A Study on ISO 31000: Managing Risk Management System Implementation to Improve the Organization Performance: The Case of Malaysian Airline System Berhad

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ABSTRACT

Risk management plays a vital role in safeguarding organizational operations against uncertainties that may threaten their performance, safety, and reputation. The Malaysian Airline System Berhad (MAS) provides a critical case study, as incidents such as the MH370 and MH17 highlight the consequences of inadequate risk preparedness. This study examines the application of ISO 31000:2009, alongside AS/NZS 4360:2004 and OHSAS 18000:2007, to evaluate how structured risk management systems can improve organizational performance in the airline industry. Employing a qualitative research approach, data were collected through 3 interview session with MAS management to assess the implementation of the risk management framework. The findings suggest that integrating international standards fosters systematic risk identification, assessment, treatment, and monitoring, thereby enhancing decision-making, safety, and resilience. The study concludes that adopting ISO 31000, in combination with other frameworks, can significantly strengthen organizational performance by embedding proactive and adaptive risk management practices in complex operational environments.

Keywords: ISO 31000; risk management system; organizational performance; Malaysian Airline System

INTRODUCTION

The airline industry in Malaysia is experiencing rapid growth and has become a significant sector in transportation. In this context, any accident in the airline industry can adversely affect the business performance, financial stability, and reputation of the company. As noted by George and Bob (2009), failure to adhere to specific protocols can damage an organisation’s reputation. On 8 March 2014 a major incident occurred involving the Malaysian Airline System Berhad (MAS) with the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing, China. Additionally, Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17, travelling from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur, was shot down in Ukraine. Both incidents had detrimental effects on the company's financial performance and its reputation.

According to Borghesi and Barbara (2013), "Risk" cannot be eliminated. Therefore, organisations must manage factors that increase and mitigate risks to achieve strategic advantages at a minimal cost. Consequently, risk management is essential for ensuring workplace safety and managing adverse events. Malaysian Airlines had implemented effective risk management and might have had alternative strategies for Flight MH17, such as altering the flight path to avoid the "potentially hazardous situation" in the Ukrainian airspace. It appears that Malaysia Airlines lacked a contingency plan in its risk-management strategy.

The objectives of this study are as follows: (1) to focus on the study of the ISO 31000:2009 system in managing risk to enhance organizational performance; (2) to demonstrate how organizational performance can be improved through the implementation of risk management systems and processes; and (3) to elucidate the improvements

in organizational performance that can be achieved through the ISO 31000 Risk Management System. In addition to examining the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 31000:2009, other systems such as AS/NZS 4360 and OHSAS 18000 are reviewed in this study. Malaysian Airline System Berhad (MAS) was selected as the case study to obtain the results.

