

Impact of Safety and Health Audits on the working conditions in Nairobi Metropolis

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ABSTRACT

Safety and health auditing is a structured process of collecting independent information on the efficiency, effectiveness and reliability of the safety and health management system of an organization and drawing up plans for corrective action.

The aim of this study was to evaluate the impact of safety and health audits on improvement of working conditions in workplaces within Nairobi Metropolis since introduction of safety and health audits in Kenya in 2004.

Ten (10) workplaces, one management representative from each of the workplaces and a total of one hundred and thirty (130) workers were selected for this study. A Safety and Health audit database at DOSHS, workplace audit reports and questionnaires were used for the study.

The study found that the number of workplaces that were audited from 2005 to 2008 increased from 315 in 2005 to 632 in 2008 marking an increase of 100.6%. However, only 6.35% of the workplaces consistently underwent auditing from 2005 to 2008 annually. Implementation of the recommendations contained in the safety and health audit reports by the workplaces averaged 65%, the major impediments to implementation being lack of adequate budgetary allocation to safety and health in the workplaces and follow up by DOSHS. Employers' commitment to safety and health was found to be marginal. Overall, there has been improvement of the working conditions within Nairobi Metropolis since the introduction of safety and health audits in 2004.

The researcher recommends introduction of control audits and an action plan with a time schedule to expedite implementation of recommendations in the audit reports. A further study to determine the reason for marginal commitment towards safety and health by employers in Kenya and the extent to which Safety and Health Advisers have contributed towards promotion of a safety and health culture in Kenya is also recommended.