

SAFETY COMMITTEES

and its services are welcomed (See Chapter 8, "Safety Training")

The work of a committee may be better accomplished in a prompt, effective, and orderly manner if a chief executive of the company serves as chairman. The head of each operating unit assumes responsibility for safety work in his unit and can incorporate safety into its daily work. He can plan safety just as he plans production and the daily work of his men.

The committee as a whole helps to (a) better inform the chief executive by presenting him with clear outlines of objectives and problems, (b) familiarize chosen staff members with safety affairs, (c) bring together various viewpoints for discussion, and (d) promote interest in and cooperation for safety among the committee members themselves.

General Organization of Safety Committees

Primarily, the size of the plant determines the type and number of safety committees which will function most effectively within it, but other factors must also be considered. These factors include the progress already made in safeguarding the plant when committee work is started, the size and relationship of the various departments or plant units, and the type of business (such as manufacturing, construction, transportation, public utilities). In any case, when the committee or committees decided upon are formed, certain fundamentals should be observed.

Each committee should be so made up as to have prestige. For instance, a main or governing committee should include such key executives as master mechanic and production manager. A workmen's committee should comprise workers well known to and respected by fellow workmen.

The committee membership should encompass the maximum knowledge of methods, practices, and conditions in the plant or group represented.

The committee should be as small as is consistent with the above requirements. A committee of three men functions more effectively than a committee of five. Larger committees tend to produce more debate and less action. In general, however, three is the smallest number for practical purposes.

The basic plan of a committee's structure and operation should be such as to assign specific duties to committee officials and members (Fig. 3-2). Copies of a chart outlining the duties of a safety committee should be posted on bulletin boards where all employees will have a chance to study them.

Selection and term of office

Whether safety committee members are elected or appointed is largely determined by the type of committee and by the length of time committees have existed in a plant.

Members of interplant and governing committees are more likely to be appointed by management. Selection of qualified persons is assured by the appointive method. Also, when safety committees are first being formed, the members are usually appointed.

In some companies, a foreman is selected by the plant safety committee to serve on the workmen's safety committee, and he automatically becomes its chairman. He usually serves for six months or for some other set term, after which another foreman is appointed for this work. In this way, all the plant foremen, as successive chairmen of the workmen's committee, are rotated and given this experience. In many plants, the foreman who serves as chairman of the workmen's safety committee is also a member of the plant safety committee.

The workmen's safety committee is usually composed of elected members, who are rotated to provide experience for all the workers. The usual term of office is three to six months, the members being replaced one at a time.

Policies and procedures

When a committee is formed, certain policies and procedures should be set forth in writing, and should cover at least

- 1 Scope of committee activity
- 2 Extent of committee authority
- 3 Procedure as to
 - a) Time and place of meetings
 - b) Frequency of meetings
 - c) Order of business
 - d) Records to be kept
 - e) Attendance requirements