

Safety on the lines



Theme 2020:
**Occupational safety responsibilities
and the Crystal-Clear Line**
p. 4

Contents

4

**Crystal-Clear Line –
clear responsibilities on worksites**

7

Occupational safety summary for 2019

10

**Occupational safety seminar
inspired attendees to think about attitudes**

12

**What causes accidents?
Veli-Pekka Nurmi, Director of the Safety
Investigation Authority**

14

**Factory audits improve corporate
responsibility in the procurement chain**



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Contact us!

Occupational safety affects us all, and we want to improve safety in cooperation with suppliers. All feedback is important. Please send any ideas for articles, tips for development and feedback on the magazine to Karri Koskinen. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions about occupational safety.



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FINGRID

PHOTO | FINGRID



Heading for clearer areas of responsibilities

According to the Finnish Workers' Compensation Center (TVK), occupational accidents cost society EUR 2–2.5 billion every year. When **Mika Tynkkynen**, the TVK's Director, was interviewed, he stated in no uncertain terms that “occupational safety is nowhere near the optimum standard. There is a lot still to do, and development is known to stall once a reasonable level is reached. Finland is a good second-division country in terms of occupational safety.”

For Fingrid, 2019 was a year of contrasts in terms of safety. It was positive that more safety observations were made and more near-misses were reported during the year. The safety observation campaign, which finished at the end of the year, gave rise to some high-quality proposals that could genuinely improve safety.

The number of occupational accidents leading to sick leave, which numbered seven in total, was disappointing. Two of these were serious incidents: one requiring sick leave of more than 30 days and the other leading to a permanent disability. As a lost-time injury frequency per million working hours, this works out at approximately 5.5. The root causes of accidents were largely unchanged: slipping, uneven terrain and inadequate safety planning in changing circumstances. This is not acceptable. The target remains the same: zero accidents. The interim targets for 2020 are a lost-time injury frequency of less than five and more observations than in the previous year.

The feedback we received throughout the year indicated that some of our practices were considered to lack clarity or to

interfere in contractors' areas of responsibility. Based on this, we implemented a development project entitled “Crystal-Clear Line” at the end of the year with the aim of clarifying the occupational safety responsibilities of the client and suppliers. The overarching principle is to ensure that the responsibilities imposed by legislation are clear to the client and supplier and that the responsible parties discharge their obligations without impinging on each other's areas of responsibility. In this issue, Expert **Karri Koskinen** discusses the execution of the project and the targets for the new decade.

It is often said that attitudes and actions are decisive and that culture is the root of everything. Development must take place at every stage, and best practices need to be adopted. At its final meeting of 2019, Fingrid's Executive Management Group decided to make a contribution to further improving the company's culture of safety: we will jointly implement a workshop following the “Hearts and Minds” concept. The workshop is expected to lead to a stronger, more proactive culture of safety and a more effective system for managing occupational accidents.

What will you do to improve occupational safety in the new decade?

Timo Kiiveri

Senior Vice President, Asset Management,
Fingrid

Crystal-Clear Line – clear responsibilities on worksites

The boundaries between the responsibility for occupational safety and ensuring safety can sometimes be indistinct for the client and supplier. The successful management, leadership and development of occupational safety requires that both parties are aware of their responsibility and tasks related to it. On the basis of feedback from suppliers, Fingrid began a project entitled Crystal-Clear Line in August 2019 to improve and maintain a high standard of occupational safety.

TEXT | KARRI KOSKINEN

PHOTO | JUHA-PEKKA HONKANEN

The purpose of the Crystal-Clear Line project is to clarify the responsibilities for occupational safety between the client and suppliers.

The main idea is to ensure that the responsibilities imposed on the client and supplier by means of legislation are clear, and that the responsible parties manage their own obligations without overreaching or under-reaching into each other's areas of responsibility.

In 2019, we organised several events to enable the suppliers and Fingrid's personnel to discuss the project. The project was also discussed with the suppliers in management discussions, the occupational safety seminar and the supplier occupational safety group.

We rewrote the contract terms concerning safety in 2019, and the new terms were taken into use on 1 January 2020. A lot of detailed requirements were removed from the contract terms, which were restructured to improve readability, and the number of pages decreased by about one-third. The details removed from the contract terms will be transferred to the material concerning best occupational safety practices, which will act as an aid and a recommendation on Fingrid's worksites. The project does not change any practices related to the safety of electrical work and operations.

