the future to digest what I experienced. I'd say the Friday afternoon meetings in Shanghai with the Chinese EHS professionals were the biggest highlight that comes to mind.

The Beijing meetings were important, and I think ASSE will reap the rewards of these introductory meetings by keeping the lines of communication open with these groups. The follow-up is as important or more important than the introduction.

David Holden
Occupational Safety and Health Manager
International Boundary and Water Commission

Several things. (1) The immensity of China, in size, population, buildings and culture. (2) Interactions within our group were also a major part of the experiences, both the similarities and differences. (3) Gaining a better understanding of the cultural history of Hawaii, especially with the many Asian influences. I myself being able to identify with both delegations, yet often found myself in between the delegations. I am very interested to see where this initial steps lead for everyone who was involved and am left wondering when our paths will cross again.

Gaylord Yoshimura
Regional Safety Manger
Charles Pankow Builders, Ltd.

What I found interesting was the dichotomy between a very modern society with very wide streets in Beijing, over 4 million cars and huge high-rises that go on and on for miles and the fact that the water from the taps were not potable. The construction site was the highlight of my trip to China along with the meetings with the safety professionals and the government officials. I loved the people on the trip and the passion we all shared for making a difference. It was a privilege to meet so many interesting and dynamic individuals from delegates, the alien software professional, and the spouses and children of the delegates. I hope that we meet again in Chicago.

Barbara Semeniuk
President
Purcell Enterprises, Ltd.

The time to know different EHS professionals within our group was a great. As for the delegation experience, I enjoyed the meeting with the EHS professionals from China general industry. It was good to know that whether the regulatory program is in its infancy or mature as we have in US, EHS professionals have some common challenges around the globe.

Dhruti Thaker
Assistant Director, Health & Safety
Actavis, Inc.

As for what I enjoyed the most, it was meeting the safety professionals from the ASSE delegation, and our Chinese colleagues. It reinforced my belief that we are all the same really, and the issues and challenges we face as safety professionals are much more similar, than they are different. We had quite a discussion on safety culture and many of the issues were the same as in the US, Canada or Europe. To Jim's question, the top three issues that I saw in common were the challenges of active leadership commitment and involvement, pro-active incorporation of S&H

issues into the business processes, and systemic-based root causes (rather than blaming the employee)...all of which are culture issues.

Cathy Hansell
President
Breakthrough Results

Additional miscellaneous comments from the delegation

As safety professionals I would venture you have all seen one article, picture, or You Tube video of unsafe conditions in China. It may have been the workers inside the operating press or the foam helmets, maybe the human counterweight for the bamboo scaffolding. Most likely this was sent via office email for a good laugh, but my challenge is that you never see these images the same way again.

Regardless of where in the world the pictures were taken, there are people in the picture with families. In developing countries, as in America's not-too-distance past, workers are forced to make a decision between personal risk and providing essential income. As safety professionals we either directly work for or regularly interact with international companies. The American-based companies operated in China are the current model of safe, productive facilities and will continue to drive change throughout the country. The first challenge is to find one of these companies and offer your support in safe work practices. Alternately there are Chinese safety professionals looking for seasoned safety mentors that can be reached through the Global Committee of the International Practice Specialty in ASSE.

Jeramiah B. Hayes, CSP
EHS Specialist
Printpack Inc. Rigid Plastics Division

The rural areas of China are very primitive. The cities are very advanced in many ways. Unlike in the U.S. they still have a frugal gene and a good diet that we are adversely affecting! They put great value on anything with a U.S. label, for example vitamins, cosmetics and unhealthy food. A downside of their one-child policy is that there are four grandparents and two parents competing for the child to the point that they do not respect their cultural elders like the patriarch, typically the child's father's father. The one child tends to be very spoiled, self-centered, and disrespectful. In cities they are very educated but have great difficulty finding employment to the level of their education and what they anticipated. The people we met with were extremely gracious and they were forgiving of my Chinese cultural ignorance and being a typical one-language American.

Joe Davis
Safety Specialist – Training
Man Tech International

China was a land of many contrasting wonders. Ancient civilization, architecture, arts, history. Old ways, old traditions, ancient values. Yet China is advancing in all aspects of technology and modernization at a breakneck pace. Another contrast was central planning coexisting with private enterprise. In this environment I observed safety leaders at all levels grappling with the dynamic tensions these contrasts have created in their society.

Stan Turbyfill
VP of Safety and Security

ASSE's New China Initiative

ASSE, aligned with its Global Plan, is strategically focusing on developing partnerships, alliances, chapters and sections to support ASSE members through ASSE's vision "as the global champion of the SH&E professional, a global leader of the profession, and a premier resource for those engaged in protecting people, property and the environment." The ASSE Council on Member Region Affairs (CoMRA) Global Committee, chaired by Kathy A. Seabrook (a member of the China Delegation), is working with the Delegation and the ASSE IPS on what ASSE has dubbed the "ASSE China Initiative." Tim, Fisher, Director, Practices and Standards will be the staff liaison working with Pam (Ferrante) Walaski from the ASSE China Delegation, the ASSE Global Committee, and International Practice Specialty. The initial objectives are to develop a more formal relationship with the State Administration of Work Safety; explore a more formal relationship with the Shanghai Safety professionals networking group, and finally developing an Ambassador program.

As of this writing, Chris Patton, as delegation leader and past president of ASSE, is working on developing the relationship with SAWS and ASSE. The Global committee has formed a task group to develop a proposed ASSE Ambassador Program (tied to the ASSE Global Plan objectives) which will incorporate the Shanghai action item:

- Creating a system to track ASSE professionals who travel to Shanghai and would be willing to provide presentations on EHS topics at Shanghai Safety Professionals networking events.

Once the proposed criteria for the ASSE Ambassador Program is completed, it will be presented to CoMRA and the ASSE board of directors for approval. Watch for more information in Professional Safety, Society UPDATE and the International Practice Specialty Newsletter.

As the delegation reflected back on the visit during the long plane ride home, one common observation emerged from the group and was heard in some fashion during each of the professional meetings that while China is a country with some of the largest metropolitan cities in the world with an unparalleled pace of development, it is also home to some of the most rural and remote villages where the cultural life still retains the customs of a much less-developed nation. While proud of their accomplishments to date, the hosts that met with the members of the delegation often acknowledged privately, and in some small ways openly, that they see themselves as being in a similar position as North America was about 80 years ago when the Industrial Revolution began. Then in North America, as it is now in China, workplace accidents happen too frequently and fatalities, while decreasing, continue to be unacceptably high. The Chinese workforce is essentially illiterate, making safety education a challenge. Overcoming the cultural tenet of never being the cause of one's supervisor losing face creates difficulties in setting up injury reporting systems or identifying safety hazards. In some cases, supervisors and higher-level managers lose their jobs when a worker is killed or seriously injured on a site, and shortly after the delegation returned, one member shared a news story he came across regarding two Chinese mine foremen whose death sentences had been upheld by the provincial high court in Henan Province. They had previously been found responsible for a gas explosion that killed 76 people at a central China coal mine last year.

It remains to be seen if China can learn from the mistakes of other developed countries, including our own, as they try to create safer workplaces and apply the best practices that have

been developed over the years by others for their benefit, all of which needs to be accomplished under a governmental structure that still dictates much of daily life, despite growing pushback from the younger generations who are much less concerned with culture and traditions than their older parents and grandparents.