



Media Release

OHSA commended for its actions by a European team of Evaluators

25 November 2016

The Occupational Health and Safety Authority (OHSA) has been commended following an evaluation exercise conducted on behalf of the European Commission by representatives of the Senior Labour Inspectors Committee (SLIC) in October. The 8 person-strong evaluation team was headed by Finland and included members from Estonia, Portugal, Italy, Greece, Cyprus and Lithuania. The evaluation included meetings with other stakeholders in Malta. During their 5 day evaluation, the team analysed OHSA's policies and operations, written and practical procedures and accompanied OHS Officers during their mundane inspections to evaluate the way workplace inspections are carried out.

"We are very pleased that the evaluation group gave such a glowing report about OHSA, recognising the hard work, the professionalism of the members of staff and their motivation, as well as noting the wide range of activities carried out by OHSA. We were humbled by the praise towards OHSA's leadership as well as the managerial and administrative systems in place at OHSA which allow it to fulfil its full range of responsibilities," said Dr Mark Gauci, the Chief Executive Officer of OHSA.

Raimo Antila, the head of the delegation, said that he was impressed by how much was being achieved by such a small organisation (which he described as "small but organised in an appropriate way and well functioning") and that the resources (financial, human and technical support) are out of proportion to the duties and functions assigned to OHSA.

The report noted that the safety culture is promoted well in Maltese society, has developed in a positive direction and that OHSA is committed to this promotion mission and has had an important role in this development. The report said that the social partners in Malta understand the importance of OHS issues. The evaluators noted that OHSA had taken plenty of communication initiatives and has excellent cooperation with different stakeholders in Malta. They regretted that certain media in Malta seemed to pay more attention to negative news rather than promoting positive actions and the benefits of having high levels OHS in place.

The legislation was deemed comprehensive and in compliance with the EU legislation and SLIC common principles. The report noted that the strategy and annual rolling plan of OHSA are comprehensive and they fulfil the requirements of the EU strategic framework of health and safety at work 2014-2020 and the SLIC common principles for labour inspection. The enforcement procedures were also described as well defined and the inspectors described as competent and carry out inspections professionally. The evaluators also noted that OHSA is active in international affairs and benefits from exchange of experience on the international level.

The report also looked at the progress achieved since the last evaluation in 2009. Overall, the major conclusion was that progress has been registered on all fronts, but although OHSA's resources have been increased slightly, there remains room for improvement.

The evaluators also made a number of recommendations with the more important ones concerning the need for an integrated IT system, better resourcing for OHSA, and the need to make public all OHSA's enforcement procedures (including extracts of its technical operations manual). Other recommendations refer to situations of which OHSA is already aware, and is already working on solutions to the ensuing problems.

The final report will be formally passed on to the Senior Labour Inspectors Committee and the European Commission.

[Photo attached: [*EU Evaluators with some members of staff at OHSA*](#)]

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