

Inspections by DEL OHS Inspectors - Part 3: Notices served on the employer

Implementing an ergonomic programme

Position Paper on Professionalisation of Occupational Health and Safety Practitioners in South Africa

Enhancing food safety in Ghana's hospitality industry using HACCP



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CONTENTS

FEATURE ARTICLES

Enhancing food safety in Ghana’s hospitality industry using HACCP 4

Inspections by DEL OHS Inspectors Part 3: *Notices served on the employer* 12

A moral and psychological safe imperative: *Workplace inclusion with psychologically safe assurance* 13

Breathalyser results in employee dismissals 26

Joint health and safety committees 27

Fatality reports 35

Dangers for seamen consuming alcohol at sea 44

Home safety: Is your bedroom safe? 45

Summer foot and nail care 46

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH



Zambia in the news: Patient safety day in Zambia 36

Vision Zero 2023 Zambia 37



The future of occupational health and safety: *Advancements and challenges ahead* 8

Position Paper on Professionalisation of Occupational Health and Safety Practitioners in South Africa 9

Why should we consider ESG? 30

Implementing an ergonomic programme: *Ergonomic Regulation 2019* 32

Navigating Avian Flu Outbreaks: *Safeguarding poultry, safety officers, and the public* 42

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Armscor: A strategic partner of choice for defence and security solutions 15

Your workers are counting on you to protect their future health 20

SAPEMA MEMBERS

Interceptor by Hi-Tec recognises the importance of occupational safety 22

SAPEMA Annual Golf Day 2023 39

CONSTRUCTION SAFETY



Prevention Through Design (PtD) in construction Health and Safety (H&S) 40

OCCUPATIONAL HYGIENE



Work Environments: *Harmonising Ethics and Occupational Hygiene* 16

National council feedback 17

From the Professional Certification Committee (PCC) 18



COVER STORY:
Dräger page 3

Participating associations / organisations / institutes with AFRICAN OS&H and the Safety First Association





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Editor's Comment

PROFESSIONALISATION OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

The need for professionalisation of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in South Africa is long overdue. Professionalising OHS practitioners is a critical step towards achieving the goal of ensuring that all employees have the right to proper health care and human dignity.

The position paper published in this issue explores a proposed model of professionalisation in the field of OHS in South Africa.

South Africa, like many other countries, faces numerous workplace safety and health challenges across various industries and OHS Practitioners are at the coal-face. Unfortunately, due to the lack of a standardised professional framework, varied levels of competence and inconsistent practices exist.

Due to the nature of the OHS Practitioner's responsibility to achieve a safe and healthy workplace - taking into consideration the role they play in HIV, TB and even during the Covid pandemic - the authors believe that OHS practitioners should be incorporated into a statutory structure of the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA).

The authors discuss the benefits of professionalisation and the challenges that will be faced in the process. They then provide a proposed model towards achieving this goal.

We ask all our readers to study the paper on page 9 of this issue and send comments to the email addresses listed at the end.

ENHANCING FOOD SAFETY IN GHANA'S HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY USING HACCP

Coming out of Ghana is a thought-provoking article on food safety.

Food not only necessary to survival is also one of the greatest pleasures we experience. Yet, how many of us stop to consider that unsanitary food practices may also spread disease.

One of the key challenges faced by Ghana's hospitality sector is the lack of robust enforcement of existing regulations and guidelines affecting for example, hotels, restaurants, catering services, and food vendors.

In this article on page 4, the authors explore some of the challenges to food safety in Ghana Africa, and provide a case study of how HACCP when successfully implemented can act as a solution.

BREATHALYSER RESULTS IN EMPLOYEE DISMISSALS

The court case of of Samancor Chrome Ltd (Western Chrome Mines) v Willemse and Others earlier this year, questioned the reliability of breathalyser testing in enforcing an employer's zero-tolerance alcohol and drugs policy. The employee in question was dismissed.

In his article on page 26, Rhys Evans discusses why this dismissal was both unjustified and incorrect.

There are many other articles of interest in this issue as well - too many to discuss in this short space.

As always we encourage feedback which can be emailed to debbie@safety1st.co.za

Dräger X-plore® 1900



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Dräger X-plore® 1900 is a high-performance, single-use dust mask for protection against fine dust and particles. The premium particle filtering mask is available in two sizes, combining ease of use, exceptional comfort and optimal fit. For the highest degree of safety, even for people wearing spectacles.

Optimal fit

The dust mask is available in two sizes (S and M/L). This makes it suitable for many different shapes and sizes of face, so each wearer can choose the right size for an optimal fit. The three-part folding design offers high flexibility in terms of fit, so the mask easily adjusts to the wearer's face. It also ensures that the mask stays firmly in position. Even when the wearer speaks, the mask does not shift.

The flexible nose clip integrated into the filter material is combined with a soft nose pad on the inside. This allows the mask to be effectively positioned and securely sealed in the nose area. The VarioFLEX head straps are highly flexible and adjust individually to various head sizes.

High filtration efficiency for increased safety

The CoolSAFE filter material offers effective protection against fine dust as well as solid and liquid particles. It combines high filtration efficiency with low breathing resistance, allowing the user to work easily and without tiring for long periods of time. The mask is particularly suited for working safely in environments with high levels of dust exposure.



Enhancing food safety in Ghana’s hospitality industry using HACCP

1. QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The documentary film *Poisoned: The Dirty Truth About Your Food*, examines the food industry in the United States, and systemic fractures resulting in outbreaks of foodborne pathogens.

One can argue to little objections that food is perhaps the greatest pleasure of being human. We owe the developments of our civilization to the improvements in the food that we consume. Yet it often slips people’s minds that basic human need is also a double-edged sword, perfectly capable of the widespread destruction of mankind.

