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Workplace Health and Safety Management

Guideline

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WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT

Practical Guidelines on the Implementation and Maintenance of an Occupational Safety, Health and Welfare Management System

ABOUT THESE GUIDELINE

WHO SHOULD READ THESE GUIDELINES?

The guidance is principally aimed at enterprises with a well-defined management Structure, where occupational safety and health management can be integrated into the general management system.

In particular, it is aimed at executive directors, boards of directors, other boards of management and senior management controlling bodies in workplaces, all senior managers who discharge responsibilities for occupational safety and health, and safety and health professionals. Smaller companies with a less formal management structure can use this guidance as appropriate to their needs. Safety Representatives should also find it helpful.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO HAVE AN EFFECTIVE SAFETY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ?

There are sound economic reasons for reducing work-related accidents and ill-health, as well as ethical and regulatory reasons.

Economic Reasons

Besides reducing costs, effective safety and health management promotes business efficiency. Thousands of work-related accidents, resulting in more than three days off work are reported to the Health and Safety Authority each year. Work-related diseases and ill-health are more difficult to measure due to their long latency period but result in excess of one million days lost at work each year. These accident and ill-health cases are due to failures and deficiencies in the occupational safety and health management in organisations.

Legal Reasons

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 (the 2005 Act) require you to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of your employees and to manage and conduct your work activities in such a way as to ensure their safety, health and welfare. This requires you to be proactive in managing your safety, health and welfare responsibilities and deal with them in a systematic way. This guidance should help organisations to improve their safety and health performance by providing advice on how safety and health should be managed, and in the process help them to comply with their legal requirements.

Moral and Ethical Reasons

The proactive management of safety and health in the workplace helps organisations prevent injuries and ill-health at work. This guidance should help organisations reduce the personal loss caused as a result of accidents and ill-health at work.

HOW WILL THESE GUIDELINES HELP ?

This guidance aims to give practical advice and recommendations on developing an occupational safety, health and welfare management system for your organisation. The words 'safety and health' are used throughout the document for conciseness and are intended to include the safety, health and welfare of employees and others at work due To work activities.
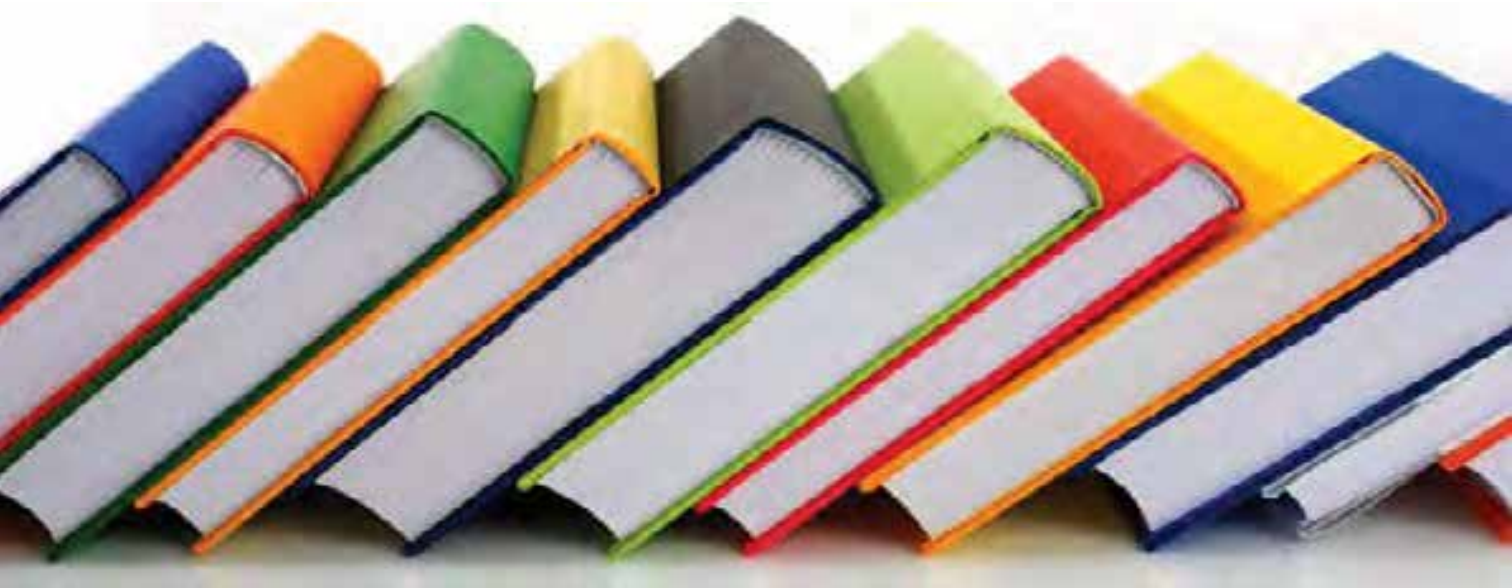
THIS GUIDANCE IS NOT INTENDED TO BE A SPECIFICATION OR TO BE USED FOR CERTIFICATION PURPOSES THIS DOCUMENT :

