

ACCSH Workgroup Meeting 6/30/2020

ACCSH Education, Training, and Outreach Workgroup

Workgroup Co-Chairs: Chris Trahan Cain & Fravel Combs

Attendees (note it was difficult to capture all attendees so this list of attendees is likely incomplete): Fravel Combs, Damon Bonneau, Greg Sizemore, Jens Svenson, Bryant Seymour, Kevin Cannon, Palmer Hickman, Scott Earnest, Scott Ketcham, Tim Irving, Wes Wheeler, Wayne Creasap, Richard Tessier, Ron Sokol, Marisa "Reese" Fortin, Hossmann Carvajalino, Gretta Jameson, Scott Mabry, Signey Hernandez, Joseph Gilliland, Bret A Williams, Bob Foster, Alan Lu, Christopher Rodman, Garvin Branch, Jeremiah Sullivan, Kevin Cannon, Kimberly Banks, Laurence Fortin, Michael Payne, Mark Mullins, Chuck Stribling, Brad Mannion, Liz Garza, Robert Matuga, Christian Culligan, Christopher Rodman, Erin Patterson, V. Preston, Felicia Watson, Tom Hill, Brandon (?), Cindy DePrater, Jimmy Walker, Rich (?), Rick Firestone, Reese Kohler, Beth O'Quinn, Matthew Meehan

ACCSH members on this work group: Chris Cain, Fravel Combs, Scott Mabry, Mark Mullins, Palmer Hickman, Ron Sokol, and Wes Wheeler.

Scott Ketcham opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the ACCSH workgroup meeting.

Co-chair Fravel Combs said that Covid-19 has had an enormous impact on the industry, since construction was labeled as an essential business. He said that the positive impact on this was incidence rates of injuries has decreased significantly. He outlined a few strategies to keep incidence rates low as work continues to increase, like using a safety moment stories to engage the craft and lifesaving rules campaign. By using safe work plans with care and concern we can "hold the trend".

Chris Cain, co-chair of the workgroup, said that the last workgroup meeting was on March 5. March 5 meeting major highlights were:

- Asked for DTE Director to speak on training on falls and excavation
- Discussion on trenching for the trench stand-down
- Discussion on falls and background on the campaign and stand-down

Falls Discussion

Steve Rank of the Ironworkers presented on Falls Hazards, Falling Object Hazards, and Tripping Hazards resulting in falls. He presented that OSHA issued directives on these issues that are at odds with the regulatory text. Discussion items included why employers were not fully decking and should there be specifications dimensionally as to what constitutes a trip hazard, and that hazards should be eliminated or engineered out versus having employers rely on personal protective equipment.

He asked that the workgroup make a recommendation to approach OSHA to investigate this issue with their directives; PPE should not be the first resort of protection. Prefabricated studs exacerbate the issue. The consensus of the group was to raise this and discuss it in the full ACCSH meeting and ask OSHA to consider reevaluating the directives and potentially define what constitutes a tripping hazard.

Tom Shanahan with the National Roofing Contractors Association presented an update on the NORA Construction Sector Council's Falls Workgroup. This workgroup is dedicated to preventing deaths and injuries from falls, by promoting research and evaluating activities, and multiple resources have been developed to address fall hazards in the industry. The next meeting of the NORA Construction Fall Prevention Workgroup will be held July 7 from 2-3 EDT.

The Campaign to prevent Falls in Construction National Safety Stand-Down has been postponed because of COVID-19; it will be held September 14-18 as a virtual stand-down. There are plans to launch a NORA Construction Falls App for the 2021 Stand-Down.

The discussion regarding subpart L's Appendix B was continued from the previous workgroup meeting. There was a consensus that guidance is needed on scaffold erection and dismantling. Garvin Branch said that OSHA, working with ACCSH, has tried to create guidance on this issue.

Chris Cain requested OSHA provide the workgroup with the historical drafts created from ACCSH and OSHA trying to address the issue in the past. Scott Ketcham confirmed that OSHA would get that information to the workgroup. Chris Cain also requested NIOSH research related to this issue. Discussed the need to reach out to employers that successfully utilize fall protection for scaffold erectors.

OSHA Trenching Initiative and Agency Priority Goal: update for the ACCSH workgroup

Jens Svenson presented on the OSHA Trenching Initiative and Agency Priority Goal. The agency wants to reduce trenching hazards through enforcement and compliance assistance, as well as publicity, outreach, and participation in the Trench Safety Stand-down. Multiple resources exist on OSHA's web site.

OSHA was asked for clarification on the Agency Priority Goal numbers. The press has reported that OSHA is open for business despite COVID, and is unclear why the goals have been adjusted for COVID19 impacts. Jens Svenson said that it was a target and was not clear on why the target was reduced or if it would be further adjusted. It was suggested that OSHA revisit the efforts made over a decade ago through OSHA, NIOSH, and ACCSH to address this hazard, and some of the information could be updated.

OSHA Directorate of Training and Education Update

Robert Murphy from OSHA Directorate of Training and Education spoke on how the pandemic has been impacting their courses. Bob reported on compliance officer training through the OSHA Training Institute (OTI) as well as impacts to the OSHA Training Institute Education Centers (OTIECs).

OTI classes were canceled from mid to late March because of the pandemic. Thirteen courses are currently offered in a blended format (where there is an online portion of a class, then they come into the in-person classroom). DTE determined to separate the online portion and make them available 24/7 through an LMS that an OSHA Compliance officer could take.

OTI courses are being priorities for development in a virtual format, with an initial focus on introductory courses, legal aspects, interviewing techniques, and courses for various disciplines of an OSHA Compliance Officer. They are evaluating when in-person classes can resume. They are using the WebEx platform for training in virtual classes.

OTIECs update:

In mid-March, DTE advised OTIECs that they follow their organization's decision-making process on their operational status, as well as following CDC and OSHA guidelines. They asked Education Centers to let them know if they would be closed for more the 30 days. Many closed to in-person classes but were able to maintain card processing activities. Some began to offer courses virtually. OSHA removed some barriers to remote Outreach Training and notified Education centers on May 1 that they were making changes to the procedures manual to allow education centers to do remote synchronous training for some numbered courses.

OSHA 500/OSHA 501/OSHA 5400/OSHA 5200 courses that require evaluation of teaching techniques, as well as the test, presented a challenge. They were not allowed to be taught in a virtual capacity currently. If they do move in that direction, several barriers will need to be overcome.

In mid-March, OSHA made modifications to the outreach training program that would allow for the impact of the pandemic. Trainers who were due to renew training credentials during the OTI education center closure were given a 90-day grace period after courses resume at their OTI center.

There was discussion regarding if OSHA is considering additional exceptions beyond the 90 days as the pandemic continues, as some OTIECs may open and then close back down.

It was brought up that if the OTIEC is in a large area, they could open in an area of low community spread for courses, but not allow them in the high spread areas. An employer may also decide they don't want their employee to travel and be in a room at this time. The complexity of the pandemic poses many challenges to hard and soft rules given so many unknowns. The consensus of the group was that the integrity of the training programs was very important and needed to be maintained, and that ACCSH is interested in continuing the dialog so that trainers are available and able to provide training to construction workers on persistent hazards in the construction industry.

Adjourn

ACCSH Chair Kevin Cannon said that he said the workgroup had a great discussion on falls, trenches, and covid-19 related issues, and was looking forward to bringing up the issues in the full ACCSH meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:38 PM.