

Pasadena Citizens' Advisory Council

www.pasadenacac.org

Summary of Tuesday, February 24, 2015 Meeting

ANNUAL REPORT ON WORKER SAFETY

"If the recordable rate in 2002 (1.18) had been the recordable rate in 2014, 61 people would have been injured—80 instead of 19."

The 13th Annual Report on Worker Safety in the 17 Pasadena Citizens' Advisory Council (PCAC) Plants was presented by facilitator Diane Sheridan, who emphasized that the *numbers* in the report tell the stories of *people* injured, and not injured, in PCAC plants.

In 2014, PCAC plants had their best safety performance ever, based on the number of injuries and the weighted average. "Best" means the fewest injuries as defined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and as based on the number of hours worked. "Ever" means since 2000, the first year for which PCAC collected data, or since the year that type of data began to be collected. It is generally agreed that, due to improvements in safety since then, it is unlikely that there were fewer injuries or lower rates prior to 2000.

Highlights follow:

- In the 17 plants, there were **13.6 million work hours** in 2014, which represents an estimated **3375 employees and 3183 contractors**. Work hours were down 10% from 2013.
- **Two-thirds of the total hours were worked in 3 of the 17 plants:** LyondellBasell Houston Refinery, Chevron Phillips, and Pasadena Refining. About 43% of the total work hours occurred at the LyondellBasell Houston Refinery due to large planned maintenance turnarounds.
- **19 OSHA recordable workplace injuries or illnesses** occurred during the 13.6 million hours of work, 15 fewer than in 2013. There have been **no fatalities since 2008**.
- The weighted average was **0.28, the best weighted average ever**. A rate of 1.00 means 1 injury among 100 workers in a year, so 0.28 is far less than 1.00. It means that, out of 1000 workers, there were 2.8 people with OSHA recordable injuries.
- **9 of the 17 plants had a 0.00 recordable rate**, meaning no employee or contractor workplace injuries or illnesses in 2014. "Zeros are Heroes" in CAC terms.
- **0.38 was the best simple average ever**. It is based on number of plants, not on the hours worked. It is affected mostly by small plants, in which a single injury can result in a high recordable rate. The simple average was 2.64 in 2000.
- For the second time in PCAC reports, the **median was 0.00**. The median is the middle when plants are listed from 0.00 to the highest rates. The median was 1.33 in 2001.

- There were **fewer restricted duty cases** in 2014 compared to 2013 – 8 vs. 12 last year. Restricted duty means the worker is given another assignment because he or she cannot perform the usual one.
- There were also **fewer lost-time cases** in 2014 – 5 in 2014 vs. 14 the year before. Lost-time cases mean the worker was unable to come to work. Yet the number of restricted duty and lost-time cases combined was 68% of the 19 recordables. OSHA says that nationally, including all kinds of businesses, the more serious injuries are about half the total.
- All but one of the 17 PCAC plants had **recordable rates better than companies nationwide in the same general kind of business**, when compared by North American Industry Classification System codes
- One other local community advisor council compiles a worker safety report like PCAC. The **La Porte CAC report** predates and was the inspiration for the Pasadena CAC report. PCAC's overall weighted average of 0.28 was better than the 0.56 rate of the 43 plants in the La Porte CAC. (Those plants worked more than 22 million hours in 2014 compared to the 13.6 million work hours in PCAC.)
- PCAC **employee rate** of 0.23 was better than LPCAC's 0.75 employee rate in 2014. The PCAC **contractor rate** of 0.23 was better than LPCAC's 0.40. The American Chemistry Council member companies' rates for employees was 0.73 and for contractors was 0.55; these were the best in the history of the trade association.
- PCAC's 0.28 recordable rate was significantly better than the national **record of businesses typical in Pasadena**; e.g. 7.00 marine cargo handling; 6.40 hospitals; 3.80 retail trade; 3.60 education and health services. It also was better than the overall chemical industry in the US (2.00). The highest rate nationally in 2013 was for nursing and residential care (13.7 per 100 of those workers had workplace injuries in 2013). Nationwide, the safest workplaces were those of investment advisors and Certified Public Accountants working in offices (0.10).
- OSHA data may be found at the **Bureau of Labor Statistics** website www.bls.gov under "workplace injuries." Comparisons of 2014 PCAC plant data were made to the most current national data, which were from 2013.

Also reported at the PCAC meeting was information on the severity of injuries and the percentage from chemical contact or exposure (5%, or 1 case out of the 19). The report shows comparisons between employees and contractors; lists plants taking part in voluntary, third-party, worker-safety related audit programs; and tells whether they are batch or continuous process plants.

Emphasizing that the safety report *numbers* are really about *people*, Sheridan said 19 out of about 6558 workers were injured in 2014, and no one wants injuries. But this also means that 6539 workers were *not* injured. In the plants with 0.00 rates, about 1550 people worked for a year without a recordable injury or illness.

Zeros are the goal when tracking OSHA recordable injury and illness rates. Perhaps the most striking way to see the progress PCAC plants have made is to consider this: *If the recordable*

rate in 2002 (1.18) had been the recordable rate in 2014 (0.28), 61 more people would have been injured – 80 instead of 19.