- Describes the principles and management practices that provide the basis for effective Occupational safety and health management;

- Sets out the issues that need to be addressed;

- Serves as a tool to develop improvement programmes, self-audits or self-assessments.

- Extrapharma guidance brochure is to help our employees to read about our Health and Safety policy and procedure.

Safety and health principles are universal, but how much action is needed will depend on the size of the organisation, the hazards presented by its activities, the physical characteristics of the organisation, products or services, and the adequacy of its existing arrangements.

Many of the features of effective safety and health management are analogous to the sound management practices advocated by proponents of quality management, environmental protection, and business excellence. Commercially successful companies often excel at safety and health management as well, precisely because they apply the same efficient business expertise to safety and health as to all other aspects of their operations. While the quality management of products or services and environmental protection principally protect physical phenomena, safety and health management in the workplace involves protecting people and developing a safety culture between employers and employees. However, there are considerable similarities between the approaches to safety and health described here and those advocated for effective quality management. (ISO 9000 series of standards) or environmental protection (ISO 14000 series).

For example, quality management systems promote continuous improvement in all aspects of an organisation's activities.

They are founded on a continuous process of:

1. **Identifying the key processes;**
2. **Setting performance standards;**
3. **Measuring achievement against these standards;**
4. **Taking corrective action;**
5. **Identifying opportunities for improvement.**

Success in quality management requires the development of supportive organisational cultures. Quality management systems also stress the importance of the active involvement of all employees in the quality process, and the crucial importance of visible leadership by managers.

1. KEY ELEMENTS OF SAFETY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT

The key elements of a successful safety and health management system are set out in this section. Diagram 1 on page 10 below outlines the relationship between them. They also comply with the main elements of an occupational safety and health management system as set out in the ILO Guidelines. The manner and extent to which the individual elements will be applied will depend on factors such as size of the organisation, its management structure, the nature of its activities, and the risks involved. The terminology used in this guidance is explained in Appendix A.

1.1 POLICY AND COMMITMENT

The organisation should prepare an occupational safety and health policy programme as part of the preparation of the Safety Statement required by section 20 of the 2005 Act. Effective safety and health policies should set a clear direction for the organisation to Follow. They will contribute to all aspects of business performance as part of a demonstrable commitment to continuous improvement. Responsibilities to people and the working environment will be met in a way that fulfils the spirit and letter of the law. Cost-effective approaches to preserving and developing human and physical resources will reduce financial losses and liabilities. In a wider context, stakeholders' expectations, whether they are shareholders, employees or their representatives, customers or society at large, can be met.

