

**4TH MEETING
INTERNATIONAL
ADVISORY PANEL
FOR WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH**

**REPORT OF
THE 4TH MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL
ADVISORY PANEL
FOR WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH**

6 & 8 MAY 2014



INTRODUCTION

1 In 2006, the Minister for Manpower appointed a group of international experts to an International Advisory Panel (IAP) for Workplace Safety and Health (WSH), as part of initiatives to improve WSH standards and outcomes in Singapore. The terms of reference of the IAP are to:

- a. Advise on significant trends and developments in industrial practices that would impact on WSH in Singapore;
- b. Share approaches to WSH challenges in other countries that might guide Singapore's WSH developments; and
- c. Critique WSH standards, practices and the regulatory regime in Singapore and provide advice on possible improvements to bring WSH standards in Singapore to the level of leading edge country leaders.

2 Three IAP meetings (2006, 2008 and 2011) and two progress reviews (2010 and 2012) had been held and they contributed significantly to the advancement of WSH standards and outcomes in Singapore. For example, recommendations from the IAP played a significant role in the formulation of the national strategy for WSH (WSH2018) in 2008 and the establishment of the WSH Institute (WSHI) in 2011.

FOURTH IAP MEETING

3 The fourth meeting of the IAP was convened on 6 and 8 May 2014 at the Suntec Singapore International Convention and Exhibition Centre. The meeting was attended by five IAP members (see list of IAP members at Annex). The Fourth IAP meeting deliberated on the state and progress of WSH developments in Singapore since the last meeting in 2012. The IAP also discussed two strategy papers jointly developed by MOM, WSH Council (WSHC) and WSHI.

- a. **“Implementing Total WSH”**. The paper discussed the ways to manage Workplace Health holistically through a Whole of Government approach by (i) developing capability and competency; (ii) building awareness and understanding of the TWSH concept, objectives and benefits; (iii) adopting a promotional, targeted and phased approach in implementing TWSH; and (iv) incentivising organisations and companies.

- b. **“Vision Zero, The Next Frontier”**. The paper outlined the main strategies to achieve a Vision Zero mindset in Singapore by (i) promoting greater awareness; (ii) creating conducive business eco-system and (iii) building competencies and establishing evidence-based policy and programmes.

The IAP also visited a key construction project in Singapore (Singapore Sports Hub) to better understand how Design for Safety (DfS)¹ has helped stakeholders overcome WSH challenges in its construction as well as facilities management.

4 The IAP lauded Singapore for making tremendous progress in her WSH performance since the Panel’s inaugural meeting in 2006. Notwithstanding this, the IAP cautioned that it may be challenging for Singapore to continue to progress further at the same pace. As Singapore has achieved a WSH performance that is comparable to many developed nations, it is at risk of plateau-ing where further gains become more difficult to achieve. The IAP encouraged Singapore to press on with its WSH strategies and efforts to make further sustained progress in its WSH journey, and this would contribute to its national economic resilience.

5 The IAP concluded that building a strong WSH culture among all stakeholders is crucial to bring Singapore’s WSH performance to the next level. The IAP commended Singapore for embracing bold and innovative concepts such as Total WSH and Vision Zero and supported the strategies put forth to achieve the WSH outcomes. The IAP offered the following recommendations for consideration:

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

[Recommendation 1: Instil greater WSH ownership by Developers and Clients in the Construction Sector](#)

6 All stakeholders have a part to play in creating and maintaining safe construction workplaces. Developers and Clients hold the greatest leverage in influencing the behaviour of project stakeholders since they decide on the terms of their projects as well as the key deliverables. The IAP agreed that Developers and Clients needed to take greater ownership as they are best placed to lead the construction industry towards consistent achievement of good WSH performance.

¹ Refer to <https://www.wshc.sg/dfs> for more details on DfS.

7 In this regard, the IAP supported mandating the adoption of DfS for construction projects. The IAP was of the view that sustained improvement in WSH requires upstream intervention to address WSH risks at the design and planning phase instead of only managing them downstream at the construction phase. Noting that the DfS programme has been introduced in Singapore since 2008 on a voluntary basis, the IAP agreed that it was timely to legislate the requirement for Developers to bear responsibilities for the safe build-ability and constructability of projects. The IAP believed that widespread implementation of DfS will lead to quantum improvements in WSH performance in the construction industry. However, the IAP cautioned that mandating DfS should be accompanied with on-going measures to change the mindset of developers and designers that addressing WSH risks upstream makes good business sense.

