

Workstress in the construction industry: causes and measures

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introduction

In the Dutch construction industry over half of the employees experience considerable pressure of work, and they think that measures should be taken either to prevent high work pressure or reduce it. Employers also admit that work pressure is sometimes high. One quarter of the employers taking part in a Dutch monitoring study (1995) on stress and physical workload admitted that work pressure is indeed high. However, only 3% of the employers say that this causes serious problems. In this paper results will be presented of recent research on trends in complaints of workstress of construction workers in the past decade. Furthermore results will be presented on the nature and number of measures implemented at 20 construction companies.

methods and results

Quantitative monitoring study of work stress complaints

Per year about 35,000 construction workers have a voluntary medical check up. They fill in a validated questionnaire concerning their health status and their perceived working conditions. The two-years periods 1993/1994, 1995/1996 and 1997/1998 will be compared on the aspects of workstress.

Qualitative study on feasible measures

With a semi-structured interview employers and employees at 20 construction companies are questioned about feasible measures to reduce the workstress. A distinction is made on measures at an individual level and group level

discussion

Nowadays construction companies start more and more to experiment with different ways of work organisation. But still too little attention has been paid to experiments on implementation of technical and organisational solutions. More projects at company level (aimed at reducing workstress) will be needed to gain more insight into effective solutions aimed at reducing complaints about workstress.

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