1.2 PLANNING

The organisation should formulate a plan to fulfil its safety and health policy as set out in the Safety Statement. An effective management structure and arrangements should be put in place for delivering the policy. Safety and health objectives and targets should be set for all managers and employees.
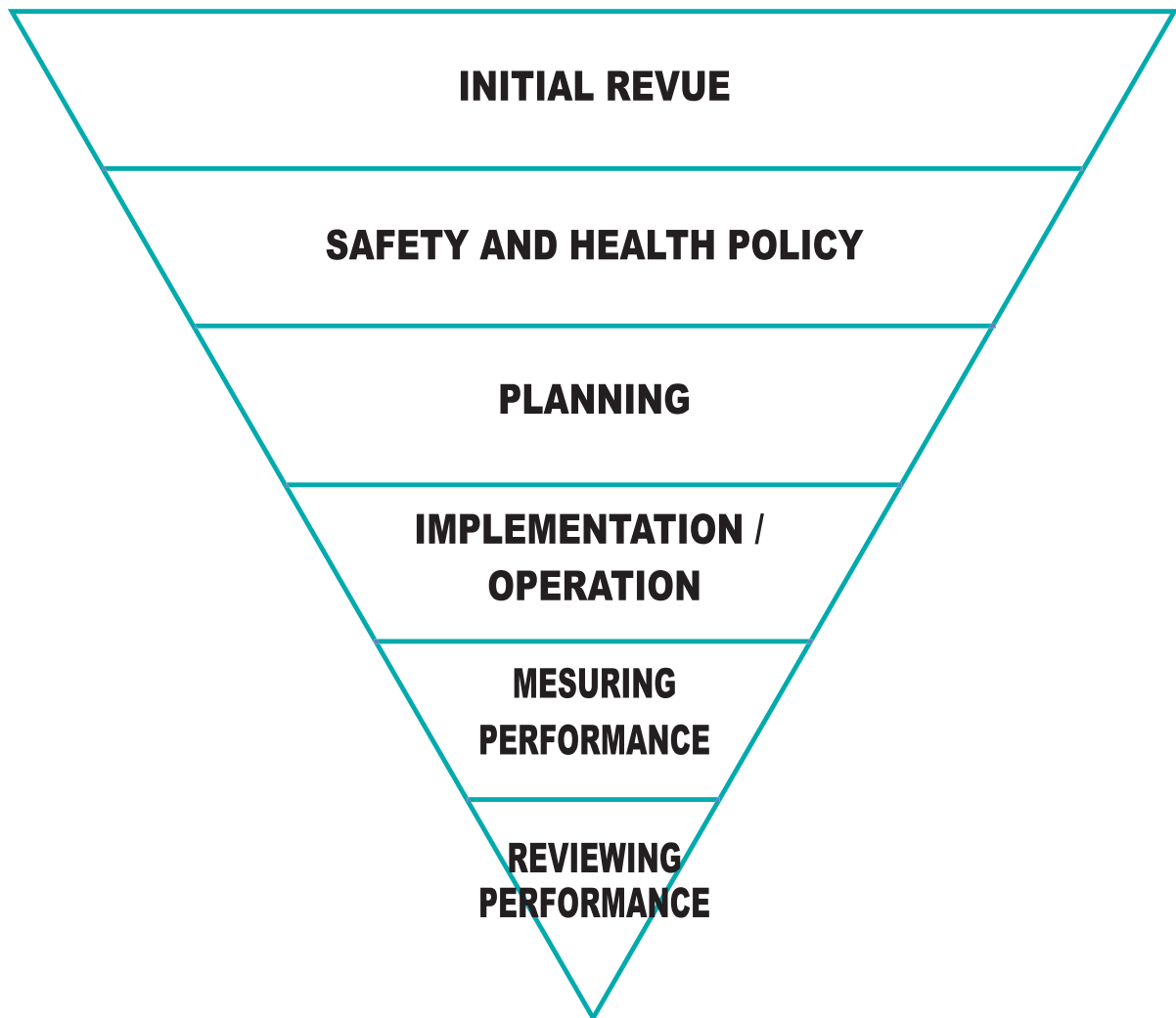
1.3 IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATION

For effective implementation, the organisation should develop the capabilities and support mechanisms necessary to achieve its safety and health policy, objectives and targets. All staff should be motivated and empowered to work safely and to protect their long-term health, not simply to avoid accidents.

The arrangements should be:

- Underpinned by effective staff involvement and participation through appropriate consultation, the use of the safety committee where it exists, and representation systems;
- Sustained by effective communication and the promotion of competence which allows all employees and their representatives to make a responsible and informed contribution to the safety and health effort. There should be a planned and systematic approach to implementing the safety and health policy through an effective safety and health management system. The aim should be to minimise risks. Risk assessment methods should be used to determine priorities and set objectives for eliminating hazards and reducing risks. Wherever possible, risks should be eliminated through the selection and design of facilities, equipment and processes. If risks cannot be eliminated, they should be minimised by the use of physical controls and safe systems of work or, as a last resort, through the provision of personal protective equipment. Performance standards should be established and used for measuring achievement. Specific actions to promote a positive safety and health culture should be identified. There should be a shared common understanding of the organisation's vision, values and beliefs. The visible and active leadership of senior managers fosters a positive safety and health culture.

DIAGRAM 1 : KEY ELEMENTS OF A SAFETY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

DEVELOPMENT OF THESE TECHNIQUES ...

