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BSI Standards Publication

Occupational health and safety management systems — General guidelines for the implementation of ISO 45001:2018

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National foreword

This British Standard is the UK implementation of ISO 45002:2023. It supersedes BS 45002-0:2018, which is withdrawn.

The UK participation in its preparation was entrusted to Technical Committee HS/1, Occupational health and safety management.

A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its committee manager.

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Occupational health and safety management systems — General guidelines for the implementation of ISO 45001:2018

Systèmes de management de la santé et de la sécurité au travail — Lignes directrices générales pour la mise en œuvre de l'ISO 45001:2018

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 283, *Occupational health and safety management*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

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Introduction

An organization is responsible for the occupational health and safety (OH&S) of its workers. This responsibility includes promoting and protecting their physical and mental health. The organization is also responsible for taking steps to protect others who can be affected by its activities. This is best achieved through an OH&S management system.

The purpose of an OH&S management system is to provide a framework for managing OH&S risks and opportunities, and for managing risks and opportunities to the management system itself. The intended outcomes of the OH&S management system are to continually improve the OH&S performance, to fulfil legal requirements and other requirements, and to achieve the OH&S objectives.

This document gives guidance on how to implement the requirements in ISO 45001:2018 in any type of organization and should be used in conjunction with ISO 45001:2018. Where ISO 45001:2018 states what needs to be done, this document expands on that and gives guidance, including real-life cases, on how it can be done. A complement to this general guidance is a handbook, see Reference [2].

The intention of ISO 45001:2018 is to enable organizations to protect all workers from injury and ill health, regardless of individual characteristics. This document provides additional guidance on how to ensure the specific needs of individuals and groups of workers are addressed, recognizing that a generic approach to OH&S management can lead to the needs of different genders, age and minority groups not being fully addressed.

Many requirements of ISO 45001:2018 contain terms such as “as appropriate”, “as applicable” or “relevant”. These terms signal that the organization should determine whether and how the requirement pertains to the organization, taking into account its conditions, processes or context. In this document, the meaning of these terms is as follows:

— “as appropriate” means suitable or proper in the circumstances and implies some degree of freedom, i.e. it is up to the organization to decide what to do;

— “as applicable” means possible to apply and implies that if it can be done, it should be done;

— “relevant” means directed and connected to the subject, i.e. pertinent.

The OH&S management system approach applied in this document is founded on the concept of Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA). The PDCA concept is an iterative process used by organizations to achieve continual improvement. It can be applied to an OH&S management system and to each of its individual elements, as follows:

a) Plan: determine and assess OH&S risks, OH&S opportunities and other risks and other opportunities that can influence the intended outcomes of the OH&S management system and establish OH&S objectives and processes necessary to deliver results in accordance with the organization’s OH&S policy.

b) Do: implement the processes as planned.

c) Check: monitor and measure activities and processes with regard to the OH&S policy and OH&S objectives and report the results.

d) Act: take actions to continually improve the OH&S performance to achieve the intended outcomes.

The PDCA concept and relationship to this document is shown in Figure 1.

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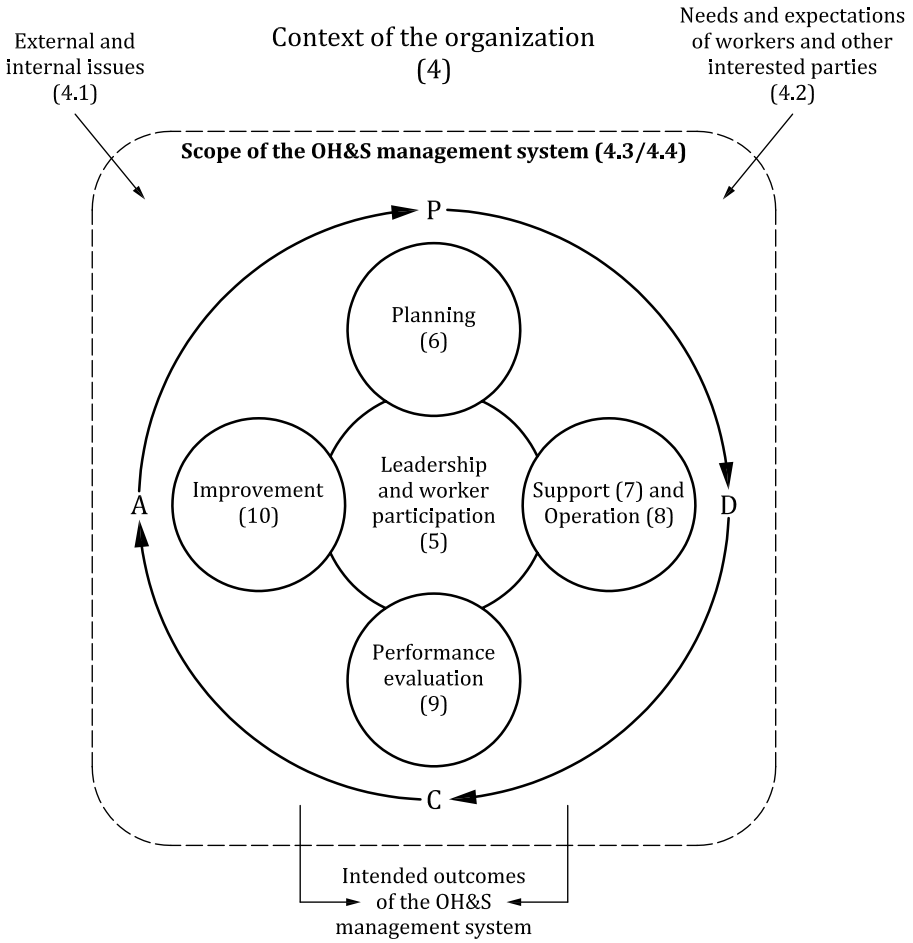

NOTE The numbers given in brackets refer to the clause numbers in this document.