This article explores some of the challenges to food safety in Ghana Africa, and provides a case study of how successfully HACCP implementation can act as a solution.

The National Food Safety Policy for Ghana has the ultimate aim of establishing and maintaining an integrated farm-to-fork food safety system that ensures consumer health and public safety.

Everyone within the food chain has a responsibility to ensure that food is safe and suitable by adopting and implementing food safety management systems that align with the policy.

Challenges in Ghana’s hospitality sector

Looking at Ghana’s hospitality sector, food safety is a critical concern for the various establishments within the sector such as hotels, restaurants, catering services, and food vendors. They all play a significant role in ensuring the safety of the food they serve, as it directly impacts not only public health but also their establishments’ reputation. However, the sector faces several challenges that hinder the achievement of optimal food safety standards.

One of the key challenges faced by Ghana’s hospitality sector is the lack of robust enforcement of existing regulations and guidelines. While Ghana has regulatory frameworks in place, such as its National Food Safety Policy, their implementation, and monitoring often fall short due to, among many other factors, a lack of political will and coordination between relevant authorities [CITATION Min22 \l 17417].

Lack of compliance

Insufficient inspections and limited penalties for non-compliance contribute to a lax food safety culture within the sector. If left unchecked, this culture would then allow food safety issues to manifest rampantly within the hospitality sector.

Matthew Kwaw – Principal Investigator



Eric Adarkwa – Field Inspector

Maya Mehrotra – Research Personnel

Muhammad Afiq Amiruddin – Research Personnel

Street food vendors

A study by King, Awumbila, Canacoo, and Ofosu-Amaah found that only 1.85% of the Ghana street food vendors surveyed met basic hygiene requirements based on five criteria:

1. Presence of animals
2. covered waste containers
3. Licensed meat sources
4. Food protection from dust and flies
5. Vicinity to a drain/toilet/refuse dump (2000).

While these unsanitary practices can be traced back to a lack of awareness amongst the vendors, they are in business for profit and will probably ignore ethics.

Foodborne diseases

Outbreaks of foodborne illnesses not only pose risks to public health but can also lead to reputational damage and financial losses for establishments.

An establishment worth noting here is the government of Ghana itself, which incurred an annual loss of USD 69 million in its fight against foodborne diseases [CITATION Mah12 \l 17417].

News of food poisoning incidents spreads rapidly through social media and word-of-mouth, causing potential customers to question the safety standards of hospitality establishments. This highlights the urgent need to enhance food safety practices and regain consumer trust.

HACCP - The solution

One of the most promising solutions to the problem at hand is the implementation of the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) management system.

Initially developed during the 1960s, HACCP focuses on identifying, evaluating, and controlling hazards during the food production process based on seven principles as listed by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA):

1. Conduct a hazard analysis
2. Determine the critical control points (CCPs)
3. Establish critical limits
4. Establish monitoring procedures
5. Establish corrective actions
6. Establish verification procedures
7. Establish record-keeping and documentation procedures.

Fundamentally, HACCP is not used enough in Ghana, with 68% of hospitality employees in managerial roles around Kumasi a city in Ghana having the view that it is not mandatory (Agyei-Baffour et al., 2013).

While it may not yet be a legal requirement, HACCP execution will allow for Ghanaian food practices to be comparable to those of its international counterparts.

In brief, HACCP is a proactive solution to food safety problems and their attendant consequences, one that is contingent on addressing food safety constraints in Ghana.

There is little existing literature in Ghana providing evidence on how HACCP can improve a food service’s monitoring and evaluation performance, which may contribute to its lack of implementation.

This article effectively combats this, as a private food safety consultancy called Prime Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) joins the battle to save lives through innovation and science.

Currently, various scientific organisations have endorsed and recommended using the HACCP system. The US FDA did so back in 1999 due to its proven record of being “the most effective and efficient way to ensure that food products are safe” [CITATION FDA15 \ 17417].

More than 10 years prior to the FDA recommendation, WHO EUROPE and the National Academy of Science already concluded that HACCP is worthy of being implemented to ensure food safety [CITATION Wei18 \ 17417].

2. QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

The Safe Skill Program

In 2023, Prime OHS developed a service product called the “Safe Skill Program” which envisions zero

foodborne illness cases from the hospitality sector through compliance, training, and inspection.

Dstrkt 24 Management, a leading organisation within the sector, was the first to partner with Prime OHS and implement the Safe Skill Program in their two restaurants in Accra. Both of these establishments were already adhering to the Ghana FDA Code of Practice and other local regulations.

To enhance their environmental, social, and governance obligations and attract more financial investment, Dstrkt 24 Management went beyond local regulations and implemented HACCP through the Safe Skill Program.

Prime OHS established and implemented prerequisite programmes, including three months of weekly inspections to evaluate various food safety criteria such as supplier control, chemical control, pest control, personal hygiene, and sanitation.

Their performance data throughout the period are shown in Figure 1.

The performance data indicated a positive correlation between the duration of the Safe Skill Program implementation and the restaurants’ inspection scores.

To confirm the statistical significance of this correlation, a linear regression t-test was conducted at a 1% (0.01) significance level. The test hypotheses are stated below:

Null hypothesis (H₀): No linear correlation exists between the programme duration and the inspection scores.

Alternative hypothesis (H₁): A linear correlation exists between the programme duration and the inspection scores.

The output from Excel’s Data Analysis feature is shown in Table 1.

