

A Case Report on the Occupational Safety and Health Perspectives in the Philippine Television and Broadcasting Industry

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Abstract

The Philippine media industry as a whole is undeniably a powerful system of communication and information dissemination. With the advent of technology, more and more Filipinos are now able to watch television programs and movies that pique their interest. The current trend is that the audience can now access media content via TV screens and online simultaneously. On December 2014, it was reported that the TV viewing habits of Filipino audience in major Philippine cities nationwide increased from 93% (2013) to 95% based on the Nielsen Cross-Platform Report. Locally, issues on general labor and safety & health of workers in the entertainment industry have been gaining public attention. These issues include employees' call for work regularization, consecutive premature deaths of directors, and violence experienced by bit players during taping. It is for these reasons that there is a need to evaluate the prevailing work practices in the entertainment industry in order to mitigate the effects of possible risks or hazards which prevent employees from working in safe and healthy working environment.

The purpose of this case report was to come up with initial information regarding the current practices OSH policies and program implementation in

the television and broadcasting industry. It aimed to identify the working conditions and practices peculiar to the industry and to determine the existence of OSH policies and programs currently formulated and implemented by the companies. The findings served as a reference for the conduct of Special Assessment and Visit to Establishments (SAVE) and future studies pertaining to the said industry.

Pre-Assessment Activities. A series of meetings and consultations with stakeholders from the Department of Labor and Employment (Bureau of Working Conditions, Institute for Labor Studies, Bureau of Workers with Special Concerns, Legal Service, DOLE NCR--Quezon City Field Office), the Broadcasting Industry Tripartite Council and two major Television Networks were conducted. This was done to have an overview of the work processes involved in the industry.

Tools. A survey tool was constructed, with the aid of the Labor Laws Compliance Assessment and Gawad Kaligtasan at Kalusugan (GKK) Checklists to assess the general occupational safety and health profile of the television and broadcasting industry. The OSHC worked in collaboration with the Institute for Labor Studies, the organizer of the discussion, and Bureau of

Working Conditions (BWC) in assessing the general labor practices. The ILS furnished its own survey tool for the general labor component of the study.

Participants. The Quezon City Field Office disseminated a letter of invitation to major networks to attend the roundtable discussion. The participants were management representatives who are Human Resource personnel (HR), Safety Officers (SO) and workers of four (4) television and broadcasting networks who attended the Round Table Discussion facilitated by DOLE staff from the Bureau of Working Conditions, Bureau of Workers with Special Concerns and Occupational Safety and Health Center. Network 1 was represented by their HR personnel and Safety Officer, Networks 2 and 3 were represented by their HR personnel, while Network 4 was represented by a worker.

Three out of four networks acknowledged that there is an existing safety and health committee in their respective networks. With regard to the safety services, programs and policies implemented in the networks, a more heterogeneous set of responses was observed. The variation in responses showed what safety practices are implemented per network and the diversity reflects each network's priority in practicing safety measures. Procedural

guidelines in reporting accidents, illnesses and hazards especially on reportorial procedures to the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) were either non-existent or not being implemented at all, according to all respondents. Among the management representatives, 3 out of 4 conveyed that the occupational health personnel present in their respective networks include first aiders, nurses and physicians. As for the health policies and programs implemented, it was observed that immunization, wellness and drug-free workplace are the most commonly provided programs while ergonomics, HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and Hepatitis B programs are the least provided programs. Establishment of the respondents as key informants needed emphasis in this study. The information gathered was based solely from the responses of the representatives and the similarities or differences in their responses must be on the basis that their responses are highly reliable. It is important to note that there was a dissonance in the responses of the management representatives (HR and safety officer) of Network 1, considering that they are expected to be the responsible persons in ensuring the implementation of OSH-related programs and practices in their network.

A more thorough data gathering process involving larger number of respondents is recommended to enhance the reliability and validity of

responses. Methodology can be further improved with the use of key informant interviews and validation of responses using walk-through surveys and document reviews. It is also important to investigate the level of awareness on occupational safety and health policies, programs and services of both management and workers in the industry. Monitoring and evaluation of OSH programs can also be explored with the participation of key informants including but not limited to human resource personnel, safety officers, supervisors, workers of the industry. Adequate time allotment for the interview to extract necessary information from respondents and presence of a documenter and an interviewer is also recommended.