Figure 1 — Relationship between PDCA and the framework in this document

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Occupational health and safety management systems — General guidelines for the implementation of ISO 45001:2018

1 Scope

This document gives guidance on the establishment, implementation, maintenance and continual improvement of an occupational health and safety (OH&S) management system that can help organizations conform to ISO 45001:2018.

NOTE 1 While the guidance in this document is consistent with the ISO 45001:2018 OH&S management system model, it is not intended to provide interpretations of the requirements in ISO 45001.

NOTE 2 The use of the term "should" in this document does not weaken any of the requirements in ISO 45001:2018 or add new requirements.

NOTE 3 For most of the clauses in this document, there are real-life cases on how different types of organizations have implemented the requirements. These are not intended to suggest the only or best way to do this, but to describe one way this was done by an organization.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 45001:2018, *Occupational health and safety management systems — Requirements with guidance for use*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 45001:2018 apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at https://www.electropedia.org/

4 Context of the organization

4.1 Understanding the organization and its context

To be able to implement an effective OH&S management system, the organization needs to understand the context within which it operates and to determine what issues can make it easier or more difficult to achieve the intended outcomes of the OH&S management system. The intended outcomes as included in the definition of "occupational health and safety management system" (see ISO 45001:2018, 3.11) are to prevent injury and ill health to workers and to provide safe and healthy workplaces. It includes enhancement of OH&S performance, fulfilment of legal requirements and other requirements, and achievement of OH&S objectives. These are the minimal, core outcomes but an organization can set additional intended outcomes such as going beyond the requirements of ISO 45001:2018, e.g. encouraging a supplier to also implement an OH&S management system.

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The organization should be aware that external and internal issues can change, and therefore, should be monitored and reviewed. It is advisable for an organization to conduct reviews of its context at planned intervals and through activities such as management review.

Examples of external issues that can affect the intended outcomes of an OH&S management system are:

— economic and financial situation, economic activity;

— business sector, markets, international commerce activities, the needs and expectations of interested parties (contractors, insurance companies, etc.);

— supply chain requirements, including modern slavery;

— terrorist threats;

— technological innovations, equipment, products and systems evolution, the knowledge of OH&S effects of products and work equipment;

— political and social unrest;

— legal requirements and other requirements, including legislation, sectoral agreements, conventions and voluntary agreements subscribed to by the organization;

— institutional needs and expectations;

— the geographical location of the company;

— environmental concerns that can have an impact on health and safety, including climate change and pollution;

— potential emergency situations including pandemics but also floods, earthquakes, etc.

Examples of internal issues that can affect the intended outcomes of an OH&S management system are:

— consultation and participation, issues raised by workers and other interested parties that can impact the organization's internal activities and its OH&S management system;

— internal requirements, including policies and practices, mission, vision, values, objectives, strategies, agreements and guidelines;

— what has been known to cause injuries and ill health in the past;

— organization structure and governance model, work scope, work shifts, roles, functions and responsibilities;

— work centres and distribution;

— demography (e.g. gender of workers, age range, racial identities, range of languages, workers with disabilities);

— conditions and extension of services and activities;

— globalization and internalization of the company;

— cultural diversity (e.g. inclusion, racial identities and backgrounds, cultural and religious beliefs, proficiency in languages, literacy and education levels);

— financial, human (availability, competence, etc.) and technological resources (availability and conditions of equipment, products, facilities, systems and workplaces) and distribution of resources;

— general planning;

— processes, products and services.

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An organization can choose to document this information if it wants to adopt a more structured approach to its OH&S management system. However, the absence of such documentation should not impact the ability of the organization to seek and demonstrate conformity to ISO 45001, where it can evidence a structured approach by other means.

The organization can use different methodologies to determine and evaluate the external and internal issues. One example is analysing strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats. See Clause 5 for guidance on how to involve workers in this process.

The issues dealt with in this clause are mainly related to the impact on the OH&S management system and are usually analysed at high levels of the organization. Specific OH&S risks are dealt with at operational levels and are considered in 6.1.2 and 6.1.3.

EXAMPLE Real life case 1 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 4.1.

A diverse service organization implemented the requirements of 4.1 and made a high-level analysis of issues by conducting a brainstorming exercise with participation from OH&S staff, other workers and worker representatives, knowledgeable persons from various parts of the organization and someone from top management who champions OH&S. The team discussed external and internal issues from a wide perspective and determined which were relevant for the OH&S management system. This then served as input to identify interested parties (see 4.2), determine scope (see 4.3), and address risks and opportunities (see 6.1).

Even though there is no requirement in ISO 45001:2018 to document the result of this context work, the organization chose to do that anyway and ensure that the whole team agreed on the result. They created a bridge from context to planning by documenting each relevant issue in a categorized way, stating if this was a current or future issue, and if it had a positive or negative potential. They also put a value to its relative importance and stated how the issue should be managed in their system (as an OH&S risk, potential emergency, risk to the management system, other opportunity, etc.). Table 1 shows part of what they found.

