

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY
AND HEALTH STANDARDS BOARD

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OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH
STANDARDS BOARD

BOARD STAFF'S REVIEW OF THE PETITION
Petition File No. 537

Petitioner: Walter W. Wise, General President
International Association of Bridge, Structural,
Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers

Submitted By: George Hauptman
Title: Senior Safety Engineer
Date: 1/2/14

The Petitioner notes that Federal OSHA is evaluating the potential for new standards that include reinforcing steel and post-tensioning operations and associated hazards per its Request For Information (RFI) published in the Federal Register, dated March 29, 2012. The Petitioner stated that in July of 2012, Federal OSHA received numerous support letters from labor and management stakeholders urging the Agency to adopt new standards. The Petitioner and supporting organizations are requesting the Board to adopt similar standards for California.

Reason for the Petition

The Petitioner states that the current provisions in Section 1712 “Reinforcing Steel and Other Similar Projections” contain limited references pertaining to reinforcing steel activities and does not contain any references to post-tensioning operations. The Petitioner states there is a correlation related to the hazards and injuries to workers involved in concrete reinforcing steel and post-tensioning activities and the lack of specific regulations addressing these hazards. The Petitioner projects that the use of steel reinforced and post-tensioned poured in-place concrete is expected to double by the year 2015 from its 1990 level and may comprise a majority of commercial and industrial construction activities.

The Petitioner recommends the adoption of standards that are similar to those from the ANSI/ASSE A10.9 – 2013 standard into Title 8 that address provisions for Site Access and Layout, Written Notifications Prior to Commencement of Reinforcing Steel Activities, Stability for Reinforcing Assemblies, Impalement Protection and Custody of Impalement Protection, Hoisting and Rigging Reinforcement Assemblies, Post Tensioning Activities, Fall Protection, Formwork and Falsework Stability and Training.

The proposal would place certain responsibilities on controlling contractors, such as ensuring safe jobsite access roads and conditions for the safe storage of materials and equipment. Other requirements for controlling contractors include, but are not limited to, providing written notification prior to the commencement of reinforcing steel activities; ensuring the stability of formwork and maintaining custody of rebar protective covers after completion of work by the reinforcing steel contractor. The Petitioner notes that several similar controlling contractor responsibilities have been adopted for structural steel erection work in the CSO Section 1710. The Petitioner and supporting organizations believe the adoption of these standards would mitigate the potential for accidents and injuries to workers involved in reinforcing steel and post-tensioning operations.

National Consensus Standards

The national consensus standard, ANSI/ASSE A10.9 – 2013 “Safety Requirements for Concrete Masonry Work” Section 10 contains similar provisions to those recommended by the Petitioner and are the basis for the petition.

comparison of existing standards and the Petitioner's proposal would be necessary in order to avoid potential duplication or conflict with existing standards.

Several major associations representing construction contractors have requested the opportunity to express their concerns and to be involved in any advisory committee and rulemaking action that may be initiated as a result of this petition. The petition has received a broad range of support from labor groups, the ironworker/reinforcing steel industry including the organizations and entities listed in the industry coalition of stakeholders. In staff's opinion the petition includes a number of new provisions that would reduce hazards and injuries to workers engaged in concrete reinforcing steel and post-tensioning operations.

Recommendation

For the reasons stated above, Board staff is of the opinion that an advisory committee of stakeholders should be convened to consider the Petitioner's request and participate in the review and development of any rulemaking proposal that is submitted for consideration by the Board. The Petitioner and or its representatives should be invited to participate in the advisory committee.