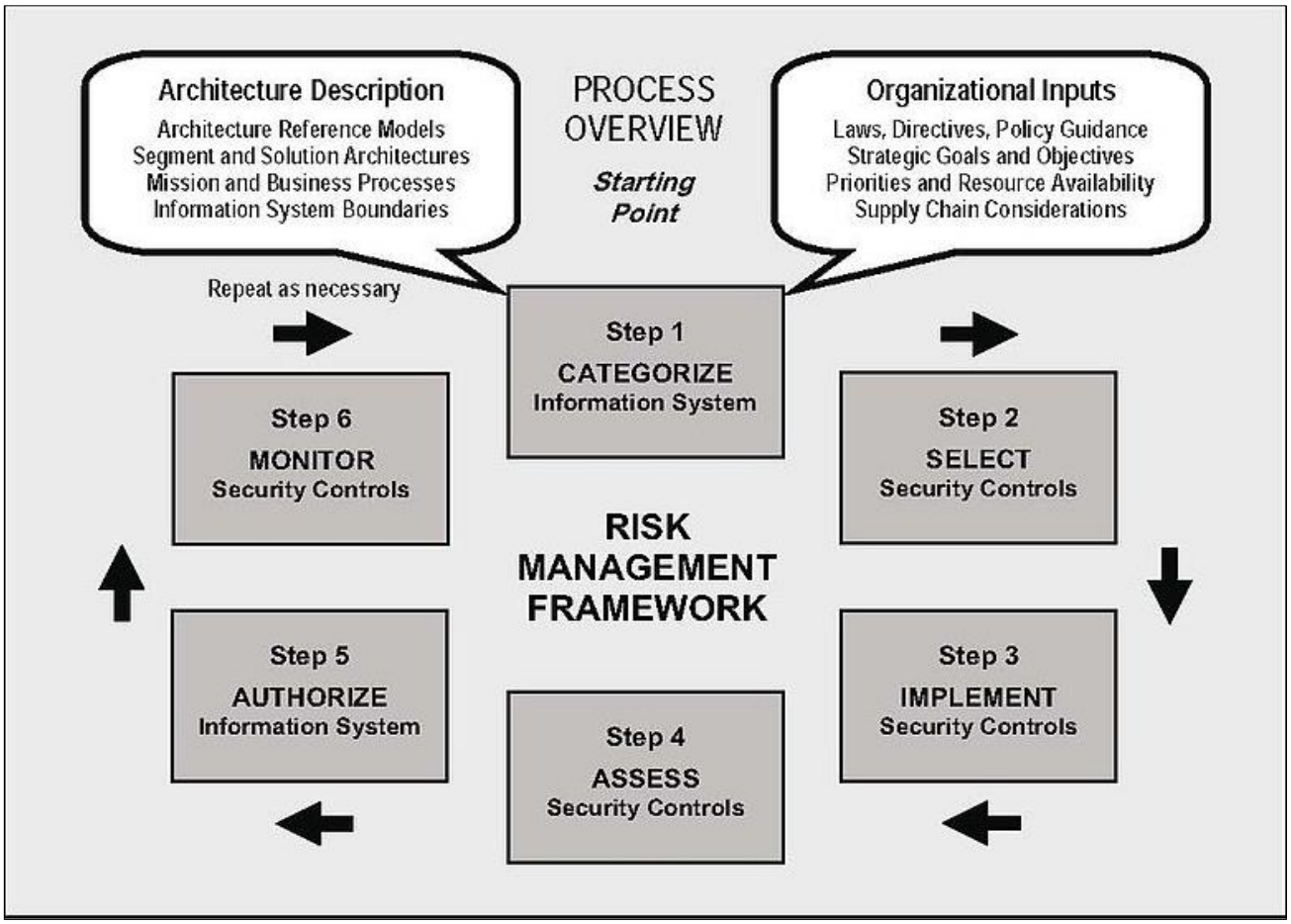
LITERATURE REVIEW

Risk Management

Risk management is a systematic process aimed at assessing risks, determining control measures, and mitigating threats within companies and industries. It involves the regulation and monitoring of risks to ensure safety and health, thereby reducing the likelihood and impact of adverse events. Although risks can be minimised to an acceptable level, they cannot be entirely eliminated. The significance of risk management is increasing as businesses expand globally and face increased competition (Ahmed et al., 2007). The process encompasses establishing context, identifying, analysing, assessing, treating, monitoring, and communicating risks, which facilitates the continuous enhancement of decision-making (Standards Australia, 1999). According to Stoddard, J. (2004), risk management is a challenging endeavor that has the potential to motivate individuals. It is a structured approach for identifying, assessing, and prioritising risks, followed by allocating resources to minimise and control the impact of undesirable events (Smith and Merritt, 2002).

RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Figure 1: Risk Management Frameworks

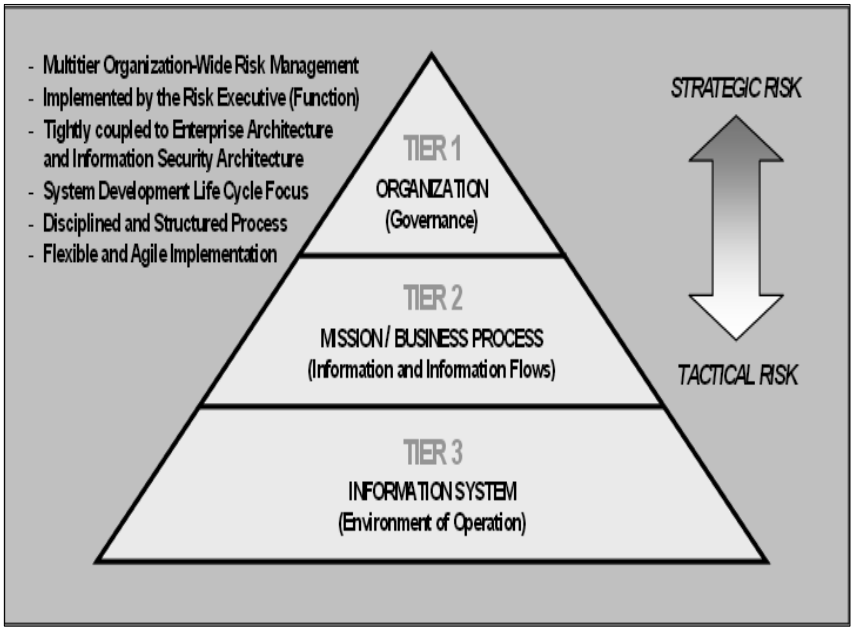


(NIST Special Publication 800-37 Revision 1, 2010)

The Risk Management Framework (RMF) as shown in the Figure 1 provides a disciplined and structured process that integrates information security and risk management activities into the system development life cycle. The

RMF operates primarily at Tier3 in the risk management hierarchy but can also interact at Tiers 1 and 2 as shown in Figure 2.

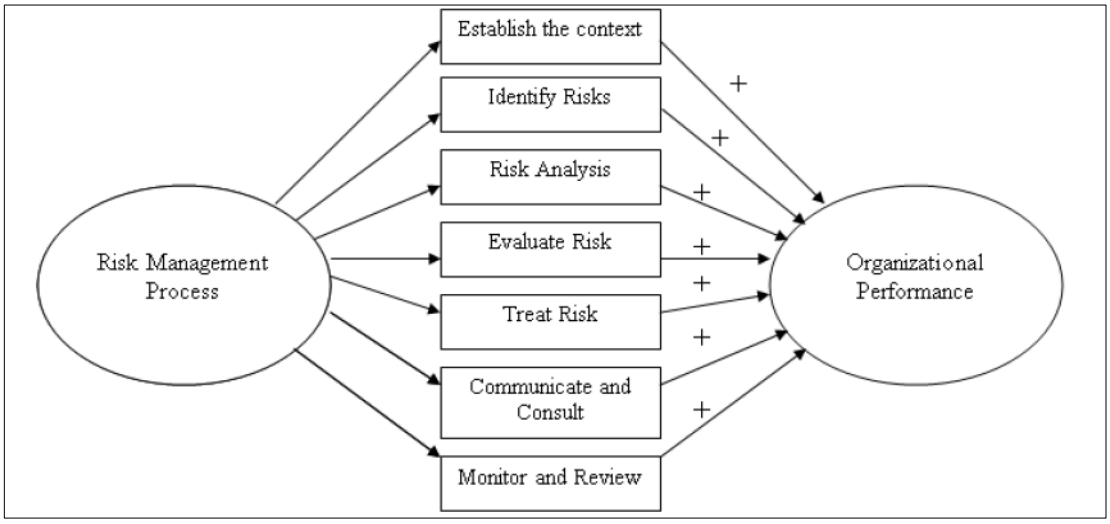
Figure 2: Tiered Risk Management Approach