This context exercise is reviewed when there are significant external or internal changes that affect the organization or the OH&S management system and otherwise when deemed appropriate by the organization.

Table 1 — Some of the external and internal issues found

Category	Issue	Time frame	Negative or positive	OH&S management system importance	Managed as
Culture: internal	Lack of OH&S interest from top management	Current	Negative	High	OH&S management system risk
Workplace hazard	Working at heights with customer installations	Current	Negative	Medium	OH&S risk
Workplace hazard	Noise levels in some operations	Current	Negative	High	OH&S risk
Economy: internal	Lack of financial resources for investing in OH&S improvements	Future	Negative	Medium	Currently not managed
Activities: internal	Inadequate chemical management	Current	Negative	Medium	OH&S risk
Resources: internal	Improvement of OH&S staff competence beyond requirements	Current	Positive	Medium	OH&S management system opportunity
Technology: external	New technologies for eliminating hazards and mitigating OH&S risks developed	Current	Positive	High	OH&S management system opportunity
Interested parties: external	Requirements from customers regarding OH&S management system certification	Future	Positive	High	OH&S management system opportunity
Interested parties: internal	Lack of participation from worker representatives	Current	Negative	High	OH&S management system risk

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Table 1 *(continued)*

Category	Issue	Time frame	Negative or positive	OH&S management system importance	Managed as
Company: internal	Poor internal OH&S communication	Current	Negative	Medium	OH&S management system risk
Resources: external	Suppliers of OH&S protection equipment, including personal protective equipment (PPE) are not always able to deliver required goods when there is increased market demand	Future	Negative	Medium	OH&S management system risk
Company: internal	Lack of specific consideration for issues related to gender, non-binary workers and other specific groups as well as provision for these groups	Current	Negative	High	OH&S risk

4.2 Understanding the needs and expectations of workers and other interested parties

The needs and expectations (i.e. requirements) of workers and other interested parties are important when considering the context in which the organization operates. It is important that the organization takes into account the characteristics of its workers and how these can affect needs and expectations. Different genders and age groups can have very different needs and expectations than others. Minority groups (e.g. ethnic minorities, workers with physical or mental disabilities, workers of non-traditional gender or sexuality) also have needs and expectations which are not always recognized or understood. Determining interested parties that are relevant to the OH&S management system and developing a relationship with them enables communication, which can improve worker participation, remove obstacles to participation, lead to a culture that supports OH&S, and build mutual understanding, trust and respect.

The organization should identify the relevant needs and expectations of workers and other interested parties, to determine those that it has to comply with and voluntary agreements that it chooses to comply with. The methods used and resources applied can vary depending on, for example, the size and nature of the organization, the finances available, the OH&S risks and opportunities that should be addressed, and the organization's experience with OH&S management.

There are three steps that are typically taken to determine what the organization should comply with:

— Step 1: Determining other relevant interested parties, in addition to workers. Workers at all levels are always at the heart of the OH&S management system. However, other interested parties that are relevant to the OH&S management system can include:

  — trade unions and worker representatives;

  — regulatory or statutory agencies;

  — communities;

  — owners, including investors/shareholders;

  — neighbours;

  — other companies related to the organization, such as contractors, suppliers or clients;

  — institutional bodies, such as inspectorates, OH&S national institutes and OH&S research groups;

  — other bodies or companies related to injuries or illnesses, such as social security, compensation bodies and insurance companies;

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- customers (e.g. those requiring suppliers to implement an OH&S management system or that have specific OH&S-related requirements);
- people that can occasionally be in the facilities or under the control of the organization, such as visitors, consultants, transport workers, and workers of contractors or suppliers.

Interested parties can change over time and can depend on the sector, industry or the geographic location in which the organization operates. Changes in the external or internal issues that are part of the organization's context can also result in a change in interested parties. It can be good practice to keep this information up to date.

- Step 2: Determining the relevant needs and expectations (i.e. requirements) of workers and other interested parties in relation to OH&S. Examples include:
  - authorities require the organization to meet legal requirements;
  - workers need the organization to provide adequate training to ensure their competence to control risks from their work or as a result of contractor(s) work;
  - specific needs and expectations of, for example, women (correctly fitting PPE), workplace environment), older workers (accessibility, training/communication methods), workers with visible or invisible disabilities, workers from different cultural or ethnic backgrounds, and workers with additional psychological health and safety needs (e.g. due to racial identity, sexuality, gender or religion);
  - contractors need the organization to keep them informed of all OH&S-related policies, processes and procedures;
  - regulators require the organization to provide relevant OH&S information in a timely manner;
  - owners need and expect to be kept informed about the organization's OH&S performance;
  - customers require their suppliers to implement fully or partially an OH&S management system;
  - suppliers require access to hazard-related information as part of contract negotiations;
  - worker representatives expect the organization to provide them with information on OH&S performance regularly.

  There is no single approach to determining needs and expectations. The organization should use an approach that is appropriate to its scope, nature and scale, and is suitable in terms of detail, complexity, time, cost and availability of reliable data. Sources for determining worker needs and expectations can be:

  - individual or collective agreements;
  - suggestions by workers or their representatives;
  - surveys carried out by the organization;
  - informal discussions with workers.