The change will affect sanction practices and the client's occupational safety assurance practices.

The new contract terms strongly emphasise the supplier's responsibility for safety planning and occupational safety monitoring. For example, the supplier is responsible for drawing up a safety plan and risk assessment, creating work plans for any work

defined by the supplier, creating risk assessments for any identified work tasks or worksites that cause a specific hazard, and for planning the necessary first aid preparedness for the worksite.

The supplier's safety plan must describe the responsibilities and occupational safety practices, and it acts as a plan for the more detailed plans that must be drawn up and of risk assessments. The sanction practices were also substantially modified. According to the new contract terms, the supplier must have in place notice practices and practices for intervening in unsafe activities that violate the rules and requirements, whereas the earlier contract terms emphasised the sanctions imposed by the client.

The change will have a strong effect on the client's occupational safety assurance practices, such as the worksite visits made by Fingrid specialists, corporate responsibility audits and management occupational safety walks. Fingrid's worksites will continue to operate on the principle that everyone is entitled and obliged to intervene in unsafe activities.

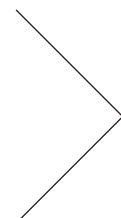
Fingrid's representatives must always put a stop to any work identified as unsafe before immediately contacting the supplier's representative. This enables Fingrid to find out why the work was not being done safely, whether the supplier had planned the work safely and how the employee was trained on the safe performance of the work. If necessary, the supplier is asked to review its occupational safety processes. In other words, the client's occupational safety assurance visits focus on assuring the quality of the supplier's occupational safety process rather than searching for individual errors.

The occupational safety responsibilities of the construction contractor and the main contractor on a building site are set out in the Government Decree on the Safety of Construction Work (205/2009). The construction contractor, employer and planner must separately and jointly ensure that the work does not present a hazard to the people working on the site or in its sphere of influence. ■



At Forest Line worksite meeting in Rantsila, Fingrid's representatives and the suppliers review the status of the worksite.

Responsibilities of the construction contractor (Fingrid)	Responsibilities of the main contractor (the supplier)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointing the main contractor • Making sure that occupational health and safety are taken into consideration in the planning for the construction project. • Preparing the safety document. • Keeping the documents related to occupational safety up to date and taking care of communication with other parties. • Preparing instructions for the safe use and maintenance of the building. • Appointing a safety coordinator to take care of the construction contractor's obligations as listed above. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing a safety plan and a plan for using the construction site area. • Assessing the risks. • Appointing the person responsible for the worksite. • Implementing the safety plans and keeping them up to date. • Taking care of coordination between the parties on the worksite so as to prevent and communicate hazards. • Informing the construction contractor of any changes if work cannot be done according to the plans required by the construction contractor. • Taking into account the prevention of hazards and harm in technical plans and the implementation of plans. • Providing all of the employees on the worksite with orientation training. • Supervising the realisation of occupational safety on the worksite. • Ensuring that all machinery and equipment conforms to the requirements and is safe to use. • Taking care of pre-use inspections. • Conducting a weekly maintenance/safety monitoring tour of the worksite. • Rectifying any problems identified by inspections immediately, before the machine, equipment or work tool is taken into use.





Attendees at a panel debate gave their views on the division of responsibilities in occupational safety matters. Representatives from Siemens, Empower, Eltel, Destia and Fingrid shared their perspectives.

The right direction

THE MOST INTERESTING TOPIC at Fingrid’s occupational safety seminar, which was held in November, was the new areas of responsibilities for occupational safety. The panel discussion revealed a wide range of viewpoints from people in various roles within the industry. The people involved in the discussion agreed that developing was heading in the right direction.

The issues of the day were discussed by **Kaisa Ruusunen**, Quality and Safety Coordinator from Siemens, **Antti Keskinen**, Vice President from Empower, **Jussi Ala-Kokko**, Project Manager from Eltel, **Juha Laukkola**, Project Manager from Destia, and **Juha Pikkupeura**, Project Manager from Fingrid. The moderator was **Karri Koskinen**, Expert in Occupational Safety from Fingrid.

What should Fingrid do differently in order to for a culture of safety to be developed together?

“It is essential to have the opportunity for interpretation. I would like Fingrid to think about how much leeway exists for adaptations. At the moment, it feels like there is no coherent policy on this.”

