



## **MFA-Survey on the topic: Employment safety for maintenance workers in Austria**

### **How safe is your job?**

This recent survey initiated by the maintenance organization MFA – Maintenance and Facility Management Society of Austria provides interesting data regarding safety in Austrian companies, especially in the area of maintenance. The online survey was launched during the European Campaign 2010/2011, “Safety in maintenance work” for Austria.

A joint questionnaire was put together through the association VAS (Association for Job Safety), the AUVA (Public Accident Insurance Institution) and the technical safety center, Andritz Hydro.

Between July and September, over 2,200 Austrian companies and particularly classic KMU’s were contacted by e-mail and asked to participate in the online survey. This request is being supported through a professional article in the magazine, “Sichere Arbeit” (Work Safety) and MAS. Almost three hundred businesses took part in this survey and answered the thirty given questions related to job safety in their business as a whole, maintenance tasks for job supervisors and other entrusted personnel.

### **Alarming results**

The results of the survey were finally brought to light and then discussed intensely during a special event for the Federal Ministry of Labor, Social and Consumer Protection (BMASK) in Vienna, on October 14th.

According to information presented by EFNMS (European Federation of National Maintenance Societies) 25% of all job-related accidents are associated with maintenance work. The MFA is taking on the responsibility for bringing up current data for the Austrian companies in order to initiate specific programs and bring about targeted measures. The results at hand show signs of these first attempts.

### **Guidelines for the future**

The advantages of structured safety work with clear responsibilities, systematic analysis of near accidents, as well as removing weak spots and enforcing regular usage of PSA (Personal protection gear) are becoming increasingly evident.

The high success of PSA in conjunction with and eye protection is certainly rewarding. 98 percent of those asked acknowledged using hand & eye protection in association with maintenance work. The optimization potential here is also present. Almost half of those interviewed admitted not using respiratory protection, and close to a third (31%) used no head gear.

The increased degree of planning in maintenance clearly indicates positive results in work safety. Aside from performance, job safety is also enhanced through the increased usage of planning tools and the early incorporation of maintenance workers, as in obtaining processes.

The survey showed that 84 Percent of those responsible for maintenance would consider obtaining investments for introducing technical safety standards for future repairs. Nevertheless, this means that every 6th plant is not yet interested in seeking consultation regarding maintenance safety.



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Those actively engaged with this are safer. The workers need to be assigned active roles in evaluating their workplace (determination of stresses and dangers, establishing measures, testing for effectiveness). In this way, a sense of conscious scrutiny is established concerning various dangers and stress areas in the workplace.

Often times, the significance of supervisors informing and instructing the worker is taken too lightly. About 40 percent of those surveyed answered no to the question, “Are the employees informed systematically about new legal reforms?” Almost 14 percent admitted that the employees have not been made aware of inquiries and assessments made over dangers and stress areas. This in no way concerns just small businesses – approximately 80 percent of these companies employ more than 100 employees, and they also hire their own safety specialists (SKF).

The results of the survey are not representative of all Austrian businesses, but they shed a different light on everyday conditions. The survey nevertheless institutes the first constituent which should – even in the course of the European Campaign – result with lasting improvements in providing worker safety in the area of maintenance.

**Die MFA – Maintenance and Facility Management Society of Austria ([www.mf-austria.at](http://www.mf-austria.at)):**

The goal of this charitable organization MFA is an international practice oriented exchange of knowledge between business and science in the area of maintenance, Facility Management and Technical Service. The MFA sees itself as an information and communications platform that offers their members a wide assortment of special services. The association is the official Austrian representative in the European network EFNMS (European Federation of National Maintenance Societies, [www.efnms.org](http://www.efnms.org)).

The MFA supports their members by exchanging experiences and building upon (mutual) knowledge in maintenance and facility management. MFA-members profit from numerous cooperation and special conditions (e.g.: rebates on professional seminars, etc.), Best Practice Events, negotiation activities, etc. All information concerning MFA is available under [www.mf-austria.at](http://www.mf-austria.at).

You can obtain the presentation of the survey results, in addition to photo material which is available for free use in the listing MFA-PressInfo under [www.mf-austria.at](http://www.mf-austria.at).

You may get details and information about the survey results and additional specific measures under [office@mf-austria.at](mailto:office@mf-austria.at) or under [www.mf-austria.at](http://www.mf-austria.at). For any questions please contact the survey coordinator DI Ludwig Grubauer ([umfrage@mf-austria.at](mailto:umfrage@mf-austria.at)).