- Step 3: Determining which needs and expectations are, or can become, legal requirements and other requirements:
  - An organization should determine which of the relevant interested parties' needs and expectations it has to comply with (legal requirements), and then which of the remaining needs and expectations it chooses to adopt (other requirements). This general, high-level knowledge then gives input into managing legal requirements and other requirements as further detailed in 6.1.3.
  - For requirements set by a regulatory body, the organization should gain knowledge of areas of legislation that are applicable to its circumstances and operations and relevant in the context of

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ISO 45001. The organization should ensure that legislation and regulatory body requirements relating to fairness, equality and discrimination are taken into account.

— In the case of voluntary commitments (other requirements), the organization should gain broad knowledge of relevant needs and expectations. This knowledge enables the organization to understand the implications these can have on the achievement of the intended outcomes of its OH&S management system.

The organization should consider the output from the steps above when setting the scope of its OH&S management system, establishing its OH&S policy, and addressing risks and opportunities. Although not a requirement, it can be useful to document this information to facilitate its use to meet other requirements in ISO 45001.

EXAMPLE 1 Real life case 1 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 4.2.

A medium-sized manufacturing organization identified the following interested parties during the context analysis of its external and internal issues:

— External, on-site (sometimes): Customers, visitors, suppliers, external consultants, labour inspectors, insurance companies, waste management companies, fire department and ambulance workers.

— External, off-site: Creditors, competitors, regulatory authorities, shareholders, social insurance agencies, neighbours, lenders and other finance institutions, and labour organizations.

— Internal: Workers including top management, worker representatives, works council and fire brigade members, contractors.

In the form of a brainstorming workshop, the organization then listed everything it could think of that these different interested parties required or might require of the organization related to OH&S. Then it also listed anything anyone in the workshop could remember that these interested parties had asked about or even shown an interest in, in relation to OH&S. They also included requirements from the past and added things they thought would become requirements or become important for interested parties in coming years.

The final step was to decide which of these needs and expectations the organization would need to or chose to comply with. These included legal requirements, collective agreements, board and top management OH&S-related decisions (although they found two that were in conflict that needed to be resolved) and contractual agreements.

The outcome was documented in a file and was then used as a starting point for the process of going into details about legal requirements and other requirements and how these were met by the organization (see 6.1.3).

Table 2 shows what the file contained.

Table 2

Interested party	Needs and/or expects the organization to:
Workers:	— provide adequate training to ensure their competence to control risks from their work or as a result of contractor(s) work processes and procedures — be transparent and disclose OH&S information — recognize and appreciate good initiatives and OH&S performance — recognize that different groups of workers (related to gender, age, disabilities etc.) can be exposed to different OH&S risks and take steps to address these — ensure that workers have the possibility to participate in the planning and decisions related to the execution of work tasks

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Table 2 *(continued)*

Interested party	Needs and/or expects the organization to:
Authorities	— meet legal requirements — provide relevant OH&S information in a timely manner — align its OH&S management system with government objectives — promote compliance with applicable regulations and standards to contractors
Contractors	— keep them informed of all OH&S-related policies, processes and procedures — recognize and appreciate good OH&S performance, initiatives and collaboration
Owners	— keep them informed on the organization's OH&S performance — good communication and coordination — implement a sustainable OH&S management system
Customers	— implement an OH&S management system that they have set up as a requirement for suppliers — supply products that are safe to use — supply products in time and not delayed by incidents — take a general approach to sustainable development that includes OH&S
Suppliers	— be clear and consistent on what they require in relation to OH&S in contract negotiations — recognize and appreciate good OH&S performance, initiatives and collaboration
Worker representatives	— ensure a safe and healthy workplace with no serious OH&S incidents — clarify OH&S rules as well as roles and responsibilities — provide them with information on OH&S performance on a regular basis.

EXAMPLE 2 Real life case 2 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 4.2.

A small service organization conducted a survey of identified interested parties during two workshops with participation from the OH&S manager, operations manager, worker representative, human relations manager, a lawyer and two external consultants. First, the group identified the relevant interested parties; then it listed anything anyone in the workshop knew that these interested parties had asked or shown an interest in, in relation to OH&S.

They also included requirements from the past and added things they thought would become requirements or become important for interested parties in coming years.

The results of the survey were reviewed by the owner and was sent to the worker representative to ask for further input and/or review. Based on this input the company determined what to comply with. The outcome was shared with employees at a meeting to obtain feedback and establish a plan for implementation.

4.3 Determining the scope of the OH&S management system

To clarify what is and what is not within the scope of its OH&S management system, the organization should determine the boundaries and applicability of the management system, using the outputs from 4.1 and 4.2, and considering its activities. Implementing an OH&S management system can be done with respect to the entire organization or to a subdivision of the organization.

Care should be taken to consider geographical, jurisdictional, physical and organizational boundaries when defining and documenting the scope of the OH&S management system.

The organization should understand the extent of control or influence that it can exert over activities, products and services before deciding on the scope. However, it is critical to the success of the OH&S

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management system and to the credibility of the organization to ensure that the scope is not defined in a way that excludes activities, products, services or facilities that have or can have significant impact on the OH&S performance. The scope should also not be set to evade legal requirements or other requirements, or to mislead interested parties.

If the organization changes its sphere of control or influence, expands or contracts its operations, or makes other changes likely to affect the OH&S management system, the scope should be reconsidered.

When considering the scope of the OH&S management system, it is important to understand that outsourced functions and processes can impact the intended outcomes of the OH&S management system. Organizations should consider these activities when scoping the boundaries of their management system. Further detail on outsourced functions is available in 8.1.4.3.