“The conditions on worksites can vary dramatically. That is why it is important to be able to adapt to the conditions.”

“Any deviations that arise should be handled immediately on the worksite, not in a complaint that is sent after the fact. A notice may also be sent later on.”

“Inspections should be coordinated in a reasonable way: if inspections occur too frequently, they begin to feel intrusive.”

“The safety plan must be clear and specific to the site. Plans do not work in practice if they are too long and include every conceivable detail.”

“Webinars could be used to review things. This would ensure everyone received the same information at the same time.”

What should not be changed?

“Fingrid’s own supervisors should remain on worksites. They can answer questions immediately and move things forward.”

“No really big changes should be made – just a bit of fine-tuning to ensure that we reach better results and have zero accidents.”

Threats or opportunities?

“I think there are opportunities to obtain new ideas and better practices when the party doing the work has free rein.”

“The threat is that someone takes the liberty of making compromises and the safety level changes.”

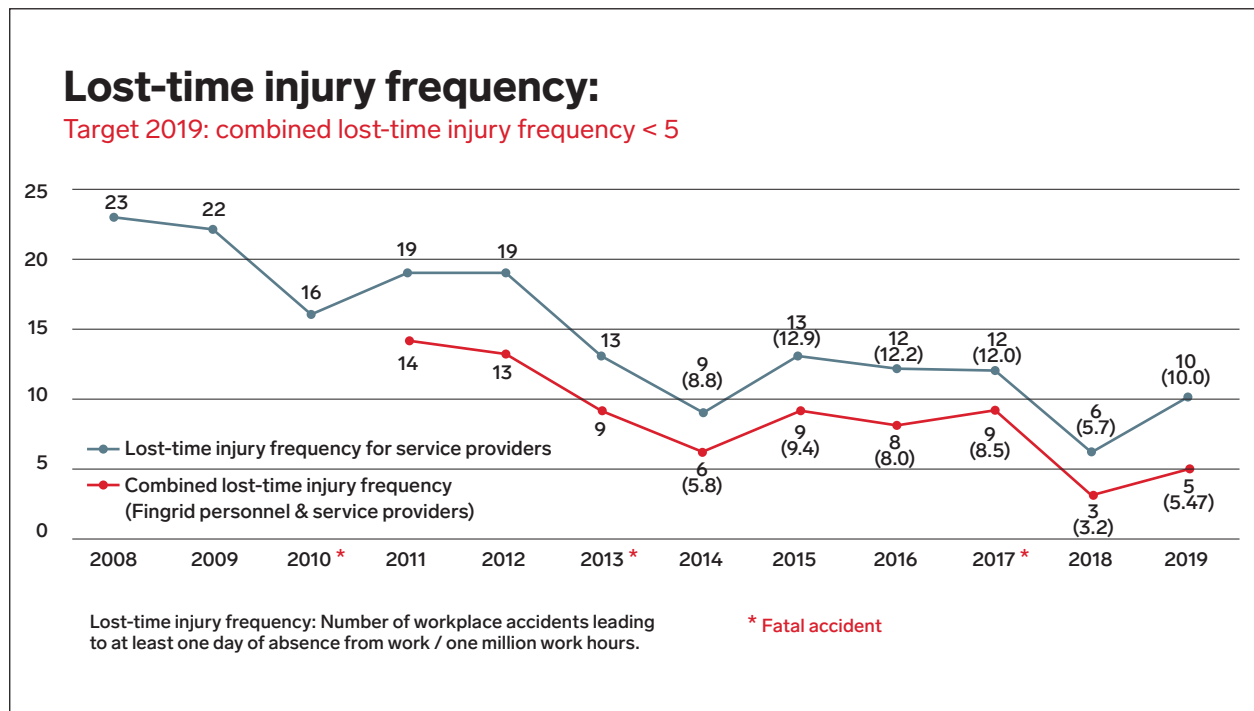
“The supplier should be responsible for risk management and planning because they have the best knowledge of the practical work and related risks.” ■

Occupational safety summary for 2019

Fingrid’s objective is to ensure that everyone working on our worksites gets home safely and healthily at the end of every working day. We have worked with our suppliers for several years to reach this objective. Thanks to our long-term occupational safety work, we have succeeded in reducing the number of accidents in the workplace and the lost-time injury frequency.