Since the p-value for “Week” (0.000793) is less than the significance level (0.01), there is sufficient

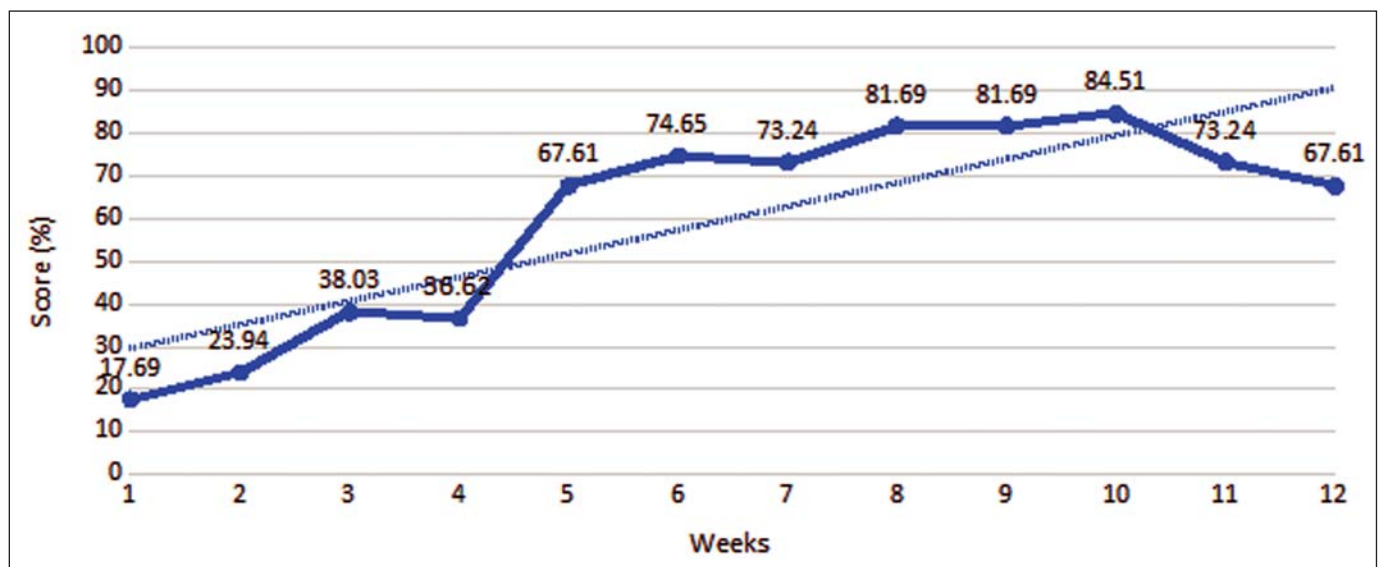


Figure 1: Graph showing the inspection scores for each of the 12 inspection weeks. The dotted line represents the line of best fit.

Table 1. The output from Excel's Data Analysis

SUMMARY OUTPUT				
	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	24.03515152	8.603164181	2.793757	0.018997
Week	5.53972028	1.168939827	4.739098	0.000793

evidence to reject H_0 . Therefore, it can be concluded with high confidence that there is a significant linear correlation between the programme duration and the restaurant's inspection scores – in other words, the longer the Safe Skill Program is implemented, the higher the restaurant's inspection score will be.

This correlation can be attributed to the implementation of HACCP principles by Prime OHS.

Their team of qualified HACCP-certified experts can make a thorough analysis of potential hazards (Principle 1) that might be present in the restaurant's food production chain, as well as the critical control points (Principle 2) for these hazards.

The analysis is especially helpful for the restaurant owners to identify hazards that are often overlooked due to a lack of food-safety expertise, and subsequently identify corrective measures (Principle 5) for the critical control points to bring the hazard below the established critical limits (Principle 3).

Monitoring procedures (Principle 4) in the form of weekly inspections were conducted, and inspection scores served as part of the record-keeping procedures (Principle 7).

Compliance with HACCP standards led to increased scores, hence verifying the restaurants' adherence to food safety practices (Principle 6).

Interestingly, during weeks 4, 7, and especially the last 2 weekly kitchen inspections (weeks 11 and 12), the restaurant's scores deviated from the general increasing trend and instead showed a decrease. This inadvertently demonstrates one of Prime OHS' core values: transparency.

As an advisory consultancy, Prime OHS acts as an advisor in food safety matters for its clients, but whether the clients wish to make a consistent effort to comply is beyond the company's control. Nevertheless, Prime OHS remains committed to its due responsibility to report any non-compliance with full honesty and transparency, ensuring accountability for both parties and prioritising the best interests of end-consumers.

Prime OHS urges other stakeholders in the hospitality sector to become a member of the Safe Skill Program and save lives through innovation and science.

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The future of occupational health and safety:

Advancements and challenges ahead

I was sitting at the airport today with major delays from OR Tambo airport, and thinking about this subject so I decided to pen this short article as the thoughts crossed my mind.

Occupational Health and Safety has come a long way in ensuring the well-being of workers and safeguarding them from workplace hazards.

Although we know we are nowhere close to where we should be, we have been advancing well through the years.

As we progress further into the 21st century, the landscape of OHS is set to undergo some significant improvements and we should be preparing ourselves for them.

Emerging technologies, evolving work practices, and a growing emphasis on employee well-being are driving the future of OHS towards a safer, more efficient, and employee-centric approach.

INTEGRATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AND DATA ANALYTICS

The future of OHS lies in harnessing the power of AI and data analytics to predict and prevent workplace accidents.

By analysing vast amounts of data and trend analysis data, collected from sensors, wearable devices, and employee feedback through surveys etc. AI will be able to identify potential hazards and suggest measures to mitigate risks proactively. Predictive analytics will enable organisations to take forward thinking actions, reducing the number of incidents and injuries significantly.

EMPHASIS ON MENTAL HEALTH

In recent years, mental health issues in the workplace have garnered significant attention.

Working at Worley for only a few months, many topics and safety shares have focused on this topic.

The future of OHS will focus on addressing and destigmatising mental health challenges. Companies will invest in employee assistance programmes, counselling services, and create a supportive work environment that nurtures mental well-being. Recognising the impact of stress and psychological safety factors on productivity, this transition will foster a more resilient and engaged workforce.

