

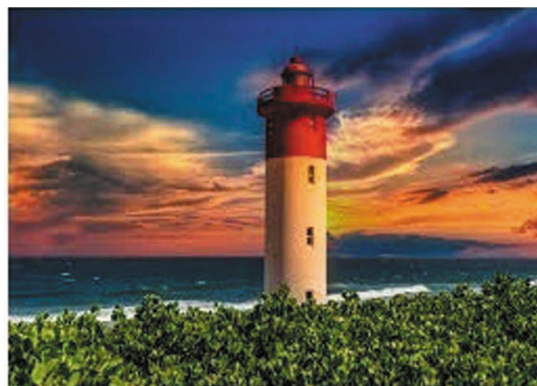


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Occupational Hygiene in Practice - Navigating New Workplace Challenges

20-23 October 2025

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July/August 2025 Volume 85 Number 3

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Editor: Debbie Myer
 Production Editor: Lindsay Myer
 Chairman: Leighton Bennett
 Vice Chairman: Herman (Harry) Fourie
 Administration: Vanesse Levitt
 Membership: Debbie Myer
 Committee members: Wensley Misrole, Wellington Mudenha, Steward Shapiro, Fabian Buckley, Warren Manning, Delene Sheasby, George Browse

Telephone: + 27 11 886-5985
 Mobile: + 27 83-266-6662
 E-mail: delinds@mweb.co.za, debbie@safety1st.co.za
 Postal address: PO Box 41822 Craighall 2024

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Editor's Comment

EXERCISE AND MINEFULNESS PROMOTE PRODUCTIVITY

Research shows that exercise—physical activities or mindfulness practices—can benefit cognitive functions and help employees perform optimally in the workplace. Exercise will improve decision-making and work performance, thereby helping employers and their employees tackle workplace challenges more effectively. Melanie Ossip addresses this in her article *Effects of exercise on cognition, mental health and productivity of workers*.

OH&S BUDGETS

Bill Pomfret underscores the critical need for companies to allocate a distinct budget for Occupational Health and Safety. He outlines strategies that OSH practitioners can use to ensure the budget allocation becomes a reality. Acknowledging that many companies prefer to spend their money on “nice to haves”, he offers actionable pointers OSH practitioners can craft in their case to secure this funding.

OH&S COMPLIANCE AT TVET

To achieve academic excellence, Estelle May has supported OH&S implementation across all her campuses. She successfully aligned infrastructure and compliance with educational delivery. In this issue, you can read how she achieved this success, plus get a glimpse into her plans to continue moving forward on this path.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY FILES

The contents of Maintenance Work Project H&S files differ from those required for construction work projects. Leighton Bennett emphasises that OHSPracs need to tailor their maintenance work requirement Health & Safety Specifications and/or maintenance project requests. These customised requirements must fit the specific tasks and activities when maintenance work and plant turnaround project are being performed

CURBING ALCOHOL ABUSE

When a paper mill identified that alcohol abuse among its employees resulted in frequent accidents, they conducted a safety audit. The results showed that nearly 40% of accidents were linked to alcohol consumption, including cases where employees arrived at work under the influence. The company immediately took action, implementing routine, mandatory breathalyser testing for all staff. The results were staggering. This is a worthwhile read for all companies dealing with the same on-site issue.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Tibor Szana explains the complexities of Section 16 of OHSA, concluding that companies must set up their structures ensuring they are suitable for their companies, without trying to squeeze Section 16(2) as a “square peg into a round hole”.

Han Wenqi discusses Human and Organisational Performance (HOP)—a systematic way of analysing and handling mistakes.

If you want to know what happens behind the scenes when you visit a guest house or hotel, read Harry Fourie’s article on hospitality safety.

John Smallwood in his article *Quality Management and Health and Safety (H&S) management: “Two sides of the same coin”* explores how deviations from requirements has resulted in catastrophies such as the George building collapse.

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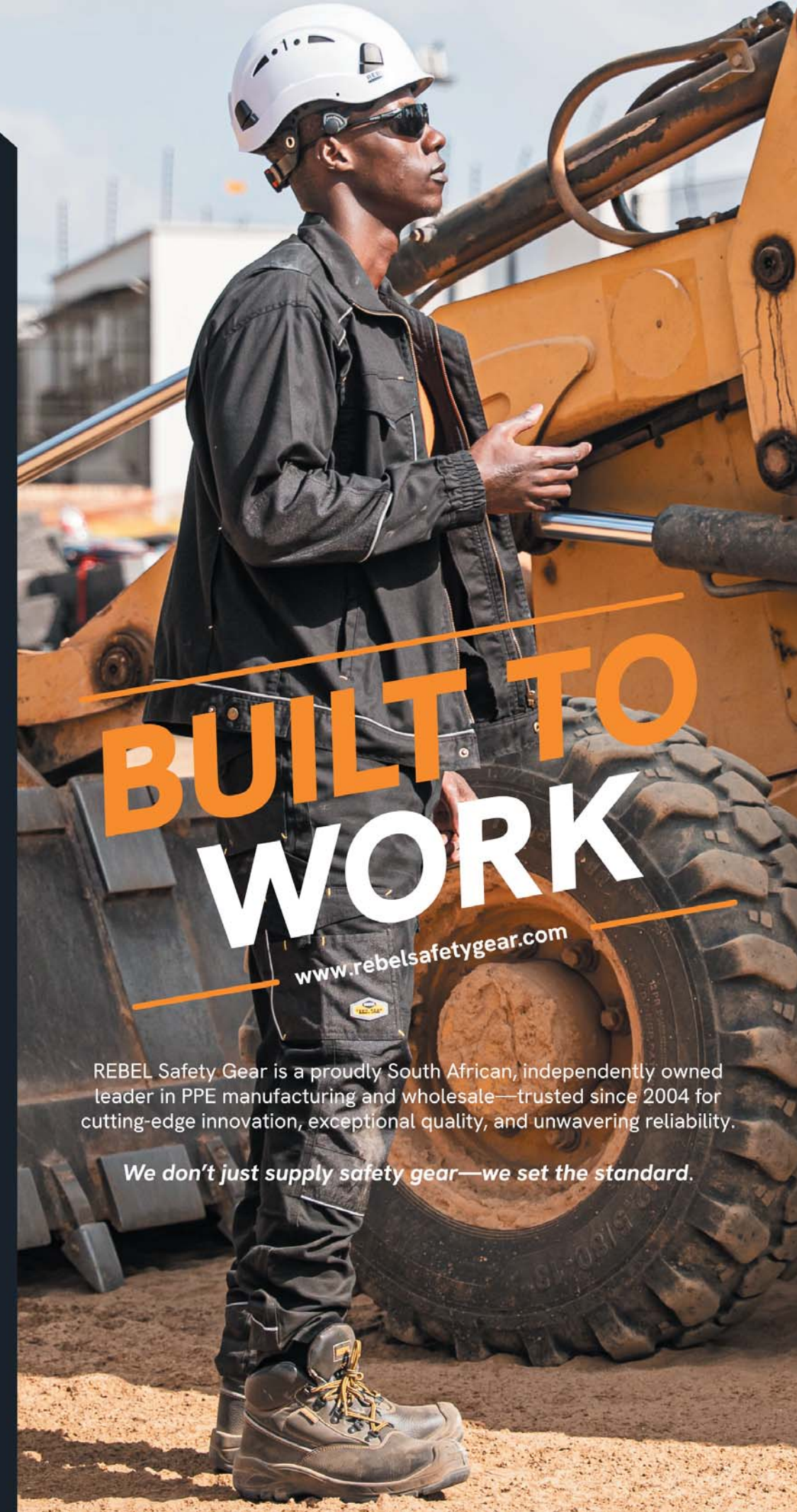
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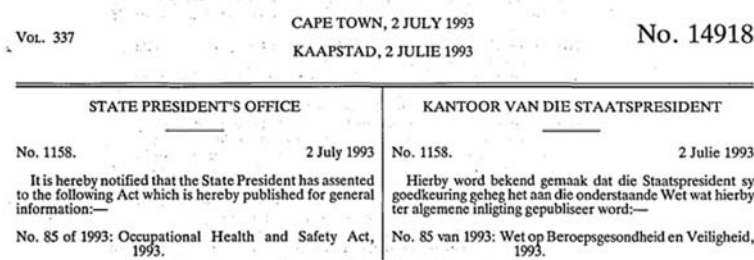


Assigning duties in terms of S16 of OHSA



Tibor Szana
Chief Inspector:
Occupational Health and
Safety (Retired.)

Have you sorted out your Section 16 appointments and assignments related to the CEOs duties in your company? Over the years Section 16 and more specifically Section 16(2) has remained one of the key issues that DEL was engaged in with employers/employer representatives which is also something that I personally had to deal with, both as a junior inspector and subsequently as Chief Inspector. The implementation by the inspectorate post the publication of the OHSA in 1994 resulted in some confusion as the Department sought to apply the Section. It was assented to by the State President and subsequently published and was in effect from 1994.



The issues related to Section 16 emanated as a result of understanding what the intention was by the DEL and how the employers could best apply this within their businesses. Part of the challenge over the years appeared to relate to the sometimes complex structures of companies, which included the fact that globalisation and the move into the 4th IR meant that some CEOs of multinational companies did not need to be permanently present within a country to operate their business and on the other hand there were companies that had what appeared to be multiple businesses independently registered under what was deemed to be a "holding company" of sort.

While the application in many companies left a lot to be desired, nevertheless, it did not change where "the buck stopped" in any company regardless of how the employer (the company) and its top or senior management sought to 'manipulate' the legislation to their unique circumstances or shift their legal responsibilities.

Firstly, lets look at this Section 16 in its entirety:

16. (1) Every [chief executive officer] shall as far as is ...reasonably practicable ensure that the duties of his employer [as contemplated in this Act], are properly discharged.

(2) Without derogating from his [responsibility] or [liability] in terms of subsection (1), a chief executive officer may (assign) [any duty] contemplated in the said subsection, to [any person] (under his control). [which person] shall (act subject to) the [control] and [directions] of the chief executive officer.

(3) The provisions of subsection (1) [shall not], [subject to the provisions of section 37], relieve an employer of any [responsibility] or [liability] under this Act.

(4) For the purpose of subsection (1), [the head of department] of [any department of State] shall be deemed to be the [chief executive officer] of that department.

From this Section, there are two clear areas of responsibility indicated. The first being the Chief Executive Officer, which according to the OHSA definition "in relation to a body corporate or an enterprise conducted by the State, means the person who is responsible for the overall management and control of the business of such body corporate or enterprise".

The second level allows the Chief Executive Officer to 'ASSIGN' any duty that is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer to 'any person' where such person is 'under' the 'control' of the Chief Executive Officer. It should be noted however, that it is "without diminishing the original intent or scope of the law" in Section 16(1) in relation to the Chief Executive Officer. It should further be observed that the CEO carries the full responsibility at all times on behalf of the employer, the employer being the registered company in its many forms.

Despite what is recorded in Section 16, you should at all times be aware that this Section 16 cannot be read in isolation of Section 37 which allows others to bear responsibility for their own acts or omissions in relation to OHSA, should the conditions indicated be met by the parties concerned. Section 37 requirements however, are for a different discussion on another day.

Probably one of the most talked about issues then is Section 16(2) which relates to the 'assignment of duties' of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). This Section does not require these duties to be in writing and was not deemed necessary in 1993, it would appear. However, given how serious this is, it would be remiss of the CEO not to put the duties being assigned in writing to any person given any duties that are the responsibility of the CEO.

The problem with this 'assignment of duties' I have noted over the years was the manner in which these duties were framed by the CEO when it was given to any person to perform. It was essentially framed in generalities such that it made no sense firstly and secondly it was clear that the CEO had no understanding what he/she was doing. The seriousness or lack thereof on the part of any company can be seen in the way it is documented or not documented by the CEO.

While any duty of the CEO may be assigned to any person, this person should be under the control of the CEO, and this person will be doing those duties where the person is 'subject to' the 'control and directions' of the CEO. Not another person, but to the CEO directly, according to the OHSA.

Let's revisit Section 16(1) again though, it says "as far as is ... reasonably practicable". Why is this relevant? The definition of "reasonably practicable" means practicable having regard to the severity and

scope of the hazard or risk concerned; the state of knowledge reasonably available concerning that hazard or risk and of any means of removing or mitigating that hazard or risk; the availability and suitability of means to remove or mitigate that hazard or risk; and the cost of removing or mitigating that hazard or risk in relation to the benefits deriving therefrom". This definition would require the CEO to really consider to whom any duties would be assigned to. This is therefore not a low level assignment of duties by the CEO. The intention does not stretch to the worker on the shopfloor. The converse is also true that the CEO would need to seriously consider to whom any duty would be assigned to as the CEO would not be a specialist in all areas and would therefore need the assistance of another person to fulfil his duties as required by the legislation.

So the CEO is a person of an enterprise in the private sector and a person at the level of Director General (the head of department of any department of State) notwithstanding the CEOs or Executive Directors of State Owned Entities (SOEs) which are operating under a State Department/Ministry but are operating on their own, each with a Board of Directors.

In 2013, the office of the Chief Inspector provided a Directive to the Provincial Offices (which included the Occupational Health and Safety Inspectors) on how Section 16 was to be interpreted and how the Provincial Offices were to raise awareness as to the Department's interpretation in this regard with a clear intention to minimise the number of queries coming in to the Department on Section 16 by promoting a common understanding across the board.

Let's delve slightly deeper then, say the company is a national company and more specifically a holding company with many smaller companies linked to it. If the companies attached to it are all companies registered as companies in their own right with their own company registrations, does the head of the holding company now have to make the individual company CEOs Section 16(2) assignees? No, of course not!

Another scenario could be a registered company that houses several business units within its structure as a registered entity, can each of the business unit heads now be 'appointed' as Section 16(2) assignees?