INITIAL REVUE

SAFETY AND HEALTH POLICY

PLANNING

IMPLEMENTATION / OPERATION

MESURING PERFORMANCE

REVIEWING PERFORMANCE

2. INITIAL SAFETY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM REVIEW

The organisation should carry out an initial review of its safety and health management arrangements. This review should compare existing safety and health practice with:

- The requirements of safety and health legislation;
- The provisions set out in the organisation's safety statement;
- Safety and health guidance in the organisation;
- Existing authoritative and published safety and health guidance;
- Best practice in the organisation's employment sector.

As a minimum, in order to comply with safety and health legislation, the organisation must:

- Identify hazards and carry out their risk assessments;
- Prepare and implement the safety statement requirements;
- Have effective safety consultation and employee participation programmes in place;
- Facilitate the selection of and support the role of the safety representative.

The initial review of the organisation's safety and health management system should cover the issues listed above. The following checklist may be used for the review:

- Is the Safety Statement clear and concise so that it can be read and understood by Those who may be at risk?
- Is it available at the workplace to which it relates and are workers given relevant Extracts where they are at specific risk?
- Is the overall safety and health policy of the organisation and the internal structure For implementing it adequate, e.g. are responsibilities of named persons clearly Outlined?
- Does the Statement contain a systematic identification of hazards and an assessment Of risks for the workplace(s) it covers?
- Are risk assessments being carried out on a regular basis as risks change, and are
- The necessary improvements made to keep the safety and health management
- System up to date?

- Are the necessary safety control measures required for a safe workplace identified and implemented - e.g. the provision of safe access and egress, good housekeeping, Clear passageways and internal traffic control?

- Are written safe procedures available for those operations that require them, e.g. for Routine processing and ancillary activities, handling and using chemicals, preventive Maintenance, plant and equipment breakdown maintenance, accident and ill-health Investigations, emergency planning, assessment of personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements?

- Are procedures available for monitoring the implementation of safety systems and Control measures, e.g. are safety audits being carried out?
- Is safety and health training being carried out and does the training give adequate Information to workers on risks they might be exposed to?

- Is the impact of this training and the level of understanding of the information Assessed by anyone?

- Do safety consultation, employee participation and representation procedures exist And are these procedures effective, e.g. is there good co-operation between Employer, managers and employees on safety and health issues at the workplace?

- Is there a safety committee in existence and if so does it comply with the 2005 Act Requirements.

- Are safety committee meetings constructive, with meeting reports and follow-up action lists?

- Is the Safety Representative or Representatives involved at every stage of the safety Consultation process?

3. SAFETY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM MODEL

3.1 SAFETY AND HEALTH POLICY

Management should develop and incorporate into the safety statement a safety and Health policy that recognises that safety and health is an integral part of the Organisation's business performance. They should ensure that this safety and health Policy:

- Is appropriate to the hazards and risks of the organisation's work activities and Includes a commitment to protect, so far as is reasonably practicable, its employees and others, such as contractors and members of the public, from safety and health risks associated with its activities;

- Includes a commitment to comply with relevant safety and health legislation, codes of practice and guidelines as a minimum;

- Provides a framework for measuring performance and ensuring continuous Improvement by setting, auditing, and reviewing safety and health objectives and Targets.

- Is documented, understood, implemented, and maintained at all levels in the
- Organisation;
- Clearly places the management of safety and health as a prime responsibility of line management from the most senior executive level to first-line supervisory level;
- Covers employee safety and health consultation, safety committee meetings where they exist, worker participation; and safety representation and includes a
- Commitment to provide appropriate resources to implement the policy;
- Provides for employee co-operation and compliance with safety rules and procedures.
- Effective safety and health management demands comprehensive safety and health policies that fulfil the spirit and the letter of the law, are effectively implemented, and are considered in all business practice and decision-making.

Organisations achieving high standards of safety and health develop policies that Recognise:

- The contribution that safety and health can make to business performance by Preserving and developing human and physical resources, by reducing costs and Liabilities, and by expressing corporate responsibility;

- The need for leaders to develop appropriate organisational structures and a culture That supports risk control and secures the full participation of all members of the Organisation the requirement to resource and plan policy implementation adequately;

- The necessity of approaching injury, ill-health and loss prevention by systematically Identifying hazards, assessing and controlling risks;

- The need for the organisation to develop an understanding of risks and risk control And to be responsive to internal and external change;

- The requirement to scrutinise and review performance to learn from experience;

- The connection between quality, the environment, safety and health, and good Management practice.