REMOTE/HYBRID WORK SAFETY

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of remote or hybrid work.

As telecommuting becomes more prevalent, OHS practices will need to adapt accordingly. Employers will need to provide guidance on ergonomics for



Fabian Buckley
Idip Nebosh

home offices, cybersecurity measures, and mental health support for remote/hybrid workers. Striking a balance between flexibility and ensuring remote workers' safety will be a key challenge.

One would also have to look at insurance cover for their employees to ensure they are covered while at home.

Checking in sessions can and should be a daily routine where one can gauge the employees' mental well-being and have engaging chats to reduce stress and loneliness.

ROBOTICS AND AUTOMATION

The dreaded 4th Industrial revolution is here. The increasing use of robotics and automation in workplaces is already reshaping OHS strategies.

While these technologies can enhance efficiency, reduce injuries, and reduce physical strain for workers, they also present new risks.

Future OHS protocols will revolve around training employees to work safely alongside robots, creating safety standards for robotic systems, and ensuring proper maintenance, safety boundaries, lock out tag out systems and monitoring will have to be implemented.

GLOBAL HARMONISATION OF OHS STANDARDS

As businesses operate across international boundaries, there is a growing need for harmonised OHS standards.

The future will see greater collaboration between countries and industries to establish unified safety guidelines. Such efforts will enhance worker protection on a global scale and promote the exchange of best practices.

I have also been discussing this with a few OSH professionals to increase our collaboration within Africa and to move towards standardising Africa.

AUGMENTED REALITY (AR) FOR TRAINING AND SAFETY

A few years ago I was asked to chair a seminar held at Emperors Palace. It was excellent and had some great topics and demonstrators.

One of the best topics was a young geek from Johannesburg, who demonstrated the AI software they created. It was extremely well received and encouraged many attendees to think twice about the power of augmented reality and virtual reality.

AR will revolutionise OHS training by offering immersive and realistic simulations of hazardous scenarios.

Employees can undergo virtual safety drills, enhancing their preparedness for real-life



emergencies. AR will also assist in on-the-job safety guidance, providing workers with real-time information and alerts to prevent accidents.

This is already a reality and can be purchased and used as I write this article.

DIGITISATION AND DIGITALISATION

There is a huge difference between the two and one that often gets mixed up.

Digitisation of forms occurs as many organisations move into using tablets and cellphones to log findings, conduct inspections etc.

Digitalisation involves streamlining systems and processes and making them digital through an application or desktop software or web based system.

They will become a standard within the near future, and will be a requirement of all companies for OSH professionals to be trained in using these systems.

This should become a standard training in the near future. In my opinion it should be included as a module or a standard training for all OSH professionals.

IN CONCLUSION

The future of Occupational Health and Safety is headed towards a more sophisticated and inclusive approach.

- With the integration of AI and data analytics, companies will have the tools to prevent accidents before they occur.
- Mental health will take centre stage, acknowledging the importance of holistic well-being.
- Remote work and technological advancements will require new safety measures and guidelines.
- By fostering collaboration and embracing emerging technologies, we can build a safer and healthier work environment for the workforce of tomorrow.
- Safety systems will be mostly digital and digitalised.

As we continue to learn from the past and adapt to changing circumstances, the evolution of OHS will remain an ongoing journey towards improved worker safety and overall workplace satisfaction.

Either we get on board or we become extinct as OSH Professionals. The choice is yours to make.

Position Paper on Professionalisation of Occupational Health and Safety Practitioners in South Africa

Compiled by Innocent Bhaikwa, Fabian Buckley and Warren Manning

I. INTRODUCTION

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) as a practice is of paramount importance in ensuring that employee Right to Health Care and Human Dignity are realised. The professionalisation of OHS practitioners is a critical step towards achieving this goal since competent OHS Practitioners are at the coal-face of OHS service provision. This position paper explores a proposed model of professionalisation in the field of OHS in South Africa.

II. BACKGROUND

South Africa, like many other countries, faces numerous workplace safety and health challenges across various industries. The importance of OHS practitioners in addressing these challenges cannot be overstated. However, the field lacks a standardised professional framework, resulting in varied levels of competence and inconsistent practices.

III. THE NEED FOR PROFESSIONALISATION

The need for professionalisation is well established and includes :

1. **Standardisation:** Professionalisation would establish standardised qualifications, training, and certification requirements for OHS practitioners, ensuring a consistent and high level of competence.
2. **Protection of Workers:** A professionalised OHS workforce can better protect the health and safety of workers by the provision of high quality OHS services.
3. **Legal Compliance:** It would enhance compliance with existing OHS legislation and international standards, ensuring that South Africa aligns with global good practice.

IV. BENEFITS OF PROFESSIONALISATION

The well-know benefits have been stated before and includes:

1. **Improved Workplace Safety:** A professional OHS workforce can implement effective safety programmes, leading to reduced workplace accidents and health hazards.
2. **Enhanced Productivity:** Safer workplaces lead to increased productivity, benefiting both employees and employers.
3. **Public Confidence:** Professionalisation builds public trust in OHS practitioners, ensuring that their advice and actions are reliable.
4. **Economic Impact:** Fewer accidents and healthier workers contribute to reduced healthcare costs and an overall boost to the economy.

V. THE CURRENT STATUS OF OHS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The proposed OHS professionalisation project will need to overcome two serious challenges. The first is the fragmentation of OHS practice due legislation and the second is the lack of recognition of OHS practitioners

THE LEGISLATIVE FRAGMENTATION

South African OHS law is highly fragmented and has been so for over the last 40 years, as commented on by Ncube and Kanda (2018). They explained that these fragmentations have been resulting in duplication of law

enforcement roles; a costly waste of scarce resources; and inconsistencies and lack of uniformity in the implementation of enforcement functions. The main outcome is a hampering of progress at safeguarding workers' health.

