

Seghisa is an Occupational Health, Safety and Hygiene provider with 206 clients on its books. It is committed to developing Occupational Health and Safety and workplace health promotion in SMEs from a broad range of industries.

Seghisa works in partnership with a number of health specialists including doctors, nurses and hygiene and safety experts.

WHP: a new approach

The company places great emphasis on WHP, taking into account not only its impact on workers' health but also the significant role it can play in revitalising traditional OHS.

Seghisa has introduced WHP strategies to various client enterprises with great success. Support, encouragement and expertise is provided to these companies in their efforts to initiate WHP programmes. There is a tremendous focus on preventive measures too and Seghisa provides support with meeting mandatory requirements as well as helping companies take these measures a step further.

Introducing WHP to an organisation

Before WHP can be brought into a company it is essential to:

- n Secure the support of the owner or management team
- n Interest and motivate employees and ensure that they participate
- n Interest the OHS team
- n Make sure that a budget is avail-

able for developing WHP measures

- n Ensure that everyone understands the benefits that better health and wellbeing will bring to the organisation
- n Make sure that time is set aside during working hours for running health circles.

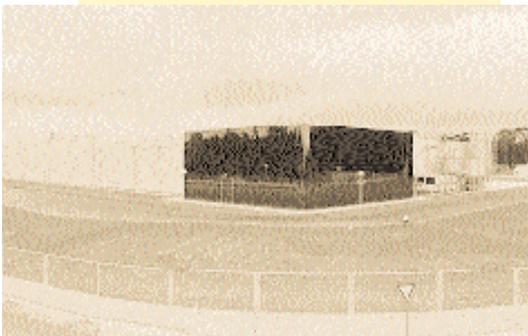
Once the basic groundwork for introducing WHP has been carried out further activities can be developed. These include:

- n Health information and education campaigns (including videos, pamphlets, leaflets, presentations, seminars etc)
- n Creation of health circles
- n Promotion of healthy lifestyle, behaviour and safe practices.

Generating interest in WHP

The Director of Seghisa has been participating in "Active and Healthy Life at the Workplace", a pilot project implemented by the Directorate General of Health. This provided an opportunity to increase interest in WHP and introduce it to client companies. A number of SMEs now recognise the importance of WHP activities.

Seghisa sees WHP as an invaluable way of improving the health of the



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working population as well as being an excellent method of enhancing traditional OHS. It has also found that motivating client companies to bring WHP programmes into their policies has not been difficult. A great deal of interest was generated once positive results began to come through. This interest extended to the smaller companies too, even though they are generally less focused on WHP activities. Seghisa has selected one of its clients, a manufacturing company, as a Model of Good Practice in WHP.

Roca Torneiras, Lda

Roca Torneiras, Lda manufactures taps and employs 49 workers. Its business is expanding and it plans to maximise export potential and increase production in the near future. Roca believes that better employee health and satisfaction will enhance the company's business opportunities and improve staff morale and with it productivity. Therefore, with the help of Seghisa, it has developed a number of OHS and WHP programmes that are proving to be very successful.

Looking at better health in the future

In order to improve the working environment, Roca has developed a risk assessment policy to identify the main risk factors at the workplace. With advice from the OHS

provider it is also working towards achieving the dual goals of preventing ill health and promoting health.

Practical measures to improve daily life for staff have been developed. For example, better methods of transporting goods around the plant and a highly sophisticated system is now in operation as a result. This study was presented at Safety Week 2000, and the company was subsequently selected as a nominee for a European Agency for Health and Safety at Work award, as a Model of Good Practice in preventing muscular-skeletal problems.

Working together

The WHP team at Roca includes

- n ***from the external services provider:***
 - Occupational health doctor
 - Nurse trained in OHS
 - Safety and hygiene experts
- n ***From the company:***
 - Management representatives
 - Human resources department representatives
 - Employees.

Roca has developed a number of health related projects:

- n Regular health checks for employees
- n Training in First Aid, Safety and, more recently, in WHP
- n Risk assessment and control
- n Improved working conditions

- n Information and education on Health and Safety
- n Identification of new resources for WHP
- n Development of better ergonomic conditions

The following workplace health promotion activities were introduced:

- n Creation of health circles
- n Promotion of healthy lifestyle and behaviour (nutrition, physical exercise, safety etc)
- n Training on health education
- n Dissemination of information on WHP interventions and the benefits
- n Introduction of new WHP projects.

Roca provides all the necessary administrative support for the implementation of WHP measures and makes sure that time and money is set aside so that these health promoting activities can enjoy maximum effect. The support from Seghisa has been very helpful indeed in getting health promotion projects launched and the company feels that it will now be able to continue with its good work.