DEVELOPING A WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH POLICY

By law, employers are obliged to plan their overall approach to managing safety and Health and must commit the necessary resources to implement the plan. As an initial Step, employers must develop a safety and health policy which should form part of the Safety Statement. It must be specific to their organisation and be in a written format. The content of the safety and health policy of an organisation should be based on the Hazards and risks present in the organisation and should reflect the fact that systematic Hazard identification and risk assessment have been undertaken.

As a minimum, the policy should contain a commitment that safety and health Legislation will be complied with, and should specify those responsible for implementing The policy at all levels in the organisation, including senior managers, first-line Managers, and supervisors. It should also define their safety and health responsibilities.

Employees' responsibilities should also be addressed. The safety and health policy Should specify the organisation's commitment to ensuring it will manage and conduct its Work activities, so far as is reasonably practicable, so as to be safe for employees and Others in its workplace and it will not allow improper conduct or behaviour which is Likely to put safety and health at risk. In particular, it should specify that adequate Resources will be provided for critical safety and health issues such as the:

- Design, provision and maintenance of a safe place of work for all employees; design, provision and maintenance of safe means of access to and egress from each part of the workplace;

- Design, provision, and maintenance of any article, plant, equipment or machinery for use at work in a safe manner;

- Provision of systems of work that are planned, organised, performed, maintained or revised, so as to be safe, particularly for safety-critical process operations or Services;

- Performance of ongoing hazard identification and risk assessments, and compliance with the general principles of prevention as set out in the legislation;

- Provision and maintenance of welfare facilities and PPE;

- Preparation of emergency plans and the provision of first-aid training;

- Reporting of accidents and dangerous occurrences to the authority and their Investigation;

- Provision and dissemination of safety and health information, instruction, training and supervision as required;

- Operation of safety and health consultation, employee participation and safety Representation programmes;

- Review and keeping up-to-date the safety and health policy in order to prevent Adverse effects on the safety and health of employees from changing processes, Procedures and conditions in the workplace;

- Appointment of people responsible for keeping safety and health control systems in place and making them aware of their responsibilities;

- Establishment of monitoring arrangements, including safety and health inspections and audits, which should be used by the employer to ensure ongoing compliance with legal duties, responsibilities and controls;

- development of in-house safety and health competence;
- Employment of external safety and health experts as required;
- Use of standards, codes of practice, guidelines, or industry practices;
- Co-operation required from employees and disciplinary procedures for noncompliance.

The above list is not exhaustive and the critical safety and health issues that could be Covered by the policy will depend on the risks in the organisation. If the above issues are adequately covered elsewhere in the Safety Statement or in the safety and health Management system, they might need only to be referred to in the safety and health policy. Backup documentation may also be referred to in the policy.

The executive board of directors or other senior management controlling body of the Organisation needs to accept formally the contents in the safety and health policy and Publicly acknowledge its collective role in providing safety and health leadership in its Organisation by:

- Committing to continuous improvement in safety and health;
- Explaining the board's expectations to senior managers and staff and how the Organisation will deliver on them;
- Ensuring the safety statement is a living document, is prepared in consultation with Workers, is reviewed as conditions change, and is brought to the attention of all workers.

3.2 PLANNING

Planning is essential for the implementation of safety and health policies. Adequate Control of risks can be achieved only through co-ordinated action by all members of the Organisation. An effective planning system for safety and health requires a safety and Health management system that:

• Controls risks and as a minimum complies with safety and health laws;
• Reacts to changing circumstances and demands;
• Promotes and sustains a positive safety and health culture and supports
  Continual improvement in safety and health performance.
Initially, the organisation should:
• Access and identify relevant legislation, codes of practice, and guidelines;
• Monitor legal and other requirements and communicate relevant information on these
  to employees.

Safety and health objectives and targets should be based on legal and other requirements. The next step is to formulate a plan to fulfil safety and health policy, objectives and targets.

The plan should include the following:
• setting clear performance standards;
• defining work programmes – the plan for achieving each objective;
• designating responsibilities;
• setting time frames for tasks to be completed.

A safety and health plan will help the organisation meet its legal obligations and improve its performance. It should be reviewed and revised regularly to reflect changes in organisational safety and health objectives.