Unfortunately, the lost-time injury frequency increased year-on-year in 2019. Seven workplace accidents occurred resulting in absences, two of which were classified as serious accidents. The interim target for the combined lost-time injury frequency in 2019 was less than five (workplace accidents leading to absences / million working hours). The frequency ended up being 5.5, so we did not reach this target.

TEXT | KARRI KOSKINEN



Three of the workplace accidents occurred on transmission line investment sites, one in transmission line maintenance, one in a substation project, one in substation maintenance, and one in vegetation management. Slips and trips were the causes of about half of the workplace accidents leading to absences. It is noteworthy that there were three accidents caused by rotating blades in machinery. One of these was a serious accident leading to a permanent

disability when the blade of a brush saw severed an employee’s finger.

Another serious workplace accident occurred on a transmission line investment site when an employee slipped on a forestry machine platform and injured his arm. This accident led to sick leave lasting more than 30 days.

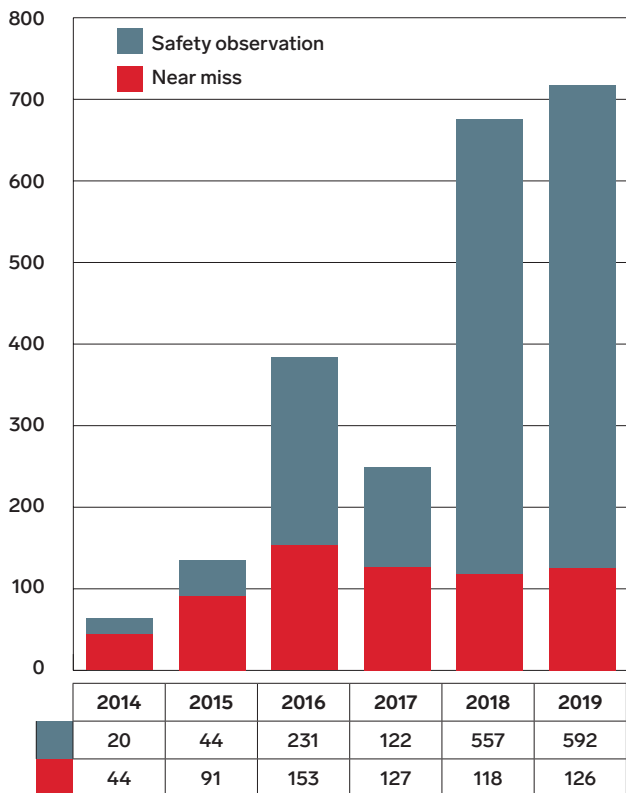
The same causes were behind the accidents as in previous years: slipping, uneven terrain and inadequate

safety planning in unforeseen circumstances. Accidents often occur when situations change, so it is important to suspend work if an unforeseen event arises and take enough time to plan the work safely.

Proactive occupational safety work continued on Fingrid's worksite this year. The number of safety observations and near misses increased slightly year-on-year. The majority of the observations were made on substation and transmission line investment sites, but there were also some observations in maintenance.

The number of safety observations has increased in recent years, and employees have contributed to the joint development of occupational safety at a pleasing rate. In addition to the quantity of safety observations, the quality and the things that we learn from them are also important. Approximately 500 safety toolbox talks were held on Fingrid's worksites, which is about the same number as in 2018.

Near misses and safety observations, 1 January 2014 – 31 December 2019



In 2019, there were no near misses falling in severity category A. However, there were more than ten near misses in the medium-severity category, B, including the following:

- Incidents of the ground giving way during lifting work caused three moderately severe near misses. None of these incidents involved the hoist falling over, but if the ground gives way, there is always a risk of personal injury and significant material damage. The reasons for these incidents were either inadequate hoist bedding or misjudgements of the load-bearing capacity of the ground. .
- One forestry machine came close to falling over after slipping on a snowy and icy slope.
- The lack of a design for a prefabricated construction element led to a hazard when it became apparent that the prefabricator had made the support holes too small, resulting in the risk of elements falling over in high winds. Fortunately, the supplier noticed the mistake before any installation work began.
- When a conducting wire was being pulled through, the conductor's span wire snapped when the conductor was over-tightened to allow for insulators to be installed. The conductor did not fall down because a brake machine was used as a backup.
- A tower was being demolished on a transmission line project when it fell onto the live 20 kV transmission line next to it. No measures had been taken to prevent the demolished tower from falling onto the adjacent line.
- On a substation project, the overhead line's jumpers attached to the horizontal beam of a switchyard caused a three-phase short circuit during commissioning.
- A live cable also caused a hazard when a gas analyser was being installed in a transformer, as the installation technician thought that the cable was not live.

