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Inter-Society Cooperation*

Industrial Hygiene Section

ON April 30, 1947, the Section Council of the Industrial Hygiene Section of the American Public Health Association appointed a Committee on Inter-Society Cooperation. The bill of particulars specified for this committee was: "To provide incidental liaison with kindred societies, as on matters of policy or committee activities, and establish a hitherto missing relationship for the benefit of their respective memberships and the fuller attainment of their professional objectives."

The committee membership, which is comprised of ten persons, six of whom are from the medical profession, is indeed a representative one from the standpoint of affiliation with various societies concerned with industrial health problems. Of some eleven societies which are active in the field of industrial health, seven are represented by members of this committee. The committee has never had a meeting, but your Chairman has discussed the functions of the committee informally with several of its members. Correspondence has also been carried on with the committee members, as well as with the heads of some of the societies involved, in an effort to obtain data on the subject.

It is axiomatic that a problem should be defined before its solution can be attempted intelligently. In this particular instance, it would appear that a study of the various societies concerned with industrial hygiene is necessary, in order to determine how they can function in a mutually beneficial manner. Such a

brief study of eleven organizations reveals the following information:

American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists—This society which has been in existence for the past ten years, has as its major objectives the promotion of all phases of industrial hygiene and sanitation and the coordination of these activities in official agencies. The organization also has for a further objective the encouragement of the interchange of experience among industrial hygiene personnel in official organizations, and the collection and dissemination of information which may be of assistance in the proper fulfillment of their duties.

This organization, which numbers approximately 300 members, has at present the following standing committees: Industrial Ventilation, Industrial Hygiene Codes, Standard Methods of Analysis, Standardization of Plant Records and Reports, Appraisal and Reporting of Industrial Hygiene Activities, Threshold Limits, Dust Counting, Worker Health Information, Standardization of Air Sampling Instruments, and Recruitment of Industrial Hygiene Personnel. Sporadically, other committees have functioned within the Conference, but as their purposes were served the committees were discharged. It is obvious that this particular organization is primarily concerned with the proper administration of responsibilities given to the agencies by legislative fiat or other decrees.

American Industrial Hygiene Association—This Association is approximately eight years old and has more than 400 members. In addition to the national

* Report of the Committee.
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even organizations receive information.

Office of Governmental Affairs—This society has existed for the past 25 years. Its major objectives are the dissemination of information and the coördination of activities in official agencies. It also has for a purpose the encouragement of the exchange of experience among personnel in official agencies and the collection and dissemination of information which may aid in the proper fulfillment of their duties.

It has, which numbers approximately 100 members, has at present the following standing committees: Industrial Hygiene, Industrial Hygiene Methods of Plant Hygiene, Appraisal and Industrial Hygiene Activities, Dust Counting, Industrial Hygiene Standards, Sampling Instruments, Industrial Hygiene Educationally, and other committees. At the Conference, the purposes were served and the members were discharged. It is a particular organization which is concerned with the proper fulfillment of the responsibilities given to it by the legislative fiat or

Industrial Hygiene Association—This association is approximately 40 years old and has more than 400 members. It is a national

society, there are a dozen local sections. The object of this association is to increase the knowledge of industrial hygiene through interchange and dissemination of information; to promote the study and control of environmental factors affecting the health and well-being of industrial workers; to correlate such activities; and to bring together persons interested in the various phases of industrial hygiene.

This association has several standing committees, including an Ethics Committee, an Editorial Committee, a Publications Committee, an Awards Committee, and a Committee on Placement of Personnel.

American Standards Association—Recently incorporated under the laws of the State of New York, the association has for its objectives the provision of systematic means by which organizations concerned with standardization may cooperate in establishing American Standards, to the end that duplication of work and the promulgation of conflicting standards may be avoided. This society is highly organized, and before a proposed standard is adopted it has to go through a rather long, arduous, and cumbersome procedure with many checks and double checks.

A review of the ASA committee roster reveals some fifteen or more technical committees which are concerned with various aspects of industrial hygiene, such as Ventilation, Illumination, Industrial X-rays, and Toxic Limits. Perhaps the most active committee at present is the one on Toxic Dusts and Gases, which has issued approximately 20 standards on maximum allowable concentrations.

Industrial Hygiene Foundation—This group is a research association subsidized by industry for advancing industrial health, improving working conditions, and bettering human relations. In addition to a Board of Trustees, the Foundation has a Research Advisory Council, a Medical Committee, a Pre-

ventive Engineering Committee, a Chemical and Toxicological Committee, and a Legal Committee. The Foundation serves as a clearinghouse for the collection and interchange of industrial health data, publishes a monthly abstract of current literature, holds an annual meeting and round table conferences for its members, and conducts plant investigations and special researches.

American Association of Industrial Physicians and Surgeons—This association is at least 33 years old and has a large number of standing committees for the purpose of carrying out its business between meetings. These committees deal with such subjects as certification, annual convention, history, medical education and graduate fellowship, membership, past presidents, publications and editorial, tuberculosis, and workmen's compensation.

In a recent communication solicited by your Chairman from the Managing Director of this society, the view was expressed that the physicians are vitally interested in all phases of industrial health and occupational medicine and feel that it would be unwise to designate boundaries or to try to limit the field or scope of societies concerned with industrial medicine and hygiene. This group of physicians has a long and enviable record of achievement in the furtherance of the cause of industrial health and occupational medicine.