HEALTH OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

Realistic and achievable safety and health objectives should be established to meet the organisation's safety and health policy. Objectives should be aimed and focused at overall improvement in safety and health performance and should be supported by specific performance standards and targets. They should also be in compliance with relevant safety and health laws applying to the organisation. Discussions about agreeing objectives should help set priorities for the allocation of resources for safety and health. These should reflect the ultimate aim of minimising risk, while the immediate objective may be to achieve a level of performance that complies with relevant legal requirements. Safety and health objectives should be periodically evaluated and updated if necessary.

Measurable targets should be agreed with all managers responsible for achieving the plan and should be clearly communicated to those involved in its implementation.

Performance standards

Performance standards are the basis of planning and measuring safety and health achievement. The maxim 'what gets measured gets done' applies. If the organisation is to be efficient and effective in controlling risks, it needs to co-ordinate its activities to ensure that everyone is clear about what they are expected to achieve. Both the direction of the organisation as a whole and specific risks have to be controlled. Setting performance standards is essential if policies are to be translated from good intentions into a series of co-ordinated activities and tasks. Standards should:

- Set out clearly what people need to do to contribute to an environment free of Injuries, ill-health, and loss;
- Identify the competencies, expertise and training individuals need to fulfil their responsibilities;
- Form the basis for measuring individual, group, and organisational performance.

3.3 IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATION

Structure and Responsibilities

Responsibility for safety and health management ultimately rests with the employer. This responsibility is normally delegated to executive directors, senior managers, line managers, supervisors, and employees. Each person's authority and duties should be clearly defined, documented and communicated to them. The organisational and reporting structure for implementing these duties should be illustrated in an in-house organisational chart.

In addition, each director on the organisation's board needs to accept their responsibilities in providing safety and health commitment and leadership by:

- Ensuring that each member's actions and decisions at board level always reinforce the message in the organisation's safety statement;
- Preventing a mismatch between individual board members attitudes, behaviour or decisions and the organisation's safety statement so as not to undermine workers belief in maintaining good safety and health standards.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Accidents, ill-health, and incidents are seldom random events. They generally arise from failures of control and involve multiple contributory elements. The immediate cause may be a human or technical failure, but such events usually arise from organisational failings which are the responsibility of management. Successful safety and health management systems aim to utilise the strengths of managers and other employees. The organisation needs to understand how human factors affect safety and health performance. Senior executive directors or other senior management controlling body members and executive senior managers are primarily responsible for safety and health management in the organisation. These people need to ensure that all their decisions reflect their safety and health intentions, as articulated in the Safety Statement which should cover:

- The appointment of someone at senior management level with executive Responsibility, accountability and authority for the development, implementation, Periodic review and evaluation of their safety and health management system;
- New materials – are they toxic or flammable, do they pose new risks to employees, Neighbours or the public, and how will any new risks be controlled?

- New work practices – what are the new risks, and are managers and supervisors
- Competent to induct workers in the new practices?
  New people – do they need safety and health training and are they sufficiently
  Competent to do the job safely?
- Only engaging contractors to do new or ongoing projects that reinforce rather than
  Damage the organisation's safety and health policies;
- Recognising their continuing responsibility for safety and health even when work is
  Contracted out;
- Providing their customers with the necessary safety and health precautions when
  Supplying them with articles, substances, or services;
- Being aware that although safety and health responsibilities can and should be
  Delegated, legal responsibility for safety and health still rests with the employer.

Senior managers' responsibilities should include:
- Preparing safety and health policies and consulting employees, including the safety
  Committee where it exists, and the Safety Representative, as appropriate;
- Devising safety and health strategies for key high risks;
- Setting safety and health objectives and targets for employees;
- Devising plans to implement the safety and health policy;
- Ensuring that appropriate organisational structures are in place;
- Identifying and allocating resources for safety and health;
- Ensuring that the safety and health policy is effectively implemented, and checking
  whether objectives and targets have been met; reviewing the effectiveness of the
  safety and health management system;

Managers and supervisors have direct responsibility for the safety and health of employees and activities under their control. Individual employees have responsibilities for ensuring their own safety as defined by the 2005 Act and other relevant safety and health legislation. These responsibilities should be clearly allocated and communicated to the various duty holders. Individual responsibilities should be stated in the organisations Safety Statement. They may include providing supervision and carrying out risk assessments.

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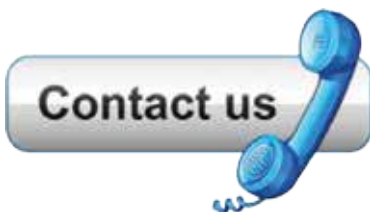
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