

Management of Health and Safety Environment in business Organisations in India with Special Reference to Occupational Health and Safety

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Abstract--Creating a safe work environment is critical to the success of our business, and is one of the best ways to retain staff and maximize productivity. Though it may cost to implement safe practices and install safety equipment, the effect of not taking action can be severe. As a business owner we have responsibilities regarding health and safety in our workplace. We need to ensure that our business doesn't create health and safety problems for our employees, customers or the public. In particular, it is aimed at those who control the activities of the business e.g. the 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, safety and health professionals. Effective health and safety policies set a clear direction for the organisation to follow. There is a shared common understanding of the organisation's vision, values and beliefs

Key Words--Severe -Dreadful, Ensure - Ascertain, Vision - Intellect, Beliefs - Conviction.

I. INTRODUCTION

Health and safety is one of the most important aspects of an organization's smooth and effective functioning. Good health and safety performance ensures an accident free industrial environment. With the continuous and untiring effort of various legislative authorities as well as NGOs, the awareness of occupational health and safety (OH&S) has improved in India considerably. Organizations have started attaching the same importance to achieve high OH&S performance as they do to other key aspects of their business activities. Considering this fact and a great demand from the industry for a comprehensive framework for OH&S, the Committee formulated IS 18001 in the year 2000 taking considerable assistance from BS 8800 : 1996 'Guide to occupational health and safety management system' ; and AS/NZS 4804 : 1997 'Occupational health and safety management systems—General guidance and principles, assessment and supporting techniques'.

Indian Standard on OH&S management systems

Occupational Health and Safety demands adoption of a structured approach for the identification of hazards, their evaluation and control of risks in the organisation. Hence, Bureau of Indian Standards has formulated an Indian Standard on OH&S management systems. It is called as the IS 18001:2000 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems. This standard prescribes the requirements for an OH&S Management Systems, to

enable an organization to formulate a policy, taking into account the legislative requirements. It also provides information about significant hazards and risks, which the organization can control in order to protect its employees and others, whose health and safety may be affected by the activities of the organization. Organizations interested in obtaining license for OH&S Management System as per IS 18001 should ensure that they are operating the system according to this standard.

National Policy on Safety, Health and Environment at Work Place

The Constitution of India provide detailed provisions for the rights of the citizens and also lays down the Directive Principles of State Policy which set an aim to which the activities of the state are to be guided. On the basis of Directive Principles as well as international instruments, Government is committed to regulate all economic activities for management of safety and health risks at workplaces and to provide measures so as to ensure safe and healthy working conditions for every working man and woman in the nation. Government recognizes that safety and health of workers has a positive impact on productivity and economic and social development. Prevention is an integral part of economic activities.

II. LEGISLATIONS FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT

1. Under the **Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974** employers are required to consult employee's representatives on the making and maintenance of health and safety arrangements and for checking their effectiveness.

2. **The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977** ensure that:-

- Recognised trade unions (and staff associations) may appoint safety representatives to represent employees in these consultations; and
- If requested to do so by the safety representatives, employers are required to establish formal safety committees for that purpose.

3. By virtue of the **Health and Safety (Consultation with Employers) Regulations 1996**, employers have also been required to consult with employees not in groups covered by trade unions or staff associations. As a matter of good practice some forces have entered into agreements with

trade unions and staff associations to represent non-affiliated staff where health and safety issues are likely to affect the whole workforce. Force and local level safety committees owe their origin to this legislation and provide for formal opportunities to review the measures taken to ensure the health and safety at work of employees.

4. The Factories Act, 1948 regulates health, safety, welfare and other working conditions of workers in factories. It is enforced by the State Governments through their factory inspectorates. The Directorate General Factory Advice Service & Labour Institutes (DGFASLI) co-ordinates matters concerning safety, health and welfare of workers in the factories with the State Governments.

DGFASLI conducts training, studies and surveys on various aspects relating to safety and health of workers through the Central Labour Institute in Mumbai and three other Regional Labour Institutes located at Kolkata, Chennai and Kanpur.

5. Mines Act, 1952 contains provisions for measures relating to the health, safety and welfare of workers in the coal, metalliferous and oil mines. The Mines Act, 1952, prescribed duties of the owner (defined as the proprietor, lessee or an agent) to manage mines and mining operation and the health and safety in mines. It also prescribes the number of working hours in mines, the minimum wage rates, and other related matters. Directorate General of Mines Safety conducts inspections and inquiries, issues competency tests for the purpose of appointment to various posts in the mines, organises seminars/conferences on various aspects of safety of workers. Courts of Inquiry are set up by the Central Government to investigate into the accidents, which result in the death of 10 or above miner pecuniary punishments are prescribed for contravention of obligation and duties under the Act.

6. Dock Workers (Safety, Health & Welfare) Act, 1986 contains provisions for the health, safety and welfare of workers working in ports/docks. It is administered by Director General Factory Advice Service and Labour Institutes, Directorate General FASLI as the Chief Inspector there are inspectorates of dock safety at 10 major ports in India viz. Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Visakhapatnam, Paradip, Kandla, Mormugao, Tuticorin, Cochin and New Mangalore overall emphasis in the activities of the inspectorates is to contain the accident rates and the number of accidents at the ports.

III. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS OF MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

The organization shall establish, document, implement, maintain and continually improve an OH&S management system, in accordance with the requirements of this standard. The organization shall define and document the scope of its OH&S management system.

OH&S Policy

Top management shall define, document and endorse its OH&S policy. The policy shall:

- a. be appropriate to the nature, scale and the hazards and risks of its activities and facilities;
- b. includes a commitment to continual improvement in its OH&S performance;
- c. include a commitment to comply with the applicable OH&S legislations and with other requirements to which the organizations subscribe;
- d. be implemented, maintained, communicated to all employees and understood within the organization;
- e. provide a framework for establishing, maintaining and periodically reviewing OH&S objectives and targets;
- f. be reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains relevant and appropriate to the organization; and
- g. be available to the public.