In a third scenario, the company is a multinational company with its head office situated outside the borders of South Africa. The head travels to its various companies in other countries, versus another scenario in the same vein where the head of a company situated in South Africa (part of a multinational) is required to spend a certain amount of time in the head office of the company situated in another country. Does the head of the company situated in South Africa now 'appoint' a Section 16(2) assignee in South Africa to perform the duties (as specified) on behalf of the CEO while the CEO is absent from the company in South Africa? Consider a fourth and final scenario, a construction company that has a project which could be its own registered project or it could be a joint venture, to what extent does Section 16(2) get included? If yes, how?

Of course, the scenarios that are presented to the Department of Employment and Labour (DEL) wherein employers want the OHSA to be able to adequately address their "unique" circumstances, are endless.

In response to the aforementioned then, the Section 16(2) assignee cannot, as a rule 'assign' the duties of the CEO to a third person or another Section 16(2) as it were, the condition

that has been put there is clear, such assignee if he/she was assigned further duties would now fall outside of the 'control' of the CEO and the 'direction' of the CEO. The 'direction and control' components could be dependent on the complexity of the issue being addressed. For example, an issue in SASOL or Eskom would be treated differently to an issue in Pick n Pay, or an issue in Volkswagen or Ford may be addressed differently to an issue in Nampak or Arcelor Mittal. The structures are different, the complexity of each company is different, its manner of operating is different, etc. The duties the CEO wishes to assign to a second person makes the presumption that such person is competent in all respects to perform the duties the CEO wishes to hand over to him/her.

When a senior manager is described as being "under the control and directions" of a CEO, it signifies a legal relationship characterised by authority, oversight, and responsibility. The CEO must actively manage, guide, and monitor the senior manager's actions to ensure compliance with occupational health and safety laws, thereby maintaining accountability and mitigating legal risks. (AI)

1. Control

Control: power or authority to guide or manage (CONTROL Definition & Meaning - Merriam-Webster)

Control: The fact or power of directing and regulating the actions of people or things; direction, management; command (control, n. meanings, etymology and more | Oxford English Dictionary)

Definition: Control refers to the power or authority to manage, direct, or influence the actions and decisions of another person or group. In the context of a senior manager being under the control of a CEO, it implies that the CEO has the ultimate authority over the senior manager's actions related to occupational health and safety duties.

The CEO must monitor the senior manager's activities to ensure compliance with legal obligations and organisational policies. This means regular communication, reporting, and performance reviews.

2. Direction

Direction: guidance or supervision of action or conduct : management (DIRECTION Definition & Meaning - Merriam-Webster)

Direct: direct somebody/something to control or be in charge of somebody/something (direct verb - Definition, pictures, pronunciation and usage notes | Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary at OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com)

Definition: Direction involves providing guidance, instructions, or commands regarding how tasks should be executed. In this context, it means that the CEO can instruct the senior manager on specific actions to take or policies to implement.

The CEO is responsible for establishing clear expectations regarding health and safety standards. This includes defining roles, responsibilities, and performance metrics.

3. Combined Effect of Control and Direction

The combination of control and direction means that the CEO cannot simply delegate responsibilities and walk away. They must actively engage in the management of those responsibilities, ensuring that the senior manager operates within the framework of the law and organisational policy.

So, to recap, there is the CEO (private of public sector) and there is the assignee, and the role of the assignee is to assist the CEO with his/her duties on behalf of the employer, viz. Company XYZ (Pty) Ltd or CC, etc. Furthermore, this could happen for a variety of reasons, but, the key reason always given is that the CEO span of control is too big and therefore, the CEO requires a person or people to assist with the duties assigned by OHS to the employer.

Section 16(1) is by no means complete or considered fully understood unless you understand one fundamental aspect, and that is, the CEO has some 'room for movement' relating to the application of his duties. When looking at what those duties are, the employer must apply the four conditions set out under the definitions relating to ... "as far as is reasonably practicable" in order to "ensure that the duties of his employer, are properly discharged".

As indicated previously of course, Section 16 cannot be considered in isolation of Section 37 which provides further conditions for the application of Section 16.

When considering the construction aspect (Contractor / Construction Manager) in relation to how Section 16 fits, it should be noted that there is a very dynamic relationship between the two that must be met, notwithstanding the fact that this explanation does not provide a "one size fits all" solution. You may find that when doing 'structures' for your site, it may require a different setup to the one you are used to.

A summarised extract of key aspects of CR hereunder:

A client appoints an agent to act as his/her representative on a construction site. A principal contractor who is an employer is appointed by a client to perform construction work. The principal contractor appoints a construction manager for a specific site. The agent, according to CR 5(7) must manage health and safety on site. The contractor must provide a health and safety plan according to CR7(2)

(a) The construction manager must ensure health and safety compliance on site according to CR 8(1). There is therefore a clear line of responsibility from the top to the bottom. There are other checks and balances that are added by the CR that I have not included here.

A Joint Venture (JV) is a relationship between two registered entities (companies) that register a company representing both parties and then registers with the Compensation Fund/FEM. Thereafter, the parties are more than likely going to employ the services of an Agent to represent them. The rest of the structure follows thereafter. There is a notion that the Section 16(2) gets appointed and commercially oversees the entire project but is not permanently on site. The Section 16(2) is responsible for ensuring that the CR8(1) Construction Manager has all the necessary resources to do the required work in a healthy and safe manner. This apparently is in the contention or the norm supposedly. This person may oversee one or several sites.

You are to remain cognisant of the fact that the client of course may appoint an agent, and if he/she does not do so, then the agent function falls away. In this instance, I think it is more sensible to assign duties (S16(2)) to the Agent if one is appointed, considering how the duties are defined. If one

(Agent) is not appointed, then to appoint an S16(2) to do what the principal contractor wants. So there are two scenarios, and as with all things legal, there will be a myriad of opinions and suggestions, some based on actual experiences and some of it on fluff.

THE OHS BILL/NEW ACT

The new OHS Act or amended OHS Act when published regarding Section 16 as it currently stands, will not necessarily address the complexities of this current challenge as posed above, as far as I am aware. It will however provide for the 'assignee' duties to be put in writing for anyone required to assist the CEO with his/her duties. The current conditions in essence remains the same then as indicated earlier. It does not distinguish or make special requirements for multinationals or any companies with national footprints and the like. Should you feel that you have very special circumstances and that you would like the DEL to consider your proposal in relation to an amended Section 16(2) then you will be within your right to consider asking DEL to consider an Exemption for your circumstances, when required. But don't be frivolous about it.

IN CONCLUSION

Companies must set up their structures such that they are suitable for their companies without trying to squeeze Section 16(2) as a "square peg into a round hole". If you have not made any comment in this regard during the 'Public Comment' phase then you can expect more of the same as this particular area would have required your direct input for it to assist you to manage the CEO duties in a way you deemed necessary, that is, if you had an opinion on it.

Remember, this Section 16(2) has as its primary purpose the function of assisting the CEO and not drawing out the structure of the company for whatever reason and thereby making sure that there is additional remuneration for 'additional work' as some have done. Simply put, a Section 16(2) cannot assign the duties given by the CEO to him or her or assign other new duties not entrusted to him/her by the CEO of the company. If you want to override Section 16(2) for any reason, get an exemption from DEL first by providing a strong motivation why you want to do so.

To further seal this matter, don't forget that health and safety should be part of every staff members (workers) performance agreement at all levels of the organisation. At the end of the day, every manager and supervisor as well as every other employee has a direct responsibility for OHS (Section 14) that is not optional and Section 8(2)(i) pretty much makes that very clear. Managers and supervisors should understand that they have a direct duty to manage health and safety at their respective workplaces.

NOTE:

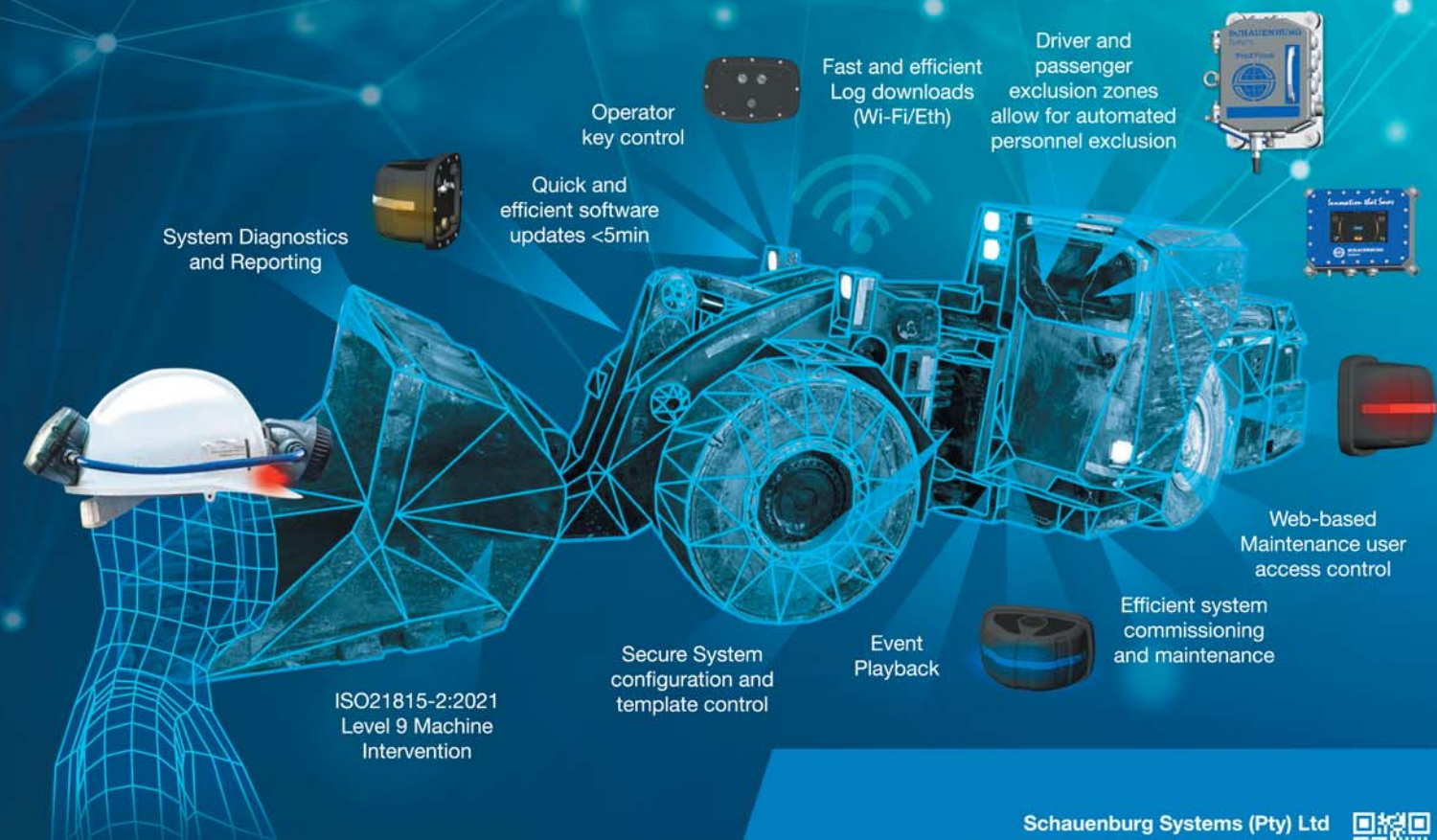
This is an opinion piece and therefore there is no attempt to provide legal advice through this item.

Thanks to those who have given me of their time to bounce off an issue.

References added directly and in one instance I bounced an item on AI.

TRANSFORMING DATA INTO ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS

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ISO21815-2:2021 Level 9 Machine Intervention

Construction work vs maintenance work H&S files



By Leighton Bennett, Benrisk Consulting, Safety First Association Chairman, OHS & Risk Management Consultant

Today's Occupational Health & Safety Practitioners (OHSPracs) usually know that for construction work a Health & Safety Specification should/must be provided to a contractor's developing and submitting a contractor's construction work health and safety plan, and file to the client for the proposed construction work project.

However, when a maintenance work project is required, the OHSPracs usually resort to issuing their construction related Health & Safety Specification to the contractor for maintenance work, but the Construction Regulation appointments do not apply, as maintenance work has a general, machinery, electrical or process system focus, with the need for the work to be performed safely.

Maintenance work projects that I have recently worked on involved needing maintenance H&S files for maintenance work on gantry cranes and process pumps, manufacturer's equipment installation monitoring, production plant automation system upgrades and the painting of security electrified palisade fences, for example, with working at heights in some cases.

Yes, the OHSAct Sections 16(1) and 16(2) appointments still apply in terms of the responsible people for the business or contractor's OHSAct compliances, but who is the contractor's appointed site responsible maintenance manager/supervisor?

Many OHS Practitioners would say the General Machinery Regulations apply. Yes, but the client's site usually has an appointed GMR 2(1) machinery responsible person (with the DEL informed of the appointment) for their site's machinery. So the maintenance contractor's site person is not a GMR 2(1) on the site but could be a maintenance contractor's GMR7(2) appointment to assist with the supervision of machinery, with a specific instruction to report issues to the client site's GMR 2(1), and not to the contractor's own GMR2(1) when on a client's site, as applicable.

A GMR 4(3) shiftsman appointment focus is to supervise machinery needing constant attention to avoid accidents, so also does not apply to maintenance work

An OHSAct section 8(1)(a) is a possible employer appointment to a designated employee to ensure to provide and maintain systems of work, plant and machinery, within their working environment, in a safety and health condition, at both their home site and when working at a client's site. While adding a section OHSAct 8(1)(i) to the above appointment, this requires that the appointee must ensure that the work performed, and that the plant or machinery

used (and/or worked on) is done under the general supervision of a person trained to understand the hazards associated with such plant and machinery being used (worked on), and to ensure precautionary measures are taken and applied. So, the responsible person for maintenance work needs to be an OHSAct Section 8(1)(a & i) appointment for both own and client site maintenance work.

From Table 1, you can see that appointments become complex when drawing across the legislator's intentions to have people responsible to ensure health and safety supervision and management is applied at workplaces, especially where some maintenance work requirement activities have been legislated within the Construction Regulation and other Regulation clauses (EMR, DMR, EIR, GAR, etc).