[Recommendation 2: Strengthen link between WSH performance and business outcome](#)

8 The IAP suggested that Government, as a major procurer of building projects, could strengthen the link between WSH performance and business outcome by factoring greater WSH consideration into government procurement process. In addition, drawing reference from the UK, the IAP suggested the organising of a National Construction Summit. The Summit serves as a call to action for key industry players and decision makers to pledge their leadership and commitment to WSH outcomes. This includes improvements in respect of the structural issues of the industry, particularly the challenges involving SMEs and transient workers.

Implementation of Total WSH

[Recommendation 3: Integrate Workplace Safety & Health with Well-Being](#)

9 Singapore is facing an aging workforce, increasing incidence of chronic diseases and emergence of new health threats. Managing workers' health at all levels is critical to ensure they are able to stay in the workforce, and have productive as well as fulfilling lives. The IAP endorsed Singapore's efforts to integrate general health and workplace health through the Total WSH approach. However, the IAP cautioned that Total WSH should build on existing occupational health initiatives to more comprehensively address the general health of workers. The IAP suggested that implementation of Total WSH should be contextualised to workplaces so that it is relevant to all industries and employees.

10 The IAP acknowledged that it will take time for companies to embrace the concept of Total WSH and be convinced of its benefits. The IAP noted that one important reason for the good take-up rate of similar initiatives in Finland was the benefits companies gained and this has become a way of doing business. The IAP suggested that Singapore could create greater buy-in by strengthening the economic case for Total WSH and linking it to work-ability, continued employability, productivity, employee engagement and welfare for a progressive workplace.

[Recommendation 4: Build capabilities to support implementation of Total WSH](#)

11 The IAP noted the importance of building up the manpower capabilities to support the implementation of Total WSH at a company and community level. This will include the need to build an industry of service providers that could support the approach. The IAP highlighted the role of “Personal Coach” in the Finland to help companies and workers make best use of workplace safety and workplace health intervention programmes. This could stimulate the development of a larger pool of WSH trained personnel and to build a new industry.

[Recommendation 5: Better monitoring of workplace health data](#)

12 To better understand the linkages between the impacts of WSH, organisational factors and general health, the IAP recommended that Singapore develop better data (including field surveys and leveraging on surveys by other agencies) and indicators to measure and monitor the effectiveness of Total WSH over the long term. This would require the establishment of a baseline as well as identification and prioritisation of Workplace Health issues. For a start, all WSH professionals could be educated on and made aware of the interactions on work and health and vice versa.

Vision Zero, the Next Frontier

[Recommendation 6: Facilitate mindset change through Vision Zero Leaders](#)

13 The IAP commended Singapore’s endeavour to clarify that “Vision Zero” is about having the mindset that all work injuries and ill health are preventable. The IAP believed that leaders play a critical role in effecting the mindset change as they are in the best position to engage and empower their employees towards Vision Zero. The IAP suggested that leaders who are passionately committed to Vision Zero could be identified to serve as role models for other leaders beyond their respective spheres of influence. This would serve as a conduit to encourage greater cross learning and sharing of best practices, as well as to nurture more and better WSH leaders. The

leaders could also work through WSH initiatives within the respective companies' business activities to influence communities.

[Recommendation 7: Develop performance measures to track progress of the Vision Zero mindset movement](#)

14 Vision Zero is a paradigm mindset shift which should be viewed as a journey rather than a destination. The IAP commented that considering that it would take time to imbue the Vision Zero mindset, it would be important to develop performance measures to track progress and facilitate regular reviews. These measures should include both leading indicators as well as outcome-based indicators.

[Recommendation 8: Provide a compelling case for Vision Zero](#)

15 As the concept of Vision Zero is relatively new, IAP highlighted the importance on focusing early efforts to achieve support and buy-in from the industry. The use of well-designed projects as pilots could help provide the compelling economic and moral case for Vision Zero, and this should be encouraged and facilitated.

CONCLUSION

16 Singapore has achieved remarkable improvements in WSH performance through the concerted efforts of all stakeholders. The IAP believes that by addressing risks upstream at the planning and design phase as well as taking an integrated approach towards WSH, Singapore is well-positioned to embrace a Vision Zero mindset and this would contribute to its national economic resilience. This report is the outcome of the IAP's deliberations at its fourth meeting, and proposes a set of recommendations to elevate and sustain Singapore's WSH performance. The IAP looks forward to the adoption of its recommendations by the Singapore Government and their implementation by all stakeholders.



ANNEX A - PROFILE OF IAP MEMBERS



Mr Tan Chuan-Jin

Minister for Manpower

Chair, IAP

Republic of Singapore

Mr Tan Chuan-Jin served in the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) for nearly 24 years before retiring in 2011. Commissioned at Sandhurst, he has held various appointments in the SAF, including Commander Singapore 3rd Division and Commander Training and Doctrine Command.