(NIST Special Publication 800-37 Revision 1, 2010)

Risk Management Process

Figure 3: Research model



("Do effective risk management affect organizational performance", European Journal of Business and Management)

According to Standards Australia (1999) as shown in the Figure 3, the risk management process comprises the following seven steps.

1. Establish the context: This initial phase involves defining the aims, objectives, and scope of risk management and determining the criteria, resources, and authorities for risk treatment. It reflects the project's status in terms of resources, equipment, budget, stakeholder involvement, deliverables, strategic goals, and schedules (Ahmed et al., 2007).
2. Identify risks: Risk identification uncovers potential risks facing an organization and is considered the most

critical step, as it forms the foundation for risk control programs (Tchankova, 2002). The identification method is influenced by the organizational culture and practices. A risk list should provide at least one response to each identified risk (Chapman 1997). Cerevon (2006) views risk identification as collaborative, examining project events across risk categories to identify their negative impacts. The identification process must be continuous because of environmental changes.

3. Risk analysis: Following identification, analysis determines the characteristics and significance of each risk for further review (Ahmed et al., 2007). Each risk is rated to assess its impact and probability. Risk analysis provides information for decisions regarding priorities and treatments (Standards Australia, 2004). Two types of analyses were employed: a) quantitative and b) qualitative (Kinch et al., 2007).
4. Risk evaluation: The complexity of the evaluation depends on the number of risks. With fewer risks, evaluation is simpler but becomes challenging with numerous complex risks (Standards Australia, 2004). Risks should be examined individually and for their combined project impact (Elkington et al., 2002). Risk evaluation determines mitigation options and selects the most suitable option for a mitigation plan (Ahmed et al., 2007).
5. Treat risks: Risk treatment is the primary outcome of risk management. Risks can be addressed using proactive or reactive approaches. Reactive approaches involve actions taken after risk events occur, whereas proactive approaches are based on potential risks (Ahmed et al., 2007). Standards Australia (2004) identifies treatment options as reducing likelihood, reducing consequences, transferring risk, accepting risk, and avoiding risk.
6. Monitor and review: This step involves monitoring risks and reviewing the effectiveness of the treatment plan. Risks must be monitored as changing circumstances may alter priorities. As risks rarely remain static, the management process requires regular repetition to capture new risks (Standards Australia, 2004).
7. Communicate and consult with relevant authorities: Effective risk management requires contributions from all organizational participants (Ahmed et al., 2007). Communication is essential and involves stakeholders to achieve successful outcomes (Standards Australia, 2004). Future risk communication will be twofold: organisations must expand internal communication as external stakeholder demand increases (Ryan et al., 2005).

Critical success factors of effectiveness in Risk Management

Table 1: The Critical Success Factors (Ranong P. N.& Phuenngam W., 2009)

Critical Success Factors	
1.	Commitment and support from top management
2.	Communication
3.	Culture
4.	Organization Structure
5.	Trust
6.	Information Technology (IT)
7.	Training

The factors of effectiveness in Risk Management are:

Commitment and Support from Top Management

Ifinedo (2008) examined contingency factors, including top management support, business vision, and external

expertise. Zwikael (2008) posits that top management support is a critical success factor in project management. Young and Jordan (2008) assert that "the essence of top management support relates to effective decision-making to manage risk and to authorize business process change." Top management support is vital to the success of organizational initiatives (Hasanali, 2002). Top management formulates objectives and strategies for organizational risk management (Henriksen and Uhlenfeldt, 2006).

Communication

Internal communication should align with the business strategy and enhance performance (Quirke, 1996). This ensures that team members understand their current status and objectives (Clutterbuck and Hirst, 2002). Finniston (1975) highlighted the importance of gathering, storing, delivering, and communicating information in business. Communication is essential for effective risk management in construction projects. Grabowski and Roberts (1999) emphasised the role of communication in risk mitigation, providing opportunities for clarification, understanding progress, and discussing improvements.

Culture

Hofstede (2001, p.9) defines culture as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another." Culture comprises patterns of values, ideas, and feelings transmitted through symbols that shape behaviour. Hasanali (2002) describes culture as "the combination of shared history, expectations, unwritten rules, and social customs that compel behaviours. It is the set of underlying beliefs influencing perceptions of actions and communications of all employees."

Organizational Structure

Stank, Daugherty, and Gustin (1994) state that organizational structure defines an organisation's internal pattern of relationships, authority, and communication. It allocates tasks and resources and provides coordination. Hunter (2002) supports the organizational structure that determines how employees work.

