

Emergency Action Plan for Serious Factory Incidents

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Preface

The ICTI Ethical Toy Program Worker Helpline recently received calls reporting factory incidents such as strikes, go-slow, brawls, shocks or death happening among workers in factory areas and dormitories. The absence of official responses, clarification or guidance from the factory management resulted in rumors, speculations, concerns and fear rapidly spreading among workers, affecting them emotionally and undermining the workplace harmony. After analyzing the reported cases, we found that the root cause was factories lacking capacity to manage these emergencies.

Action Plan

Apart from requiring factories to set up emergency plans for natural disasters such as typhoons, earthquakes, flood, large scale epidemic or contagious diseases, power cuts and no water supply, Ethical Toy Program now encourages factories to form an emergency management unit and establish a robust mechanism to communicate and cope with the emergencies among workforce. A good action plan should meet the following standards:

Be Humanitarian

- Call local emergency services (e.g. 119 or 120 in China) immediately, rescue and care for the injured.
- In case of deaths, handle the posthumous affairs properly and compassionately.
- Pay compensation or grants for work-related or non-work-related casualties in accordance with the law.
- Accommodate and console the families of the injured or deceased appropriately.
- Provide emotional and psychological support to uninjured employees.
- If the incident is correlated to the factory's Occupational Health & Safety issues, the management should take all necessary steps to ensure the issues will not impose further dangers to employees.

Be Transparent

- Senior management should pay high attention to the emergencies, manage the incidents personally and directly, start an investigation according to the factory's internal procedure, and communicate the results to all employees.

- Seek assistance from the local government departments (e.g. the police and local administrative departments) immediately when necessary.
- Involve worker and labor union representative(s) in the emergency management, investigation and communication process.
- Use the internal announcement and broadcast system to notify employees of the incidents and announce the progress of investigation in a timely manner.

Be Fair (mainly for strikes, go-slow and brawls)

- If the factory management is primarily responsible for the incidents, they should not be involved in the emergency management, investigation or communication process.
- The primary responsible parties should be treated fairly and equally regardless of their positions.
- The factory should investigate if the incidents are caused by an inadequate internal management system, and improve it in a timely manner if so. Disciplinary procedures may be considered when necessary.

Employees are the most valuable assets of a company. Factories should work, with a humanitarian approach, to fulfill the corporate social responsibility objectives and to demonstrate their commitment to the Ethical Toy Program.

Should you have any question, please contact our Factory Helpdesk at info@ethicaltoyprogram.org or (+852) 2111-2462.