The Benjamin and Greef Committee of Inquiry into a National Occupational Health and Safety Council in South Africa was presented to the Minister of Labour on the 29th May 1997 noted that "the practice of OHS across industries in South Africa is uncoordinated, fragmented and a burden on resources."

Further analysis of the legislative framework shows that there are four departments (labour, mining, transport and health) creating OHS legislation and five regulatory bodies (aviation, rail, road, nuclear, maritime) creating specific OHS management protocols.

While there has been progress in many technical aspects of OHS in South Africa the lack of coordination remains and if proposed amendments to the OHS Act are implemented, the fragmentation will in fact increase.

LACK OF RECOGNITION OF OHS PRACTICE

There is a persistent lack of recognition of OHS as a practice in South Africa. In all forms of health care analysis and planning including grand legislative proposals such as National Health Insurance, the role of OHS practitioners is consistently omitted.

This "unremembering" of OHS practitioners occurs even after the important role OHS practitioners have played in the responses to HIV/Aids, TB and Covid-19.

VI. PROPOSED MODEL

The proposed model is based on the understanding that OHS is a specialisation in the field of Public Health and that OHS practitioners are classified as "Health Professionals" by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in its International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) see table below:

OHS Adviser	OHS Inspector
2263: Environmental and Occupational Health and Hygiene Professionals	3257: Environmental and Occupational Health Inspectors and Associates

This necessarily means that OHS practitioners should be incorporated into a statutory structure of the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA).

The HPCSA has 12 Professional Boards under its ambit and they are established to provide for control over the education, training and registration for Health professionals registered under the Health Professions Act.

THE WAY FORWARD

1. CONSULTATION

All persons currently practising OHS within South Africa must be given the opportunity to comment on this position paper. A committee representing OHS practitioners will need

to be established with the mandate to approach the respective Departments with our intention to be fully recognised as a profession.

2. ESTABLISH PROFESSIONAL BOARD UNDER THE HPCSA

The necessary consultation with the HPCSA will be conducted to identify all legal procedures to be followed for the incorporations of OHS into an existing Professional Board or for the establishment of a new independent OHS Board under the HPCSA.

3. ACCREDITED TRAINING PROGRAMMES

The status quo will respect to current qualifications of the practising OHS professionals will be established.

A process to develop accredited training programmes and institutions to ensure OHS practitioners receive the necessary education will be initiated.

4. CERTIFICATION AND LICENSING

A system of certification and licensing will be established to verify the competence of OHS practitioners. This system will be built on the current certification practices of the HPCSA.

A transition arrangement will be determined to ensure fairness and inclusivity during a set period leading to mandatory professional registration.

5. CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As with all HPCSA professional a system of ongoing learning and professional development through mandatory continuous education requirements will be implemented.

Recognition of prior learning will be an essential component of this process.

VII. CONCLUSION

The professionalisation of OHS practitioners in South Africa is a vital step towards achieving safer workplaces and protecting the well-being of the workforce. It not only benefits workers but also contributes to economic growth and global competitiveness.

By implementing standardised qualifications, certification, and ethical guidelines, South Africa can elevate its OHS standards and ensure a safer, more productive future for all.

This position paper calls on OHS Practitioners, government bodies, industry stakeholders (especially labour unions), and educational institutions to collaborate in realising the professionalisation of Occupational Health and Safety practitioners for the benefit of South Africa's workforce and economy.

The authors make a specific request to all OHS Practitioners in South Africa to critically reflect on this proposed way forward and send their comments and suggestions to us at:

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Fabian: Fabian.Buckley@Worley.com

Warren: warrenmanning@gmail.com

or

Safety First Magazine: debbie@safety1st.co.za



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Inspections by DEL OHS Inspectors

Part 3: Notices served on the employer

So after the inspector has done all the introductory bits and has informed you about the nature of the inspection and has also at this stage completed the inspection, administrative and physical walk-about components, the inspector would have identified contraventions (shortcomings) in terms of the Occupational Health and Safety Act and/or its Regulations (OHSA).

Remember that the Inspector could also identify shortcomings/contraventions in terms of any of the 'Incorporated' South African National Standards (SANS) that falls within the administrative remit of the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS).

Of course it is possible that the inspector did not find any contraventions on the day of the inspection/audit. That is very possible. You have different inspectors that have different disciplines, viz., the inspector has a qualification such as a three (3) year qualification or degree in Chemical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Construction, Environmental Health (Occupational Hygienists), etc. They are then trained to perform the functions of an inspector. You have inspectors with varying levels of experience of course, ranging possibly from a year to thirty plus years.

ACCOMPANYING THE INSPECTOR

So then, let's get back to the key issue, after the inspection has been conducted. Remember all the while that the inspection is being conducted, the inspector must ensure that he/she is accompanied by person(s) from the company which may include persons representing the company but must, when they are appointed, be accompanied by the relevant health and safety representative for each area of responsibility. Size of the company being the determinant and also, instead of a company, it could be a 'User'. The inspector may also be accompanied by the recognised shopsteward on site. The inspector would also have interviewed at least two employees whose names are to be recorded in the inspector's report.

In my opinion, a senior manager must accompany the inspector. I have always found it in poor taste when a company sends a junior person. This a clear sign of the poor sense of responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and/or the Board of Directors, main member(s), senior management of a company. Remember, the company is obliged to provide any such reasonable resources as may be required in the performance of his/her functions as an inspector. The inspector may also have a person accompanying him/her on the inspection who may include: an interpreter, SAPS,



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

person with technical knowledge, etc. but such person(s) must be under the supervision of the inspector while on site.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF NOTICES

The inspector could at this stage write out the relevant notices based on the findings observed during the inspection. There are three possible notices an inspector could issue to an employer at the end of an inspection.