Training

Organisations use formal training processes and external consultants for employee training (Hughey and Mussnug, 1997). Treven (2003) categorises training methods into two types: on-the-job training, including one-on-one instruction, coaching, job rotation, and apprenticeship/internship, and off-the-job training, which is conducted away from the worksite.

Trust

Trust, according to Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995, p.711), is "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party." This definition applies to relationships with identifiable parties who are perceived to act toward the trustor.

Information Technology

According to Halliday, Badenhorst, and Solms (1996, p.22), Information Technology (IT) comprises two components: "first is the information systems including related information on which critical business functions depend. Second are the computer technologies (hardware and software) which support the processing, storage, and distribution of data." IT connects humans to information and each other (Wong 2005).

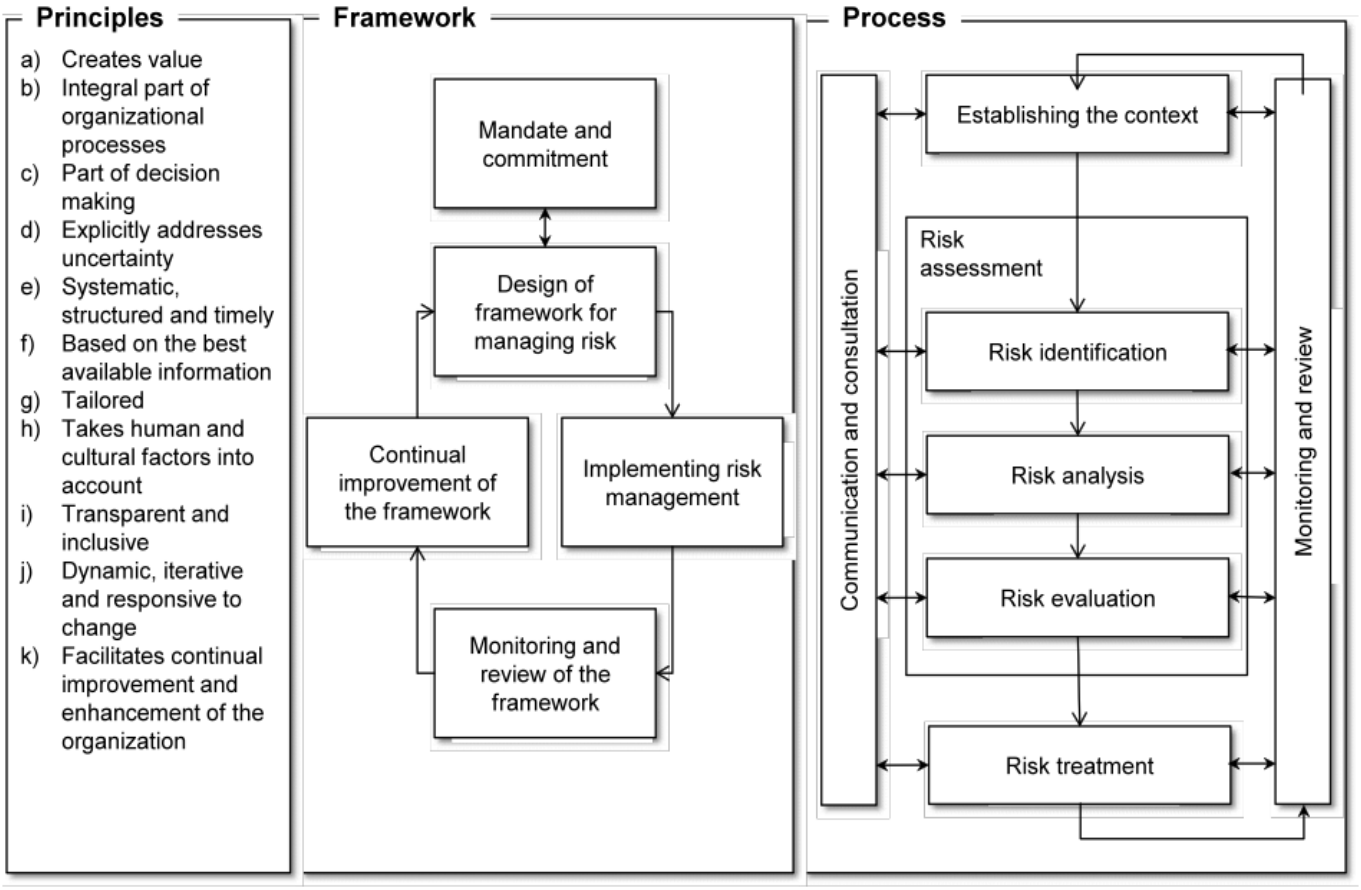
ISO 31000 in Risk Management

ISO 31000:2009, Risk management about the principles and guidelines, provides principles, framework, and a process for managing risk. It can be used by any organisation, regardless of its size, activity, or sector. Using ISO 31000 can help organisations increase the likelihood of achieving objectives, improve the identification of opportunities and threats, and effectively allocate and use resources for risk treatment. However, ISO 31000

cannot be used for certification purposes but does provide guidance for internal or external audit programs. Organisations using it can compare their risk management practices with an internationally recognised benchmark, providing sound principles for effective management and corporate governance (ISO, n.d.).