However, at the contractor's home site the GMR 2(1)(a) & GMR 2(7) appointments are made for competent people to be held responsible for the safe function and use of their site installed and operated machinery.

If the contractor is to do maintenance work on a client's machinery, site work permits, overlock/double lockouts, plant/system depressurisation, equipment drainage and possible plant/equipment, decontamination may be required to ensure the maintenance worker's health and safety, followed by supplier "out-of-stock" and "like-for-like" spares procurement delays, that may be required to ensure the maintenance worker's health and safety issue resolution.

Furthermore, the maintenance workers must also obey and implement the client site's health and safety requirements, in terms of site rules, workplace procedures, workplace PPE to be used, impact and other exposure risks and work permit requirements because of the various workplace risks at the client site's and operational risks. These issues are unlikely to occur where a construction work contractor is working at a "green fields" work site.

In closing, as the content of Maintenance Work Project H&S files are not the same as required for construction work projects, the Occupational Health & Safety Practitioners (OHSPracs) need to customise their maintenance work requirement Health & Safety Specifications and/or maintenance project requests to suit the specific maintenance work tasks and activities that are anticipated to be performed when maintenance work and "plant turn around" projects are to be performed.



Table 1. Appointments for differed worksite activity projects

Site Responsible Person Appointment Options				
Client site appointment	Construction site work appointment	Client's site contractor Machinery Maintenance appointment	Client's site electrical contractor maintenance work appointment	Client's site contractor general maintenance work appointment
Company OHSAct S16(1) – CEO/MDS16(1)	Construction company OHSAct S16(1)	Company OHSAct S16(1) – CEO/MD	Company OHSAct S16(1) – CEO/MD	Company OHSAct S16(1)
Company OHSAct S16(2)	Company OHSAct S16(2)	Company OHSAct S16(2)	Company OHSAct S16(2)	Company OHSAct S16(2)
User/ Lessor responsible for site's electrical installation EIR 2(1)	User/ Lessor responsible for site's electrical installation EIR 2(1)	Not Applicable - client responsible	Not Applicable - client responsible	Not Applicable client responsible
Client's machinery GMR 2(1)	Site's machinery GMR 2(1) ?	OHSAct S8(2)(a & i) &/or GMR 2(7)(a)?	Electrical contractor registration EIR 6(1)	OHSAct S8(2)(a & i)
Client's machinery assistant GMR2(7)(a)	Site's machinery assistant GMR 2(7)(a)?	Machinery assistant GMR 2(7)(a) possible to site GMR2(1)	Electrical registered person EIR 11(1)	OHSAct S8(2)(a & i)
Shiftsman GMR4(3) (= machine use supervisor?)	Construction supervisor CR8(7)	OHSAct S8(2)(a & i)	OHSAct S8(2)(a & i)	OHSAct S8(2)(a & i)
Own Construction Manager CR8(1))	Construction manager CR8(1))	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Own Assistant Construction Manager CR 8(2)	Assistant Construction Manager CR 8(2)	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Risk Assessor OHSAct S8(2)(d) & possibly CR 9(1)?	Risk assessor appointment CR9 (1)	Risk Assessor OHSAct S8(2)(d) & possibly CR 9(1)?	Risk Assessor OHSAct S8(2)(d) & possibly CR 9(1)?	Risk Assessor OHSAct S8(2)(d) & possibly CR 9(1)?
Possible W@H appointment S8(2)(d) + CR 10(1)(c) or CR8(7) + CR 10(1)(c)?	Fall prevention planner CR 10(1)(a), but the CR has no formal clause CR Fall Supervisor appointment	Possibly W@H appointment S8(2)(d) + CR10(1)(c), or CR8(7) + CR10(1)(c)?	Possibly W@H appointment S8(2)(d) + CR10(1)(c), or CR8(7) + CR10(1)(c)?	Possibly W@H appointment S8(2)(d) + CR10(1)(c), or CR8(7) + CR10(1)(c)?
Incident investigator appointment S28 & GAR 8 & 9	Incident investigator appointment S28 & GAR 8 & 9	Incident investigator appointment S28 & GAR 8 & 9	Incident investigator appointment S28 & GAR 8 & 9	Incident investigator appointment S28 & GAR 8 & 9

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Contact:

Mobile: +27 83 266 6662

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The workplace accident that changed my life (Part 2)

The 4th of June is not just another day on the calendar for me. It marks the moment my life took a sharp and unexpected turn when I lost an arm and a leg ... not in a warzone, not in a far-off place, but at my place of work.

I showed up that day like every other day, expecting to finish my shift and go home, never imagining that the accident that day would cost me so much - physically, emotionally and mentally.

Here I stand-not broken but rebuilt as an ambassador of safety: To remind every employer: Safety isn't a checkbox. It's a lifeline. To remind every worker: You matter. Speak up. Stay aware. To remind every survivor: You are more than your scars. You are strength in motion.

Over fifteen years later, I still feel the weight of that day, but I carry it with courage and conviction. In the second part of this article, I will share my views on the future of OSH.

I believe that more people are becoming aware of the importance of health and safety, and as this awareness is brought into the workplace, companies will lose business unless they take it seriously. In turn, this will create more opportunities for health and safety professionals in the future.

Mental health: Due to the rising cost of living and the pressure caused by long working hours as people struggle to sustain their families, I foresee a rise in mental health problems like stress and depression. As a result, there could be a greater emphasis on the health aspect of our roles in the future.

Technology: If used correctly, technology, including AI, may help OSH practitioners work more efficiently.

Burning platform: The OHS profession must get a wider buy-in, to create a "burning platform", as suggested by Andy Mutch, a survivor of the Piper Alpha disaster (Mutch & Macdonald, 1991). The "burning platform" would recognise and seek to proactively mitigate the impact of a lack of, or inadequate health and safety.

Leaders in their respective areas would be required to show their commitment and set the tone for success. Spreading awareness of the importance of health and safety through continuous learning, sharing of personal stories and training are key. Emphasising the benefits from getting health and safety right and highlighting the negative impacts of failure is a good way to go. The moral, legal and financial reasons for health and safety should be explained and is something I do when I share my story.

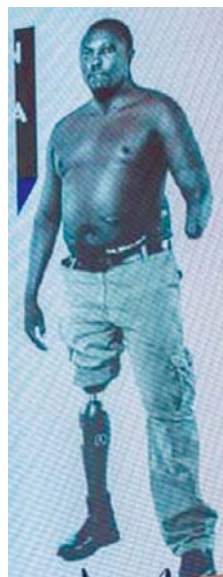
Moral reasons: Companies have a moral obligation to ensure the health and safety of their employees so that they return home safe and well. Workers also have a moral duty to protect their own and others health and safety.

When I look at my accident, it caused physical harm and brought an end to my career which meant I had to start over again. Whilst I recovered and found a new path, my family and I suffered uncertainty and financial hardship.

Morally no one wants to inflict the consequences that can follow an accident on others.



Partington Oswald
Mitatabikwa



Financial and legal reasons: When I had my accident I lost my income, had to sell almost everything I owned and had to accept help from my wider family and friends to get by.

My employer lost revenue through downtime whilst the accident was investigated. When work could recommence, overtime had to be paid to make up for the lost time, and damaged equipment had to be repaired or replaced which all increased costs.

Accidents also have a cost for wider society too. I cannot imagine the cost of my care considering I spent the whole year in hospital. By including such practical examples in our conversations, we can get wider buy-in on the importance of health and safety, especially if the message is delivered with passion.

MY LONG-TERM GOALS

Education: I completed the NEBOSH International Diploma in Health and Safety. I now aim to obtain the NEBOSH International Environmental Diploma by the end of 2025.

I have a passion for the environment because of the way it is directly linked to health and safety. As humans, we are destroying our own habitat, and something needs to change. Long-term I would like to incorporate environmental aspects in my talks, and achieving this NEBOSH Environmental Diploma should help me achieve this.

Once I have attained both NEBOSH Diplomas my goal is to study for an MSc in Occupational Health, Safety and Environmental Management.

Recognition: JT Foxx says, "It is not who you know but who knows you". This highlights the importance of being visible and credible which you can use to have a positive impact.

I intend to continue to share my story on a global stage to inspire and motivate others. Networking and attaining globally recognised qualifications like those offered by NEBOSH will help me to raise my profile and open doors so that I can continue to make a difference.

By my own endeavours and with the help of others I will achieve them and continue to make a difference by sharing my story.

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Effects of exercise on cognition, mental health and productivity of workers



Melanie Ossip is a Director Corporate Wellness Centre. She is a physiotherapist and ergonomic consultant specialising in reducing workplace discomfort and pain.

A comprehensive study was conducted to analyse the effects of exercise on general cognition, memory and executive function which in turn effects employees and productivity in the workplace.

It was found that exercise, even light intensity such as Tai Chi, yoga or mindfulness, benefit general cognition, memory and executive functions across all populations, reinforcing exercise as an essential, inclusive recommendation for optimising cognitive health.

It was found that

- Exercise interventions significantly improved general cognition, memory and executive function across all populations and ages.
- Effects were generally larger for low- and moderate-intensity interventions.
- Exercise, even at a lighter intensity, positively impacts overall cognitive function, memory and executive skills in all demographic groups.

Exercise has profound effects on physical health. However, increasing evidence suggests that these effects extend beyond physical health, positively influencing cognitive health and mental well-being. The relationship between exercise and cognitive function has become an important area of research due to its relevance on the healthcare of workers and the broader community.

Physiologically, exercise may bolster cognition through mechanisms such as the augmented release of neurotrophic factors, increased vascularisation of the brain, greater dendritic spine density, enhanced synaptic plasticity and reduced systemic inflammation.

Psychologically, the social and interactive aspects of exercise may further catalyse cognitive improvements.

All exercise modalities confer significant improvements in general cognition, memory and executive function, certain modalities impart greater cognitive benefits.

The practice of mind-body exercises (including yoga, Tai Chi and Chi Jong), require a high degree of attention in conjunction with the memorisation of coordinated movement sequences. This is found to be particularly beneficial for memory enhancement.

Low-intensity exercise had the greatest effect on cognitive outcomes, it is important to consider that many low-intensity interventions, such as Tai Chi, yoga and exergaming, incorporate significant cognitive components.

Tai Chi requires memorisation of sequences and spatial awareness, yoga emphasises mind-body connection and breath control. Several mechanism come into play increased cerebral blood flow, enhanced neuroplasticity, improved neurotransmitter function and the cognitive demands of complex movement patterns.

Exercise prescriptions can be individualised based on patient preferences and abilities, as cognitive gains were observed across various exercise types, intensities, frequencies and durations

CONCLUSIONS

The current evidence on the cognitive benefits of exercise, highlights its positive effects on general cognition, memory and executive function across diverse populations and exercise modalities.

Regular physical activity supports cognitive health across the lifespan. Most forms of exercise appear effective, including light-intensity activities, exergaming and mind-body practices such as yoga and Tai Chi, making exercise an accessible and versatile intervention.

There is a need for further high-quality studies to confirm and refine these findings of the effects of these exercises, this review provides strong support for the role of exercise in promoting cognitive function and overall health.

It has been found that employees who exercise regularly, have improved well-being and perform optimally in the workplace.



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Health and safety budgets: *why they matter*



Dr Bill Pomfret has over 50 years of experience as a safety consultant working for leading companies around the world. Dr Bill is a passionate advocate for safety training.

Workplace accidents and work-related illnesses are a scourge that damage the health of workers, and entail enormous economic costs. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates the costs of workplace accidents and illnesses at almost 3 trillion dollars annually worldwide. However, the harm to health is even more significant than the economic costs. According to the ILO, 2.6 million people die every year from work-related causes. Of this number, approximately 330,000 cases are due to fatal accidents. To put the data into context, the director of the ILO compared this economic impact to the combined GDP of the 130 poorest countries. Not investing in safety and health translates into enormous costs of workplace accidents and illnesses.

In the European context, the costs of workplace accidents and illnesses also reach macroeconomic figures. According to the National Institute of Safety and Health at Work (INSST), in Europe, they amount to 476 billion euros (524.085 billion dollars).

These 476 billion euros represent 3.3% of the total European GDP. In the specific case of Spain, there are studies estimating the costs of workplace accidents and illnesses at 3% of the country's GDP.

It is therefore understandable that organisations need to set aside a certain amount of their budgets for occupational health and safety.

THE IMPORTANCE OF OH&S BUDGETS

Why can't you just spend what you need? Well-run organisations recognise the need to ensure that they only spend what they can afford.

Usually this is achieved by making sure that sales are higher than costs. In almost every business, there are choices to be made around which of many options to take when it comes to spending money. No organisation can do everything it wants within its limited budget. And no organisation has an unlimited budget.

Businesses face tensions over how to share out the pie. Part of setting the budget is about ensuring strong cases are put forward to use the available cash.

HEALTH & SAFETY BUDGETS

Health and safety professionals who are keen to make change will face certain challenges. If historic spend has been low or non-existent, then your current budget is going to be low. You must find a way to break this cycle! This is a strong reason to start your thought process well in advance, as it may take some time to build up a business case and to educate your peers, line managers and leadership team.

You also need to know who signs off the budget.

Typically, the budget process is overseen by the finance department and is signed off by the board. You may feel overwhelmed, like this is going to be hard work. It is! But you have one huge issue in your favour: Occupational health and safety is NOT optional!

There are plenty of "nice to have" things a company might spend money on. Think ball pools and slides in many big tech companies! But health and safety is a legal requirement. This is a huge win when it comes to arguing for resources to help your employer comply with the law.

TELLING YOUR STORY TO MAKE YOUR PITCH

Some health and safety leaders struggle to get hold of a budget. When making their case, they must make it clear that H&S must not be thought of as an overhead, but rather as an important investment in the success of the company. H&S is about much more than reporting accidents and incidents.

