BASIC ELEMENTS OF IN-HOUSE SAFETY/SECURITY COMMITTEES

It has been clearly demonstrated that organizations with internal safety and security committees have fewer and less severe losses from employee accidents, claims by the public or clients, and property losses. This results in lower absenteeism greater productivity, fewer liability claims and property losses and lower insurance costs.

The following bullets outline the basic elements of an effective loss control program with the role of the safety/security committee as an integral part of that program.

1. **Governing Body and Administrative Leadership**
   - Policy Statements – The governing body should approve a policy statement containing specific safety and security goals, which requires administrative action and information feedback. These statements provide a powerful message that the people at the "top" of the organization have a continuing interest in this important activity.

   - Administrative regulations should be promulgated, establishing authority and responsibility for specific safety and security practices which implement the policy statement. Provision should be included for the establishment of an in-house safety/security committee with an administrative coordinator. The administrative coordinator should not necessarily assume the leadership role of the group if someone else on the committee exhibits other natural leadership Safety/Security committee membership should be representative of all the major activities of the organization or all the locations of the organizations, depending on how your program can be most effective. Employee organizations should be asked to nominate participants. An effective safety/security committee can be a positive part of the employer-employee relations/program.

   - The safety/security committee should be supported by the specific allocation of workday time for its tasks and necessary access to clerical and communications services to carry out the policy and regulations for which it is responsible. This further reinforces the concept that top management feels that this is an important task.

   - The committee should be provided with an information base consisting of known accidents involving staff, pupils and public, as well as other kinds of losses. In systems with enough data and resources, this information should be reported in a way that will facilitate data processing input and analysis. That is, reporting should rely less on extended prose descriptions and more on standardized coding worksheets for uniform data entry and meaningful analysis. Simple analysis should include, but not be limited to, such items such as location, time of day, date and environment in which the occurrence took place, who was in charge or otherwise involved, injuries and disposition of the matter.

   - It is important that your community be aware of your safety and security efforts. This awareness helps create a positive image of your management style and concern for people. It may also reduce claims against you. This can be accomplished indirectly by making these activities the subject of periodic reports to the governing body, which becomes a part of the public record or direct information to the community via the media.

- The governing body should officially recognize those people, both staff and from the public, who have made a significant contribution to loss prevention or reduction in your operations. This provides an additional instance of management's concern for safety and loss control, and frequently leads to positive public relations in the media.

1. Staff Participation

- Membership should be representative of a broad spectrum of tasks and/or locations. Top level, line administrative leadership should be provided on a continuing basis. Natural leadership ability should be identified and encouraged.

- Committee activities should occur during working hours and consist of, but not be limited to, the following:

    1. Meeting as necessary to review loss data, which includes the cause of loss, and considering ways to alleviate the cause of loss.

    2. Establishing a mechanism for the communication by other staff of safety/security concerns to the committee.

    3. Inspecting or having inspected specific locations or circumstances from which losses or concerns arise.

    4. Calling upon experts for guidance and assistance as deemed necessary by the committee.

    5. Making recommendations to the appropriate administrative authority for the alleviation of losses or potential losses.

- All other staff members should be aware of the committee's activities and know of the means of communication both to and from the committee. Regular, assigned space on bulletin boards or in the organization's internal communications medium are ways this can be accomplished.

It should be noted that most employee concerns about safety can be satisfied by direct administrative action, and involve relatively simple matters of work procedure or facility arrangement. Dealing with concerns at this level will often prevent them from finding their way into the formal employer-employee relationship, generation tensions that might easily be otherwise accommodated.