When the Indian Ocean Tsunami struck on Boxing Day 2004, Mr Tan led the SAF's relief effort to Meulaboh, Aceh in Indonesia. Despite the uncertainty and scale of the crisis, they brought in emergency relief to stabilize the situation in the critical period after the tragedy.

As Chairman Executive Committee, Mr Tan was responsible for organizing National Day Parade 2009.

In May 2011, Mr Tan was elected as one of the Members of Parliament for the Marine Parade Group Representation Constituency. He was then appointed as Minister of State for National Development and Manpower.

On 1 August 2012, Mr Tan was appointed Acting Minister for Manpower, and concurrently Senior Minister of State for National Development.

Mr Tan relinquished his National Development portfolio on 1 September 2013, but he continues to helm the Ministry of Manpower as Acting Minister.

Mr Tan was awarded the SAF Overseas Scholarship to read Economics and graduated with a BSc (Econs) from the London School of Economics (1992). He also holds a Masters of Arts in Defence Studies from King's College London (1999), and a Masters in Public Management from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore (2008).



Mr Hawazi Daipi

Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Education and Manpower

Co-Chair, IAP

Republic of Singapore

Mr Hawazi Daipi is the Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Education and Manpower. A Member of Parliament since 1996, Mr Hawazi currently chairs the Tripartite Committee on Work Life Strategy and the Tripartite Committee on CPF and Work Related Benefits for Low-Wage Workers.

Apart from public administration, Mr Hawazi has broad experience in education, journalism and union work. He works as a teacher from 1978 to 1983 before joining Singapore Press Holdings as a journalist. When he left journalism in 1997, Mr Hawazi was Berita Harian's Special Assistant Editor. He then joined the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) for five years where he was Director of the Internationals Affairs Department and Executive Secretary of four unions.

In 1996, Mr Hawazi was elected as a MP for the Sembawang Group Representation Constituency (GRC) and has been re-elected in the GRC in 2001, 2006 and 2011. At the community level, Mr Hawazi has been Chairman of Sembawang Council since 2003.



Dr John Howard

Director,
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
(NIOSH)

United States of America

John Howard is the Director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dr Howard also serves as the Administrator of the World Trade Center Health Program in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Dr Howard was first appointed NIOSH Director in 2002 during the George Bush Administration and served in that position until 2008. In 2008 and 2009, Dr Howard worked as a consultant with the U.S. Government's Afghanistan Health Initiative. In September of 2009, Dr Howard was again appointed NIOSH Director in the Barak Obama Administration.

Prior to his appointments as NIOSH Director, Dr Howard served as Chief of the Division of Occupational Safety and Health in the State of California's Labor and Workforce Development Agency from 1991 through 2002.

Dr Howard received a Doctor of Medicine degree from Loyola University of Chicago, a Master of Public Health degree from the Harvard School of Public Health, a Doctor of Law degree from the University of California at Los Angeles, and a Master of Law degree in Administrative Law and Economic Regulation from The George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

Dr Howard is board-certified in internal medicine and occupational medicine. He is admitted to the practice of medicine and law in the State of California and in the District of Columbia, and he is a member U.S. Supreme Court bar. He has written numerous articles on occupational health law and policy.



Prof Jorma Rantanen

Director General Emeritus,
Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH)

Past President,
*International Commission on Occupational Health
(ICOH)*

Finland

Dr Jorma Rantanen is a professor and specialist in occupational health. He served as the Director General of the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, FIOH, for 30 years since 1973. He has experience in practical occupational health services, and occupational medicine, in toxicology research and in the development of regulations for OHS in Finland and internationally.

Dr Rantanen has worked as an expert for WHO, ILO and EU in drafting international strategies, programmes and regulations. He was one of the key contributors to the ILO instruments on Occupational Health Services, the WHO Global Strategy on Occupational Health for All and WHO Global Action Plan on Workers' Health. Most recently Dr Rantanen has produced the WHO/ILO/ICOH approach for Basic Occupational Health Services, BOHS, and written the guidelines and supported the practical implementation of BOHS in all continents.

He has over 40 years' experience on programmes for occupational health in developing and transitory countries in Africa, Asia, Central and South America, China and Eastern Europe, including the Russian Federation, Baltic and Balkan areas. After his retirement from the FIOH, Dr Rantanen has carried out evaluations of universities and research institutions. He has planned new governance models for Finnish Universities and Polytechnics, evaluated Government research institutes and Government funded research programmes for Finland, UK and USA. Dr Rantanen has served as elected Chairman of the Board of University of Jyväskylä, Finland 2009-2013. Since his retirement Dr Rantanen has served the Finnish Government and public sector eight times as one-man Committee in six different jurisdictions and works currently as a one-man Committee in the Ministry of Interior for drawing up a National Strategy for Fire, Rescue and Civil Protection.

