

Florida Public Task Force on Workplace Safety

Minutes of Conference Call, October 2, 2008

10:00 A.M.–10:35 A.M.

Participants

Governor's appointees:

Linda South, Chair
Mark Friend
Paul Imbrone
Mike Marinar

Senate appointees:

John Henshaw
John Kozey
Karen Phillips
James Robertson

House appointees:

Scott Blaser
Cindy Kane
Hastings Williams

Project coordinator:

Charlene Vespi

Court reporter:

Catherine Wilkinson

Task Force Members Not Participating

Marianne Capozziello (Governor)
James Baiardi (Senate)
Albert Huston, Danny Shaw (House)

Charlene Vespi opened the meeting with a roll call of participants.

Chairperson Linda South, Secretary of the Florida Department of Management Services, explained that this initial meeting was organizational. She presented an overview of the intent of the legislation creating the task force.

- The task force is to develop findings and issue recommendations for innovative ways that the State can ensure public-sector compliance with safety statutes. These public groups include all State departments and agencies and all county and municipality governments in Florida.
- The task force will address these and other issues:

- differences in workplace safety needs for private sector and public sector employees
- the relationship between Federal and State safety activities and requirements
- the effect of public workplace safety on the State's economic development efforts

Ms. South commended the University of South Florida Safety Florida Consultation Program for providing staffing support for the task force.

Introduction of Members

On Ms. South's request, members of the task force explained their interests and backgrounds in serving on the task force. Summaries follow.

Mark Friend, Chair, Department of Applied Aviation Sciences, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Mr. Friend holds a doctorate in safety management from West Virginia University and has been working in the field for 20 years. He is an expert witness and consultant for businesses' compliance with occupational safety and health regulations. A resident of Daytona Beach, Mr. Friend noted the explosion that killed two city employees in 2006. He believes the accident would not have happened if proper regulations had been in place and that compliance by the state, county, and city is both an economic and a moral necessity.

Paul Imbrone, Vice-President for External Affairs and Advocacy, Macy's Florida and Puerto Rico. Macy's operates 62 stores in Florida and Puerto Rico. Mr. Imbrone has lived and worked in Florida for 28 of his 32 years with Macy's, affording him a good knowledge of company operations within the state. For 10 years he has overseen risk management.

Mike Marinan, Safety and Risk Control Manager, Public Risk Underwriters. Mr. Marinan has 30 years experience in risk management and holds the green industrial safety certification. Public Risk Underwriters provides workers' compensation and liability insurance for some 600 Florida public sector employers, a client base with an active interest in the outcome of the task force's work.

Linda South, Secretary, Florida Department of Management Services. Secretary South chairs the task force at the request of Governor Crist; the rules for State human resources fall under her department. She holds a degree in business and was active in the private sector before moving to State government two years ago. Ms. South is glad to serve the public as department head and task force chair.

John Henshaw, Safety and Health Consultant. Mr. Henshaw earned a degree in industrial health administration from the University of Michigan and has 30 years

experience in the field. In the private sector, he has worked for Monsanto. From 2001 through 2004 Mr. Henshaw was head of OSHA, appointed by President Bush. A Florida resident, Mr. Henshaw sees a void in safety and health protections in the public sector and is very interested in advancing them.

John Kozey, Security Life Safety Administrator, Martin County Board of County Commissioners. Mr. Kozey's safety and security experience encompasses 20 years; he moved into health care with local government. He is a member of the National Fire Protection Association and American Society for Industrial Security. Mr. Kozey will contribute a perspective on current safety programs in his county as well as the budgetary reservations and restraints that all local governments face.

Karen Phillips, General Counsel, Florida United Businesses Association (FUBA). FUBA is an advocacy association for a broad range of small businesses, such as professional offices, construction companies, and restaurants. Members average five employees. Ms. Phillips has held her position for 17 years and in the early 1990s, when Florida had a Division of Safety, lobbied for small business. One issue then was balancing the roles of OSHA and the Division; another one was protecting workers without onerous consequences for the businesses. FUBA also sponsors workers' compensation self-insurance for its members, providing safety consultation services for loss control. For all these reasons, Ms. Phillips has a great deal of interest in safety issues.

Jim Robertson, Managing Partner, General Crane USA. Mr. Robertson's company is Florida-based, working also in Georgia and Texas. Additionally, he is managing member of a 60-year-old trucking company in Palm Beach County, of Hunter Crane in the south Florida market, and of Republic Towers and Hoists in Las Vegas. Mr. Robertson has been very involved with Florida legislation concerning the construction industry. He co-founded the Florida Crane Owners Council, represented Associated Builders and Contractors as local and state president, and is currently working on several issues with the crane industry throughout the U.S.