It is good practice to make the scope available to interested parties. There are several methods for doing so (e.g. using a written description, inclusion on a site map, an organizational diagram, a webpage, posting a public statement).

EXAMPLE 1 Real life case 1 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 4.3.

A large multiple location company reviewed the requirements of ISO 45001. Following the requirements, this company determined its external and internal issues along with the needs and expectations of interested parties. They then decided to start with a pilot implementation of an OH&S management system at one of their locations with all its processes. The goal was to use the experiences from this pilot to see how OH&S performance could be improved throughout the whole organization. This decision was documented and communicated internally and made public on the company's website.

EXAMPLE 2 Real life case 2 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 4.3.

A large organization has operations in many locations globally. It has experience with implementing another management system in steps over a number of years and this did not work out well. The main reasons for this were that:

— both top management and the rest of the organization started to lose interest over time when only a minor part of the organization was involved during the first 1 to 2 years;

— a high turnover of staff meant that experiences from the first implementation were difficult to carry over to other sites;

— business challenges due to economic and market changes created issues with top management focus.

The organization decides to implement the OH&S management system throughout the whole organization in 80 locations. They are aware this is a major commitment, but injuries and ill health are an issue in many locations, and they do not want to give the impression that safety in one location is more important than in another. Based on their review of requirements from interested parties there is also an expectation from both the board and from key customers that they should have an OH&S management system in place.

EXAMPLE 3 Real life case 3 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 4.3.

A small factory decided that implementing an OH&S management system would reduce injuries and create a safe and healthy workplace. The owner held a meeting with its 50 employees to gather information about their needs and expectations. The owner then considered both external and internal issues facing the company, such as growth and scarce resources. The owner developed a plan to implement ISO 45001:2018 step by step over a period of two years. The scope included all processes and activities of the organization, including work currently outsourced to another organization. The owner documented the scope and the implementation plan and communicated it at the next employee meeting. The scope and plan were also posted on their webpage for external stakeholders.

EXAMPLE 4 Real life case 4 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 4.3.

A small company that designs and manufactures plastic cutlery for airlines discusses the scope for their OH&S management system. They have one manufacturing building that occupies part of a fairly large piece of land that was previously used for other purposes.

Modern technology has reduced the need for such a large piece of land for its core manufacturing activities, so they decide to open a restaurant close to the manufacturing building.

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At the same time, the organization decided to implement an OH&S management system at the manufacturing plant only. The scope of the OH&S management system was defined as "Designing and manufacturing plastic cutlery at site X".

Although the restaurant is located on the same piece of land owned by the same company, the OH&S management system considers the "workplace" to be only the part of the site occupied by the manufacturing plant.

4.4 OH&S management system

This is a general clause requiring organizations to look after the OH&S management system, which can be seen as a set of processes that, if operating in a coordinated manner, will help to ensure that the intended outcomes are achieved. Specific requirements for individual elements or management system processes can be found in each of the other clauses of ISO 45001.

The level of detail and complexity of the OH&S management system, the extent of documentation and the resources devoted to it are dependent on the context (size, structure, complexity) of an organization and its activities. A complete list of the documented information required by ISO 45001:2018 is included in 7.5.

EXAMPLE 1 Real life case 1 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 4.4.

An educational institution has a well-defined professional development programme for its workers which incorporates subjects such as human resources, computer software, financial and instructor course offerings. The processes include means to determine learning requirements, communicate offerings, self-registration and tracking completion.

The organization, during its review of the scope and requirements of ISO 45001, decides to integrate competency requirements for the OH&S management system into its existing professional development programme and processes instead of setting up a separate OH&S competence programme.

EXAMPLE 2 Real life case 2 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 4.4.

A large distribution company, which has several sites, has established a management system team. The team's members include one person from top management, at least one operations manager, a corporate OH&S manager, a distribution centre safety manager, a product compliance representative, an internal auditor and employees representing diverse areas of the distribution network. The management system team meets annually to update (maintain) all documents including the OH&S policy, scope of the management system, organization roles and responsibilities and legal and other requirements.

In addition, risks/opportunities are reviewed and ranked each year. The team uses the highest ranked risks to determine opportunities. The team then chooses from these opportunities to determine its objectives for the current year. The company has a written procedure on how this process is completed each year to ensure continual improvement.

5 Leadership and worker participation

5.1 Leadership and commitment

Top management should engage in, promote, communicate and monitor the performance and effectiveness of the OH&S management system. How this can be applied depends on various factors, such as the size and complexity of an organization, management style and organizational culture.

The term "top management" is defined in ISO 45001:2018, 3.12, as the "person or group of people who directs and controls an organization at the highest level". They are accountable and responsible for the overall performance of the management system and for supporting other workers to demonstrate leadership and commitment within their areas of responsibility. In other clauses, there are examples of further direct top management responsibilities including the OH&S policy, organizational roles, responsibilities and authorities, as well as management review. If the scope of the management system covers only part of an organization, then top management refers to those who direct and control that part of the organization.

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Top management should consider integration of OH&S requirements in general business processes and when setting mission, vision and values. Where appropriate, these elements should be included in the formation of the organization's overall business, strategic direction and operational plans.

Top management's commitment also means providing physical and financial resources, as well as direction. It includes active involvement, removing barriers that can limit worker participation, leading others to support the OH&S system, and communication of the importance of effective OH&S management. It also means ensuring that processes for effective consultation and participation are established.