The Structure of the Standard

Figure 4: Relationship between principles, framework and process (Vandijck I., (2014))



The structure of the ISO 31000 standard is based on three fundamental components: principles, framework, and process (Figure 4). This structure is concise, clear, and relatively straightforward. It does not introduce any radical innovations, as the principles delineate widely accepted best practices. The framework is grounded in Deming's 'Plan-Do-Check-Act' cycle, while the process embodies international best practices in risk management (Vandijck I., 2014).

The Principles

According to Vandijck I. (2014), the principles assert that risk management should primarily focus on value creation, followed by the protection of assets. Additionally, risk management should be an integral component of organizational processes, considered in decision-making, and explicitly account for uncertainty. It must be systematic, structured and timely. Furthermore, risk management should be based on the best available information, including historical data, experiences, stakeholder feedback, and observations.

The Framework

As illustrated in Diagram 1, the framework is predicated on a mandate and commitment from the top management. The design of a risk management framework within an organisation is informed by an understanding of the internal and external contexts, including political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental (PESTLE) factors.

The Process

The process comprises several key steps: risk identification, assessment, and evaluation. Following risk evaluation, the subsequent step is risk treatment, during which various options or combinations of options are considered. These include risk avoidance, acceptance or increase based on opportunities, elimination of the risk source, response to the likelihood or consequences of the risk, and risk sharing with other parties. Throughout all stages, effective communication between internal and external stakeholders and continuous monitoring and refinement of the process are required (Vandijck I., 2014).

Managing Risk on ISO 31000

According to Ramiro (n.d), ISO 31000:2009 gives a list in order of preference on how to deal with risk:

1. Avoiding the risk of deciding not to start or continue with the activity that gives rise to the risk
2. Accepting or increasing the risk in order to pursue an opportunity
3. Remove the risk source
4. Changing the likelihood
5. Changing the consequences
6. Sharing the risk with another party or parties (including contracts and risk financing)
7. Retaining the risk of an informed decision

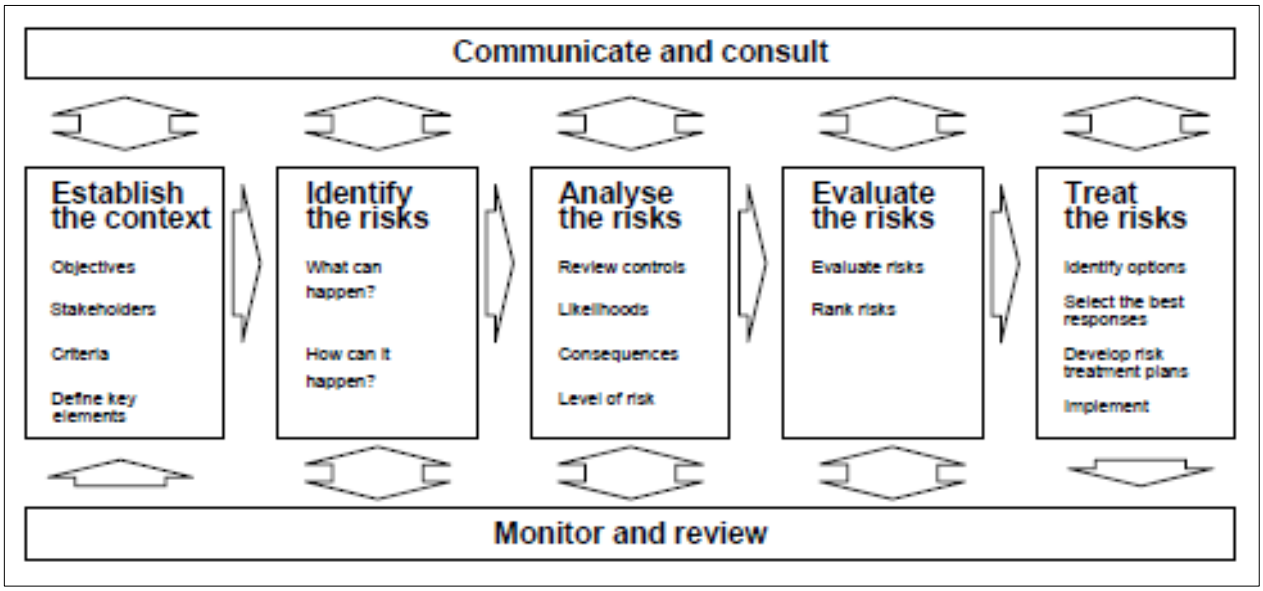
AS/NZS 4360 in Risk Management

Dr. Dale F. Cooper, serving as a Director at Broadleaf, is a founding member of the joint Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand Technical Committee OB-007, which was instrumental in the development of the Australia and New Zealand Standard for risk management, AS/NZS 4360:2004, along with its associated Handbook. Grant Purdy, an Associate Director at Broadleaf, currently holds the position of Chair of the Committee. This standard was formulated in response to the identified need for practical guidance in implementing risk management within both public and private sector organisations. Since its inception, it has emerged as one of the most widely adopted standards, with various supplementary handbooks subsequently produced.

Approach

The risk management process is set out in the Standard in the Figure 5 and Figure 6 below.