The 4 biggest challenges:

Below are some of the biggest encounters I have found when researching what companies think about spending on health and safety:

- 1) For smaller companies, it can be the complexity around the legal obligations. To overcome this challenge, the small companies may outsource their safety tasks to an external consultant.
- 2) For larger companies, the main reason is a lack of time and people – this isn't surprising given how wide the requirements are for H&S.
- 3) Often, it's simply the lack of funds available and an inability to break the cycle.
- 4) Sometimes it's about a lack of awareness among staff and management on what they must do for their health and safety to be truly compliant. If they don't know what they need to do, how do they allocate budget to it?

REASONS WHY SAFETY LEADERS CANNOT GET A BUDGET

Following are some of the comments I hear, and questions I am asked:

Is Occupational Health and Safety an "overhead" or "just compliance"?

Your company's leadership teams may perceive health and safety as an overhead rather than an activity that contributes to revenue or saves money.

Firstly, health and safety does not need to be expensive. The initial investment will depend on where you are starting from, but building a health and safety culture does not need to cost the earth.

Whilst compliance is a legal obligation (and

therefore an overhead imposed on companies by the Government), this view ignores things like working days lost to injuries, or the cost of investigations, or site closures if things go wrong.

There is also the question about the cost of training. These days there are amazing free learning events and resources.

Finding it hard to recruit? The modern workforce is making choices about where they take their labour. Employers that are known for a lack of care, may find it hard to attract and retain good talent.

Many companies are already reporting their safety performance in public documents. These stats are used by investors and potential acquirors for competitor benchmarking and to decide on valuations.

Claims records have a big impact on insurance premiums. Thinking of safety as an overhead ignores the potential costs being incurred from expensive insurance premiums.

The chances of winning a competitive tender are reduced with a poor safety record, or poor systems and data to evidence the safety approach.

On the positive side, it is heartening when I hear that more and more customers are seeking assurance that their supply chains are compliant with the relevant laws, and that they are actively showing they care for their employees, the environment and society.

My company has never had a separate health and safety budget

You might find that there's never been a specific health and safety budget put in place, or perhaps one that has never been asked for. This is going to be a challenge. You may even find that money has been set aside for health and safety but is difficult to access.

In larger organisation's, health and safety professionals often struggle to get hold of budgets because the money is allocated to other departments. This poses a major challenge for the health and safety department.

It is important for management to understand that health and safety is unique in the organisation. In other words, because safety is "everywhere", it can end up being "nowhere".

Some of the most common challenges associated with this concept are:

- a) IR controls all software budgets.
- b) HR control the training, learning and development budgets.
- c) Health and safety sits within HR.
- d) The legal department controls the "compliance" budget, which is often a badge given to health and safety.
- e) The budget for equipment might sit with the facilities team.

f) The budget for insurance will often sit with the finance or operations teams.

You need to influence and engage with your leadership colleagues, to make sure that you have access these budget pots. Even where IT, HR or Legal have control of spend, they will value your professional input and contribution, but you have to make a strong case.

There is a health and safety budget, but sign off requirements are tight

Even where the H&S budget is allocated, several stakeholders may be required to sign off on any budget being given or purchase being made.

Time and again we see health and safety professionals ready to buy a service or software only to realise that IT, Legal, Finance, Procurement all want a say in the process! This can either delay the process, or at worst, the request can even be denied.

It's a modern reality of business life that more people get involved in decisions, particularly where they cross different functions.

Once again, you have to make a strong case and have all facts on hand to overcome this challenge.

You're new to safety and don't know where to start

Health and safety professionals require a fine balance of empathy, discipline, organisation, data literacy and storytelling. The profession is a brilliant community of people who care! But you first need the necessary experience and knowledge to guide the business on what it needs to spend on health and safety.

Your first focus will be on building up your own qualifications and technical understanding. If your employer supports that initiative, then they will also acknowledge the value of health and safety.

You can also start by using your workplace and wider networks to see what's worked for other people and companies.

CONCLUSION

You will find that budgeting cycles become easier if you can show you took care over your spend in the current period, and if you can highlight the business benefit of the investments you made—referred to as Return on Investment (ROI).

You may occasionally see that a "top down" approach happens mid-year if things aren't working out as planned. This most commonly applies when a company is missing its sales budget.

It may take you a bit of time and twists and turns, but once you become a budget owner, you will have the power to drive a proactive safety culture throughout your organisation.

With the resources secured, you can effect real change, and do what you came into safety to do!

Building safe learning environments: the importance of OSH at False Bay TVET



Ms Estelle May has over a decade of experience in safety compliance and facilities management. She has supported OHS implementation across all campuses, contributing to the accreditation of more than 20 qualifications. Estelle serves on several internal committees, promoting a systems-based approach to safety and compliance. She remains committed to assisting and creating safe, future-ready learning environments that support innovation, sustainability and excellence in the TVET sector.

In South Africa's evolving Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) landscape, infrastructure development and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) compliance are no longer support functions, they are critical enablers of academic excellence, student success, and institutional resilience.

At False Bay TVET College OHS, facilities and infrastructure are in the process of driving a safe, compliant, and future-focused innovation.

Ms Estelle May, the College's facilities and occupational health and safety officer has played a pivotal role in aligning infrastructure and compliance systems with educational delivery and accreditation standards. She and her team have worked across the college's five campuses and central office, contributing to the design of safe, future-ready environments that support both learning and legislative requirements.

SAFETY AS A STRATEGIC ASSET

False Bay TVET College has redefined its approach to OHS, moving away from a "tick-box" compliance culture and toward a proactive, system-driven safety strategy. In 2024, the College introduced 21 new occupational certificate programmes—nearly triple the number from the previous year, made possible through rigorous infrastructure readiness and strategic collaboration. The Megawatt Workshop designed as a fully

compliant, industry-aligned training space, enables students to learn using state-of-the-art equipment in a risk-controlled environment. It has drawn the attention of industry partners and funders, proving that safety and innovation can and must coexist.

"Compliance doesn't slow us down," says Ms May. "It enables us to move faster, more confidently, and more sustainably."

THE CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

Failure to maintain facilities or meet OHS requirements can have serious legal, operational, and reputational consequences including:

- **Legal liability and fines**
Institutions may face penalties or forced closures for non-adherence to OHS legislation and building regulations.
- **Health and safety risks**
Poorly maintained facilities pose direct threats to the well-being of students, staff, and visitors, including injury, trauma, or loss of life.
- **Accreditation challenges**
Non-compliance can delay or block programme approvals, limiting institutional offerings and growth potential.
- **Loss of industry trust**
Employers and funders are less likely to partner with colleges that do not uphold safe, modern learning environments.



"The cost of non-compliance isn't just financial—it's reputational," Ms May warns. "It signals to stakeholders that safety isn't a priority, which undermines confidence in our qualifications and graduates."

INFRASTRUCTURE THAT ENABLES LEARNING

In 2024, False Bay TVET College invested in a series of infrastructure projects that enhance safety, reliability, and accessibility, including:

- **Generator installations** to maintain operations during loadshedding.
- **UPS battery replacements** to ensure ICT and teaching continuity.
- **Lift upgrades** at Fish Hoek Campus to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- **Potable water upgrades** at Westlake Campus.
- **Fire safety enhancements** across all campuses.

"These are not optional upgrades—they're essential investments in operational resilience and quality learning," Ms May explains.

EMPOWERING STAFF AS SAFETY AMBASSADORS

Key to the College's success has been a deliberate focus on staff ownership of OHS requirements. False Bay TVET College trains their staff not just to follow safety protocols, but to serve as ambassadors and role models for campus wide compliance.

Staff are trained in essential safety roles including but not limited to:

- First aiders.
- Fire wardens.
- Evacuation marshals.
- Health and safety representatives.

"Compliance is everyone's responsibility," says Ms May. "When staff are informed, equipped, and empowered, safety becomes instinctive. It becomes part of who we are as a college."

SMART SYSTEMS AND CROSS-FUNCTIONAL PLANNING

Ms May contributes to several internal structures, such as the OHS Committee, and recently joined the Skills Development Committee, where safety planning is integrated into broader institutional decision-making.

This collaborative approach ensures that OHS considerations are not isolated to facilities, but embedded across academic, administrative, and operational functions. It also improves the College's ability to adapt quickly in response to emerging needs and industry trends.

SECTOR-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on her experience, Ms May would like to join other TVET colleges in aiming to improve their OHS compliance and infrastructure efficiency:

1. **Adopt preventive maintenance planning**
Regular inspections and proactive maintenance reduce long-term costs and prevent crises.
2. **Create cross-functional compliance committees**
Collaboration between departments ensures compliance is built into every stage of operations.
3. **Digitise safety and maintenance systems**
Use digital tools to track inspections, report incidents, and monitor compliance tasks.
4. **Invest in staff development**
Provide OHS awareness training for all staff, refresher (mandatory) training for Facilities and OHS personnel, to foster shared responsibility.
5. **Ensure universal accessibility**
Infrastructure upgrades must consider the needs of students and staff with disabilities.
6. **Benchmark with peer institutions**
Learn from sector best practices and develop shared tools to improve compliance maturity.
7. **Plan with accreditation in mind**
Align infrastructure development with future programme delivery and accreditation standards.

LOOKING AHEAD

As the demand for skilled graduates and workplace readiness continues to rise, TVET institutions must strengthen their foundation with safe, compliant and responsive campuses.

False Bay TVET College under the guidance of professionals like Ms Estelle May is demonstrating that smart investment in safety and infrastructure is not a cost but a competitive advantage.

"Infrastructure (Facilities) and OHS are not peripheral," concludes Ms May. "They are essential to quality, credibility, and future-readiness. When we invest in safety, we invest in people and that's what education is ultimately about."

"Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) is an ongoing journey, it's not perfect, nor is it cast in stone. There will always be areas that need improvement and continuous improvement in OHS and facilities management relies on honest, constructive input from all stakeholders, staff, students, and management alike. It's not about pointing fingers, but about fostering a collaborative culture that prioritises safety, functionality, and shared accountability."

Case study: The paper mill that curbed alcohol abuse: *one simple intervention can transform lives at work, at home and on the road*



Rhys Evans, Managing Director of ALCO-Safe

In the 1990s, a major paper mill in KwaZulu-Natal faced a serious and persistent challenge—alcohol abuse among its employees. Workplace accidents were frequent and often severe. Internal safety audits at the time revealed that nearly 40% of workplace accidents were linked to alcohol consumption. Employees were arriving at work under the influence, and the risks to safety and productivity were growing impossible to ignore.

The company knew it had to act. Drawing from safety protocols seen in the mining sector, the mill implemented a bold new approach: routine, mandatory breathalyser testing for all staff. It was one of the first industrial businesses outside mining to take such a step.

At the time, this kind of intervention was almost unheard of, and it was met with significant resistance. Employees questioned the necessity of such measures, feeling that they were being unfairly targeted. Many felt the policy infringed on their personal lives, especially since much of the alcohol consumption occurred after work hours.

But the company held firm. With support from an on-site clinic doctor and clear communication around safety, testing was rolled out consistently and fairly. The results were staggering. Within a short period, alcohol-related accidents dropped from 40% to just 4%.

The clinic even saw changes ripple beyond the factory gates—wives reported their partners being more present at home, more money for groceries, and a dramatic reduction in domestic tension. That one simple intervention transformed lives at work and at home.

THE DETERRENT EFFECT OF CONSISTENCY

The mill's success wasn't due to revolutionary technology or draconian measures. The magic was in the consistency. Workers knew they would be

tested. They knew the consequences. And over time, their behaviour changed. The bar after work became less appealing when it meant risking your job the next day.

This localised case study presents a powerful model—one with clear implications for a far broader problem: South Africa's roads.

TURNING THE TIDE ON TRAGEDY

South Africa has one of the highest road accident rates in the world. Despite strict legislation against drunk driving, alcohol remains a leading contributor to fatal crashes. The laws exist—but enforcement is patchy at best.

What if we applied the same principle from the paper mill to the national road network? What if alcohol testing was routine, visible, and unrelenting—not just during festive crackdowns but every weekend, at known hotspots?

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES TO ENFORCEMENT

Introducing this system on a national scale would not be without its hurdles. Just as the paper mill factory initially struggled with employee pushback and a lack of understanding, road safety efforts must also contend with public awareness and law enforcement capacity.

Many South Africans are vaguely aware that drinking and driving is dangerous, but there is little education on exactly why. On top of that, low exposure to roadside testing creates a sense of impunity.

People drink and drive because they assume they won't be caught. The answer lies in making enforcement unavoidable and consequences certain—just as the factory did.

WHAT A NATIONAL TESTING PROGRAMME COULD LOOK LIKE

A successful nationwide programme would need three key components:

- 1. Training and integrity in law enforcement:** Officers need to understand the dangers of drunk driving—not just the legal penalties but the human costs. Proper training in the use of breathalysers, procedural consistency, and awareness of consequences (both for drivers and for corrupt officers) is essential. Body cameras and AI-backed monitoring could support transparency and deter bribery.
- 2. Planned, targeted rollouts:** Testing must be data-driven and consistent. Roadblocks should be placed strategically—near



nightlife areas, during peak times (Thursday to Saturday evenings), with minimum test targets per location. This isn't about random road-blocks—it's about maximising impact with the resources available.

3. Reliable equipment and maintenance:

Breathalysers must be accurate, calibrated, and properly maintained. This includes budgeting for consumables and servicing.

Without this, enforcement loses credibility—and the deterrent effect vanishes.

THE ROLE OF BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY

Government alone cannot bear the burden. Businesses can—and should—step up. In high-risk areas, local companies could pool resources to sponsor breathalyser units, fund training, and support a coordinated enforcement plan. By partnering with local police, they could ensure equipment is used responsibly, maintained properly, and deployed effectively.

These partnerships could be structured through non-profits or community trusts to guarantee transparency and accountability. In return, businesses benefit from safer roads, reduced absenteeism, and healthier communities.

This community-led approach would also empower citizens and local leaders to take back control of their road safety. It's a model based on partnership, not just policy.