Another specific requirement for top management is to ensure that workers are protected from reprisals when they report OH&S issues such as injuries, ill health, unsafe conditions, near misses, or risks and opportunities related to OH&S or to the management system.

EXAMPLE 1 Real life case 1 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 5.1.

The top management of a company ensures that their decisions on OH&S matters are consistent with their values and can demonstrate that it meets the requirement in 5.1 h) by establishing performance objectives for managers and supervisors that are linked to continual improvement of OH&S performance and the OH&S management system. The organization also recognizes those employees who provide suggestions for improvement.

EXAMPLE 2 Real life case 2 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 5.1.

In a manufacturing company, managers actively involved workers in the improvement of OH&S by making them aware of risks and urging them to report all dangerous situations including near misses. They supported and encouraged workers to bring forward their own ideas for improving OH&S. Managers also promoted OH&S by providing targeted support for further training.

Managers also demonstrated that health and safety is a top priority by addressing this topic regularly during meetings and tours throughout the organization. Part of the working time of top management was reserved for implementing and promoting OH&S.

EXAMPLE 3 Real life case 3 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 5.1.

The owner of a small organization demonstrated commitment to providing a healthy and safe workplace by including an example of what had been done recently to improve OH&S performance, during the monthly organization-wide meetings held with employees.

During these meetings, employees were encouraged to provide feedback on both positive and negative experiences in the workplace as they related to the OH&S management system.

By consistently providing examples of commitment and leadership and engaging employees in conversations at the meetings, the owner developed a culture that supported the intended outcomes of the OH&S management system.

EXAMPLE 4 Real life case 4 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 5.1.

In a regional public service, to introduce the new health and safety management system in line with the international standard, and to begin the process of migrating from their out-of-date national standard, top management took the decision to buy and distribute individual copies of ISO 45001:2018 to their union delegates and health and safety committee members.

They chose to do that to gain trust from their unionized workforce, and to begin a new higher-level strategic engagement over preventing injury and ill health, beyond the usual cycle of incidents, hazards and risk assessments.

The copies of ISO 45001:2018 were sent with an offer to participate in a recast joint service-wide health and safety committee, now called the "Regional Public Service ISO 45001:2018 Committee", with participation from top management, senior OH&S and other managers. The process began with a joint training session for all the members of the committee on ISO 45001, with officials of the relevant union also invited to attend.

A key element of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) to establish this committee was to give it a key role in conducting the ISO 45001:2018 auditing process, which was previously conducted only by management.

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In the covering letter to the MOU, the board chair stated that "The leadership of this organization see the opportunities presented by ISO 45001, to deepen our engagement with our workforce and their representatives to make work better".

The union delegates and health and safety committee members agreed that the time had come to try a higher strategic engagement model and that was what ISO 45001:2018 offered.

The first meeting of the ISO 45001:2018 committee took place a few days after the joint training session.

EXAMPLE 5 Real life case 5 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 5.1.

After there had been a number of health and safety near misses and then an incident in a small cabinet-making workshop, the owner/manager decided that changes were needed in how health and safety was handled in the organization.

The owner had read about ISO 45001:2018 after an internet search on improving health and safety. She bought a copy to read and decided to convene an all-staff meeting to talk about the recent incident and to introduce the workshop's first health and safety management system.

As the owner presented the various clauses of ISO 45001:2018 on a projector screen, they talked about the near misses and the incident and what sort of health and safety management system would suit their context.

During the meeting, the staff were surprised at how much ISO 45001:2018 was about their consultation and participation and saw the opportunity to have more of a voice at work.

Given the size of the organization, all agreed that it was not necessary to establish a representative health and safety committee. It was agreed to start the process of introducing the new system, by holding weekly all staff meetings on Monday mornings to talk about the work planned for the week, and to systematically go through the health and safety issues that were presented by the work.

The more experienced staff also undertook to talk more often to the apprentices and newly qualified workers about safe working and to help them see the warning signs of unsafe work.

Both the owner and the staff agreed that rushed timelines for orders and work pressure also needed better management, as these were underlying hazards that had caused the incident. The owner agreed to have more detailed discussions with the more experienced staff concerning delivery deadlines in contract negotiations with clients.

5.2 OH&S policy

ISO 45001:2018, 5.2, states that the organization's OH&S policy should be "appropriate to the purpose, size and context of the organization and to the specific nature of its OH&S risks and OH&S opportunities". This means that it should be specific enough to be focused on the issues that are significant for the organization to keep workers safe and healthy and continually improve its OH&S performance.

It should enable workers to understand the overall commitment of the organization and how this can affect their individual responsibilities.

In developing its OH&S policy, an organization can consider, for example:

a) its context, mission, vision, core values and beliefs;

b) coordination with other policies (corporate, integrated, etc.);

c) needs and expectations of workers and other interested parties;

d) risks and opportunities associated with the activities of the organization;

e) legal requirements and other requirements to which the organization subscribes that relate to its OH&S management system;

f) historical and current OH&S performance of the organization such as statistics or reports of incidents;

g) opportunities for continual improvement and what needs to be done to prevent injury and ill health;

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h) what is needed to establish achievable objectives.

The requirements regarding OH&S policy in ISO 45001:2018 are not meant to define specific text that should be in an OH&S policy but can be covered through other words with the same meaning. The OH&S policy can be linked or integrated with other policy documents of the organization and should be consistent with the organization's overall business policies.