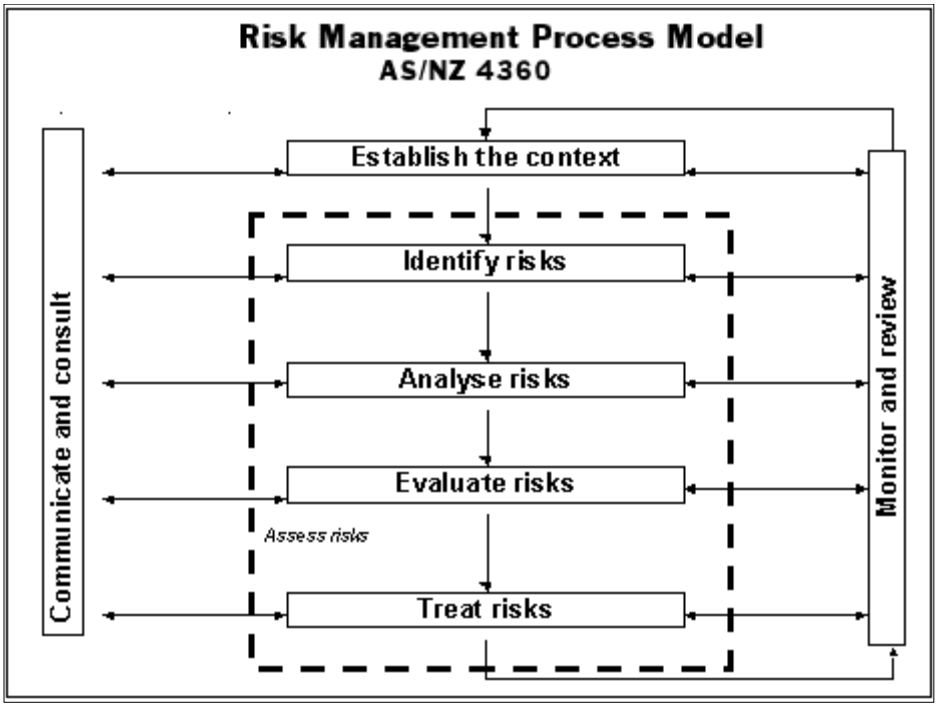
Figure 5: Risk Management Process



(Tutorial: Risk Management Standard, AS/NZS 4360:2004)

Australia was one of the first countries that define the risk management model in a national standard (AS/NZ 4360-1999) shown diagrammatically below.

Figure 6: Risk management process model



(Taken from website, Risk Chase (2013))

OHSAS 18000

OHSAS 18000:2007 Occupational Health and Safety Management Certification is an international standard that offers a framework for identifying, controlling, and mitigating risks associated with health and safety in an organization as shown in Figure 7. Implementing this standard communicates to stakeholders that the health and safety of employees are prioritised within the organisation (taken from website certification Europe: OHSAS 18001 Occupational Health and Safety, (n.d.)). Similar to the ISO standards, OHSAS 18000 emphasises continuous improvement, which is crucial for maintaining health and safety in an organisation. It can effectively reduce the risks within an organisation.

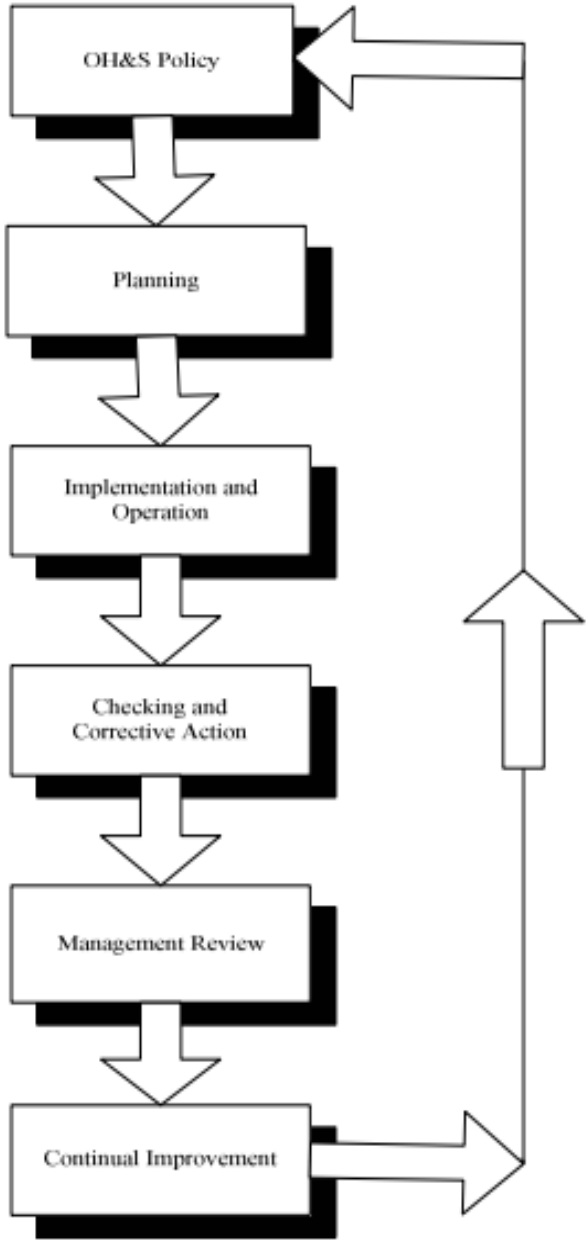
OHSAS 18000 is an international specification for occupational health and safety management. It consists of two parts, 18001 and 18002, and incorporates BS8800 along with several other publications (taken from website OHSAS 18001 Health & Safety Standard, n.d.). OHSAS can assist in minimising risks for the company and its employees and enhance an existing occupational health and safety management system.