LESSONS FROM THE MILL - A PROVEN MODEL, SCALED UP

The paper mill case proves one thing: consistent alcohol testing changes behaviour. Not just in theory, but in practice. When workers were held to account daily, they adapted. They chose safer, more responsible behaviour, simply because the consequences were clear and immediate.

The same workers who were once arriving at work still intoxicated from the night before were now going home sober. They were fathers at home instead of patrons at the bar. They were safer, healthier, and more stable—and their communities benefitted.

Now imagine that effect, multiplied across a nation.

This factory's experience isn't just a workplace safety success story—it's a microcosm of what could happen on our roads.

The same people who changed their behaviour to keep their jobs are the same people getting behind the wheel every day. If the threat of testing can change their choices at work, it can do the same on the open road.

Alcohol-related road deaths are not an inevitability, they're a preventable tragedy—and we already know how to prevent them.



ARE YOU MEETING ALL OCCUPATIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES?

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Keeping hospitality safe (without killing the vibe):

Why OHS matters in guesthouses and the tourism industry

Helping guesthouses stay safe, legal, and fabulous, one compliance checklist at a time.



Herman "Harry" Fourie
Occupational Health and Safety Consultant,
OSHProv Pty Ltd.
Vice-Chairman of the
Safety First
Association.
Professional worrier
and certified "Safety
Nerd"

Let's be honest: when most people think of guesthouses, they picture sun-drenched verandas, fluffy white towels, and someone handing them a welcome drink with a smile. Not fire extinguishers. Not "Slippery When Wet" signs. Definitely not the Occupational Health and Safety Act. But as much as we'd love to believe our guesthouses are just about charm, charm, and more charm—the truth is, behind that Instagram-perfect facade lies something far less glamorous: responsibility. And yes, that includes OHS—the three-letter acronym that makes most small business owners want to hide under the duvet.

Now, before you roll your eyes and reach for the wine, hear me out. South Africa's tourism industry isn't just nice to have, it's a R400 billion-a-year powerhouse, supporting over 1.5 million jobs. That's a lot of rooibos tea being served. And at the heart of it?

Guesthouses, B&Bs, and self-catering gems—those cosy little escapes where guests feel like they're staying with family (or at least with someone who doesn't judge their snoring).

But here's the thing: warm hospitality doesn't mean turning a blind eye to safety. In fact, the best kind of hospitality is the kind that says: "You're welcome here. But also, please don't die in the shower." Let's face it, a guest slipping on a wet bathroom floor isn't exactly the five-star experience you advertised.



THE NOT-SO-GLAMOROUS DANGERS OF GUESTHOUSE LIFE

We don't put guesthouses in the same category as mines or chemical plants. But don't let the fairy lights fool you. Hazards are hiding in plain sight—often behind that very towel rail you just grabbed for support.

Common risks include:

- **Slips, trips, and falls:** a lack of non-slip mats because they are less attractive than marble floors.
- **Fire hazards:** from unattended stoves ("I'll just pop the kettle on" guest), to dodgy wiring older than TikTok.
- **Electrical dangers:** such as extension cords snaking across walkways like confused garden hoses.



- **Gas leaks:** no hotel or guest house wants their guest's first South African experience to be an impromptu explosion.
- **Missing fire extinguishers:** or worse, having one that's been there since 2008 and now doubles as a decorative plant stand.
- **Poor hygiene:** "I wiped it with a tea towel" is not a food safety policy. And let's not forget the staff—the real MVPs. The cleaner is mopping a wet floor without a warning sign. The chef is using a stove that sparks like a disco ball. The receptionist who has no idea what to do when a guest faints after too much sundowner.

Spoiler: These aren't hypotheticals. These are real risks. And real lawsuits are waiting to happen.

PREVENTION: HOW TO BE SAFE WITHOUT BEING A BUZZKILL

The good news? You don't need to turn your guesthouse into a bunker to be compliant.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act (Act 85 of 1993) applies to all workplaces—yes, even to that cute cottage with the fairy lights. But compliance isn't about fear, it's about common sense with paperwork.

Here's how to keep everyone safe, and still keep the vibe:

1. KITCHENS

Those that don't want to kill your self-catering are great until someone tries to cook a three-course meal on a stove that sounds like a dying dragon.

Do this:

- Keep fire extinguishers and fire blankets (yes, they exist) nearby. Guests should even be shown where they are.
- Make sure stoves, ovens, and gas connections are in working order—no hissing like an angry snake.
- Avoid electrical cords playing hopscotch near sinks.
- Add child locks if your place is family-friendly (because toddlers are tiny ninjas).

Pro tip:

Get a Certificate of Compliance (CoC) for electrical and gas installations. It's like a report card for your appliances. And no, the belief that "It's been fine for years" doesn't count.

2. BATHROOMS

Wet bathrooms can be the olympic arenas of slips and falls. One wrong step and bloop, your guest is in a real-life "I fell in the shower" meme.

Make them safe:

- Install non-slip flooring. It may not be sexy, but it's lifesaving.
- Add grab rails. Dignity is important, but not breaking a hip is more important.
- Use "Wet Floor" signs during cleaning. Bonus points if it's in three languages.
- Keep outlets away from water. Use splash-proof covers.
- Ventilate well: Mould isn't a design feature.

3. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

AKA—"Don't Panic".

Imagine: fire alarm goes off. Guest asks, "Where do we go?" You say, "Uhh... towards the light?" No. Not ideal.

Be ready:

- Display evacuation plans in every room, this is like a treasure map, but for survival.
- Mark emergency exits, but for the love of all things holy, don't block them with garden furniture.
- Pick a safe assembly point, for example, the front lawn, not the pool.
- Train staff in first aid properly. "I watched a YouTube video" doesn't qualify.
- Keep first aid kits stocked, and check them regularly. Band-Aids from 2017 are not effective.

4. TRAIN YOUR TEAM

Your staff are your first line of defence, and also the ones who'll have to explain to SAPS why the fire extinguisher was full of sand. So, train them without boring them to tears.

What training they need:

- OHS induction: Not a PowerPoint marathon, but a quick, practical chat on fire safety, hazards, and what to do when someone spills red wine on the white couch.
- Refresher training: Once a year, or after you spot one of your staff trying to fix a fuse with a spoon.
- Clear reporting channels: Staff must not fear saying "Boss, this geyser sounds like it's plotting something."

Remember: under the OHS Act, staff have the right to refuse unsafe work. So if your cleaner says, "Nope, not mopping that during a thunderstorm," respect it. They're not lazy. They're safety-conscious.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU IGNORE SAFETY?

Spoiler: It doesn't end well.

- A guest slips, sues, and leaves a one-star review: "Lovely view. Terrible hospital."
- The Department of Employment and Labour shows up like an uninvited in-law, and issues a fine or closure order.



- Your insurance says, "Nice try," and refuses to pay because you skipped the CoC.
- Worst of all, someone gets hurt, or worse. And no amount of fairy lights can fix that.

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR CARING

Here's the good news: safety is actually great for business.

- Safer spaces = happier guests = better reviews and repeat bookings.
- Well-trained staff are more confident, efficient, and less likely to quit.
- Insurance premiums may go down (or at least stay down).
- You build a reputation for being responsible, which, let's be real, is sexy in a "I can trust you with my life" kind of way. And with South Africa pushing domestic and eco-tourism, guests are choosing places that care about the planet, the people, and not setting the kitchen on fire.

SAFETY IS PART OF THE SERVICE

Hospitality isn't just clean sheets and a smile. It's also: "I made sure the wiring wouldn't electrocute you." "I checked the fire extinguisher." "I trained my team to help if you fall."

True hospitality means making people feel safe, and not just welcome.

So let's stop treating OHS like a chore. Let's treat it like part of the service. The best guesthouse isn't just beautiful. It's thoughtful, responsible, and safe from bathroom-based disasters.

Let's build a tourism industry that doesn't just say, "Welcome!" But also quietly promises: "We've got your back. And the fire blanket is under the sink."

Road safety: *It starts with you!*



For years, Dräger's drug and alcohol testing equipment have helped police identify law breakers, avoid confrontations and bring watertight evidence to court.

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STOPPING ACCIDENTS BEFORE THEY HAPPEN

Driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs is one of the most common causes of accidents on public roadways. Random screenings helps law enforcement to identify the culprits, and also to immediately get them off the road.

During an accident or roadside screening, tests performed with scientifically proven breathalysers produce evidence that is admissible in a court of law.

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Roadside screenings often need to be conducted quickly and in less-than-ideal conditions, such as darkness, cold or rain. To tackle these challenges, Dräger alcohol pretesting and drug screening devices are extremely durable in design, simple to operate and easy to read from, even under poor lighting conditions. They are suited for use during roadside screenings as well as during traffic accidents and criminal investigations. Based on Dräger's years of experience in the field of measurement and sensor technologies, the company produces alcohol and drug screening devices that provide fast and precise results.



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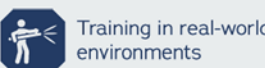
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Human and organisational performance:

A critical success aspects of occupational health & safety management system



Han Wenqi is an experienced workplace safety and health professional from Singapore, and an advocator with 15 years of industrial safety experience. He is a lecturer for the Bachelor of Science in SHEM and MSc in OHSW. He is currently a guest speaker / associate lecturer with the Leeds Beckett University, Cardiff Metropolitan University. His experience is highly sought after in Singapore mega projects.

Human and Organisational Performance (HOP) is a systematic way of analysing mistakes to efficiently handle them. It helps us comprehend how people behave and how to create a system that is resistant to mistakes.

By clearly understanding the behaviour and working environment is crucial to human and organisational performance. A conceptual change in how you manage dependability, efficiency, and safety is human performance.

WHAT IS MEANT BY ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE?

Organisational performance refers to a company's capacity to attain its goals and maximise outcomes. Organisational performance can also be characterised as a business's capacity to meet goals in a fast-paced changing environment.

WHAT IS HUMAN PERFORMANCE IN SAFETY?

Human performance's most fundamental goal is to enable staff members to improve an organisation's operational efficiency and level of safety.

Even the best workers are likely to make mistakes, according to the Principles of Human Performance. Processes and standards inside a company influence a person's performance.

WHAT AFFECTS ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE?

Planning for human resources, hiring practises, employee training, workforce planning, and succession planning all influence how well an organisation performs.

Moreover, the organisation's performance is influenced indirectly by technology, organisational rules, acquired supplies, and inflation.



WHAT IS A LEARNING TEAM WITHIN THE HOP PARADIGM?

Communication between those who do the work and those who designed it is facilitated by a learning team to improve system's integration and share operational capability data. Before a failure occurs, we can utilise a learning team, or we can use it thereafter.

WHAT MAKES AN ORGANISATION SUCCESSFUL?

Successful businesses show competencies in five important areas: strategic planning and structure, workers, workplace procedures and systems, and mindset.

The Human and Organisational Performance (HOP) adopts the comprehensive approach to safety management that emphasises on the safety engagement sessions with complex interactions between humans, organisations, and the systems they use.

It aims to create a more resilient and proactive safety culture by understanding how people and systems interact, rather than solely focusing on individual errors.

HOP is a way of thinking about safety that shifts the focus from blaming individuals to understanding and managing systems and processes. It utilises social science principles to design more resilient working systems. HOP embraces errors that are inevitable and focuses on managing them through proactive preventive measures. It emphasises learning from incidents and using that knowledge to improve systems.

HOP promotes a culture of learning and continuous improvement, where mistakes are seen as opportunities for growth.

The key principles of HOP are:-

- **Error is normal:** Recognise that errors are a natural part of human activity and are not necessarily indicative of individual incompetence.
- **Blame fixes nothing:** Focus on systemic improvements rather than assigning blame.
- **Context drives behaviour:** Understand how organisational culture, procedures, and systems influence individual actions.
- **Learning is vital:** Use incidents as learning opportunities to improve safety and prevent future occurrences.
- **Response matters:** How an organisation responds to errors can either perpetuate or terminate a cycle of mistakes.

HOW CAN HOP IMPROVE WORKPLACE SAFETY?

- **Reduce reliance on individual performance:** HOP emphasises improving systems and processes to make them more robust and resilient.
- **Enhance communication and collaboration:** HOP promotes open communication and teamwork to identify and address safety risks.
- **Inculcate a more proactive safety culture:** HOP encourages organisations to identify and address safety hazards before they lead to incidents.
- **Induce proactive decision-making:** HOP provides a framework for understanding complex situations and making informed decisions.
- **Maintain and continuously improvise a culture of learning and continuous improvement:** HOP encourages organisations to learn from their mistakes and use that knowledge to improve their safety performance.

THE ORGANISATION'S RESPONSIBILITIES

In the context of an implementation of HOP in the workplace", we need to:

- Embrace the principles of Human and Organisational Performance to create a safer work environment.
- Focus on systemic improvements rather than blaming individuals for errors.
- Promote a culture of learning and continuous improvement.
- Utilise the knowledge and insights gained from HOP to create more resilient and proactive safety systems.

CONCLUSION

The principles of HOP enable organisations to start the process of understanding their organisation's capacity.

For a deeper awareness of the working context, HOP assists in bridging information silos.

The ability to learn from every situation and involve staff members in coming up with suggestions is what matters most.

An important HOP approach that can result in fewer injuries and more employee engagement is to view employees as "problem solvers."

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Quality Management and Health and Safety (H&S) management: “Two sides of the same coin”



Professor John Smallwood
PhD (Construction Management)
Professor of Construction Management, Department of Construction Management, Nelson Mandela University

INTRODUCTION

Notable collapses of buildings and other structures during construction in the South African construction industry over three decades amplify the importance and role of quality management in assuring that the construction process and its activities do not compromise the integrity of buildings and structures, and the H&S of project participants and the public in general.

THE ABSOLUTES OF QUALITY AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO H&S

Crosby (1996) presents the four absolutes of quality, which constitute the basics of quality: definition—conformance to requirements; performance standard—zero defects; system—prevention, and measurement—price (cost) of non-conformance (CONC).