A total of nine corporate responsibility audits were performed on substation and transmission line projects, reserve power plant projects and vegetation management sites in 2019. Corporate responsibility audits are Fingrid's way of ensuring that the activities on the worksite comply with the requirements of Fingrid and the laws in occupational safety and environmental matters, as well as employee responsibility matters.

There was found to be room for improvement in areas such as risk assessments, identifying particularly hazardous work locations, competence management and online training completion, and lifting equipment. It is good to see that suppliers have welcomed feedback and suggestions for improvements. Development has occurred in terms of MVR measurement competences, the quality of safety plans and, at the end of the year, the condition of lifting equipment. About ten corporate responsibility audits will be conducted in 2020. ■

Campaign leads to high-quality safety observations

In October and November, Fingrid ran its familiar safety observation campaign for people working on Fingrid's sites. In 2019, the campaign aimed to collect high-quality observations to enable occupational safety improvements.

TEXT | PÄIVI LEINONEN REVISED | MARKKU PÖYSTI
PHOTO | MIIKA KAINU

"WE SUCCEEDED in reaching the target. There were slightly fewer observations than in last year's campaign, but the majority of them contained more carefully considered content," says **Markku Pöysti**, Fingrid's Occupational Safety Expert.

Observations of a high technical quality include an adequate description of the event, background information and photographs. Content quality refers to the observations that lead to immediate or subsequent improvements to occupational safety or work procedures.

The people who submitted the five best observations were rewarded with a pair of high-quality binoculars. In addition, everyone who submitted an observation was entered into a prize draw with the chance to win travel loudspeakers.

"This year, we did not give a prize for every observation like we did last year. Now, we had prizes for the five best observations. I believe that this encouraged people to think about their working environments more carefully and comprehensively."

RAISING THE ENGAGEMENT OF SERVICE SUPPLIERS

The main theme of the campaign was "Detect hazards and you can ensure that you and your colleagues have a safe day at work". This idea underpins Fingrid's occupational safety theme for the year as a whole: "Creating a culture of safety together".

Markku Pöysti is particularly pleased that observations were also submitted from worksites where observations were not actively made in the past.

Observations are made at an encouraging rate all year round. In 2019, an average of 47 reports were submitted per month. During the campaign months, the average rose to 65. Over the year as a whole, almost 600 observations were made.

The majority of the observed hazards – 30 per cent of the total – were related to moving around on the worksite. Of all the different worksite types, substations were the

sites where most observations were made, but people working in reserve power plants also submitted a good number of observations.

"The number of observations regarding transmission line work should be higher, as the work carries greater risks and the operating environment is very challenging."

Work needs to be done to raise the visibility of the campaign. A safety observation campaign will also take place in 2020. No major changes are foreseen, but Fingrid will try to inform suppliers of the campaign at an earlier stage.

"It would be great if suppliers made use of the campaign in their own occupational safety development work as much as possible. Occupational safety requires ongoing work, so we will keep our eyes open and make lots of high-quality observations this year." ■

Three ways of submitting observations:

- www.fingrid.fi/havainto
- On the Quentic system
- Using a QR code

Observations of the threat of fire and suggestions regarding the reporting practices of maintenance personnel!

Read about the prize-winning occupational safety observations: www.fingridlehti.fi/en/category/safety.



The right attitude to occupational safety

At Fingrid's occupational safety seminar in Vantaa last November, awards were handed out to three people who had an active influence on occupational safety.

TEXT | PÄIVI LEINONEN

PHOTOS | SAMULI SKANTSI

The lifetime achievement award was bestowed on **Harri Osara**, a specialist who has done long-term work to promote safety. Osara began his network construction career in 1976. He has worked for Empower since 1990, and he has also worked on sites abroad.

“Since I began working about 40 years ago, the state of occupational safety has improved dramatically. On my most recent worksite – the Korja substation – we did about 700 days’ work with no accidents.”

Osara won plaudits for his good orientation training.

“Occupational safety is the first thing to address during orientation on worksites. Every conceivable hazard must be highlighted. In addition, the kick-off meetings for each work phase may be more important than general orientation.”