American Medical Association—The American Medical Association has two groups which are concerned with industrial health. One of these is the Section on Preventive and Industrial Medicine and Public Health, while the other is the Council on Industrial Health. The former operates very much in the fashion of our own Section on Industrial Hygiene, largely through several committees on problems of current interest, and transacts its major affairs at the time of the annual meeting of the A.M.A. The Council on Industrial Health is a

standing committee of the Board of Trustees of the A.M.A. and has been in existence since 1937. Its purpose is to coordinate medical effort in industrial health. The Council's functions are executed through special committees, such as public relations, professional relations, scientific development, workmen's compensation, rehabilitation, and standards. Through cooperation with nursing societies and other interested agencies, the Council finds it possible to deal with labor, management, and government, on local, national, and international levels.

American Association of Industrial Dentists—Approximately five years old, this group has for its major objective the development of means for improving the oral health of industrial workers.

American Association of Industrial Nurses—This group was organized in 1942 and has for its objective the stimulation of interest in the special problems of industrial nurses. The society further aids in the promotion of industrial nurses' participation in all nursing activities. It attempts to cooperate with other groups in the promotion of industrial health, and provides a forum for discussion of problems in this field.

The industrial nursing society has standing committees dealing with such subjects as legislation, membership, publicity, and education.

American Society of Heating and Ventilating Engineers—This society was formed in 1894 and has maintained a research staff since 1919. The main objective of the society is to create atmospheric conditions in industry and in the home which will result in optimum comfort and health. Among the various committees which this society maintains, the ones of particular interest in the industrial hygiene field are those dealing with air cleaning, air sterilization, industrial ventilation, physiological research, sound control, and sensations of comfort.

Conference of State Sanitary Engi-

neers—This group was formed for the purpose of promoting the public health in all its aspects and, in particular, to coordinate engineering activities in official state and territorial health organizations. Like the other societies, it encourages the interchange of experience among sanitary engineers, and collects and makes accessible to the profession information and data on public health engineering problems.

For many years the sanitary engineering group had a committee on industrial sanitation, but this was not very active lately and apparently was dissolved. This does not mean, however, that the sanitary engineering profession does not have an active interest in industrial hygiene. In fact, one finds many sanitary engineers in the industrial hygiene field either in operating positions or in an administrative capacity as directors of industrial hygiene activities at the state and local level.

National Safety Council—The National Safety Council, which has been in existence for more than three decades, is the most outstanding organization operating in the field of accident prevention, both within and outside industry. At one time, the Council had an active section on industrial health, but in recent years the Council's activities in the health field have been limited to publication of good practice data on certain occupational disease exposures and of brief articles in the monthly organ of the Council. A few industrial health topics are presented from time to time at the annual meetings of the Safety Congress sponsored by the Council, but in the main the Council is primarily concerned with the prevention of accidents and furtherance of safety organizations.

From a study of the various activities of the associations listed, it would seem that there is already considerable "incidental liaison" between the members of the A.P.H.A. Industrial Hygiene Section and these other societies. This

is especially evident when one realizes that a large number of the members of these other societies are also members of our Section. The very make-up of the present Committee on Inter-Society Coöperation attests to this fact, since, as already pointed out, all of its ten members also claim membership in the majority of the societies interested in industrial hygiene, are active on committees, and are thus in a position to present the views of the groups they represent in any committee work.

The Section Council, in specifying the bill of particulars for this committee, indicated that it was desirable to "establish a hitherto missing relationship for the benefit of their respective memberships and the fuller attainment of their professional objectives." It is the consensus of the committee that this is not exactly an accurate premise, since on the whole there exists a very good relationship among the various societies.

It would also seem that there is not quite so much duplication as one might suppose and that some duplication is perhaps desirable. For example, the governmental group is concerned with specific problems dealing with administrative standards and is in a position to utilize standards developed by other societies. A case in point is the American Society of Heating and Ventilating Engineers, which has recently appointed a committee on industrial ventilation. The governmental group also has a committee on industrial ventilation. There is no conflict, however, between these two committees, and both are keeping themselves informed of each other's work. The ASHVE committee is concerned with developing good standards in the field of industrial ventilation. The governmental group is also interested in having such standards developed, since it is charged with the responsibility of promoting the adoption of good practices in industry. Perhaps these two organizations should get together and operate

through a joint committee. There is ample precedence for such joint committee work in the A.P.H.A.

It would seem to your committee that since the Industrial Hygiene Section of the A.P.H.A. is the one group which is concerned with the overall public health approach to the health of the industrial worker, perhaps the best function which your present committee could serve would be to keep abreast of the developments in the various societies and make the results of these developments available to all those interested in industrial hygiene. Our Section could very well serve as a forum during Annual Meetings for developments of this character. In this manner we would have a strong annual program which would be of interest to all industrial hygienists, not only those concerned with the broader aspects of industrial health, but also those concerned with special problems.

The fact that already there is some coöperation, and interchange of information, is borne out rather well by the annual industrial health meeting in the spring of the year in which five societies participate. We are referring to the annual meeting of the American Association of Industrial Physicians and Surgeons, the American Industrial Hygiene Association, the American Association of Industrial Dentists, the American Association of Industrial Nurses, and the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists. It is our feeling that these joint meetings do a great deal for society coöperation.

Another way in which inter-society coöperation could be effected is to have various groups undertake a coöperative study of any one particular problem. This can often be accomplished through joint committees appointed to undertake a given study as suggested earlier for industrial ventilation.

Finally, your committee would like to suggest that perhaps the best way to obtain inter-society coöperation is not

through a committee of this character, representing one group such as our Section, but a committee whose membership would comprise representatives of all the societies but not serve any one association. This Section could very well assume leadership for the creation of such a committee, but it should not be a committee of this Section alone as it now is.

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