

THE GLOBAL COMPACT COMMUNICATION ON PROGRESS FOR 2006-2007

By the Centre of Training of Energy Specialists of Lithuania

1. Introduction

In 2005, a public education institution the *Centre of Training of Energy Specialists of Lithuania* (hereinafter referred to as the “Training Centre”), as a socially responsible undertaking, joined the Global Compact, the United Nations international initiative. Employees of the Training Centre earnestly support all principles of this initiative, *pro rata* to the potential of the company take part in its activities and sincerely believe in benefits from the Global Compact for the training institution and the society.

The Council and the management of the Training Centre perceive the perspective of their work in the context of the principles of the Global Compact, and these principles are implemented in the Training Centre’s everyday activities. The Training Centre publicly declares its approach towards the Global Compact in its web-site by describing its vision and the trends of the Training Centre's activities.

2. About the Training Centre

The *Centre of Training of Energy Specialists of Lithuania* is a public vocational training institution for adults involved in the training of personnel subject to request of various companies, offices and organisations of Lithuania as well as the Employment Exchange of Lithuania. The Training Centre was established in 1964 as a specialised qualification improvement institution for personnel employed by the companies operating in the power system. In 1991 it became an independent public vocational training institution for adults. During the recent decade, the number of professional training courses arranged by the Training Centre increased several times, along with the boosted number of trainees. The Training Centre employs 53 people on the permanent basis, and more than 200 lecturers per year are employed based on the short- term contracts. Per year more than 10 thousands trainees from enterprises, offices and organisations of Lithuania attend the training courses of different duration arranged in the Training Centre and its five branches. The head office of the Centre is located in Vilnius, and its branches - in Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai, Panevėžys and Utena. The training courses arranged in the Training Centre are attended by electricians, gas and electric welders, specialists of gas and district heating companies, employees of the power plants, machinists – maintenance specialists of conditioning and cooling equipment, operators of filling stations and other energy specialists from power companies, construction organisations and utilities. Whereas the Training Centre has got a licence for public vocational training of adults issued by the Ministry of Education and Science of Lithuania, the certificates of the Training Centre are acknowledged by the state authorities and are valid in the whole country.

The Training Centre, a public vocational training institution for adults, as a socially responsible undertaking, operates in two directions:

- 2.1. within the company;
- 2.2. through its trainees by disseminating its activity in the whole country.

3. Socially responsible activity within the company

3.1. Indiscrimination and psychological climate

The Training Centre does not discriminate people according to their nationality, age or gender. Among a comparatively small number of staff, there are persons of four nationalities (Lithuanians, Russians, Poles and Byelorussians); some of them are young and some – quite advanced in years (more than 50 years old). The main evaluation criteria of staff are their competence, diligence, high sense of duty. These are the basic characteristics, predetermining the labour payment and carrier of an employee. The director of the centre and chief financier are women, although the main energy specialists and lecturers are men. The labour payment of every employee depends on his/her contribution to joint activities, but not on nationality, gender, etc. Efforts are made to establish a favourable psychological climate for every employee, family and for women.

3.2. The Training Centre and non-governmental organisations

An independent trade-union, having 37 members (68.5 per cent of the employees) is acting in the Training Centre. The administration of the company has signed the Collective Agreement with the trade-union organisation where the bulk of attention is given to social needs of the employees. The employees are active participants in the activities of the power sector professional associations (the National Electricity Association, the National Electric Engineering Association, the Association of District Heating Suppliers of Lithuania, etc.).

3.3 Possibilities of studies for the employees

The Training Centre supports its employees studying at colleges or universities by providing them with paid vocations for taking exams and credits, preparation of term papers and graduation thesis. At present two employees of the centre are studying in higher educational institutions.

In order to maintain high professional competence of the employees, the qualification improvement courses are arranged in Lithuania and abroad. In 2006 – 2007, twelve employees improved their qualification during the project financed under the Single Programming Document. Moreover, seven employees in 2006 and three employees in 2007 visited foreign power companies – importers of electric equipment to Lithuania (ABB, Raichem, Siemens, etc.). During the visits they learned about up-to-date equipment of these companies and its applicability, other modern technologies, attended exhibitions of the newest products in Germany. Continuous improvement of qualification enables the Training Centre to maintain high competence of its personnel; the employees feel secure as far as their job places, carriers, prestige of their training institution and its image with regard to the quality of provided training in the eyes of the customers are concerned.

