

Promotional activity

The strategy of actions aimed at the improvement of work safety requires close cooperation with a wide circle of social partners. Cooperation with trade unions and employers' organisations is of key importance, and it covers: dissemination of knowledge of hazards and ways of their elimination, exchange of information on the essential issues connected with labour protection, inspections undertaken by the labour inspectorate and the resulting conclusions. A very important component of promotion is also advice on labour protection. On average, NLI's experts annually provide over 40 thousand pieces of advice to trade union activists and civic labour inspectors.

For many years, NLI's cooperation with social partners has taken the form of inspections carried out on the motion of the multi-establishment TU organisations and civic labour inspection. It is a very effective type of assistance given to employees' representatives by the labour inspectorate.

In order to ensure successful implementation of its preventive policy, the National Labour Inspectorate conducts educational activities by organising training at the level adjusted to the needs of separate target groups, as well as by producing specialist publications. These include e.g.: guides, brochures, leaflets, posters, and folders. NLI's periodicals include: a monthly "Labour Inspector", and "Legal Notes". A primary rule adopted for publications says that they should support the present priority tasks of the NLI and that they should be targeted at those who, for organisational and financial reasons, find it most difficult to obtain the necessary information on labour law, including occupational safety and health. Therefore, a huge portion of NLI's publications focuses on OSH in agriculture. They are distributed among villages' administrators, headmasters of agricultural schools or those located in rural areas, and directly among farmers during visits to farms. Regularly updated Internet website contains: electronic versions of printed publications, an annual Report of the Chief Labour Inspector on the NLI's Activity, a set of the most frequent questions addressed to the National Labour Inspectorate followed by answers.

In connection with the introduction of new inspection tools – namely checklists – they have also been published on the Internet. Checklists for small companies were supplemented by extensive comments to enable employers to make use of this tool in the assessment of working conditions in their firms and to prepare for visits by labour inspectors.

Within promotional work connected with labour protection, in the year 2000 – jointly with the Polish Craftsmen Association – a programme for the improvement of work safety in small enterprises employing up to 20 people was launched. With the assistance of labour inspectors, employers adjust their companies to the requirements of the legislation in force. Appreciating the role of employers and their responsibility for working conditions, we organise an annual All-Poland Competition entitled "Employer – Organiser of Safe Work". Awards of the Chief Labour Inspector are also of big promotional significance. They are meant for:

- people involved in actions for the improvement of work safety – Halina Krahelska's award;
- journalists popularising issues related to labour protection;
- scientists – for research-development projects and master theses in the field of labour;
- the best exhibitors and manufacturers of protective equipment – "Grand Prix" at the International Fair of Work Protection, Rescue and Fire Fighting Equipment in Poznań, and "Golden Laurel" at the International Fair of OSH and Fire Prevention Measures in Katowice.

Among the most important initiatives promoting labour protection, one can also mention organisation of numerous competitions and knowledge contests for teenagers and children from rural areas, for example:

- "OSH in Agriculture – Safe Farm",
- "Knowledge of Labour Law and OSH" for young people receiving vocational training in craftsmen's workshops.