

# The Impact of the OSHC-Led Work Environment Measurement (WEM) Training Course in the Internal WEM Capability Building

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## **THE IMPACT OF THE OSHC-LED WORK ENVIRONMENT MEASUREMENT (WEM) TRAINING COURSE IN THE INTERNAL WEM CAPABILITY BUILDING**

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Protection of labor rights and promotion of safe and secure working environments for all workers is part of Goal No. 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), targeting to achieve a better world by year 2030 by putting an end to poverty, inequality and addressing the urgency of climate change. The International Labor Organization (ILO) has adopted the Decent Work Agenda, rooted in these four pillars: employment creation; social protection; rights at work and social dialogue. One of the substantive elements that corresponds to these pillars is the Safe Work Environment. One of the ways to ensure that a workplace is maintained safe and not hazardous for the health of the workers is through the conduct of Work Environment Measurement (WEM). This involves sampling and analysis of health hazards in the atmospheric working environment and other fundamental elements of the working setting for the purpose of determining the actual working conditions. Conducting WEM will determine and monitor the magnitude of the hazardousness of harmful environmental agents in the workplace, the efficiency of the implemented control measures and ultimately, maintaining favorable working conditions. Furthermore, results of the WEM will be the basis for the improvement of working conditions. Based on Rule 1077 of the Occupational Safety and Health Standards (OSHS) on WEM, employers are required to maintain and control the working environment to be conducive for the workers. In addition, to ensure that a safe work environment is being provided to the workers, employers are also required to conduct WEM to any workplace where hazardous work is being performed. WEM can be performed by the Occupational Safety and Health Center (OSHC) and its accredited WEM Service Providers. However, companies may conduct internal WEM monitoring as long as the following requirements are met: personnel have adequate training and calibrated Industrial Hygiene equipment. One of the

OSHC's WEM Training Course's objectives is to build the capabilities of companies in the conduct of their own WEM.

In this study, the impact of the OSHC-led WEM Training Course in building internal WEM capability among companies of its graduate participants was assessed. The study utilized a self-administered survey questionnaire using Google Forms to collect data on the changes and challenges that the training participants have encountered after taking the training course on building their companies' internal WEM capability. The study respondents were WEM training participants from year 2015 to 2019 and the attained response rate was 50.10%. Results showed that the training course was highly effective in carrying out its objectives based on the responses gathered from the participants. Majority of the participants have successfully established their internal WEM program and that their dependency on OSHC and its accredited WEM Service Providers for WEM has significantly lowered, especially for the monitoring of the physical hazards. However, for the measurement and monitoring of chemical hazards, particularly airborne dust, heavy metals and organic solvents, companies are still relying to the OSHC and its accredited WEM Service Providers. This may be attributed to the high technicality and expensive costs involved in the laboratory analyses of these chemical hazards. There were few participants that were hindered by the lack of administrative support, and budget for the procurement of Industrial Hygiene equipment. Overall, an extensive training on the conduct of WEM, both of its theoretical and practical aspects, coupled with the support from the employers, play a big role in the successful internal WEM capability building.