

**CONSTRUCTION SAFETY
COORDINATORS**

The Cyprus experience

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BSc(Eng) MSc DIC CEng MICE
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Everything that will be mentioned in this presentation is based on my personal experience.

Instead of the title “The Cyprus experience” we can change it to “The story of my life” and it will all be the same presentation!

I will mention just a few words about myself to show the big picture of my personal career.

CONSTRUCTION SAFETY COORDINATORS

The story of my life

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CONSTRUCTION SAFETY COORDINATORS - The Cyprus experience

- 1975: 14 years old: went to England
- 1981: 20 years old: BSc (Eng) Civil Engineering at UCL
- 1982: 21 years old: MSc Concrete Structures at Imperial
- 1982 – 1984: Corps of Engineers - National Guard
- 1985 – 1994: Civil / Structural Engineering Consultant
- 1995 – 2013: GCC: Health & Safety, Environment, Quality, Insurance, Legal, HR.
- 2013 – 2016: J&P Qatar: HSE Manager
- 2016 – 2019: ACC-J&P: ONE TOWER Limassol
- 2020 – today: Atlas Pantou: ARARAT TOWER Limassol

During the first **10 years** of my professional career I was involved in the design of civil and structural engineering projects.

During the next **18 years** at GCC I worked on Safety & Health, Environment, Quality, Insurance, Legal, Human Resources, and more.

And during the last **9 years** I have been dealing with the issues of Safety & Health only (3 years in Qatar, 3 years at ONE TOWER Limassol and now at ARARAT TOWER Limassol).

CONSTRUCTION SAFETY COORDINATORS - The Cyprus experience

Evolution – before 1995

| <u>Project Team:</u> | <u>Safety Team:</u> |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Project Manager | ??? |
| Site Engineer | |
| Foreman | |

My own personal story with H&S started in 1995 when I joined GCC (a building and civil engineering contractor).

There was no specific person to manage safety. The same was true for nearly all contractors in Cyprus.

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Evolution – 1995

| <u>Project Team:</u> | <u>Safety Team:</u> |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Project Manager | Company Safety Officer |
| Site Engineer | (>200 employees) |
| Foreman | |

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Too many problems with safety so a **Company Safety Officer** is employed to manage safety. (For companies with more than 200 employees, a Company Safety Officer is a legal requirement.)

How do you manage safety?

Common practice was, the Company Safety Officer (based at the Head Office) carries out site safety inspections. The Project Team must implement the necessary corrective / preventive actions.

The Project Team depends on the Company Safety Officer to tell them what to do. They have poor knowledge of H&S and/or they do not care about H&S.

For example: they will leave an excavation without fall protection barriers and they will wait until the Company Safety Officer comes to tell them to install the barriers.

So the next step in our Evolution is **H&S training for everyone.**

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Evolution – 1995

Project Team:

Project Manager

Site Engineer

Foreman

Safety Team:

Company Safety Officer

Health & Safety training for everyone.

Apart from training, someone has to be in charge of H&S on site. It is not correct / possible for the Company Safety Officer to manage 10-15 projects from the Head Office.

So the Site Engineer is given the Role of the **Site Safety Officer** also, and he must **manage** safety on his site.

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Evolution – 1995

Project Team:

Project Manager
Site Engineer / Site
Safety Officer
Foreman

Safety Team:

Company Safety Officer
Safety Culture

Health & Safety training for everyone.

The Company Safety Officer manages H&S company wide and tries to improve the **Safety Culture**.

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Evolution – 2002

Project Team:

Project Manager /
Safety Coordinator

Site Engineer / Site
Safety Officer

Foreman

Safety Team:

Company Safety Officer

Construction Sites Regulations ΚΔΠ 172/2002

The next step in our Evolution came in 2002 when the Construction Sites Regulations **ΚΔΠ 172/2002** were published.

The role of the **Safety Coordinator** is born and someone has to take up this role. This is given to the Project Manager.

Everything is in order and everything works just fine.

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Evolution – 2015

Project Team:

Project Manager /
Safety Coordinator
Site Engineer / Site
Safety Officer
Foreman

Safety Team:

Company Safety Officer
(project < 10,000m²)

Construction Sites Regulations ΚΔΠ 410/2015

The next step in our Evolution came in 2015 when the new Construction Sites Regulations **ΚΔΠ 410/2015** replaced ΚΔΠ 172/2002.

For 'small' projects (< 10,000m²) the arrangements are similar to before.

The Project Manager is also the Safety Coordinator.

And the Site Engineer is also the Site Safety Officer.

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Evolution – 2015

| | |
|---|---|
| <p><u>Project Team:</u></p> <p>Project Manager / Safety Coordinator</p> <p>Site Engineer / Site Safety Officer</p> <p>Foreman</p> | <p><u>Safety Team:</u></p> <p>Company Safety Officer</p> <p>Safety Coordinator (project > 10,000m²) + Site Safety Assistants?</p> |
|---|---|

Construction Sites Regulations ΚΔΠ 410/2015

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But for projects that are > 10,000m² a **dedicated** Safety Coordinator must be employed (by the Client, but usually this is done by the Main Contractor).

So the Project Manager is no longer the Safety Coordinator.