Disturbing terms such as ‘low quality materials’ used by the Council for the Built Environment (CBE) (2025) in the Media Statement on the Council for the Built Environment investigation into the Multi-Storey Building Collapse in George on 6 May 2024, are a misnomer as materials either conform to requirements (standards / specifications) or do not i.e., there are no ‘low’, ‘medium’ or ‘high’ quality materials.

These absolutes apply unequivocally to H&S. Firstly there are numerous H&S requirements contained in, among others, legislation, regulations, standards, contract documents, and H&S specifications, that need to be conformed with.

Secondly, the obvious performance standard relative to H&S is zero deviations (from requirements). Deviations create the opportunity and / or ‘trigger’ for ‘failures of management’ as opposed to ‘accidents’, the outcome of which is fortuitous, either minor, moderate, major, or catastrophic as in the case of the George building collapse.

Thirdly, the system is certainly prevention as opposed to appraisal or inspection. Although brick-work can be demolished and re-built (at a cost) if defective, once an arm is severed, it is severed!

Fourthly, in terms of measurement, the cost of accidents (COA) is ideal, as all stakeholders can relate thereto and it can be expressed as a percentage of the cost or value of a project, or the value of completed construction in an organisation or industry.

QUALITY MANAGEMENT IS A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER MULTI-STAGE ISSUE

If a suspended reinforced concrete slab, support work, wall, or trench excavation collapses, then it is

invariably a quality management issue, which have implications for H&S.

Furthermore, a range of stakeholders influence quality over the six stages of projects, among others: clients and construction project managers (CPMs)—multi-stakeholder project quality plans, adequate project duration, appropriate procurement system, pre-qualification in terms of quality (designers and contractors), quality as a bid criterion, and project quality oversight; designers—design of the permanent works, constructability, ‘design and construction’ method statements, and ensuring of conformance to requirements; quantity surveyors (Qs)—facilitation of financial provision for quality-related interventions, and quality as a bid criterion, and contractors—quality management systems (QMSs), safe operating procedures (SOPs), safe work procedures (SWPs), and conformance to requirements.

CHALLENGES

The following, among others, militate against quality: a general poor industry quality culture; the focus of registration relative to projects when businesses / practices undertake projects and influence the achievement of quality thereon; separation of design and construction relative to constructability, H&S, and quality; fragmentation of design; compressed project schedules; competitive tendering resulting in the appointment of the ‘lowest bid’ contractor accompanied by the general focus on cost and time; no ‘barriers to entry’ by contractors and workers; de-skilling of the trades; inadequate management commitment to quality; a general informal approach to quality, and limited documenting of defects and measurement of CONC / rework.

REQUIRED INTERVENTIONS

The integration of management systems and approaches relative to the environment, H&S, and quality.

Quality-related criteria such as QMSs and / or quality management practices must be included in the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) and the National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBRC) contractor registration processes, and employer associations’ e.g., Master Builders Associations (MBAs) and South African Forum of Civil Engineering Contractors (SAFCEC), membership application processes.

The six statutory built environment councils must review their respective ‘Scope of Work for Categories of Registration’ to ensure that they

reflect ‘better practice’ quality management, and reality. The Professional Building Inspector, and Certified Building Inspector registration categories require special attention in terms of H&S and quality.

The role of Building Control Officers (BCOs) must be reviewed to ensure that BCOs interrogate H&S and quality-related issues such as geotechnical reports, ‘designing for construction H&S’, and structural design processes, including peer review of structural designs.

All tertiary built environment education must address quality management, and statutory council and professional association accreditation panels must interrogate the extent to which it is embedded (not addressed) in such programmes.

Mandatory formal skills training of substance must be reinstated as workers must be empowered to ‘do work right, first time, every time’, while working in a healthy and safe manner and environment.

An independent CPM must be appointed to manage projects from Stage 1 ‘project initiation and briefing’ to Stage 6 ‘project close out’ to avoid designers fulfilling a design function and acting as principal agent, which represents a conflict of interest. Furthermore, CPMs must be competent to interrogate structural designs, and construction structure-related processes.

Clients must pre-qualify, prior to appointment, CPMs, construction H&S Agents (CHSAs), designers, and Qs in terms of ‘designing for construction quality’ competencies, systems, and processes, and quality management competencies, systems, and processes.

Structural design processes must be undertaken in accordance with a rigorous documented quality management process hallmarked by peer review. Design outcomes must be interrogated in terms of, among others, designing for construction quality, constructability, and H&S.

Clients must pre-qualify contractors in terms of QMSs and quality practices relative to both private and public sector projects. Furthermore, general contractors must appoint construction managers that are competent to interrogate structural designs, and construction structure-related processes i.e., able to ‘spot the mistake’!

Digitalisation of construction has the potential to contribute to improving, among others, quality performance on projects, which will require commitment, funding, and training. However, it is not the panacea, for failure to ‘get the basics right’.

CONCLUSIONS

Although the focus of this article is quality management, and that, among others, quality management is a pre-requisite for optimum construction H&S; quality management and H&S management are ‘two sides of the same coin’.

Construction quality is a multi-stakeholder multi-stage issue, which requires an integrated effort managed by a single-point responsible ‘conductor’ who must be well versed in terms of, among others, quality management, and H&S management. To this end, CPMs are the ideal stakeholder as a designer fulfilling a design function and acting as principal agent represents a conflict of interest.

There is a disconnect between quality and H&S in South African construction, which militates against the achievement of optimum H&S, which manifests itself in, among others, project stakeholders not identifying inadequate structural design, and digesting the implications of ‘cracks’.

The general construction environment, structure of the industry, no barriers to entry, pseudo registration of contractors, general limited or non-inclusion of quality management in tertiary education, and as a criterion for registration or membership, and appointment to undertake projects, individually and collectively, militate against construction H&S and quality.

ISO 9000 series certification is the optimum, however, in general, the development and maintenance of a documented QMS is challenging, and in the case of small and medium-sized general contractors, subcontractors, and micro contractors, ‘not feasible’. However, among others, pre-activity ‘quality talks’, and quality checklists are non-negotiable interventions.

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SAIOH President's Message

Karen du Preez: SAIOH President, e-mail: president@saioh.co.za

The Southern African Institute for Occupational Hygiene (SAIOH) remains steadfast in its dedication to its members and the ongoing advancement of the occupational hygiene profession. In pursuit of this commitment, we regularly provide updates and share key developments with our community.

SAIOH flourishes through the active participation and ethical contributions of its members, whose engagement continues to shape the field. To further strengthen our collective efforts, we welcome and encourage feedback on the topics covered in this edition of African OS&H.

The legacy of SAIOH



The work we do as Occupational Hygienists, have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of employees at work. Occupational Hygiene Practitioners and Approved Inspection Authorities (OH AIAs) therefore spend a lot of time and effort to ensure that they and their staff are qualified, experienced, and competent to perform their work accurately and effectively.

HAVE CONFIDENCE IN YOUR COMPETENT PERSON

Recent regulations promulgated under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993, require that occupational health risk assessments and exposure assessments are conducted by a competent person.^{1,2,3} This places a duty on the employer to ensure that they secure the services of a person duly competent in the full scope of work contracted.

The Southern African Institute for Occupational Hygiene (SAIOH) is a professional body concerned with certification of its members at three professional levels / designations, as approved by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).⁴ Members need to have obtained prescribed qualifications and experience before they can apply for assessment at these levels / designations. The curriculum that the assessments are based on, consist of 17 skill sets, as described in the self-assessment tool that members need to complete as part of the application process.

SAIOH assessments are based on theoretical knowledge, as assessed with the written assessments at all three professional levels, as well as confirmation of practical experience, as assessed through oral assessments, which is not applicable to the entry level.⁵

Personnel competence forms an integral part of the requirement for South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) accreditation under ISO/IEC 17020: Conformity assessment – Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection.⁶

SANAS accreditation under ISO/IEC 17020 is a prerequisite to obtain certification from the

Department of Employment and Labour (DEL) as an AIA for Occupational Health and Hygiene.⁷ Competence as defined by SANAS includes education, training, technical knowledge, skills and experience. Personnel competence, as declared by the AIA, is verified by SANAS during assessments. Staff employed as inspectors by the AIA must be registered with SAIOH. The reporting guideline issued by the DEL also requires that a copy of the valid SAIOH certificates of staff involved in an inspection done by an AIA, should be attached to the report.⁸

By obtaining the services of a reputable SANAS accredited OH AIA, the employer can be confident that work within the AIAs scope of accreditation should be performed by a person holding SAIOH registration, who was declared competent by the AIA, as verified by SANAS.

Through the implementation of a comprehensive, documented quality management system, work not included in the AIA's scope of accreditation are likely to follow the same quality management principles. The employer may request the AIA to confirm competence for the specific work required prior to securing their services.

Occupational hygiene practitioners are encouraged to maintain their level of competence for any work conducted, through attendance and participation in appropriate learning activities and interventions.

SAIOH members are required to participate in a system of continuous professional development (CPD) and submission of an annual CPD points return as prerequisite for renewal of membership.

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National council feedback

Karen du Preez: SAIOH president, e-mail: president@saioh.co.za

Deon Jansen van Vuuren: SAIOH general manager, e-mail: deon.jvuuren@gmail.com

SAIOH MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES: 20 MAY – 24 JULY 2025

During the period under review, SAIOH Management actively engaged in various strategic meetings and sector-related events aimed at advancing occupational hygiene initiatives and internal governance.

General Manager Position

- On 4 June 2025, Senior Management convened a special session to determine the succession plan for the General Manager position whose current contract ends 31 March 2026. The job model was revised and a Mailchimp campaign was distributed to SAIOH members inviting applications for the contractual post. SAIOH aims to appoint an Assistant General Manager from 1 October 2025, with the objective of full transition into the role by 1 April 2026.

Governance Meetings

- Council Meeting: The second Council meeting was held online on 12 June 2025.
- Upcoming Board Meeting: The third Management Board meeting is scheduled for 30 July 2025 and will be hybrid.
- Internal Coordination: Various impromptu Zoom and MS Teams sessions were conducted with the conference planning committee.

Sector Engagement and Advocacy

- On 26 June 2025, the Department of Employment and Labour (DEL), in partnership with SAIOH and the Occupational Hygiene Approved Inspection Authority Association, hosted an online webinar on the newly promulgated Noise Exposure (NER) and Physical Agents (PAR) Regulations.

The event drew over 280 on-line participants.

- On 23 May 2025, SAIOH Management members attended the Occupational Hygiene Approved Inspection Authority Association's meeting, where SAIOH updates were presented.
- A Mailchimp call for nominations to the Department of Employment and Labour Noise Technical Committee was circulated to SAIOH members on 30 May 2025.
- On 2 June 2025, SAIOH members Ms. Bulelwa Huna and Mr. Deon Swanepoel represented the Department of Employment and Labour at the ILO Conference in Geneva, Switzerland. SAIOH circulated ILO Recommendation No. 209 on 13 June 2025, addressing biological hazards in the workplace.

Event Attendance

- SAIOH leadership, including the President and General Manager, attended the official book launch of "In a Rain of Dust"—a compelling narrative of Crocidolite and Amosite asbestos mining in South Africa and related legal proceedings in the United Kingdom. The National Institute of Occupational Health (NIOH) hosted this insightful event featuring the author and legal counsel, both of whom engaged attendees with personal stories and book signings.

Accreditation & Industry Discussions

- SAIOH Management participated in the South African National Accreditation System (OH STC) special assessors meeting on 19 June 2025. Topics included updates to the Department of Employment and Labour Occupational Hygiene Report template and conformity body classifications.





SAIOH Admin Teambuilding at Mangwa Valley Game Lodge in Dinokeng, 25-27 June 2025. From Left to right: Lee Doolan, Deon Jansen van Vuuren, Rebecca Doolan, Kate Smart and Tracy Mphaphuli

Staff Development and Team Building

- The SAIOH Admin team held an online staff meeting on 28 May 2025.
- From 25–27 June, the Admin team embarked on a successful team-building retreat at Mangwa Valley Game Lodge in Dinokeng. Activities included a staff planning session, a spa day, game drives, a wine-tasting experience, and a celebratory dinner.

The retreat offered an enriching combination of professional development and camaraderie, with close-up wildlife encounters adding a special touch.

Strategic plan

The SAIOH five-year strategic plan is led by Jaco Pieterse who is guiding its implementation. Matters arising, key targets, and progress evaluations are reviewed regularly during the monthly SAIOH Management Board meetings and the quarterly Council sessions.

Ethics

SAIOH ETHICS FRAMEWORK FINALISED AND ETHICS TRAINING STRATEGY ADVANCED

- SAIOH Management, in collaboration with the Ethics Committee Chair, Dr. Oscar Rikhotso, and legal advisors NGO Law, have successfully concluded a rigorous two-year process to develop, review, and finalise the SAIOH Code of Practice and its associated Disciplinary Procedure.
- The final meeting of this comprehensive effort was held on 9 June 2025, attended by eight dedicated contributors. These foundational documents will now be formally incorporated into Chapter 1 of the SAIOH Quality Management System (QMS). With this milestone achieved, the Ethics Subcommittee will commence full implementation, embedding approved ethics protocols into SAIOH's governance practices. The ethics procedure forms a key pillar of SAIOH's strategic priority #3.
- Mandatory Ethics Training for Members - Effective 1 January 2023, all certified SAIOH members must provide evidence of completing an approved occupational hygiene ethics training course. A one-year phase-in period was granted during 2022.
- Terry McDonald (BOHS) led Professional Development Courses (PDCs) on this subject during the 2021 and 2022 SAIOH Annual Conferences, as well as through an online webinar presented on 25 July 2024. Recordings of these sessions remain available for purchase.

Development of SAIOH Ethics Course

- To address regional relevance, SAIOH has partnered with North-West University (NWU) to develop a bespoke ethics course tailored to occupational hygiene within the Southern African work environment.
- Following multiple online planning sessions, a formal Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) was signed in early July 2025. With the agreement in place, NWU will now proceed with the development of this vital training programme.