It is not a case of first serving a contravention notice before a prohibition notice is served. The inspector is expected to write out the notices on site and to get the employer to sign for the notices after the inspector has finalised the process of writing up the notices. It should be noted that even if the employer or anyone representing the employer does not sign for the notices, this does not negate the notices in any way.

Let's remember that a contravention is a criminal offence and the CEO is responsible and therefore accountable for what happens at any specific workplace in line with the OHSA. Can the Inspector legally require the employer to meet with him or her in his/her office? Of course they can ... again, in line with OHSA.

The types of notices an inspector may issue primarily to an employer includes: Contravention Notice, Improvement Notice and Prohibition Notice.

A **contravention notice** is issued for any act or omission of an employer in the interest of health and safety, in other words it is written down in OHSA and the employer was required to ensure that it was done as it is written.

In the case of a **prohibition notice** though, if there is anything which in the opinion of an inspector threatens or is likely to threaten the health or safety of any person, the inspector may in writing prohibit that employer from continuing or doing such act. I will cover this in greater detail in another article as quite a bit is involved.

A special note should be raised here at this point, any prohibition notice issued must be removed by the inspector in writing after the inspector is satisfied with the compliance after being notified by the employer that he/she complies with the content of the notice(s).

The **improvement notice** is rather a unique direction requiring the employer to 'improve' on a particular situation. For example, an AIA (Approved Inspection Authority) has made recommendations based on an hygiene survey conducted but the employer has not implemented the recommendations. The inspector, depending on the severity of the issue raised may then issue an improvement

notice or prohibition notice. Another example could be that the guard at a press or any other machine has been provided but during the assessment, the inspector determines that the guard may require modification to further improve on the guard(s) provided.

FEEDBACK AND REASONS FOR NOTICES

Don't forget, after the inspection was conducted, the employer provides a suitable facility for the inspector to provide feedback to the employer and his/her team on what he/she found during the course of the inspection and reflects on the reasons for the notices issued. This feedback is not to negotiate the content of the notices but rather to ensure that the employer and his/her team are clear on what needs to be addressed to ensure compliance and in so doing, ensure the formal removal of any notices served.

An employer is given 60 days effectively to

address any shortcomings and, if necessary, to Appeal any notice that the employer feels requires further consideration in the light of what may be presented. This will be dealt with in greater detail in the next publication. After the 60 days, the inspector will recommend a prosecution for non compliance to the Office of the Public Prosecutor.

Lastly, that an inspector may decide to issue no notices on the employer/user, that means that the inspector was unable to identify any contraventions. The employer will not receive anything in writing indicating that there were no findings.

Every workplace or place of work is a dynamic environment that changes continually over time. Any inspection that happens on any specific day is valid up until the notice is issued. Of course that stands to reason.

In the next article Part 4, we will look into and consider Appeals and Exemptions and how you may use it to assist you.

A moral and psychological safe imperative:

Workplace Inclusion with psychologically safe assurance

A PSYCHOLOGICALLY SAFE WORKPLACE

Humans want to be included in the workplace by their colleagues. They want to learn new things through adaptation and also want to contribute. And last but not least, they want to challenge the status quo when they believe things need to change, at an ease of mind with a psychologically safe organisation culture.

Employees who are not given a voice and who are mistreated can have a profound impact on their ability to perform, create value, and thrive. Trust between the employee, work team, workplace culture and workplace management style is an important pivotal element evolving in an organisation.

Coming to a decision to speak up against a toxic culture is one of the most difficult decisions employees may encounter in their working life journey. The detrimental latent impact of not providing a psychologically safe work environment for allowing feedback and voicing out concerns will contribute to systemic failures of a safety and health management system being defined as an uninformed culture.

By not providing an avenue for workers to report an unsafe condition is another commonly found systemic failure, but it is not identified as a contributory cause in incident reports.

These potential warning signals and tell-tale signs can provide supervisors and line managers with vital information about the levels of resilience in the workplace safety and health system and



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where resilience may be eroded [CITATION Rea98 \l 18441].

A PROACTIVE SAFETY AND HEALTH CULTURE

An ideally safety and culture is the 'driving force' that drives the system towards the goals, targets and objectives of implementing, maintain and sustaining the maximum resistance towards its operational hazards within the context and scope of the organisation, regardless of the leadership's personality or current commercial market factors.

In an ideal scenario, it is hard to achieve in the workplace or business environment, but it is nonetheless a goal which is worth striving for.

The power of this engine relies heavily on a continuing respect for the many entities that can penetrate, disable or bypass the system's safeguards. In short, it means not forgetting to be afraid.

This is an uphill task in industries with few accidents, with a long period of persuasion needed. Elements within a safety culture would consists of shared values (on identifying what is important) and beliefs (on how things work out) that interact with an organisation's hierarchical structures and its operating control systems to produce behavioural norms.

SHARED VALUES TO IMPROVING SAFETY

For our present purposes, it is sufficient to note that they come in different forms and two, in particular, are of relevance here: routine and

necessary violations. Violations have both motivational and situational origins and understanding the balance between them is essential for establishing culpability in a just manner.

Routine, or corner-cutting, violations typically involve taking the path of least effort between two task-related points, regardless of what the procedures may direct [CITATION Rea90 \l 18441].

On the face of it, these seem to be due to laziness and hence blameworthy. But, even here, the issues are not clear-cut.

Procedures may not always stipulate the most efficient way of doing a job, and so they might be 'rewritten on the hoof' by skilled workers who discovers both a safe and a less labour-intensive means of doing a job [CITATION Rea97 \l 18441].

