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An Agency of the Department of Economic Development - Government of Dubai

Better safe than sorry

A safe work culture and care for environment leads to a brighter future, explains *Dr. Sameer Kumar*.

Climatic changes and unsafe workplace practices have caused many a disaster and accident in recent years, resulting in loss of lives and assets.

Health, safety and environment standards, more commonly known as HSE systems, deliver a solution for a healthy, safe and pollution-free work environment.

What is HSE?

HSE focuses on three parameters, and these are: health to prevent illness

and preserve lives; safety, to protect well being and human community by preventing injury; and environment by conserving air, water, soil, flora, fauna and energy.

In short, HSE leads to accident- and pollution-free work environment with a great focus on prevention rather than correction. In technical terms HSE is an integrated management system, adopting the norms of international standard OHSAS 18001:2007 (occupational health and safety management

system) and ISO 14001:2004 (environment management system). HSE- Management System interacts and requires involvement of all Departments.

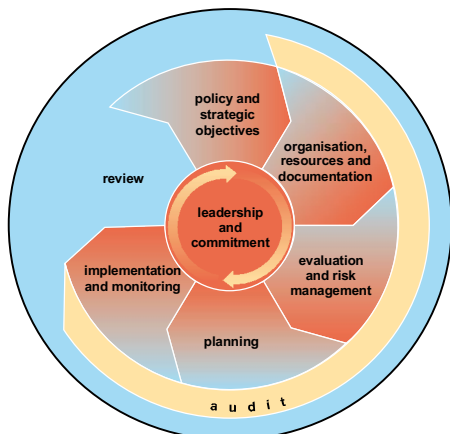
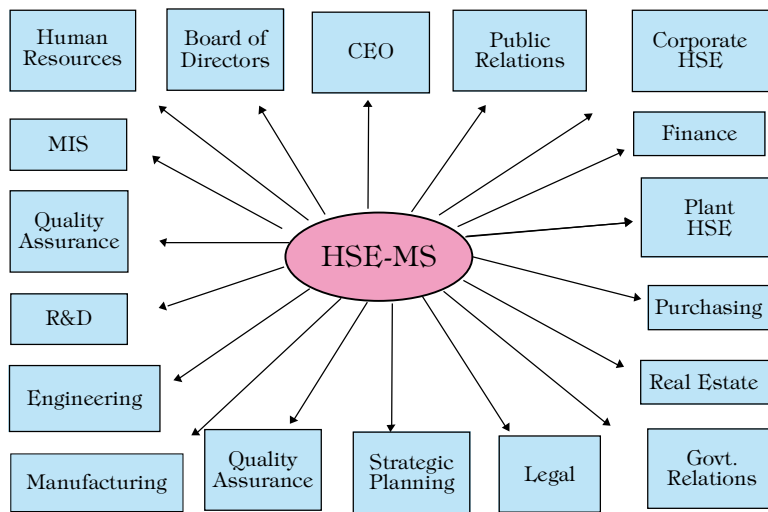
What is ISO 14001:2004?

Compliance with ISO 14001 certification series highlights adherence with environmental management standards developed by the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO). The ISO 14000 certification standards are designed to provide an internationally recognised framework for environmental management, measurement, evaluation and auditing.

International standards ISO 14001:2004 are intended to provide organisations with the elements of an effective environmental management system (EMS) that can be integrated with other management requirements and help organisations to achieve environmental and economic goals.

This standard specifies requirements for an environmental management system to enable an organisation to develop and implement a policy and objectives, which take into account legal requirements and information about significant environmental aspects. It is intended to apply to all types and sizes of organisations and to accommodate diverse geographical, cultural and social conditions. The overall aim of this ISO 14001:2004 is to support environmental protection and prevention of pollution in balance with socio-economic needs.

This international standard is based on the methodology known as Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA). PDCA can be briefly described as follows:



HSE- Management System Model

Plan: To establish the objectives and processes necessary to deliver results in accordance with an organisation's environmental policy.

Do: Implement the planned processes.

Check: Monitor and measure processes against environmental policy, objectives, targets, legal and other requirements, and report the results.

Act: Take actions to continually improve performance of the environmental management system.

What is OHSAS 18001?

The OHSAS 18001 is the international occupational health and safety management system standard. It is applicable to companies of any size, but is especially relevant to companies with a large workforce, manual and heavy work tasks, and/or high risk work environments. Targeting the health and safety of employees proves that you are actively working to ensure that your operations are safe both for your employees and the surrounding environment.

An active OHSAS system reduces the risk of accidents and personnel injuries through prevention. In turn, material losses and insurance costs are reduced. It ensures a well-qualified and

Benefits of Integrated HSE Management System as per ISO 14001 & OHSAS 18001:

- Improved health, safety & environmental performance
- Reductions in accidents, costs, staff, absence and/or claims
- Improved insurance liability rating
- New customers / markets
- Increased efficiency / reduced costs
- Enhanced employee morale and image with public
- Enhanced image with regulators

enthusiastic workforce by fulfilling expectations of employees. The OHSAS system also serves the possibility of having an integrated management system that looks at factors such as quality, environment, health and safety. Overall, goodwill of a company is established by adhering to the right management standards.

OHSAS 18001 has been developed to be compatible with

ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 to allow for easy integration. Legislative and regulatory commitment and continual improvement are two important aspects of OHSAS 18001.

How to achieve HSE as per ISO 14001 & OHSAS 18001?

Firstly, establish an appropriate HSE policy, where one identifies the environmental aspects and occupational hazards arising from the organisation's past, existing or planned activities, products and service. This would determine the significant occupational and environmental risks.

Next, prioritise and set the HSE objectives and targets, followed by a structure in which to implement the policy and objectives.

The next step involves planning, control, monitoring, preventive and corrective actions, auditing and review activities to ensure that the policy is complied with, and that the HSE management system remains active. One should always be ready to adapt to change, whether it is in objectives or organisational activities.



Dr. Sameer Kumar, CEO, Universal Consulting FZE, is a quality professional with an experience of working in more than seven countries. He has provided consultation and training to more than 400 clients in the UAE, UK, Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong and India. He has completed his MBA, PhD and is a Six Sigma champion by qualification and lead auditor of ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001. E-mail: ceo@ucfglobal.com.

Advantages of ISO 14001:2004

1. Process improvement.
2. Environmental cost reduction.
3. Better relationships with regulators
4. Better relationships with insurers, investors, and financial markets
5. Product improvement
6. Marketing advantages
7. Better control of liabilities
8. Reduced regulatory burden
9. Protection of company image and name
10. Demonstration of responsible management