SAIOH branch workshops and meetings

- North-West Branch: Earlier this year, the North-West Branch partnered with Sedulitas to host an insightful workshop on Electro-Magnetic Fields (EMF) at the North-West University (NWU).
- Gauteng Branch Meeting: The branch held its second in-person meeting of the year on 9 May 2025 at the Dräger SA facility in Midrand. The venue, catering, and presentations were of high quality. Despite nearly 80 registrations, attendance was unimpressive with only 30 members participating.
- Western Cape Branch Meeting: Conducted an online meeting on 23 May 2025. This event featured presentations by Dale Kennedy (Ergomax) on Ergonomic Regulations and Risk Assessments, and Jaco Pieterse (Gijima OHESL) on Non-ionising Radiation and the 2024 Physical Agents



Regulations (PAR). Approximately 126 participants attended.

- The next Western Cape event is a mini conference scheduled for 29 August 2025.
- The Council Branch Co-ordinator, Ms. Yvette Greeff, and Dr. Shuan Ramroop from Nelson Mandela University in Gqeberha are actively working on the establishment of an Eastern Cape Branch.
- SAIOH, in collaboration with the NWU Occupational Hygiene and Human Risk Institute (OH HRI) and the North-West Branch, is organising a one-day course on ISO 23785 – *Indoor Air Quality: Operated Cab Air Filtration,*

Pressurisation, and Certification.

- This session is scheduled for 15 October 2025 and will be limited to 20 participants.
- Additionally, SAIOH has arranged for Mr. Jeff Moredock of ISEE (USA) to present a Professional Development Course (PDC) on the same topic at the upcoming SAIOH Annual Conference on 21 October 2025. A repeat of this hands-on Advanced Training Workshop (ATW), using the Cab simulator, will be held on 24 October 2025 following the conference.

The following branches and discussion group currently remain inactive: Central (Free State), Northern Cape, Mpumalanga, and Zululand.

Annual SAIOH scientific conference

SAIOH ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2025

DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA



Preparations for the SAIOH Annual Conference, to be hosted by the KwaZulu-Natal Branch, are well underway. The Conference and Technical Organising Committees convened multiple planning sessions throughout June and July 2025, demonstrating hard work and commitment.

Following initial logistical challenges, the venue was relocated to the **Coastlands Hotel** and Conference Centre in Umhlanga, KwaZulu-Natal.

A call for abstracts has been circulated and a dedicated subcommittee is currently adjudicating submissions.

Conference fees and registration details have been distributed via Mailchimp, and a dedicated webpage has been created.

Conference Format

This year's conference will once again follow a hybrid format, enabling both in-person and online participation via livestream. The four-day programme promises to deliver a diverse and high-impact experience.

Programme Highlights

- Monday, 20 October 2025
 - Conference opening at 13:30
 - Two consecutive 4-hour Professional Development Courses (PDCs)
- Tuesday, 21 October 2025
 - Four PDCs (two morning, two afternoon sessions)
 - SAIOH Council in-person meeting (afternoon)
- Wednesday, 22 October 2025
 - Official Conference opening featuring keynote addresses from distinguished speakers
 - Gala Dinner hosted in the evening
- Thursday, 23 October 2025
 - Second day of the official Conference
 - Annual General Meeting (AGM) held in the morning—a notable change from previous years.

New Additions and Advanced Planning

- Friday, 24 October 2025
 - A specialised one-day workshop on Indoor Air Quality (IAQ), including Cab Simulator training, hosted by Jeff Moredock of ISSEE, and SAIOH
- Sponsor Engagement
 - Platinum Sponsors will be allocated a 10-minute slot during the Conference to showcase their products
- 2026 Conference
 - Preliminary planning for the 2026 SAIOH Conference is in progress, with a proposed collaboration with the National Institute for Occupational Health (NIOH). A second planning session has already taken place with Dr. Spo Kgalema.



International Occupational Hygiene Association Board, the National Accreditation Recognition Committee, and Occupational Hygiene Training Association feedback

- The Occupational Hygiene Training Association (OHTA) and the International Occupational Hygiene Association (IOHA) continue to publish their newsletters, with links emailed to all SAIOH members and posted on the SAIOH website: <https://www.saioh.co.za>. Members can also access OHTA resources via www.ohtatraining.org.
- On 3 July 2025, SAIOH promoted the IOHA-hosted online webinar titled “Driving Change in Occupational Hygiene”, further supporting global communication and innovation within the field.
- SAIOH is proudly represented on the IOHA Board and the National Accreditation Recognition (NAR) Committee by Me. Corlia Peens. She continues to actively attend meetings and provides regular feedback to the SAIOH Professional Certification Committee (PCC) Executive, ensuring strategic alignment with international developments and best practices.

SAIOH Technical Committee feedback

SAIOH’s Technical Committee continues to drive key research and development efforts aimed at strengthening occupational hygiene standards and supporting regulatory advancement.

Welding Fume Analysis

Research on the measurement and analysis of welding fumes is currently being led by Dr. Ivan Niranjana and Technical Portfolio Coordinator, Dr. Goitsema Keretsetse.

A joint subcommittee formed by SAIOH and the Occupational Hygiene Approved Inspection Authority Association (OH AIA Assoc.) has convened multiple times to develop a comprehensive technical and position paper. The final paper is expected to be released in the near future.

Heat Stress Management

A second technical committee has been established to develop procedures and a SAIOH position paper on heat stress management.

Following the unfortunate passing of Mr. Schutte, collaboration has been initiated with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

and Dr. Johan Kielblock to support the research. The deliverables are scheduled for completion during 2025.

This initiative aligns with SAIOH’s commitment to contributing technical guidance that strengthens the updated Physical Agents Regulations (PAR), formerly known as the Environmental Regulations for Workplaces.

Real-Time Monitoring

Professor Stefan Linde has taken on the role of technical coordinator from Mr. Wessel van Wyk to spearhead the development of a position paper on real-time exposure monitoring—a priority area in occupational hygiene innovation.

Ergonomic Risk Assessment Procedures

Under the leadership of Ms. Naadiya Mundy, a dedicated Technical Subcommittee has begun work on establishing procedures and guidelines to support SAIOH Occupational Hygiene Practitioners in conducting ergonomic risk assessments.

Initial meetings have already taken place, laying the groundwork for practical and implementable standards.

New SAIOH website

The SAIOH administration team, led by Naadiya Mundy and Kate Smart, is actively working on populating the new SAIOH website, ensuring that it is a comprehensive resource for members.

We look forward to launching the new website soon and delivering an improved and streamlined

platform for the SAIOH community.

Chapter 2 of the PCC’s Quality Management System, which outlines the PCC Assessment Rules and Procedures, is available on the SAIOH website and offers essential guidance and supporting documentation.



New SAIOH Publications and Engagements

MIDYEAR UPDATE 2025

SAIOH’s contributions to both the SAIOH Magazine and the Occupational Health Southern Africa (OHSA) Journal are scheduled for submission in July 2025. These articles highlight SAIOH’s ongoing activities, strategic initiatives, and technical developments.

The latest editions of:

OHTA Global Link (July 2025) and IOHA Gems – Global Exposure Manager (June 2025) have been published on the SAIOH website and are distributed to all members via Mailchimp as soon as they became available.

Upcoming Engagements

- The next Occupational Hygiene Approved Inspection Authority Association (OH AIA Assoc.) meeting is scheduled for 22 August 2025.

Ongoing Member and Stakeholder Communication

SAIOH maintains daily contact with its stakeholders through:

- Emails and Mailchimp notifications
- Phone calls
- Online meetings

These communications cover a range of critical topics including legislative developments, updates on new standards, job postings in occupational hygiene, relevant products and services, course offerings, and webinar announcements in the areas of occupational hygiene, health, and environmental safety.

A particularly urgent notice from the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) relates to the closures of the Occupational Safety and Health Association (OSHA) in the United States. No further updates have been received at this time.

Webinar & Conference Notifications Issued in 2025

SAIOH has circulated multiple international and national online webinar alerts and early announcements for key events, including:

- IOHA:** Driving Change in Occupational Hygiene – 3 July 2026
- AIHA Academy:** Ototoxicants and Occupational Hearing Loss – 23 July 2025
- WHWB:** Workplace Heat Stress Part 2 & Part 3 – 27 May & 25 July 2025
- WHWB:** Global Advocacy for OHS – 11 June 2025
- SASOM:** Annual Webinars on Occupational Health

- Wave Control & Sedulitas:** EMF Assessment for Active Implanted Medical Devices (AIMD) – 12 June 2025
- ESSA:** Three-part Quarterly Webinar Series (July–August 2025) and Annual Conference – October 2025
- Safety-First / SAPEMA:** PPE Conference: Early heads-up for the event scheduled for 9–11 March 2026
- ICOH:** ICOH 2026: Conference on the History of Occupational and Environmental Health – April 2026 in Leuven.

From the Professional Certification Committee (PCC)

Lee Doolan: SAIOH PCC administrator, e-mail: lee@saioh.co.za

Deon Jansen van Vuuren: SAIOH General Manager, e-mail: deon.jvuuren@gmail.com

Ivan Niranja: PCC chairperson, e-mail: ivann@dut.ac.za

The PCC Executive Committee (ExCo) and broader PCC teams remain actively engaged in advancing SAIOHs certification framework through scheduled meetings, subcommittee work and process improvements.

Governance Meetings & Key Decisions

- The PCC ExCo held its second online meeting of the year on 20 June 2025.
- A full PCC meeting followed on 11 July 2025.
- After several iterative discussions (“round-robins”), the revised PCC Assessment Rules and Procedures—as detailed in SAIOH QMS Chapter 2—were formally approved by the PCC

ExCo and published on the SAIOH website.

- A special session to review and amend the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) guideline document was convened on 30 May 2025.
- On 27 May 2025, the PCC hosted a feedback session for the South African OHTA Approved Training Providers (ATPs).
- PCC Chair Dr. Ivan Niranja, SAIOH General Manager Mr. Deon J. van Vuuren, and PCC Administrator Ms. Lee Doolan participated in a virtual consultation to address CPD compliance matters.



Ongoing Subcommittee Activities

- A dedicated subcommittee continues to develop the Occupational Hygiene Skill Set for SAIOH’s Self-Assessment Tool.
 - The first draft was completed earlier this year and is currently undergoing refinement.
 - Meetings are held bi-weekly (2 hours each), with recent sessions on 27 May, 10 and 24 June. The next is scheduled for 29 July 2025.
 - The team of seven is also designing oral question scenarios and reviewing the Oral Assessment Guideline.
- This subcommittee also initiated online workshops for PCC Assessors, with sessions held on 14 February and 30 May 2025.

Professional Development & Conference Planning

- A free hybrid PCC Professional Development Course (PDC) will be held at the 2025 SAIOH Annual Conference on 21 October 2025.
 - The first hour is open to all SAIOH members, while the remaining 2–3 hours are dedicated exclusively to PCC Assessors—at no cost.

Assessment Systems & Compliance Updates

- The PCC is exploring a transition to an electronic written assessment platform using MS Excel, as an alternative to the current LMS and proposed Moodle LMS. Technical challenges and data integrity risks (including AI misuse and paper leaks) have led to a temporary return to invigilated hard-copy assessments, administered

at secure venues with oversight by at least two PCC Assessors.

- Oral assessments will continue via via Zoom, MS Teams or in person with sessions, where applicable, be recorded for verification.
- The second quarter’s assessments occurred as follows:
 - Written: 13 June 2025
 - Oral: 11–22 July 2025

CPD System Enhancements

- SAIOH-registered members may now upload CPD activities throughout the year via their MySAIOH profiles.
- Effective 1 February 2025, all CPD submissions will be audited, and certificates released only once requirements are met—this includes:
 - Settlement of outstanding fees
 - Payment of annual membership
 - Uploading proof of CPD claim
 - Upload of a valid Ethics Certificate
- CPD accumulation has moved from a 5-year rolling cycle to an annual point requirement:

Certification Level	Minimum Annual CPD Points
Registered Occupational Hygienist (ROH)	12 points
ROHT	10 points
ROHA	9 points
Retired Members/Fellows	4 points

- Written requests for amnesty or extension may be submitted to the PCC ExCo via the PCC Administrator, with appropriate motivation.

Certification assessments

A summary of results for the assessments that took place from February to June 2025 is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. SAIOH PCC certification assessment results as June 2025

Certification Categories	Written Assessments				Oral Assessments			
	Assessed n	Passed n	Failed n	Pass Rate %	Assessed n	Passed n	Failed n	Pass Rate %
OH Assistants	71	69	2	97.2	0	-	-	-
OH Technologists	36	31	5	86.1	20	14	6	70.0
Occ. Hygienists	31	14	17	45.2	14	9	5	64.3
TOTAL	138	114	24	82.6	34	23	11	67.7

Table 2. SAIOH PCC written and oral assessment dates and deadlines, 2025

Assessment Type	Deadline for applications	Deadline for assessment evaluations and payment	Assessment date
Written	12 January	14 February	14 March
Oral	-	-	week of 11 April
Written	25 April	30 May	27 June
Oral	-	-	week of 25 July
Written	1 August	5 September	3 October
Oral	-	-	week of 14 November

Occupational Hygiene Skills Forum – Mid-year update 2025

The Occupational Hygiene Skills Forum (OHSF) continues to play a pivotal role in strengthening occupational hygiene training, accreditation, and qualification recognition within South Africa and the broader Southern African region.

Stakeholder Engagement & Sector Representation

- Throughout 2025, the OHSF actively participated in the OHTA Approved Training Provider Forum meetings, promoting alignment with international best practices.
- The second official OHSF meeting for the year took place on 22 May 2025, with all attendees contributing to strategic discussions.

Qualification Recognition & Institutional Liaison

A key mandate of the OHSF is to assess applications from tertiary institutions seeking formal recognition of their occupational hygiene-related qualifications.

- Notable progress includes the Cape Peninsula University of Technology’s (CPUT) occupational health qualification receiving full approval in early July 2025. Congratulations to the CPUT team on this milestone!
- Ongoing liaison is being conducted with institutions in Botswana, University of Pretoria (UP), Durban University of Technology (DUT), University of Johannesburg (UJ), and University of Limpopo (UL) to expand accreditation coverage.