He has served as the Board member of ICOH and was elected President of ICOH for the tenure 2003–2006 and 2006–2009. Professor Rantanen has been awarded with several international and national honors by Governments and Scientific Communities.



Dr Ken Takahashi

Professor/ Chair of Department of Environmental Epidemiology,
University of Occupational and Environmental Health (UOEH)

Japan

Dr Ken Takahashi is a Professor of Environmental Epidemiology and the Director of the World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Occupational Health at the University of Occupational and Environmental Health (UOEH) in Japan. He engages in epidemiologic research of occupational diseases and specializes in occupational lung diseases and asbestos-related diseases.

Prior to his current appointment, Dr Takahashi served as a consultant and advisor to WHO and International Labour Organization (ILO). He also served as an examiner and advisor to several academic institutes in Asian countries.

Dr Takahashi was twice elected to the Board of International Commission of Occupational Health (ICOH). He is also the President of the Asian Association for Occupational Health since 2011.

Dr Takahashi graduated from the School of Medicine in Keio University in 1983. He received his PhD from UOEH and Masters in Public Health (M.P.H.) from the University of Pittsburgh.



Mr Kevin Myers

Acting Chief Executive,
Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

United Kingdom

Kevin Myers joined the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in 1976 as a trainee Factory Inspector. In his career he has held a wide range of operational posts in HSE as a front line Inspector and Manager regulating a broad range of industries as well as a number of policy and strategy postings – including a three-year secondment to the European Commission in Brussels.

More recently, from 2000-2005, he was HSE’s Chief Inspector of Construction. From May 2005 until October 2008, he was Director of HSE’s Hazardous Installations Directorate and was responsible for HSE’s regulation of various “major hazard” sectors including the onshore chemical industry, offshore oil and gas, high pressure gas storage and distribution, explosives, mining and biological agents. In October 2008, he was appointed HSE’s Deputy Chief Executive. He was a Non-Executive Board Member of the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) between 2011 and March 2014. He is currently HSE’s Acting Chief Executive.



Mr Rex Hoy

Former Chief Executive Officer,
Safe Work Australia

Australia

As the first CEO of Safe Work Australia established in November 2009, Rex found that building an agency from the ground up was a rare and rewarding experience. In his 46 year career in the Australian Public Service and the Papua New Guinea National Public Service Rex understood great work depends on the people you employ to get the job done. Keeping an organization's people safe at work should be a fundamental responsibility of all employers.

In his public service career Rex worked across a range of areas and subject matters at the senior executive level. Rex retired from Safe Work Australia and the Australian Public Service in November 2013.

As well as establishing Safe Work Australia, Rex's recent highlights included leading the development of model work health and safety laws, and the Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2012-2022 which provides a ten year framework aiming to reduce the human and financial cost of work-related injuries and illness.

Before joining Safe Work Australia, Rex worked in Papua New Guinea (PNG) as Deputy Secretary in the PNG Department of Prime Minister and National Executive Council under the Australia-PNG Enhanced Cooperation Program. Living and working for four years in PNG gave Rex an insight into the country's work health and safety standards and an appreciation of the difficulties building the capacity of public servants in a developing country.

Rex has a degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of New England and was also a member of the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission.



Dr Walter Eichendorf

Deputy Director General,
German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV)

President,
German Road Safety Council (DVR)

Germany

Dr Walter Eichendorf had his university education in Bochum and Bonn (physics and mathematics). He was research staff member at the European Southern Observatory (1980-1983) in Geneva, Munich and Chile. At HVBG, he was the head of statistical department from 1983-1989, director of public relations 1989-1998, deputy director general since 1998. Since 2007, Dr Eichendorf is the deputy director general of the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV) and director of DGUV's prevention division. In addition, Dr Eichendorf is President of the German Road Safety Council (DVR) since 2009.

Dr Eichendorf was responsible for a number of large international projects, e.g. the European Year for Safety and Health at Work, Germany's Federation for Safety and Health at Work (Basi) and project manager for the thematic area 'Future of Work' at EXPO 2000 in Hanover. He is involved in a number of management and advisory boards of national and international prevention institutions. Since 2003 he is Vice President of the Research Section of the International Social Security Association (ISSA), since 2007 member of the International Organizing Committee (IOC) of ISSA and ILO for the OSH World Congress and since 2011 Vice President of ISSA's Prevention Culture Section