Active communication is also a part of the worksite manager’s everyday duties.

“Communication mainly means sharing information. Designers, colleagues and subordinates need to know what we are doing at all times. This is made more challenging when people come and go at a brisk rate. Despite this, there is no room for information gaps.”

According to Osara, supervising and monitoring various things consumes a lot of working time.

“Fortunately, we have new tools such as the Quentic app to make this job easier. This is a good trend. However, the most important thing is to ensure safety.”

ALERTNESS IN DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES

Markku Linnanen, Worksite Manager at Siemens, received an award for setting an excellent example and actively participating in the development of occupational safety. He was also praised for his diligent use of the reporting system.

Linnanen received special thanks for assisting Fingrid in rectifying a major fault while taking care of occupational safety in challenging conditions. A current transformer exploded at the old substation in Olkiluoto while a new substation was under construction next to it.

According to Linnanen the situation arose without any warning.

“I noticed flames, and I called the control centre. In incidents like this, you’ve just got to do what you think is necessary. When the fire brigade arrived, I directed them to the site.”

Linnanen says that working life – including safety – means continuous learning.

“Nobody learns these things overnight. It’s more of an evolution through experience.”

A LEADER ON CHALLENGING WORKSITES

Tauno Nieminen, Worksite Manager for Omexom, was rewarded for his observations of occupational safety shortcomings, use of the reporting system and swift rectification of problems. Nieminen also encourages others to contribute to improving occupational safety.

Nieminen won recognition for his management style on challenging worksites.

“The refurbishment of the Nurmijärvi substation required a major effort over the course of two years. It was challenging because the substation was in use throughout the work. When you are building something new near live switchyards, you need a stronger focus on safety.”

All of the award-winners highlighted the importance of having the right attitude. According to Nieminen, occupational safety seminars play an important role in internalising an attitude of safety.

“I’ve enjoyed attending the seminars, and I hope Fingrid will continue holding them. It’s nice to meet colleagues and hear the latest information on the topic.” ■



Occupational safety prizes were awarded to Tauno Nieminen (left) from Omexom, Harri Osara from Empower and Markku Linnanen from Siemens.

Occupational safety seminar inspired attendees to think about attitudes

FINGRID'S OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY SEMINAR at the end of last year featured a wide range of perspectives on the occupational safety culture. The main theme was clarifying and redefining occupational safety responsibilities. Guest speakers included **Veera Höglund**, Country Manager from Omexom, who spoke about the impact of a supportive corporate culture on occupational safety, and **Veli-Pekka Nurmi**, Director of the Safety Investigation Authority, whose presentation covered the causes and backgrounds of accidents. Both lecturers emphasised the need for safety investments at an organisational level rather than leaving it to individual employees.

We asked attendees to give their thoughts on the topics.

- What was the most important and relevant topic of the seminar for you?
- What are your thoughts on clarifying and redefining the areas of responsibility?



RIIKKA LAINE,
HSE MANAGER,
ELTEL:

“The most important thing was the change in boundaries and the transfer of responsibility onto us and to contractors. Veli-Pekka Nurmi’s presentation was also very good: he spoke about caring and personal experience, not just statistics.”



TUOMAS ANTIKAINEN,
DIRECTOR, TRANSMISSION
ELTEL:

“Personally, I don’t think this will be a major change – we were already taking responsibility for safety. There have been a few grey areas, so it’s good that the responsibilities will be clearly defined.”



ESA TURUNEN,
FOREMAN, OMEXOM:

“This Crystal-Clear Line theme is interesting and important. This was the first time I’d heard about it. There may be more to note in terms of subcontractor supervision in the future.”



JYRKI TOLJANDER,
WORKSITE MANAGER,
TMV SERVICE:

“The new Crystal-Clear Line principle is an interesting topic, and I think it’s a good direction. It was good to have more of an opportunity to discuss things.”

“The seminar had more of a feeling of open discussion than before. That is also a good direction to take.”



TAUNO NIEMINEN,
WORKSITE MANAGER,
OMEXOM:

“Omexom has high safety standards, so it shouldn’t be difficult to set boundaries.”



MIKKO HEINONEN,
BUSINESS UNIT DIRECTOR,
VOIMATEL:

“The speech by the director of the Safety Investigation Authority was a good way of addressing the range of attitudes and challenges related to change management. In our organisation, we could consider the significance of attitudes in our communication to a greater extent.”