Tertiary institutions offering occupational hygiene qualifications are encouraged to contact the PCC Administrator at lee@saioh.co.za for application procedures and guidance.

A full list of recognised training providers and accredited qualifications are published on the SAIOH website (<https://www.saioh.co.za>), ensuring students and certification candidates can easily identify programmes that align with SAIOH and international standards.

Mandate & Curriculum Development

Established to coordinate efforts around training provider recognition, the OHSF oversees:

- Approval of occupational hygiene training materials (e.g., asbestos-related content).
- Endorsement of provider institutions.
- Development and management of assessment and examination systems where appropriate.

The OHSF has also embarked on designing a bespoke SAIOH Occupational Hygiene Legislation Course, to be delivered in-house—particularly targeting non-AIA members seeking formal exposure to legal frameworks.

CPD Enhancement via Journal Engagement

In collaboration with Dr. Hennie van der Westhuizen, the OHSF began developing CPD-linked questions based on articles published in the Occupational Health Southern Africa (OHSA) journal. This initiative fosters member engagement with scholarly content while providing a structured pathway to earn CPD points.

Following the first engagement and positive feedback, SAIOH plans to continue this initiative. Many thanks to Dr. Hennie—round two is underway!



Next OHSF Meeting

The next OHSF meeting is scheduled for 11 September 2025.

South Africa's only conference for the Personal Protective Industry



THEME: Protecting people and enhancing performance through elevating PPE Standards, Practices and Technology

PPE isn't optional, it's essential!

Dates: 10-11 March 2026

Venue: Emperors, Convention Centre, Kempton Park, Johannesburg

For further information on the programme, speakers, presentations, sponsorship opportunities and exhibition stands, email: debbie@safety1st.co.za or **phone** +27 83 266 6662

Hosts



Benefits of attending the conference

This conference will be a unique opportunity for attendees to develop their expertise and knowledge in PPE. They will gain valuable knowledge and practical skills when applying PPE in the workplace ultimately creating a more productive and safe work environment including:

- Enhanced knowledge of PPE, its uses and limitations
- Improved understanding of workplace hazards and risks
- Increased confidence in PPE, through proper application
- Networking opportunities with colleagues, industry experts, vendors and suppliers
- Access to resources for future concerns
- Improved awareness of industry trends and innovations
- Better understanding of emergency procedures and responses
- Learn about new technologies and innovations
- Correct use and maintenance of PPE
- Increased knowledge of compliance and understanding the law
- Opportunities to learn from case studies
- Improved supply chain management and procurement processes
- Future innovations
- Understand the importance of using the correct PPE.

Attendees will include:

(Note this list is representative, not exhaustive)

- Occupational Health & Safety Officers
- Risk Managers
- Fire Officers
- Healthcare Professionals
- Occupational Hygienists
- Occupational Health Nurses
- Healthcare Administrators
- Infection Prevention/Control Personnel
- Safety Engineers
- Quality Assurance Managers
- Emergency Medical Technicians
- Police Officers
- OHS Inspectors
- Public Health Officials
- Regulatory Compliance Officers
- PPE Manufacturers, Suppliers, Distributors
- OHS Trainers
- OHS Consultants
- PPE Sales Representatives
- Corporate Managers and Directors
- Team Leaders
- and many more

This conference will be of benefit to all of industry - small and large corporations, including:

- Government departments (Including water, fire services, disaster management etc)
- Regulatory and Research Institutions
- Universities
- Mining
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Oil and gas
- Healthcare
- Hospitality
- Aviation and maritime
- Road and rail transport
- Forestry
- Food processing/storage
- and many more

Some of our exciting PRESENTERS



Ms Bulelwa Huna
Senior Specialist: Occupational Health & Hygiene. MPH: Occupational Hygiene. Department of Employment and Labour
Presentation title: The Role of PPE in Workplace Prevention Programmes



Dr Jeanneth Manganyi
Head: Occupational Hygiene Section, Honorary Lecturer: Wits School of Public Health National Institute for Occupational Health Division of the National Health Laboratory
Presentation title: A new bivariate respirator fit test panel representing Black South African respirator users in Gauteng



Deleane Luzzatto
Past Chairman SAPEMA.
Presentation title: SAPEMA: Past Present and Future



Prof Cas Badenhorst.
Associate Professor, Occupational Hygiene and Health Research Initiative (OHRI), North West University
Presentation title: Diesel particulate matter and welding fume protection through PPE



Loren Pearson
Sales and Marketing Manager Chemical Industrial SSA, DuPont
Presentation title: Selecting the correct protective clothing for a hazardous chemical environment



Mziwakhe Nhlapo
CEO of MMAT SHEC & ESG Training & Consulting Services, specialising in compensation matters. Past team leader NUM.
Presentation title: Ignore the law at your peril



Dharmesh Lakmidas
Sales Manager Thermal Apparel, SSA, DuPont.
Presentation title: Protecting workers from the effects of an electric arc



Leighton Bennett
Chairman Safety First Association
Presentation title: The OSH Practitioner's role in purchasing of PPE



David Selepe
High Voltage Technician at a power utility
Presentation title: Misuse of hand protection: A case study



Advocate Raynard Looch.
Managing Member Klass Looch Associates
Presentation title: PPE and the law



Wynand Englebrecht
CEO and Founder Fire Ops SA
Presentation title: Lessons learned from buying cheap PPE instead of correct PPE



Dr Anette Thompson
Podiatrist. *Presentation title: Safety footwear selection and foot health in the workplace*



JW Eggink
Sector Sales Specialist BBF Safety Group.
Presentation title: A hard hat ... or is it?

DON'T DELAY

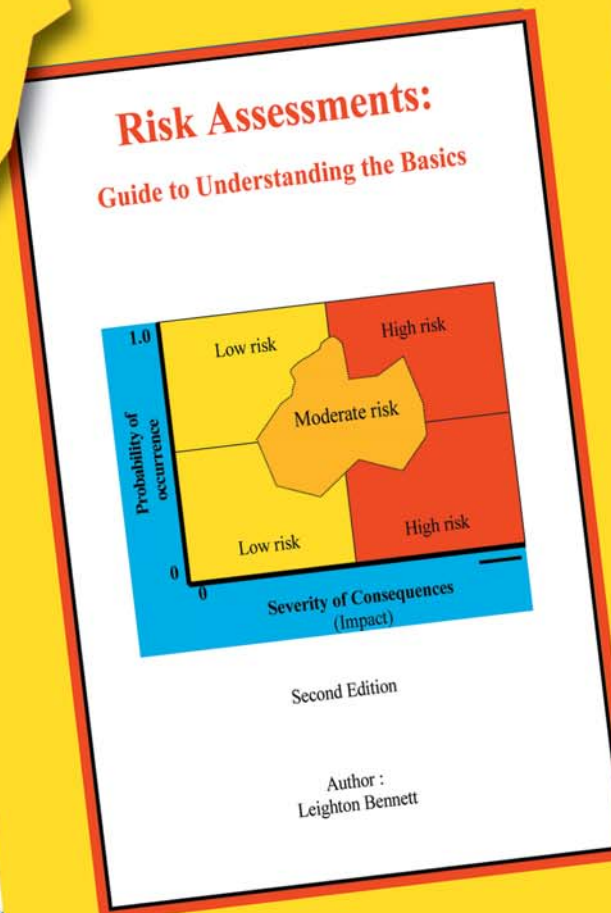
- REGISTER to attend
- BOOK your exhibition stand and qualify for early bird rates

RISK ASSESSMENTS:

A Guide to Understanding the Basics

Risk Assessments are a “Do” requirement within the SANS/ISO 9001 Quality, 14000 Environmental & 45001 Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) Management Systems standards and in the Risk Management System standard (SANS/ISO 31000).

The aim of this booklet is to facilitate the development of an understanding of the Risk Assessment basics and the Risk Assessment Process, with the outcome of enabling a novice or a professional, to perform a basic to baseline risk assessment with confidence.



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INSPECTIONS BY DEL INSPECTORS

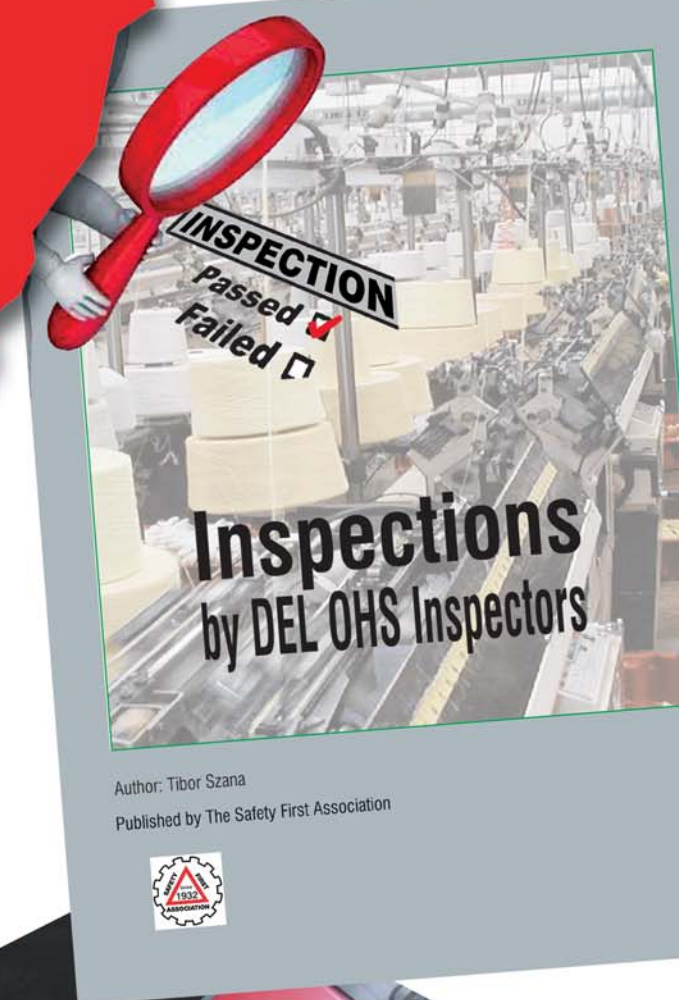
Does your company have a pending inspection by the Department of Employment and Labour?

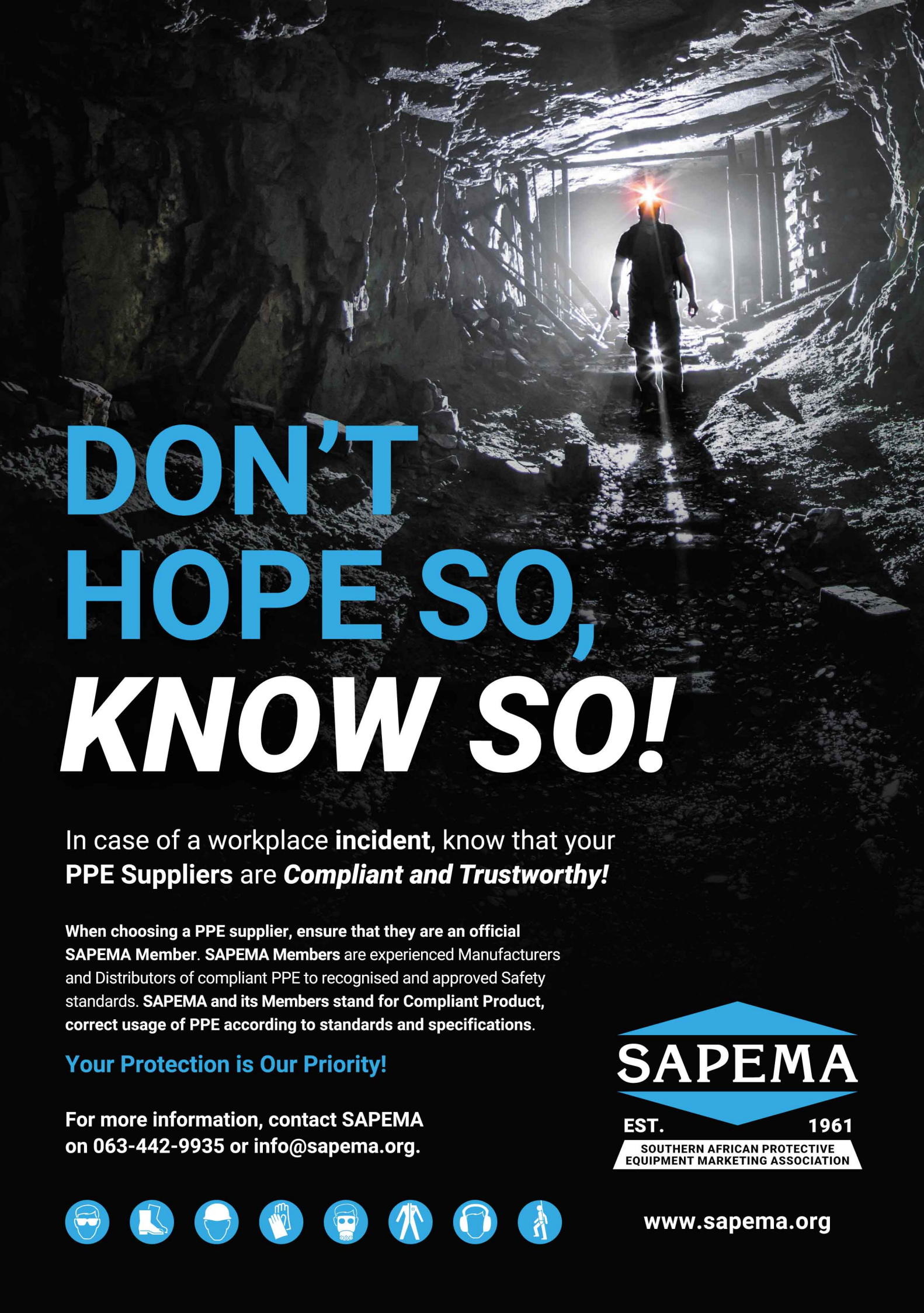
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