And since there is a **dedicated** Safety Coordinator on site, the Site Engineer is no longer the Site Safety Officer.

The Project Team is no longer involved in H&S issues!

The **Safety Coordinator** is expected to be the **Site Safety Officer** also.

On really 'big' projects **serious** Contractors employ **Site Safety Assistants** to work **under** the Safety Coordinator. This is surely an improvement, but are we moving in the right direction?

We are **confusing** the Role of the Safety Coordinator with the Role of the Site Safety Officer. And this is happening because the Safety Coordinator is an employee of the **Main Contractor**.

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Evolution – 2021

| | |
|--|--|
| <p><u>Project Team:</u></p> <p>Project Manager</p> <p>Site Engineer</p> <p>Foreman</p> | <p><u>Safety Team:</u></p> <p>Company Safety Officer and Deputy Company Safety Officer (>200 employees) + Fire Safety, First Aid + Safety Coordinator</p> |
|--|--|

**H&S Management Regulations ΚΔΠ 158/2021
+ out of court fines €500 / H&S violation**

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The next step in our Evolution came in 2021 when the new H&S Management Regulations **ΚΔΠ 158/2021** replaced ΚΔΠ 173/2002.

These are **relatively new** Regulations and we are still waiting to see the improvements in practice.

Companies must now also employ a **Deputy** Company Safety Officer (as well as other people to be specifically responsible for **Fire Safety** and **First Aid**).

Following also some changes to the H&S at Work Law, the Labour Inspectors are now authorised to impose out of court fines of up to €500 for each violation of the Law.

Are these new Regulations really going to make any improvements on the **construction sites**? With the current Safety Culture in Cyprus, I believe they are **not**.

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Revolution – 2022

Project Team:

Project Manager

Site Engineer

Foreman

Safety Team:

Company Safety Officer

+ Deputy Company

Safety Officer, Fire

Safety, First Aid

Safety Coordinator

What are the Labour Inspectors checking?

I believe that the next step must be a **Revolution!** Evolution is not enough!

The (Site) Safety Coordinators must **revolt** against the Department of Labour Inspection. Their jobs depend on the checking by the Labour Inspectors.

Revolution – 2022

- Site safety measures.
- Appointment of Safety Coordinators.
- H&S Plan.

What are the Labour Inspectors checking?

The Labour Inspectors must **evolve** and apart from checking the site safety measures, they must start checking the **real implementation** of the Construction Sites Regulations 410/2015, and not just the appointment of the Safety Coordinators or the existence of a H&S Plan.

Revolution – 2022

- ⦿ Does the Safety Coordinator have at his disposal the necessary means and the authority to perform his duties?
- ⦿ Is the Safety Coordinator able and does he perform his duties without being affected by any possible conflicts of interest?

What are the Labour Inspectors checking?

Does the Safety Coordinator have at his disposal the necessary means and the authority to perform his duties?

Is the Safety Coordinator able and does he perform his duties without being affected by any possible conflicts of interest?

Revolution – 2022

- ⦿ Is it correct for the Safety Coordinator to be an employee of the Main Contractor?
- ⦿ What happens when the Safety Coordinator disagrees with the Project Manager (who happens to be his boss)?
- ⦿ Is the Safety Coordinator appointed to serve the Main Contractor or the Project and everyone involved in it?

What is your opinion?

Is it correct for the Safety Coordinator to be an employee of the Main Contractor?

What happens when the Safety Coordinator disagrees with the Project Manager (who happens to be his boss)?

Is the Safety Coordinator appointed to serve the Main Contractor or the Project and everyone involved in it?

Revolution – 2022

- ◉ If the Main Contractor is not performing well in H&S and is not following the advice of the Safety Coordinator, to whom shall this be reported? To the Architect, to the Client, to the Labour Inspector, to the Design Safety Coordinator?
- ◉ What authority does each one have? Is this prescribed in the Law or in the Building Contract?

What is your opinion?

If the Main Contractor is not performing well in H&S and is not following the advice of the Safety Coordinator, to whom shall this be reported? To the Architect, to the Client, to the Labour Inspector, to the Design Safety Coordinator?

What authority does each one have? Is this prescribed in the Law or in the Building Contract?

CONSTRUCTION SAFETY COORDINATORS - The Cyprus experience

Cooperation - Teamwork

**The key aim of CDM 2015 is to
integrate health and safety into
the management of the project
and to encourage everyone
involved to work together:
“to build a team to build a project”**

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I will close my presentation with something I read about the Construction Design & Management Regulations 2015 in England.

Cooperation - Teamwork

- ⦿ H&S issues.
- ⦿ H&S Culture.
- ⦿ Management Commitment – “Safety First”.
- ⦿ The Law sets the minimum standards.

The Team needs to be educated first (1995!).

Our Team needs to have an understanding of the following:

- H&S issues.
- H&S Culture.
- Management Commitment – “Safety First”.
- The Law sets the minimum standards.

So we must start with educating the Team.

We are back to square number one, 1995! The story of my life!

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Cooperation - Teamwork

**The better the Management
Commitment, the lesser the
need for checking by the
Authorities.**

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The need for checking by the Authorities arises from the fact that Management Commitment is poor!

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Good luck with your projects!

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Questions?