Communication of the policy should assist in:

— demonstrating the commitment of top management and the organization to OH&S;

— increasing awareness of the commitments made in the policy statement;

— explaining why the OH&S system is established and maintained;

— guiding individuals in understanding their OH&S responsibilities and accountabilities.

In communicating the policy, consideration should be given to how to create and maintain awareness in both new and existing workers and how to verify if it has been properly understood. The policy can be communicated in alternative forms, such as through the use of rules, directives and procedures, wallet cards, posters, using QR codes, etc. In communicating the policy, the diversity of workers should be taken into account. Plain language and short sentences can be helpful to achieve maximum accessibility. Making the policy available in both written and audio formats and translated into relevant languages can also help.

It is for the organization to determine how it wishes to make the policy available to its interested parties, e.g. through publication on a website or by providing printed copies on request.

Change is inevitable, as legislation and societal expectations evolve. Consequently, the organization's OH&S policy should be reviewed periodically to evaluate ongoing suitability and effectiveness. If changes are made to the policy, the revised policy should be communicated throughout the organization and to relevant interested parties.

EXAMPLE 1 Real life case 1 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 5.2.

A medium-sized organization in the food industry chooses to use one-page policies, which are easy to communicate to workers so that they are aware of what it says. The organization develops a policy that is signed by the chief executive officer. It states that:

"Organization X is committed to continually improving its OH&S management system in order to provide safe and healthy working conditions for the prevention of work-related injury and ill health, eliminating hazards and reducing OH&S risks.

OH&S objectives will be linked to key challenges for this organization, which include ergonomics, machine guarding in production, psychosocial issues including workload issues, and traffic safety.

We promote the consultation of workers on all levels in our OH&S efforts, ensuring the views of all workers are taken into account, and we are committed to comply with laws and other agreed-upon commitments.

This policy is reviewed annually during management review activities and is made available through our intranet and internet web pages and made visible in reception, lunchrooms and other locations."

EXAMPLE 2 Real life case 2 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 5.2.

A large organization with operations in many different countries writes a one-page corporate OH&S policy that is valid throughout the operations but allows local operations to add to the corporate OH&S policy if there are specific challenges that go beyond the corporate ones. The corporate policy states:

"We are a leading company in the ZZZ business and the safety and well-being of our employees and others that perform work for us is a core value. Key challenges include chemical safety, organization of work and air quality. We are committed to:

— continually improving our OH&S management system performance, in order to provide workplaces that are physically, socially, and organizationally sustainable;

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— eliminating hazards and reducing OH&S risks;

— meeting or exceeding applicable legal requirements and other requirements we choose to comply with;

— educating, motivating and consulting workers to contribute to improving our OH&S management system;

— encouraging our contractors, suppliers and consultants to adhere to the same standards we do;

— openly communicating our OH&S performance and participating in external initiatives that improves our knowledge and performance;

— ensuring prompt reporting of any incidents, adequately monitoring and measuring our OH&S performance and regularly providing assurance that our processes and management systems are working effectively, promoting the consultation and participation of workers on OH&S related issues."

EXAMPLE 3 Real life case 3 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 5.2.

A small retail store with 25 employees develops its OH&S policy at a regular staff meeting. The owner reviews and shares the requirements with employees and together they devise a policy that meets the requirements in words that employees clearly understand. At the end of process, each employee signs the policy to demonstrate their commitment. New employees sign the policy as part of their orientation process and are given a copy of the policy. Each year, the policy is reviewed in a staff meeting and renewed, and the process repeated.

5.3 Organizational roles, responsibilities and authorities

For the OH&S management system to be effective and deliver its intended outcomes, it is essential that responsibilities and authorities for relevant roles within the OH&S management system, are assigned to workers by top management and understood within the organization. Workers should be able to make decisions and implement change to the area and/or processes to which they have been assigned. It is essential to emphasize that although authority can be delegated, the overall responsibility and accountability for the OH&S management system remains with top management. Top management should:

a) identify who needs to do what with respect to the management of OH&S, including regulatory requirements and making sure workers are aware of their responsibilities and authority;

b) ensure there is clarity of responsibilities at the interfaces between different functions (e.g. between departments, between different levels of management, between workers, between the organization and contractors, between the organization and its neighbours);

c) assign the responsibility and authority for reporting on the performance of the OH&S management system to top management in, for example, management meetings, reports, key performance indicators and reviews.

In some organizations, there can be a limited number of people with the required competence available to carry out the tasks required. In such situations, it can be useful to plan for sharing roles and responsibilities. Such plans are also valuable during holidays, when managers are away from the facility, or in cases of incidents or illness.

Top management should determine how to communicate the assigned responsibilities and authorities of relevant roles within the OH&S management system. This can be done through relevant documented information (e.g. procedures, instructions, job/project/task descriptions, training/induction packages), meeting updates, electronic or face-to-face team communication, or through a combination of approaches.

EXAMPLE 1 Real life case 1 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 5.3.

A small chemical company communicates OH&S responsibilities and authorities by including these in job descriptions and job performance evaluation processes. This company has developed descriptions for each OH&S-related role in the organization to provide clarity on expectations related to the OH&S management system. This helps top management demonstrate that responsibilities and authorities have been assigned, communicated and documented. Once assignments have been formalized, top management also shows its commitment by following up on their performance.

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EXAMPLE 2 Real life case 2 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 5.3.