ACCEPTING ERROR WITHOUT BLAME

People working in the workplace must be able to trust that they will be treated fairly in the event of unsafe acts occurring.

The key to a successful just culture is the acceptance of human error without blame. This is extremely an important contributor to the overall safety culture from national to organisation and to operation level.

In the current work environment, psychological safety will see an increasing trend of becoming an integral part of employment criteria and requirement for leaders, while organisations that don't supply it will bleed out their top talent.

INCLUSION SAFETY

Giving inclusion safety is a moral imperative. An environment that grants safe passage to learning opens the buds of potential, cultivating confidence, resilience, and independence.

If you conduct a post-mortem analysis for almost any commercial organisation that dies, you can trace the cause of death to a lack of challenger safety. Where there is no tolerance for candour, there is no constructive dissent. Where there is no constructive dissent, there is no innovation. When a leader / team grants a measure of respect but little permission, it falls into the gutter of Paternalism. When a team grants a measure of permission to contribute, but little respect, it falls into the gutter of Exploitation. Day to day examples of an "exploitation" culture are shaming, harassing, and bullying behaviour.

A work environment in which people are given respect and permission to feel included will encourage learning, contribution and innovation.

If there's no psychological safety, there's no inclusion. Inclusion safety is not earned but owed. People with low self-regard have a hard time being inclusive. Going silent is a normal response to being rejected, humiliated, or punished in some way. Silent team members disengage because they have no voice.

The unsafe workplace is most likely an amusement park of ridicule. There should be no stigma, no shame, and no embarrassment associated with failure. The most important signal in granting or withholding learner safety is the leader's response to dissent and bad news.

To foster learner safety, leaders must model a level of humility and curiosity that is simply alien to most traditional conceptions of leadership. Except for those who may be paralysed by fear or anxiety, human beings have a deep and unrelenting drive to play in the game. Fear-stricken teams give you their hands, some of their heads, and none of their heart.

WORKERS RESPOND TO KINDNESS

A toxic work environment does not produce high performance and sustain it over time. A toxic work environment is one in which employees are motivated by personal gain to the point that they engage in mean-spirited comments, unethical behaviour, abuse, and bullying.

Speaking first when you hold positional power softly censors your team. Humans are designed to respond to kindness and empathy. Candour is encouraged by the leader to protect each person's right to speak candidly about any topic, provided they don't make personal attacks or have malicious intent.

When it comes to innovation, challenger safety is the enabler while fear and ridicule are the inhibitors.

Leaders must be humble, open, and listen. If they don't, employees will eventually have nothing to say.

The dysfunction most frequently found at senior levels is pathological narcissism. Narcissism is not something a person either has or hasn't. We all possess narcissistic characteristics to a degree.

When exploitation is permitted, people learn to accept it without complaint. Even those who are exploited can become defenders of the very exploitation they suffer. Exploitation is the process of extracting value from another human being while disregarding that person's inherent value.

CONCLUSION

In the upcoming days and future ahead, you will see a swelling demand for leaders who create a high level of psychological safety on their teams and in their organisations.

This demand is the natural consequence of competing in a highly dynamic environment that relies on constant innovation.

The greatest source of fulfilment in life comes from including others, helping them learn and grow, unleashing their potential, and finding deep communion together [CITATION Tim20 \l 18441].



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SAIOH President's Message

Naadiya Mundy: SAIOH President, e-mail: president@saioh.co.za



As part of our service to our members, we provide feedback on the latest developments within SAIOH. SAIOH exists due to and for its members and is reliant on its members to continue to ethically serve this noble profession. Therefore, we invite your inputs and feedback on any matters communicated herewith.

Work Environments: *Harmonising Ethics and Occupational Hygiene*

INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly evolving contemporary work landscape, characterised by technological advancements, globalisation, and evolving work paradigms, the convergence of ethics and occupational hygiene is pivotal. It is vital to observe the intersection of these critical aspects, as these play a significant role in fostering a workplace that is both safe and ethically responsible.

In the modern workplace, cultivating a robust ethical culture is essential for sustainable growth and organisational integrity¹.

Honesty, transparency, and integrity should not be mere buzzwords but deeply ingrained principles that guide every organisational action. These ethical standards need to be seamlessly integrated into organisational policies, decision-making processes, and employee behaviour.

When employees witness and experience a consistent ethical approach, they are more likely to uphold these values in their professional interactions, promoting a positive work culture.

Leadership, being the driving force behind any organisation, plays a pivotal role in shaping ethical conduct.

Ethical leaders set the tone by embodying responsible behaviour, integrating ethical considerations into business decisions, and fostering an ethical ethos across the organisational spectrum. Employees often look up to their leaders as role models, and ethical leadership not only influences employee behaviour but also contributes to increased trust and cohesion within the organisation.

Moreover, with the integration of advanced technologies, the responsible use of technology has become a critical ethical consideration².

A very central role in this aspect is played by the occupational hygiene professionals, due to the increasingly multifaceted responsibilities of these professionals towards workers, employers, the public, public health, and labour authorities.

Safeguarding data privacy, ensuring fairness in AI algorithms, and promoting responsible digital behaviour are now imperative to maintain both

ethical standards and employee trust. The ethical deployment of technology aligns with the broader ethos of transparency and integrity within a modern workplace.

In the realm of occupational hygiene, prioritising employee health and well-being has garnered heightened attention.

The modern workplace recognises that a healthy workforce is a productive workforce.

Acknowledging the significance of mental health, contemporary workplaces must implement strategies to reduce stigma, offer mental health resources, and cultivate a supportive work environment.

Addressing stress, anxiety, and other mental health concerns is essential for employee well-being and organisational productivity.

Additionally, optimising remote work and flexibility have become paramount in the current work landscape. The prevalence of remote work, accelerated by the global pandemic, necessitates a focus on creating a safe and ergonomically sound home office environment.