3.4. The Training Centre's operations and corruption

All operations of the Training Centre are transparent. All procedures where corruption or fraud might potentially occur, such as taking the exams, submission of papers or thesis are arranged in such a way which completely eliminated corruption or fraud. The training staff, being well aware of the approach of the Training Centre's management and its obligations to the society, make all attempts to arrange their work in the best possible way. Although complaints are very rare, they are treated very seriously, and all staff members are involved in their resolution process. Every year an independent auditor performs the audit of financial operations of the Training Centre, however no serious infringements, especially such which might be related to corruption or fraud, have ever been established.

3.5. Environmental protection

The Training Centre makes no hazardous impact on the environment. In the job places where welders or fitters of power cable coupling joints are trained, good ventilation complying with the requirements

of the Hygiene Centre has been installed, waste materials are utilised according to the effective regulations.

4. Dissemination of social responsibility activities

Whereas approx. 10 thousand trainees from the whole Lithuania attend the training courses arranged by the Training Centre, through its trainees this institution is able to influence the public of Lithuania.

The main objective of the Training Centre is to provide its trainees with good skills in the professional area selected by them, to give sufficient theoretical professional knowledge enabling them to independently improve their qualifications in the future. This is our contribution to decreasing **unemployment** in Lithuania, because people who have obtained in the Training Centre such profession which is demanded in the local labour market, have better opportunities for finding a well paid job. Responsible approach of the Training Centre's management and its staff towards the teaching process and possibilities for the trainees to master the advanced technologies and to get acquainted with sophisticated equipment used in Lithuania are highly appreciated by the employers in Lithuania.

The training courses provided by the Training Centre are not limited to merely vocational training. The training curricula include the courses aimed to mould a conscientious citizen. At present, Lithuanian people and especially workers with lower general education are lacking general knowledge about the society and the place of an individual in the society, his/her duties and rights.

- 4.1. The trainees are provided with information on **the social insurance system** in Lithuania, its importance and benefits for every citizen; the importance of superannuation contributions starting from the young days in our country is explained along with the possibilities to use income tax exemptions.
- 4.2. The trainees receive summarised knowledge about the development of the economy of our country, its main principles, and the taxation system.
- 4.3. A course on the **labour and employment laws** is delivered as well. During the course, the rights of an employee under the employment agreement, benefits and possibilities provided by the Collective Agreement are explained.
- 4.4. In the curricula of every group a certain number of training hours is assigned to **safety at work**. The principles of establishing a safe working place are explained. The conscientious notion is engrained among the trainees that they are obligated to their families and society to work with a sense of responsibility and in line with the safety requirements
- 4.5. In the curricula of most groups, special subjects on environmental protection are included. This is the Training Centre's contribution to the solution of environmental protection problems in Lithuania. Due to the type of their operation, the power companies are among major pollution sources in the country, and quite a number of specialists from these companies are trained in the Centre, hence the impact of unpolluted environment on the quality of people's life and the potential input of every person and every enterprise in decreasing pollution of the environment are included in the training curricula.

Moreover, seminars and workshops are arranged for interested undertakings and construction companies on relevant issues of environmental protection. For example, in 2006-2007 a number of seminars was arranged on work with products containing asbestos. Nowadays it has become an outstanding problem, since no limitations on asbestos were applied in the Soviet times, these products are quite common in Lithuania, and, beyond doubt, they are hazardous to people's health.

5. Conclusions and plans for the year 2007

In the future, the Training Centre intends to continue the commenced works in the company and to disseminate the ideas of socially responsible business in Lithuania through its trainees. The focus of attention will be given for qualification improvement related to the training subjects and pedagogical skills.

The Training Centre has been an initiator of the club uniting all specialists of safety at work of power companies. The initiative to establish the club has been supported by 14 companies, necessary preparations are underway. Since in the companies of Lithuania, as compared with other European countries, the statistics of accidents at work is rather abundant, activities of the club could make a significant input for establishment of a safe job environment.

The Communication was prepared by:

Laimė Valotkienė
Director of the Centre of Training of Energy Specialists of Lithuania
2007 04 23