Planning

The organization shall carry out an initial review of their existing arrangements for managing OH&S. The current position of an organization with regard to OH&S shall be established by means of an initial review of its current OH&S arrangements to:

- a. Identify the gaps between any existing systems in place and the requirements of this standard;
- b. Identify all hazards and risks associated with the organization's activity and facilities;
- c. Assess the level of knowledge and compliance with all OH&S standards and legislation;
- d. Compare current arrangements with best practice and performance in the organization's employment sector and other appropriate sectors;
- e. Review past experience with incidents and results of any previous assessments, compensation experience, disruption, etc, associated with OH&S; and
- f. Assess efficiency and effectiveness of existing resources devoted to OH&S management.

The organization shall document this information and shall plan the progressive implementation of the elements of the system based on this information.

Objectives, targets and programme(s) shall be regularly reviewed at planned intervals and revised, if necessary. The organization shall establish, implement and maintain programme(s) for achieving its objectives and targets.

If a project relates to new developments and new or modified activities and services, programme(s) shall be amended appropriately, where relevant, to ensure that OH&S management applies to such projects. When the objectives and targets are set, the organization shall consider establishing measurable OH&S performance indicators. These indicators shall be used as a basis for an OH&S performance evaluation system and to provide information on both OH&S management and operation systems.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATION

The organization's top management shall appoint at the senior management level specific management representative(s), with executive powers, who, irrespective of other responsibilities, shall have defined roles, responsibilities and authority for:

- a. Ensuring that OH&S management system requirements are established, implemented and maintained in accordance with this Indian Standard; and
- b. Reporting on the performance of OH&S management system to top management for review and as a basis for improvement of the OH&S management system.

Management shall provide adequate resources essential to establish, implement, maintain/control and improvement of the OH&S management system. Resources include human resources including specialized skills, organizational infrastructure, technology and financial resources. The organization shall identify training needs for all personnel, whose work/workplace involves significant hazard associated with its OH&S management system. It shall provide training or take other action to meet these needs, evaluate its effectiveness, and shall retain associated records.

Communication and Reporting

Organization shall establish, implement and maintain procedure(s) to ensure that pertinent OH&S information including significant risks and hazards are communicated and from employees and other interested parties. The organization shall establish, implement and maintain documented procedures for relevant and timely reporting of information required for monitoring and continual improvement of OH&S performance.

Design and engineering

The organization shall establish, implement and maintain procedure(s) to ensure that health and safety is considered at the initial design and planning phase to build risk controls at this point. To ensure this, each stage of design cycle (development, review verification, validation and change) should incorporate hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control procedures. Appropriately competent people shall be allocated clear responsibilities to meet and verify health and safety requirements. Where the newly evaluated hazard cannot be eliminated or substituted for one that presents lower risks, engineering controls shall be adopted. When the product, process or workplace is redesigned this experience shall be considered in the design process.

Emergency Preparedness and Response

The organization shall establish, implement and maintain procedure(s) for emergency preparedness and response, to plan for contingency in advance and to periodically test these plans to allow an adequate response to occur during the actual emergency. While planning the procedure for emergency preparedness it shall consider significant events such as fire, explosion, toxic release or natural

disasters that threaten the viability of the organization. On-site and off-site emergency plans and procedures shall be developed and periodically tested, reviewed and revised, where necessary by the appropriate authority. Emergency plans of large installations should be prepared in consultation with municipal or state disaster planning authorities.

Critical Incident Recovery Plan

The organization shall establish, implement and maintain procedures for Critical Incident Recovery Plan (CIRP) to aid in-plant employee recovery as soon as possible after the cessation of the event. Only suitably qualified counselors shall be used to assist victims associated with a traumatic event.

Accident, Incident, Non-conformance, Corrective and Preventive Action

The organization shall establish and maintain procedures for defining responsibility and authority for:

- a. The handling and investigation of:
 1. Accidents,
 2. Incidents, and
 3. Non-conformances;
- b. Taking action to mitigate any consequences arising from accidents, incidents or non-conformance;
- c. initiation and completion of corrective and preventive action; and
- d. Confirmation of the effectiveness of corrective and preventive action taken.

These procedures shall require that all proposed corrective and preventive actions shall be reviewed through the risk assessment process prior to implementation.

Any corrective and preventive action taken to eliminate the causes of actual and potential non-conformances shall be appropriate to the magnitude of problems and commensurate with the OH&S hazards and risks encountered.

The organization shall implement and record any changes in the documented procedures resulting from corrective and preventive actions taken.

Management Review

The organization's top management shall at intervals, that it determines, review the OH&S management system to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. The management review process shall ensure that the necessary information is collected to allow management to carry out this evaluation. Reviews shall include assessing opportunities for improvement and the need for changes to the OH&S management system, including the OH&S policy, objectives and targets. Records of the management review shall be retained.

The output from management reviews shall include any decisions and actions related to possible changes to OH&S policy, objectives, targets and other elements of the OH&S management system, consistent with the commitment to continual improvement.

V. CONCLUSION

In India there are no authentic statistics on the number of companies certified for OHSAS or IS18001. Information collected from various certification bodies indicates that approximately 3000 organizations have currently adopted these standards to bench mark their OH&S activities. There action to introduction of any new system to control the existing activities is always the same. Managements view it a same thod to bring discipline and bring ineffective control and review. Getting certified against a standard is an assurance to various take holders that OHSissues are addressed in a systematic manner. Middle man agements view it as some more amount of paper work.

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