What causes accidents?

At Fingrid's occupational safety seminar, Veli-Pekka Nurmi, Director of the Safety Investigation Authority, spoke about how attitudes can affect the creation of a safe working culture.

TEXT | PÄIVI LEINONEN
PHOTO | SAMULI SKANTSI



The Safety Investigation Authority investigates all serious accidents and situations where there is a risk of a serious accident in Finland or involving Finnish people. It also investigates irregularities that are not accidents at the request of the Finnish Government. The Authority's only goal is to improve safety.

"We do not get involved in court cases, and we do not give our opinions on who is innocent or guilty. We aim to prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future," explains Professor **Veli-Pekka Nurmi**, Director of the Authority.

RULES FOR RULES' SAKE

Nurmi said that at the beginning of his career, his attitude was dramatically changed by a colleague who kept his helmet on despite constantly being on the receiving end of nasty comments from other workmates. This indifference to safety on the worksite went all the way to the top of the chain: the management never intervened when people failed to wear helmets although the company's rules required helmets to be used.

"The helmet rule was just a facade that the employer could use to avoid responsibility in the event of an accident. Unfortunately, many organisations have good rules that are not followed. Other organisations draw up bad or unnecessary rules that are not suited to the work."

Vigilant colleagues can prevent mistakes.

One example of bad safety management comes in the form of the safety management system used by a seaplane company. When an accident occurred, it became apparent that the company's pilot had never even seen the system. It was also revealed that the safety management system had been made for completely different conditions than the actual conditions in which the company's aircraft were operated.

"To put it frankly, the company's management had written the instructions purely for the sake of ticking off a regulatory requirement. What's more astonishing is that the regulator approved the safety management system."

PEOPLE CAN SEE ERRORS

Nurmi's lecture included some practical examples of accidents that were clearly due to negligence. The reason for negligence may be cost-saving measures, employee fatigue or carelessness.

In some cases, health-related matters can lead to serious accidents. This is particularly unfortunate when the health problems are known but are not taken seriously.

"Particularly in small companies, such as one-man companies, people often continue working when they are sick, as their livelihood depends on it. A situation like this led to a very serious traffic accident in 2018."

In Nurmi's opinion, human error is not an acceptable reason for an accident.

"The conditions must be managed so that they do not contribute to errors. However, if an error occurs, the system must ensure that it does not lead to disaster. If one person is vigilant, they may be able to prevent another person's errors."

A culture of blame does not necessarily promote better safety.

"If the consequence is a punishment, nobody will want to admit to an error or hazard. If an organisation is not capable of recognising its errors, it is also incapable of learning from them."

THE BACKGROUNDS OF ACCIDENTS ARE EXTENSIVELY INVESTIGATED

The Safety Investigation Act specifies the target of investigations by the Safety Investigation Authority as follows: "The safety investigation examines the course of events, their causes and consequences and the search and rescue actions as well as the actions taken by the authorities."

In Nurmi's opinion, the law has been a success because it calls for an extensive investigation into the causes and backgrounds of accidents. The apparent cause may be just the final link in a long chain. The ultimate goal is to prevent similar incidents from recurring.

"Every organisation that aims to improve safety must begin by analysing these things. It is all about management, supervision and inspections." ■

A culture of occupational safety

- A culture of occupational safety is moulded by the attitudes and actions of individuals
- The organisation must have an understanding that, despite everything, individuals sometimes make mistakes
- The task and work community must be structured in such a way that it does not contribute to the onset of errors
- A culture of safety is not a separate area of management: it needs to be integrated into the operations as a whole
- An essential aspect of safety management is prioritisation – what are the most important things?

Factory audits improve corporate responsibility in the procurement chain

Fingrid conducts audits to ensure that its occupational safety and other corporate responsibility requirements are met in the factories comprising its procurement chain around the world. Any deviations detected during audits are addressed in collaboration with the factories and contractors.

TEXT | DANIEL PAJUNEN
PHOTOS | KEIJO VÄLIMAA

Last year, Fingrid commissioned about 20 corporate responsibility audits at the factories of equipment and material suppliers around the world. Audits determine whether the working conditions and operating methods meet Fingrid's corporate responsibility requirements.