A global management consultancy has over 40 locations which have implemented an OH&S management system. The management of operations differs at each location. The organization decided to develop a checklist of the OH&S management system requirements and required each location to identify the roles at their location which were assigned responsibility and authority for meeting each requirement. By doing so, the organization ensured that the location's OH&S management system conforms to the requirements of ISO 45001.

5.4 Consultation and participation of workers

Top management should involve workers at applicable levels and functions (and their representatives, where such representatives exist) when the OH&S management system is established, implemented, maintained and continually improved.

The organization should ensure that workers and their representatives are consulted (i.e. be given the opportunity to give their suggestions and opinions) and participate (i.e. be involved in the decision-making) and be given adequate time and training on the OH&S management system. Workers should be given adequate information to be able to effectively participate and/or be consulted, and obstacles and barriers to involvement should be removed or at least minimized. The organization should inform workers, and especially new workers, of who their representatives in OH&S-related matters are.

Organizations typically focus on involving all levels of management and OH&S experts, but sometimes fail to involve other non-managerial workers such as workers on the shop floor, administrative staff, sales staff and others on lower levels of the organization's hierarchy. Since this is common, there are specific requirements in ISO 45001 that emphasize the importance of involving non-managerial workers. The requirements in this subclause specify when participation and consultation is necessary.

Organizations also typically focus on groups of workers who are in the majority and accepted historic views, and so can fail to understand or take into account the needs of specific workers or groups of workers. Mechanisms for participation and consultation can be important to ensure a full representation of women, people with disabilities, and ethnic and other minority groups, and that issues raised, suggestions made, and views on decisions are respected and acted upon.

Consultation is required for determining needs and expectations, how to fulfil legal requirements and other requirements, assigning who does what, establishing the OH&S policy and objectives, operational controls, monitoring and measurement, and for establishing the audit programme.

Participation is essential for identifying hazards, assessment of risks and opportunities and determining action to manage these. Participation is also essential for making decisions about competence, training, communication, control measures and investigation on incidents and nonconformities, as well as for taking action on these.

EXAMPLE 1 Real life case 1 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 5.4.

A medium-sized organization manufacturing, selling and distributing products directly to customers experienced a high number of OH&S incidents and cases of ill health. It recognized the need to involve workers more. To address this, the organization:

— asked for views from the worker representative, and feedback from workers, at team meetings and from talking to workers on the shop floor, then reviewed this feedback in management team meetings;

— reframed the OH&S committee to include representation from all parts of the business, including those working off-site and shift workers;

— improved effectiveness of OH&S committee meetings by having flexible meeting agendas, structuring meetings in a more consistent way and encouraging participants to provide examples of good meeting practice;

— displayed feedback from meetings in the workplace;

— encouraged workers to provide feedback to their representative or directly to the OH&S committee;

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— introduced rotation of the chair of the OH&S committee, once trust was established between the members of the committee;

— included planning for OH&S, assessing and prioritizing risks and best solutions in the agenda for OH&S committee meetings;

— introduced no-blame hazard reporting;

— jointly investigated OH&S incidents, asked for ideas to prevent recurrence and reviewed these with input from top management and the OH&S committee;

— introduced monthly joint inspections by members of top management and non-managerial workers;

— reviewed OH&S training needs and plans in the OH&S committee;

— held weekly team meetings to discuss how to improve OH&S issues (this led to improvements in machine guarding and in the working environment, including use of a better ventilation system);

— included OH&S in monthly toolbox talks, encouraging workers to deliver these.

EXAMPLE 2 Real life case 2 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 5.4.

To demonstrate the involvement of workers at all levels of the organization, a medium-sized logistics company found it helpful to create a matrix of all the processes within its OH&S management system where workers or worker representatives are consulted or participate.

This company has found that a matrix with the touchpoints down the left-hand column and the different roles who are consulted or participate in the OH&S management system across the top is helpful when demonstrating not only conformity to ISO 45001:2018 but also when internally promoting the organization's commitment to worker involvement.

EXAMPLE 3 Real life case 3 on how to implement requirements in ISO 45001:2018, 5.4.

Company X saw the value of structured regular meetings to ensure that knowledge and ideas are exchanged, and that information is not lost. They implemented this once per month as part of a brainstorming meeting with workers in which one person moderates and top management documents the results.

They set up learning teams, which are mixed teams comprising top management and other workers, to regularly exchange ideas and experiences about working together and dealing with risks.

The learning team discusses different topics, including frequent near misses or tasks with a particularly high risk without blaming anyone. The learning team in company X consists of five to seven people. The meeting takes place in two stages. In the first meeting, participants discuss how different activities are linked to each other in the work process:

— Exchange of experiences: What are the important steps in the activity? Who does what, when? How often does it happen? How long does it take? What instruments/materials are used? What are the known risks?

— What is needed to do the activity? Which requirements must be fulfilled? When does it become difficult to comply with them?

— Exchange of problems: What problems have you encountered and what did you do? What are good or bad conditions for the activity? What do you worry about when doing the activity? What have you already experienced (near misses, incidents, etc.)?

After a short reflection time (e.g. 1 to 2 days), a second meeting deals with suggestions for improvement. The meetings are moderated, and the moderator documents the findings:

— Collecting ideas for solutions: What are your ideas about how to resolve the problems? How can we have a direct impact on it? What suggestions are simple to implement?

— Make specific agreements: Who takes care of what? What do we agree on for all of us? When do we meet again to discuss results?

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