Hastings Williams, President, Fire Safety Consultants. Mr. Williams received a degree in industrial and fire safety technology and has 38 years in fire safety. His experience includes serving as director of emergency management for Duval County; conducting arson investigations; teaching fire safety and safety management in several certified programs; and helping establish a bachelor's degree program in fire safety technology at the University of North Florida. He sits on the boards of the Northeast Florida Safety Council and the Community Transportation Safety Council, holds numerous professional memberships, and is a certified safety supervisor for the National Construction Curriculum for the State of Florida.

Scott Blaser, Risk Control Director, Florida Municipal Insurance Trust (FMIT); Executive Director, Florida Municipal Association for Safety and Health (FMASH). FMIT includes 600 public entities in Florida. FMASH, which pools resources to provide safety and health to its members, includes 70 public entities. Mr. Blaser followed his bachelor's degree and Navy service with a 30-year career in safety and health. He is a member of the American Society of Safety Engineers and the National Fire Protection Association. In New York state, he served on a similar task force: a Federal health and safety committee created to help smaller businesses wanting to comply with OSHA regulations, though not receiving frequent OSHA visits.

Cindy Kane, Human Resources and Corporate Relations, Harris Corporation. Ms. Kane, a quality engineer by profession, moved later into human resources. The Harris Corporation has 16,000 employees worldwide, with 7,000 in the Melbourne area in Brevard County. She works in training and is developing a series of courses in safety for the company. She brings to the team the aspect of communicating to employees about safety issues, as well as expertise in training materials such as manuals.

Ms. South thanked all participants for contributing experience of such high quality to an important piece of work. She agreed with Mark Friend about the moral obligation to ensure that workers dedicated to public service work have safe environments and a high degree of safety awareness.

Meeting Protocol and Format

Ms. South explained that her job as chair is to ensure that all those with a stake in the task force's recommendations have an opportunity to be heard. The team's work is important to the Legislature and on a fast track. With limited time, meeting protocols require that members use the time valuably.

She began with the responsibilities of members of a publicly appointed task force, including adherence to Government in the Sunshine laws. The task force will make a joint decision as a group and bring its recommendations forward to the Legislature. In brief, the Sunshine law requires that the discussions occur in a publicly noticed meeting where the public may listen and speak. A task force member cannot discuss the project with any other member except in these publicly advertised meetings. Realizing that the task force members interact professionally, Ms. South stressed that they must be cautious not to discuss task force work in any other setting.

In order to accommodate as much information as possible—necessary for the effectiveness of the task force—Ms. South offered the following agenda format. It would allow input not only from the task force's own experts but also from stakeholders not chosen to serve and from the public.

- Meetings will follow Robert's Rules of Order.
- Stakeholders who wish to make presentations must contact Charlene Vespi for a scheduled time on the agenda. Each will have one opportunity to present and to contribute information for the task force's consideration.
- Any individual may provide comment. Those who have not requested a place on the agenda may speak during a public comment period at the beginning of a meeting. Each speaker will be limited to five minutes so that all may have a voice.
- Task force members may engage in dialogue throughout the meetings.

The task force members approved the format.

Meetings Dates and Arrangements

Ms. Vespi presented the meeting dates and locations.

October 17, Orlando, Marriott Airport Hotel

November 14, Fort Lauderdale

December 2, Jacksonville

Information will be mailed to members about making travel arrangements and receiving reimbursements. Car mileage and meal reimbursements use the State rate. Members will not have out-of-pocket expenses for needed hotel stays.

Members can participate by telephone for any meeting they cannot attend. They are to call or email Ms. Vespi with any questions or requests.

Current Public Comment

Ms. South invited input from anyone on the conference call who was not a task force member, receiving no response.

Stakeholder Participation

Members will email Ms. Vespi with suggestions for speakers or stakeholders to be notified about the meetings and agenda protocol. Mr. Williams asked about any limits for the numbers of participants.

Secretary South explained that the task force wants as much input as the public is interested in providing but does not have unlimited time or resources. It is likely many stakeholders known to the members are already eager to speak. She asked members to stimulate this community to contact Charlene Vespi, who will schedule the agendas. Meetings are spread through the state for convenience. If requests exceed available slots of time, a possibility is consolidating like groups under one voice—an arrangement which interested stakeholders may already have.

Mr. Imbrone asked whether there was an existing list of interested stakeholders.

Ms. Vespi noted that she had suggested to Secretary South the Chemical Review Board and the senators who introduced the task force bill. Also the ASSE (American Society of Safety Engineers) had expressed interest. She and the Secretary are relying on task force members, who have many contacts, to reach out to relevant stakeholders and encourage them to participate.

Secretary South thanked the participants and ended the conference call at 10:35 A.M.