According to **Satu Vuorikoski**, Fingrid's Development Manager, Corporate Responsibility, audits are a part of Fingrid's strategic approach to corporate responsibility.

"We are a client organisation, so ensuring that our procurement activities are responsible is a key part of the corporate responsibility of our operations as a whole. We want to be sure that occupational safety and decent working conditions are realised throughout our procurement chain," Vuorikoski says.



Sterlite Power's factory in India manufactures conductors. Fingrid's factory audits were conducted in 2019.

In 2019, factories in seven countries underwent audits. According to Vuorikoski, audits are risk-oriented and are often conducted proactively.

“In addition to our current suppliers, we audit the potential suppliers of materials or equipment for upcoming construction projects.”

AUDITING REVEALS WHETHER PROMISES MEASURE UP TO REALITY

According to **Keijo Välimaa**, Fingrid’s Construction Manager, audits are an important means of checking how the occupational safety and other corporate responsibility matters stated in agreements are implemented in everyday work at factories.

“We strive to verify the promises made on paper by checking factory conditions, interviewing employees, verifying records of working hours or documents such as production reports,” Välimaa summarises.

The matters checked during audits are related to the UN Global Compact, the world’s largest corporate sustainability initiative to which Fingrid has committed itself.

“We have drawn up our own corporate responsibility requirements based on the UN initiative and human rights principles. Suppliers must meet national legal requirements but, irrespective of these, we require partners to observe Fingrid’s corporate responsibility principles on matters including the use of appropriate personal protective equipment, such as hearing protectors, helmets and safety footwear,” Vuorikoski says.

LOCAL AUDITORS AND A STANDARDISED CONCEPT

Outside Finland, audits are performed by local auditors working for international audit firms who are familiar with the local language, culture and legislation.

According to **Jenni-Julia Saikkonen**, Environmental Specialist at Fingrid who is responsible for commissioning audits and processing the results, every audit follows a standardised concept, reviewing occupational safety, the work culture and matters related to employment contracts, such as working hours and remuneration. The factory’s management system, environmental management and business practices are also evaluated. Confidential interviews with employees are an important part of auditing.

“An audit provides a random sample of a factory. It is not possible to inspect every last detail of a factory, but no sections remain entirely unchecked,” Saikkonen says.

THE MOST COMMON DEVIATIONS OCCUR IN OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND WORKING HOURS

After visiting the factory, the auditor sends a report to Fingrid and the audited supplier. Any deviations are reviewed jointly, and the

factory’s managers prepare a plan and timetable for rectifying the shortcomings.

“During the first audit, shortcomings are often identified in fire alarm systems, fire extinguishing equipment or emergency exits. Other common complaints relate to working hours, remuneration and the use of personal protective equipment,” Välimaa says.

According to Vuorikoski, the deviations identified in audits performed in 2019 are mainly related to occupational health and safety, management systems, working hours and salary payment practices. There were no indications of severe human rights violations, such as child labour or modern slavery, in any of the audits commissioned by Fingrid.

TANGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS TO EVERYDAY WORK IN FACTORIES

According to Vuorikoski, Välimaa and Saikkonen, the tangible improvements to working conditions and corporate responsibility in factories are evidence that the auditing process is functioning correctly. Improving the corporate responsibility related to everyday work at factories also makes auditing more rewarding.

Improving the corporate responsibility related to everyday work at factories also makes auditing more rewarding.

“Deviations can often be addressed soon after they are detected in an audit. Many factories have installed the missing smoke detectors, fire alarms and emergency lighting or repaired emergency exit doors. Deviations related to working hours and overtime are often addressed rapidly,” Saikkonen says.

The measures taken to address deviations are inspected during a repeat audit. If the supplier refuses to address the shortcomings, Fingrid is entitled to terminate the procurement agreement.

“Occasionally, we need to be tough, but our suppliers are usually keen to improve their operations,” Välimaa says.

Factory management systems have also become more responsible on the basis of audits. For example, social responsibility policies have been drawn up for some companies that were lacking them.

“Cases like these are very positive. In the best cases, they can give rise to a long-term culture of corporate responsibility and safety in factories,” Saikkonen says. ■

Wanted! More safety observations!

Preventive occupational safety work takes many forms at Fingrid. Safety observations and reports of near misses are a crucial part of occupational safety development.

Observations and reports of near misses can be submitted using a website, a QR code and an app. It is worth taking an active approach to occupational safety!



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