

Australia, being located on a separate continent, is a federation, consisting of six states, federal government and two internal territories. Although all the policies are regulated by the Commonwealth Constitution, it is not seen to guarantee the general power to legislate Occupational Safety and Health.

1. OHS legal framework in Australia.

There are basically ten OHS statutes in Australia. Six state Acts, two territory Acts and a Commonwealth Act are noticed to cover the commonwealth of employees of licensed corporations. Apart from that, maritime industry is also regulated by the Commonwealth Act. The main legal body, which deals with managing OHS in Australia, is Safe Work Australia. It is responsible for the development of national policies related to OHS system and workers' compensations. As a rule, such policies and strategies are to be approved by Ministerial Council for Workplace Relations. Except for this, Safe Work Australia has to be in charge of preparing and practicing some model Acts, regulations and codes linked to OHS. By January 2012, such models have to be adopted by Commonwealth, six states and the territory governments. One more important point about Safe Work Australia is that it is aimed to check the compliance of the current developed policies with the general OHS legislation (About occupational health and safety regulation in Australia).

Basically, the OHS legal framework in Australia should pay attention to health and safety representative provisions as well as implement the OHS regulators in different jurisdictions in order to introduce the uniform enforcement policies. The international cooperation should serve as the promotional mechanism for setting new standards, inspection programs and guidance material. The compliance of Australian statutes with global statutes is one more point necessary to be taken into account.

2. International agencies that play a role in shaping occupational safety and health in Australia.

There are certain international agencies that can play the leading role in shaping occupational safety and health in Australia. To be precise, we should observe the international collaboration of Safe Work Australia. It is noticed to work with The United Nations, International

Labour Organization, The Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS), World Health Organization, European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation and International Organization for Standardization (International Collaboration). Let us concentrate more on two of them: The United Nations and International Labor Organization. Australia as a founding member of United Nations is to be under specialized agencies and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. This way, World Health Organization tends to work in Australian health related fields. Currently, Safe Health Australia has eight projects concerning OSH launched with World Health Organization.

The mutual reporting between Safe Health Australia and World Health Organization is established in terms of international cooperation. Safe Health Australia is also noticed to be engaged in global networks, which are targeted to combat the emerging health issues. Working with ILO, Safe Health Australia is aimed to develop oversees international labor standards by means of collaboration between governments, employers and workers. Developing the GSH system of dangerous chemicals at a workplace, the global cooperation aids to reduce the number of accidents at work. In terms of international cooperation with United Nations, Australia is provided with transportation of dangerous goods and with Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals. Finally, this collaboration helps to be a part of international network of policy makers, researchers and regulators. Working with International Labor Organization, both organizations are interested in establishment of equality and fairness within the labor markets for all workers. The collaboration with this organization means that internationally suggested labor standards should be followed and will be supervised in Australia by International Labor Organization. This advanced control will definitely have the positive effect on the entire system. The organization may be very influential in terms of protecting workers in hazardous occupations, modernization of necessary equipment, improvement of the quality of life, decision-making, inventing new policies. On this level of international collaboration, we should mention the required provisions of compensations, which greatly shaped the overall Australian OHS system.

3. Origins of the current Australian OSH legal framework

In 1985 the Australian government managed to legislate for the formation of the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission. Since that time, the system has undergone some dramatic changes, being changed two times. In 2005 the above mentioned NOHSC was replaced by Australian Safety and Compensation Council and in 2009 ASCC was replaced by Safe Work Australia. Historically, Australia was noticed to borrow most of the OSH policies from British health and safety legislation in the nineteenth century. Respectively, the policy was based upon the inspection powers, which used various methods of advice, education and persuasion. The advantage of such standards was that duty holders knew their obligations and OHS inspectorates observed the legislation to be easy to enforce. However, this traditional model had a lot of drawbacks. First of all, it resulted in many detailed technical rules, which were difficult to understand by the simple worker. Moreover, points covered the physical hazards not in even manner, depending on the work conditions. When following the standards, the companies suffered many additional costs. The reformation of this traditional model was made in 1972. The reformation of the previous system was based upon two chief principles: creation of a more *unified and integrated* system and the creation of a more effectively *self-regulating* system (Robens, 1970).

4. Occupational event that has resulted in changes to the way the country manages occupational safety and health

We can mention many events, concerning changing the OSH system in Australia, but the largest of them are those with the participation of Safe Work Australia. They are Annual Safe Work Australia Awards and National Safe Work Australia Week (Safe Work Australia). Here, we would like to focus more precisely on National Safe Work Australia Week. It has the motto of putting safety in the spotlight. Usually, this event is held in October 23-29. In 2011 it will be already the seventh annual initiative organized by Safe Work Australia. The organizers of event are aimed to increase awareness of the workplace safety. They encourage all working Australians to be more concentrated on their workplace safety in order to reduce the number of deaths, diseases and injuries. One important point about this event is that not only individuals participate in it, but also

many organizations can be noticed to take part. As a rule, those are approximately several thousand organizations. Being aware of workplace safety, the organizations have the opportunity to show that they are conscious about their employees and their safety and this can have the positive impact on the general workplace safety throughout the country. One of the best ways to get involved in this event is to become a Safe Work Ambassador. The Ambassadors are considered to be any volunteers who have the desire to make contributions to the development of OHS system. The positive point about engagement of Ambassadors is that all of them are conscious, interested and the problem is typical for all of them. Uniting employees, managers, Ministers, CEOs, health and safety representatives from various industries, we are likely to achieve the desirable result and important contribution to the OHS system in Australia. The competition between Ambassadors is also an important step, because it helps estimate the best candidates in terms of creativity, performance, commitment and participation. All in all, the main purpose of organizing the National Safe Work Australia Week is to focus attention on workplace within every particular Australian organization as well as make creative contributions to programs developed by Safe Work Australia.

5. Reviewed journal articles on harmonization of Australian OSH legal system.

Harmonization tends to be a national uniformity of the OHS legislative framework of model OHS Act, model OHS legislations and model cases of practice. According to harmonization, each jurisdiction is obliged to enact their own laws to reflect the general model laws. Due to the existence of many laws concerning OHS policies, the country should use the unified complex of laws, covering every particular industry. That is why, all the laws should be tested to comply with model laws (Johnstone, 2008). The harmonization should be realized by the statutory and non-statutory guidance publication. The harmonization is targeted to provide the normal management of OHS within four bodies. This line could be schematically showed as: Council of Australian Governments – Workplace Relations Ministers' Council – Safe Work Australia – Strategic Issues Group (Siobhan, 2010).

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