

**ANNUAL REPORT 2005**

**Executive Summary**

**Department of Labour Inspection**

**MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL INSURANCE**

**NICOSIA**

**February 2006**

## **DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR INSPECTION**

The basic aim of the Department of Labour Inspection is the safeguarding of adequate levels of safety and health at work for all workers, the protection of the public against risks arising from activities at work, the protection of the public and the environment with the effective control of industrial pollution, the risks from major accidents, the chemical substances and the risks that arise from the use of ionising radiation, and the preservation of the quality of those parts of the atmosphere of Cyprus where it is good and its improvement in those parts where it is needed.

The fulfilment of the aforementioned aims is accomplished by means of a suitable legislative framework, the implementation of an effective inspection system, the continuous raising of the public awareness, the training and education of the Department's personnel, and the co-operation with the social partners.

The headquarters of the Department are situated in Nicosia whereas there are District Offices in Nicosia, Limassol, Larnaca (serving also the Famagusta District) and Paphos. In 2005 there were 70 posts in the Department of Labour Inspection out of which 26 were vacant.

During 2005, the Department participated in various committees and working groups of the European Union and other international organizations on issues related to the areas of its competency.

In the text that follows the policy areas of the Department are presented along with a short description of the work carried out during 2005.

### 1. Safety and Health at Work

This policy area deals with

- All issues that relate to the protection of safety and health and well being of the workers at the workplaces, including the organisation and management of safety and health issues at work at local and national level.
- The issues of safety and health that relate to the requirements on work equipment at the workplace.
- Issues related to the risks to health arising from the use of asbestos, chemical and biological agents, carcinogenic and mutagenic agents, from physical agents, such as noise, vibration or heat, or from ergonomic factors, such as manual lifting and handling of loads, monotonous work, pace of work, etc.
- Issues arising from Major Accidents in which dangerous substances are involved aiming at accident prevention and / or the mitigation of their consequences to the public and the environment.
- The provision of information and training to employers and workers on issues of occupational safety and health by means of training programmes and informative material.

Also, the Department enforces the legislation on the safety and health of children and young persons at work as well as on the maternity protection at work.

The Department constitutes the Focal Point for Cyprus for the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work that deals with the collection and dissemination of information on safety and health at work topics. Within this context, the Department is responsible for the organisation and coordination of the National Information Network and participates in the preparation and the materialisation of the Agency's work agenda.

The Department constitutes also the National Focal Point of Cyprus for the European Network for the Promotion of Health at the Workplace.

Under the review period the Department dealt with the preparation of several pieces of legislation out of which one was enacted. Also, during the said period 4688 inspections on workplaces on safety and health at work issues were carried out. In addition, 1621 out of 2175 work accidents were investigated, 81 new legal cases were prepared and 12537 person hours of training were delivered to employees and employers.

## 2. Inspection and Certification of Machinery

Issues of inspection and certification of inspectable machinery, such as lifts, hoists, steam boilers, steam receivers, cranes, winches, overhead travelling cranes and air receivers are dealt with in this policy area. Also, the Department deals with the surveillance of the market for the free movement of goods on the basis of the European New Approach Directives, such as the Directives on Pressure Equipment, Simple Pressure Vessels, Machinery, Lifts, Personal Protective Equipment, and Equipment and Protective Systems.

Under the review period 1519 inspections for machinery safety purposes were carried out.

## 3. Control of Chemical Substances

In this policy area, issues related to the proper labelling, classification, packaging and management of dangerous chemical substances and preparations are dealt with. The aim is to safeguard the safety and health of all those who use chemical substances and preparations at places of work or the domestic environment, and the protection of the environment.

Under the review period officers of the Department delivered lectures on the control of chemical substances in 12 seminars and carried out 15 inspections in premises where chemicals are produced or kept in stock.

## 4. Control of Industrial Pollution

The monitoring and control of the pollution caused by substances emitted to the environment during the operation of various industrial installations in an effort to safeguard the health of the public and the protection of the environment is the main aim of this policy area.

Under the review period the Department dealt with the granting of 110 Emission Permits, carried out 325 environmental inspections and prepared four pieces of new legislation.

#### 5. Air Quality

In this area the aim is the continuous monitoring of the levels of various pollutant substances in the atmosphere and the assessment of the air quality management so that the protection of health and well being of the citizens, the protection of vegetation and the environment of the Republic in general is safeguarded.

Under the review period the Department continued the measurement of ambient air quality pollutants and parameters and signed three contracts for the upgrading of the National Ambient Air Monitoring System. Furthermore, a Transition Facility by the European Union on the Strengthening of the capacity of the Department of Labour Inspection for the assessment and management of Air Quality, which is expected to be completed by 2008 was secured. Finally, the Department prepared an amendment of the Ambient Air Quality Law.

#### 6. Radiation Protection

The main aim in this policy area is to safeguard the safety and health of the workers and the public from risks arising from the use of ionising radiation in various economic activities, such as in medicine, industry, construction, agriculture, research, as well as from radio nuclides in the environment. Also, all matters of emergency preparedness and response to nuclear or radiological accidents as well as with the safe transport and generally the handling of radioactive materials are dealt with.

Under the review period the Department prepared one piece of harmonizing legislation, carried out inspections in premises where ionizing radiation is used and prepared terms and conditions for such premises. Furthermore, the Department acquired measuring instrumentation, kept an updated Registry of Ionising Radiation sources and participated in a number of regional and national programmes aiming at strengthening the capacity of its personnel in the field of radiation protection.