The benefits of obtaining OHSAS 18000 certification include the establishment of optimal working conditions throughout an organisation, identification of hazards and implementation of controls to manage them, and reduction of workplace accidents and illnesses, thereby decreasing associated costs and downtime. This certification enhances organizational performance, ensures safe working conditions, and motivates employees. It also fosters reassurance among stakeholders and improves the company's image and credibility among stakeholders, regulators, customers, prospective clients and the public. Furthermore, it involves the adoption of best practices in risk management and minimises employer liability through proactive approaches and controls. Finally, it ensures regulatory awareness and compliance (DAS Certification USA, n.d.). According to OHSAS 18001 Health and Safety Zone (n.d.), the OHSAS specification is applicable to any organisation seeking to establish an Occupational Health and Safety (OHAS) management system to eliminate or minimise risks to employees and other interested parties exposed to OHSAS risks associated with its activities. It also enables the organisation to assure itself of its conformance with its stated OHAS policy and to demonstrate such conformance to others. The OHSAS framework allows for the implementation, maintenance, and continual

improvement of an OHAS management system, as well as the self-determination and declaration of conformance with the OHSAS specification.

Model

Figure 7: OHAS Management System Model for OHSAS Standard

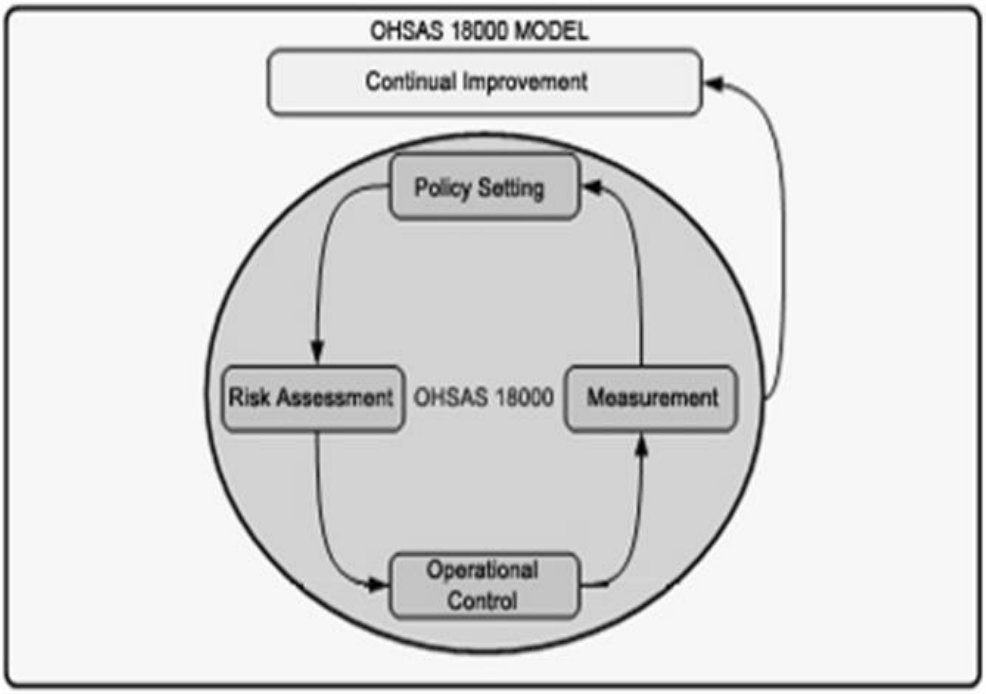


(OHSAS 18001:2007 Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series: Requirements)

Based on Figure 7 and Figure 8, OHSAS Standard is based on the methodology known as Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA). PDCA can be briefly described as follows:

1. **Plan:** establish the objectives and processes necessary to deliver results in accordance with organization's OHAS policy
2. **Do:** implement the processes
3. **Check:** monitor and measure processes against OHAS policy, objectives, legal and other requirements, and report the results
4. **Act:** take actions to continually improve OHAS performance.

Figure 8: OHSAS 18000 Model **(**Win Management Services: OHSAS 18000**)**



METHOD

In this study, a qualitative research methodology was employed, as it allowed the researcher to obtain comprehensive and direct information through interviews with respondents. The interviews were conducted via email and in person, targeting 3 respondents from the top management. According to Yin (2009), qualitative research often begins with a deductive approach to test existing theoretical perspectives using qualitative methods.

The decision to use qualitative research was based on its ability to yield original and detailed data from respondents, in contrast to quantitative research. Through qualitative methods, the researcher conducts interviews using tools such as tape recorders, videos, and photographs. It is noted that the ability to replicate data is lower than that of quantitative research. This approach enables the researcher to gather direct data from respondents regarding the quality management system (QMS) within the risk management framework, thereby achieving the research objectives. A series of interviews were conducted to collect respondents' answers, and the data collected were analysed qualitatively using thematic analysis. Transcripts were analyzed using thematic analysis, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step procedure: familiarization, coding, theme development, reviewing themes, defining/naming themes, and reporting. To enhance trustworthiness, triangulation was attempted through cross-checking participants' responses and comparing findings with existing literature.

