



Report on the 5th International Control Banding Workshop (5ICBW)

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Wednesday morning prior to the day's events at the ICOH Congress, I was taken by the contrast that split my senses. To my right was the downtown skyline of Cape Town and the Conference Center, dramatically presented before the backdrop of Table Mountain. Immediately diverting my attention, however, was the distinct odor of ozone. To my left, about 2000 meters from the Conference Center, was a fenced off work area with a compilation of old ships in varying states of dismantlement. The whiff of ozone immediately let me know that this work area that had piqued my interest was indeed a site for ship breaking and the day's activities had commenced. Curiosity had gotten the best of me, so camera in hand I followed my nose until from a distance the noise from grinding and the sparks from acetylene torch cutting confirmed my instincts.

The occupational hygienist in me, or perhaps the CB in me, looked immediately for the controls and PPE in place. Some respirators were on the worksite, however they adorned necks and heads rather than faces. Dust masks were most likely to be seen, however even these were not donned appropriately. Hearing protection was sparse, safety barriers were randomly in place, fall protection was absent, and ergonomics was not even in the picture (Photos montage below).



All at once, the value of CB was in focus. On my way to a workshop that focuses on the world's actions and activities with CB, I could immediately see how modest local exhaust ventilation could have captured fumes, Barrier Banding could offer mechanisms to ensure safety was implemented, and minor workstation changes would have greatly reduced ergonomic stressors. We have come a long way over the past four International Control Banding Workshops, but there is still a longer path in store.

International Growth of CB and Occupational Hygiene

The 5th International Control Banding Workshop (5ICBW) was held on 25 March 2009 as part of the 29th ICOH International Congress on Occupational Health in Cape Town, South Africa (Attachment A). Taking up a full day's schedule, the 5ICBW occurred over three consecutive sessions. The first session was titled "Developing simple guidance toolkit for employers." Susan Wilburn of WHO was co-chair of the 5ICBW and spoke on the Global Implementation Strategy for CB. Tom Grumbles, President of IOHA, spoke IOHA's role in the growth and internationalization of CB beginning 10 year's earlier in South Africa at an IOHA Board of Director's meeting north of Johannesburg. David Zalk, IOHA envoy and 5ICBW co-chair, presented on something with potentially more controversy in title alone, whether CB can be considered better than traditional occupational hygiene. The focus was on two important aspects where this may be considered true, when uncertainties exist (e.g. without OELs or with nanomaterial) and CB's role in the growth of the occupational hygiene profession with university programs in developing countries and international collaborations. Ayyappan Ramalingam of Sri Ramachandra University in Chennai India gave an excellent presentation on the 3-tiered approach to chemical risk management (CB)

that has been developed for Southern India. A multi-regional effort to build a more expert-based CB Toolkit has begun its validation, a qualitative risk assessment process for larger industries serves to prioritize funding using a quantitative to qualitative decision matrix, and the need for a simpler approach for SMEs that requires the development of occupational safety toolkits and a train-the-trainer process to ensure the chemical toolkit can be put into practice as safety professionals are far more abundant than occupational hygienists in India.

CB as Risk Communication

The second session of the 5ICBW was titled "Practical tools for primary prevention", focusing on existing processes that other countries can learn from. Henri Heussen of the Netherlands presented first on Stoffenmanager 4.0, offering a demonstration for the audience of the newest version of the Dutch toolkit which is expanding in scope greatly while offering a new version which is much more easier to use for SMEs. Henri had also taught a workshop for the National Institute of Occupational Health in South Africa in advance of the ICOH Congress and had already drummed an impressive level of national and regional interest. Stravroula Leka of the University of Nottingham in the UK presented on the Pyschosocial Risk Management (PRIMA) Toolkit and its latest stages of development. The need for the PRIMA was seen throughout the ICOH Congress with multiple sessions and speakers discussing the topic. Rolf Packroff of Germany presented the EMKG 2.0 CB Toolkit model that has become quite popular in his country. Very interesting was Rolf describing the manner in which the EMKG had become an excellent risk communicator, promoting the existence of occupational hygiene in Germany to Occupational Physicians (OP). CB discussions do not involve the quantitative sampling component, which is a legal obstacle for OPs discussing risk assessments, so it opens a dialogue on the occupational hygiene scope of work, as occupational hygiene is still not a recognized profession in Germany. This same concept of CB as risk communication was also shared by Dr. Heussen, as the Stoffenmanger presentations to OPs, who focus on the curative rather than preventative, often lead to the statement "oh, so that's what you do!" Additionally, presenting at the second session on the Ergonomics Checkpoints was Dr. Kazutaka Kogi of Japan, who attended almost all of the 5ICBW and was elected President of ICOH later in the week. In addition, a poster presentation was given by Custodio Muianga of

Mozambique, discussing the many toolkits that he is introducing in his country to determine the most appropriate design for implementation and dissemination. The third session was titled "Emerging models for control banding toolkits". The Korean KOSHA Control Toolkit for Industrial Chemicals was shown to be quite successful in communicating the need for engineering controls, through nice visual graphics, as implementation requiring upgrades are funded by national programs. The CB Nanotool was then presented, reflecting how its qualitative risk assessment approach is growing quickly and has been included in many national nanomaterial control programs. Hans Thore Smedbold of Norway offered an update of the ChemiRisk approach and the Man, Technology, Organization (MTO) perspective that CB offers. Christolph Kowalski of the Netherlands presented on an OP toolbox to improve cooperation between them and general physicians in communicating work-related issues to each other in a risk-based matrix. When Susan Wilburn of WHO complemented this approach and asked how an occupational hygienist can be involved in the matrix, Dr. Kowalski, an OP himself, said "until this workshop I did not know what an occupational hygienist was!"

Immediately following the last presentations and discussions of the 5ICBW, the International Technical Group on Control Banding (ITG) met. It was an impressive list of attendees at the ITG meeting with 11 attendees from 10 countries (Photo below) sharing a unified vision for the occupational hygiene profession and CB efforts.



This ITG meeting sought to finalize a summary document their efforts over the past five years (Attachment B) and to utilize the outcomes and discussions of the 5ICBW in order to capture them in a previously developed document covering the next five years, the ITG Work Plan for 2009 – 2014. The key item to add to this new Work Plan, as learned from the 5ICBW, was relating to the delineation and clarification of the term ‘occupational health’. We had discovered that this term does not always acknowledge the occupational hygiene profession, or even its existence, and CB offers

a unique opportunity to overcome this pervasive hurdle. This point became quite prescient at the closing session. Dr. Kogi, in his address to the ICOH Congress as their new President, outlined his agenda for the next three years. His first objective is to advance proactive risk assessments and toolkit approaches. He specifically acknowledged the 5ICBW and how CB can address new and old issues in a simplified approach. It is recommended that IOHA pursue collaborations with ICOH on this topic.

Note from the Editor of the IOHA Newsletter: This activity was held in connection with the 2009 ICOH Congress. As joining efforts becomes increasingly necessary, it is important to note that the 5ICBW was a WHO, ILO, IOHA, ICOH and CB ITG collaborative activity, also including an IEA presentation, therefore it was the most complete ICBW to date. And you may see that many important talks also took place on a boat trip – there is also fun in these meetings, as you can see in the photos below.



Dave Zalk seriously considering all CB options



Susan Wilburn, Henri Heussen, and Rolf Packroff having great CB discussions