

## **Technical Article-14**

# **SAFETY CULTURE**

**Sri Subash Chandra Jayasingh (Agent)**  
**Gandabahali Graphite Mine, Agrawal Graphite Industries**

Minerals have played a major role in raising living standards of human beings. Different periods of civilisation such as stone age, Bronze age and nuclear age have been determined on the basis of usage of minerals. Any thing from pin to planes is the product of metals and their alloys. The sophisticated world of today is the result of enlarged use of minerals which is the gift of nature.

Exploitation of minerals is accident prone. It is wise to take preventive measures to avoid accidents in mining rather than to wait the accident to take place and then take remedial measures.

Labour productivity and safety are interlinked and inseparable. Safety and productivity are integral and dependent on each other. The present trend to use highly sophisticated equipment's with high capacity for mining and transportation has introduced many new problems such as maintenance of wall stability in deep pits, dust control in low horizons and suitable systems for correct maintenance and operation of large mining units. Introduction of heavy earth moving equipment's with deep hole blasting is to achieve greater volume of work with a much smaller number of workers than would be required with manual operation.

Accidents are undesirable events. It causes human sufferings, reduces production trend, dampens spirit to work, demoralises the work force and ruins the production planning. Accident to one cause sufferings to many.

### **General causes of accidents:**

#### **(1) Material causes :**

- a) Slides of benches and piled material, falls of lumps and fragments of rock or ore.
- b) Falls of workers in the working.
- c) Accidents due to explosives during blasting, handling and transportation.
- d) Over loading of trucks and dumpers.
- e) Electrical accidents.
- f) Un-reliable equipment's, defective tools and appliances.

#### **(2) Organisational causes:**

- a) Unsuitable conditions of equipment's.
- b) Absence of guards and safety enclosures around machines and equipment's.
- c) Improper maintenance of road ways and passage ways, bench height, width and slope stability.
- d) Irrational methods followed to perform certain operations for production, repairs and maintenance.
- e) Lack of personal protective equipment's.
- f) Lack of proper supervision and guidance to the workers at work place.
- g) Inefficient lighting.
- h) Lack of training of workers/operative to maintain production and operate the equipment's with safety.
- I) Not framing traffic rules and code of practice.

General requirement for safe work has been enumerated in tabular form as per overleaf.

It is said that "A chain is no stronger than its weakest link". This is very much true in case of safety. No matter how sophisticated are the controls, the 'safety chain' always includes people which is the

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weakest link. With a view to make this chain stronger the safety consciousness among the people has to be encouraged. In order to make people a stronger link in the safety chain there has to be a strong safety culture in the organisation. This safety culture is the summation of attitudes of personnel at all levels in the organisation.

Proper emphasis is to be given for proper training both theoretical and practical. The top executive is to set an example in this respect by encouraging people in all levels.

It is unfortunate that safety provisions are often viewed as necessary evils demanded by loss. However compliance of safety provisions will show profit within the overall performance of the organisation.

Better safety culture is a team work. It embraces industry, government department and labour union at large. Elaborate planning on safety and devoted efforts will make the safety culture a grand success. The safety officer must be a good motivator and persuade the employees at all levels to ensure safe working conditions and practices.

The functions of a safety professional will be more effective only when he directly reports to the chief executive of the organisation to enable implement the safety polices with great impact.

There are distorted perceptions, beliefs and concepts that safety jobs are separate, not connected with production. It is time consuming, involving money, unproductive, eye wash to fulfil the statutory obligations and they are best concern of only safety department.

Many a times, it is seen that people tend to compromise safety aspects as to complete the job fast. This approach has to be discouraged.

The safety and health policy approved by the management is to be issued to workers and supervisors in local language and explained to them for better understanding and easy compliance.

The duties of workers are to inform his immediate high authority any likelihood of imminent danger to their lives or health directly or through their representatives in safety committee. The management duty is to take immediate remedial action if he is satisfied about the existence of such danger.

It must be ensured that safety can no longer be just given the lip service by the industry just sufficient to satisfy the statutory provisions. The safety officer has to play a positive, emphatic and decisive role guiding all levels of employees and employer in mankind the work place safe and healthy for all.

### OUR AIM SHOULD BE

**“Fight to the finish till accidents vanish”**

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