Herbert and Irene (1995) assert that qualitative interviewing serves as an exploratory process for understanding teaching practices across different countries, including their cultural perspectives, challenges, solutions, and the similarities and differences compared to one's own practices. The approach to interviewing is contingent on the specific information sought. It involves discerning the feelings and thoughts of others regarding their world, with the aim of comprehending the key aspects of their message and how these aspects compare to one's own context. Effective interviewing requires not only proficient conversational skills, but also attentive listening abilities.

Primary Data

The primary data used in this study was obtained through interviews with company respondents. The researcher engaged in face-to-face interviews with participants to gather data, document information, record all relevant data, and capture photographs, all of which were instrumental for the research. Additionally, interviews were conducted via email, facilitating the acquisition of direct information from respondents in relevant positions who

could provide insights into the quality management system (QMS) within the risk management framework. For this research, the researcher prepared open-ended questions to elicit respondents' opinions on the QMS in the context of risk management, ensuring that the findings demonstrate improvements in organizational performance through the integration of a risk management system within the company. The respondents included managers from each department. To effectively schedule interview sessions, the researcher must identify an appropriate time and location to collect the comprehensive data.

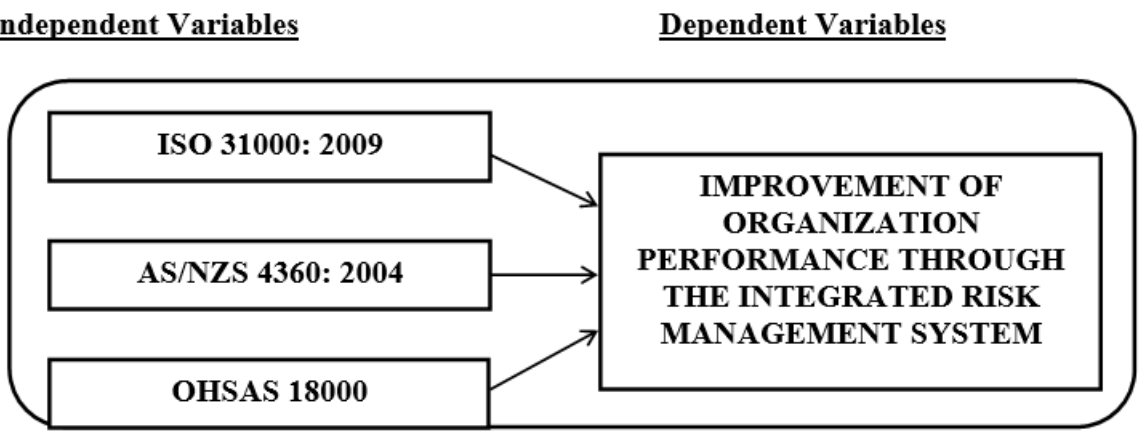
Research Techniques

In this study, the research techniques employed included observation and interviews. Observation is a fundamental method for understanding the issues present in our surroundings. Researchers are well-equipped to gather detailed information about the environment through sensory perception. The data observed in this study were analysed to gain insights into the research topic. The second technique involved interviews, conducted both face-to-face with participants and via email. Through these interviews, the researcher obtained original information and direct responses from the respondents. This technique is deemed the most effective for analyzing the collected data in this research.ates tasks and resources and provides coordination. Hunter (2002) supports that organizational structure determines how employees work.

Saleem and Abideen (n.d.) advocated for the implementation of a systematic process for risk management within organizations. They referenced the steps proposed by Boehm W. P. (1991) as potentially beneficial in this context. Additionally, their findings indicated a lack of documented risk management policies in organizations, highlighting a critical gap that needs to be addressed.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 9: Theoretical Framework



The theoretical framework (as shown in the Figure 9) for this study is built upon the integration of international standards and guidelines in risk management systems, which serve as the independent variables. Specifically, ISO 31000:2009, AS/NZS 4360:2004, and OHSAS 18000 provide structured approaches, principles, and best practices for identifying, assessing, and managing organizational risks. These frameworks collectively guide the adoption of systematic processes that enhance organizational resilience, safety, and compliance. The dependent variable, improvement of organizational performance, is expected to be achieved through the effective implementation of an integrated risk management system that leverages these standards. By aligning these international standards, the framework demonstrates how risk management integration can lead to more consistent decision-making, reduced vulnerabilities, and enhanced organizational outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This study encompasses a literature review centred on the research topic. ISO 31000 is a standard pertaining to risk management codified by the International Organization for Standardization. Specifically, ISO 31000:2009, which addresses risk management principles and guidelines, offers a framework and process for risk

management. This standard is applicable to any organisation, regardless of its size, activity, or sector. Implementing ISO 31000 can enhance an organisation's likelihood of achieving its objectives, improve the identification of opportunities and threats, and facilitate the effective allocation and utilisation of resources for risk treatment. The integration of ISO 31000, AS/NZS 4360, and OHSAS 18000 into a risk management system is demonstrated in the proposed model, which aims to validate that an integrated risk management system can enhance the organizational performance of the Malaysian airline industry. Consequently, a robust risk management system can assist an organization in successfully improving its performance while mitigating risks or threats to the company.

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