

§1.0 INTRODUCTION

§1.1 The term "Safety and Welfare" is usually a standard term in the Preliminaries section of most Bills of Quantities in the construction industry. An examination of over twenty-five of these Bills of Quantities ranging in value from five million to ten million dollars have revealed that the prices ascribed to such clauses appear to be nominal. The question arises as to whether this pricing policy is deliberate or whether contractors are unaware of the construction cost implications of those items.

§1.2 The term "safety" can have diverse connotations. For example, it can refer to safety of existing buildings; safety of adjoining property; safety of third parties, etc. For the purposes of this paper, safety is taken to mean the safety of site staff-supervisors, foremen, craftsmen, labourers, etc. - and technical staff - engineers, surveyors and the like. The time frame includes the period from when the men leave the company yard or pick-up point, to their return. Therefore, safety in this context encompasses vehicular accidents en route ^{to} the site.

§1.3 The objective of this paper is to examine generally the causes of accidents, safety precautions on site, safety precautions taken by management, legislative provisions, effectiveness of legislation and finally, the implications of cost as applicable to the construction industry in Trinidad and Tobago.

The International Labour Office (I.L.O.) Safety Education Manual - "Accident Prevention" suggests that accidents may be divided into two categories as follows:

1.1 Those due to technological, mechanical or physical causes.

1.2 Those due to the unsafe behaviour of the worker.

Accidents due to technological, mechanical or physical causes are mainly attributable to defective tools, unguarded machines, damaged electrical cables, frayed hoisting ropes and the like; and these account for only fifteen per cent of all accidents.