Challenges & Achievements in International Training in Occupational Hygiene

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Introduction

Michel Guillemin – IOHA Conference in 2005 stated: Education & training in Occupational Hygiene (OH) depended on several key criteria

- Cultural roots of a nation
- Its research capacity & policy
- Its legal framework
- The perception & understanding of this field by the stakeholders
Status Overview

• Independent research (Deloitte 2007) suggested significant need for trained OH professionals in many parts of the world albeit not in the areas where hygiene has historically been established

• Critical need at the technician (Intermediate) level

• Lack of suitable training programmes a barrier to development of the profession in these countries
• Origins in 2005 when core group of senior like-minded hygienists discussed how the same standard of control could be employed in any operation in the world

• OHTA established as a not-for-profit organisation supported by national associations & IOHA

• Development of OHLearning.com (1 May 2010)
www.OHlearning.com
School of Health Sciences - University of Wollongong

OHTA Model

Training

- Academic modules
- Intermediate modules
- Principles module

Qualifications

- Advanced
- Intermediate
- Foundation
Intermediate Level Scheme

- W501 – Measurement of Hazardous Substances
- W502 – Thermal Environment
- W503 – Noise
- W504 – Asbestos
- W505 – Control
- W506 – Ergonomics
- W507 – Hazards of Chemicals

- 5-day taught modules to meet industry needs
- Interactive teaching methods questions, workshops and practical “hands-on” exercises
- International syllabus based on good hygiene practice
- Student assessment process
Available on Website for Each Module

- Full teaching materials
- Student manual
- Slide packs and tutor briefing materials
- Practical work exercises
- Case study material
- ‘Overnight’ exercises
Advanced Level Scheme

- Use of module material in an academic process leading to a postgraduate qualification (academic rigor & assessment)
- Development of higher learning skills such as critical thinking & evaluation leading to professional practice
- Tailoring of academic programmes to industry needs & preparation of students for internationally recognised standards of professional practice
Advanced Level Scheme (cont)

• Concept has been applied in two countries to date
  – Australia & Chile

• Graduate Certificate & MSc Occupational Hygiene Practice (Australia)
  – Commenced in February 2009 first graduates July 2010

• Diploma & MSc Occupational Hygiene Practice (Chile)
  – Commenced in May 2010

• Major industry support for both programmes
MSc - Occupational Hygiene Practice in Australia

• Based on 6 of the OHTA modules

• Has additional specific industry subjects
  – Occupational hygiene in the oil & gas industry
  – Occupational hygiene in the mining industry
  plus a student workplace project

• Operates on a one week per subject block teaching
  “Fly in – Fly out” model with online assessment
MSc - Occupational Hygiene Practice in Australia (cont)

- All lecturers have strong links to industry or government with academic supervision
- Currently 56 Students enrolled (20 in 2009)
- First graduates in July 2010
- Accredited by the AIOH & BOHS
Practical Classes in Wollongong
MSc - Occupational Hygiene in Chile

• Offered by University of Antofagasta in Northern Chile
• Commenced in May 2010
• Comprises the Diploma (1st yr) & MSc (2nd yr)
• First intake has 20 students (already 12 for 2011)
• Has strong industry & government support
• Local lecturers supported by personnel from University of Wollongong
MSc - Occupational Hygiene in Chile

- Based on four OHTA modules
- Has specialist modules plus a student workplace project
  - Human physiology (Hypoxia)
  - Chilean mining legislation
  - Epidemiology & toxicology
  - Occupational hygiene in the mining industry
- Governance provided by the University of Wollongong
Lectures in Antofagasta - Chile
Conclusions

• The OHTA model offers a new approach to OH education

• The model can be used at multiple levels of education

• While the intermediate level (technician) of the OHTA model is gaining momentum there is a need to build the advanced level with more universities adopting a similar approach to that at Wollongong & Antofagasta