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Central Intelligence Agency

Executive Registry

87-0896x/1

Washington, D.C. 20505

20 March 1987

The Honorable William E. Brock  
Secretary of Labor  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Brock,

Your letter of 26 February 1987 regarding the Hazard Communications Standard (HCS) has been referred to me for response as the CIA Designated Safety and Health Official.

The HCS is indeed considered an extremely important safety and health standard, which I am sure will improve considerably the environments of employees who work with hazardous chemicals. The standard was adopted by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) effective 25 May 1986. A notice to this effect was issued to CIA employees on 23 May 1986 and was followed up with Headquarters and Field Regulations which established the policy and responsibilities for the program.

Implementation of the HCS is and will continue to be one of the areas of special emphasis in our Occupational Safety and Health Program. We adopted the Hazardous Materials Identification System by The National Print and Coatings Association and have completed surveys of the chemicals in 50 areas. Material Safety Data Sheets for 2,000 chemicals used by the CIA have been obtained and are in a master file as well as work areas. Two hundred and four (204) employees have been given appropriate training. In addition, procurement procedures were revised to require that all CIA solicitations and contracts for hazardous chemicals as defined in 29 CFR 1910.1200 require that the contractor provide Material Safety Data Sheets to the contractors' offices, who in turn will provide them to the Safety Division with name and location of the CIA Office requesting the chemicals.

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I feel that we have a very effective program for implementation of the HCS, however, support your proposal to establish a government-wide technical assistance program. Mr.

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Safety Division has been designated as the "key person" for this program and will contact Mr. Plummer, OSHA Federal Agency Program Director, as requested in your letter.

Please be assured that providing safe and healthful work environments for CIA employees is a continuing primary concern of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Sincerely,

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Arvel D. Tharp, M.D.

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Remarks

Executive Secretary

3 Mar '87

Date

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Executive Registry

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

SECRETARY OF LABOR  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

February 26, 1987

The Honorable Robert M. Gates  
Deputy Director  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Mr. Gates:

On November 25, 1983, the Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) published a final rule on a Hazard Communication Standard (HCS). This regulation, codified as 29 CFR Part 1910.1200, became fully effective on May 25, 1986.

I believe this standard ranks among the most important safety and health regulations issued since passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. It is a performance oriented standard which recognizes that manufacturers of hazardous chemicals are best equipped to describe the hazards of their products, together with instructions for safe use and handling. It recognizes that the employer is best equipped to provide training and in-plant labelling designed to alert employees to the hazards of chemicals with which they work. Further, the standard recognizes that employees can and will work safely if they know about the potential hazards of the compounds in their facilities.

The joint labor-management Federal Advisory Council on Occupational Safety and Health (FACOSH) has asked the Labor Department to provide technical assistance and leadership in developing a government-wide, cooperative approach to implementing this historic standard in the Federal sector.

The FACOSH committee suggested that the government develop a cooperative program in four major technical assistance areas: improved safety and health reference data; uniform labelling; training for Federal employees; and procurement policies that are consistent with the new OSHA standard.



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In order to implement this program in the most cost-effective manner, FACOSH recommended that coverage under the HCS be extended voluntarily to all Federal employees now, rather than limiting coverage to employees performing the "manufacturing" type activities covered by the current standard.

At this point I would like to recognize the significant support that the cooperative program has already received from two agencies, Defense and Agriculture. The Department of Defense has provided the resources necessary to develop a high quality generic training program, including masters for lesson plans and videotapes which will meet the hazard communication training needs of all the agencies. The Department of Agriculture has agreed to provide the resources necessary to develop a data sheet reference file on the thousands of pesticides used throughout the country.

With this in mind, I am seeking a similar commitment from your agency in establishing a government-wide technical assistance program to implement this regulation throughout the Federal workforce. I am asking you as the responsible manager to agree to our designating the HCS as a voluntary supplementary safety and health standard as permitted under 29 CFR Part 1960.18. Of course, we understand that the lead time required to develop the training and data elements of the program will require us to work together to develop appropriate abatement dates. Interim compliance procedures for participating agencies will be forwarded to your Designated Agency Safety and Health Official from the Assistant Secretary of OSHA.

I am asking you to designate key staff to help us with the cooperative technical assistance program which will be organized through FACOSH and supported by the Department of Labor and OSHA. Resources beyond those already committed by Agriculture and Defense will be needed. By working together in this effort, we believe that the cost for your agency to implement an effective hazard communication program will be considerably less than if each agency developed a program on its own. Please have your staff contact OSHA's Federal Agency Program Director, Mr. John E. Plummer, on (202) 523-9329 with respect to your decision and the names of key staff who will be involved.

We have an opportunity in the Federal Government to assume a leadership role and begin the process of providing the important protection afforded by this standard to all Federal employees. I believe it is important to work together, to share our resources and our skills, and develop a program that will

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protect all Federal workers. I believe this government-wide approach will reduce the overall time and effort required to comply with the regulation and will contribute significantly to the President's goal of reducing workplace injuries and illnesses by three percent.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Brock", written in a cursive style.

WILLIAM E. BROCK

WEB:blj