Employers should provide guidance to employees on setting up a conducive workspace, emphasising ergonomics, and encouraging regular breaks to mitigate any potential health risks associated with remote work.

Enhanced health and safety measures have gained unprecedented significance, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Implementing rigorous health and safety protocols is crucial to ensure the well-being of employees and maintain a safe work environment.

Organisations must prioritise employee health through measures such as enhanced sanitisation, social distancing, regular health screenings, and adequate provision of personal protective equipment.

Moreover, effectively managing occupational stress is a significant concern in contemporary workplaces. Occupational stress can have detrimental effects on employee health, morale, and productivity.

Employers should develop stress management



programmes, encourage regular breaks, and provide access to stress-relieving activities to mitigate the adverse effects of stress on employee health and well-being.

CONCLUSION

In the contemporary world of work, the integration of ethics and occupational hygiene is indispensable for creating a workplace that is not only safe and compliant but also ethically sound.

By harmonising ethical principles with a focus on occupational hygiene, organisations can ensure the well-being of their employees while upholding moral and social standards.

This fusion not only fosters a healthier and more productive work environment but also contributes to the overall success and sustainability of the organisation.

In this fast-evolving landscape, organisations must proactively prioritise ethics and occupational hygiene to create a workplace that nurtures both the professional and personal growth of its workforce.

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National council feedback

Naadiya Mundy: SAIOH president, e-mail: president@saioh.co.za

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

Strategic Plan and Objectives

The targets within SAIOH's continuously evolving 5-year strategy are consistently being met by our diligent management board.

A signed-off strategy plan will be circulated to all our members and launched at the annual general meeting (AGM) in October.

Ethics

SAIOH's Memorandum of Incorporation (MoI) with legal advisors, NGO Law, is in the final stages of approval, affording them the task of concentrating on the review of the SAIOH Ethics Policy and Procedure(s), thereby empowering the Ethics Committee to instil uncompromisable ethical behaviour in the industry.

NOTE:

**A virtual Ethics webinar will be hosted early in 2024.
SAIOH is busy developing an Ethics course that will be rolled out towards the end of 2024.**

SAIOH Branch activities

On 31 July 2023, the Gauteng branch and the OH AIA Association hosted a joint mini workshop at the CSIR ICC. Mr Schu Schutte did a workshop on Heat Stress Management, followed by Mr Lloyd Askham facilitating an interactive workshop on Welding Fume measurements, especially the use of the IOM samplers. Some 187 OHPs attended this hybrid event.

The Gauteng branch held its third hybrid meeting on 4 August 2023 at the National Institute for Occupational Health (NIOH) offices in Johannesburg. Prof Anja Franken (NWU) did a presentation on "Invitro skin permutation of Platinum group elements".

The Mpumalanga branch hosted a very successful hybrid meeting at Seretiza Coal in Middelburg on

11 August 2023. Several presentations were done, e.g. "The control of the Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) and effective ventilation inside a heavy vehicle cabin", by Trysome Industrial. Some 61 OHPs attended.

The KZN branch hosted a branch meeting / workshop on 31 August 2023. This was an on-line event, with a presentation on how to interpret and evaluate OH data (IH Stats and ExpoStat programmes), by Prof. Jerome Levaue (Univ. of Montreal, Canada). Some 57 OHPs attended.

The Western Cape branch hosted its third meeting on-line on Friday 15 September 2023. Mr Tobias van Reenen (CSIR) did a presentation on IAQ and ventilation, unpacking the new SANS 10400-0 Code of Practice. This was a hybrid event with around 76 persons in attendance.



International feedback

The Occupational Hygiene Training Association (OHTA) and the International Occupational Hygiene Association (IOHA) continue communicating with their members; relevant links are e-mailed to all SAIOH members and published on the SAIOH website.

IOHA has informed us that they will no longer publish their Global Exposure Manager (GEM) newsletter in the OSHA journal going forward.

Coinciding with the SAIOH 2023 conference, the IOHA Board of Directors will hold its autumn

meeting in Cape Town - hosted by SAIOH on Sunday 22 October 2023.

SAIOH will also host a formal dinner for the IOHA Board of Directors on Monday 23 October 2023.

The SAIOH PCC nominated a new representative on the IOHA Board and the NAR Committee.

Deon Jansen van Vuuren is to serve as an interim caretaker on the IOHA Board and the NAR Committee until end 2024.

SAIOH technical committee feedback

Our second technical committee is developing technical procedures and a SAIOH position paper on heat stress management, enabling SAIOH to provide comprehensive and relevant proposals to strengthen the newly launched Physical Agents

Regulations (PAR) - the old Environmental Regulations for Workplaces.

Dr Ivan Niranjani (the PCC Vice-Chair) will take over and co-ordinate the working of this important sub-committee going forward.

Annual SAIOH scientific conference

The hybrid SAIOH 2023 annual scientific conference will take place from 23 to 26 October this year, paired with the IOHA meeting.

The theme of the conference is “Real-time monitoring revolutionising occupational hygiene for safer workplaces”, and will take place at the Break Water Lodge (a Protea Marriott Hotel) on the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, Cape Town.

The conference programme consists of five Professional Development courses (5 PDCs), taking place on 23 and 24 October 2023.

There will be six (6) keynote addresses, and seventeen (17) plenary oral presentations, as well as eight (9) posters on 25 to 26 October 2023.

This year’s conference will include an amiable blend of international and local OH practitioners.

The SAIOH AGM will take place the afternoon of the 25th of October, followed by the Conference Gala dinner.

The final draft Programme was circulated and is also available to view on our Conference webpage on the SAIOH website.



Sadly, we received the news of Mr. Schu Schutte’s death on 28 September 2023. This is a huge loss for his family, SAIOH and South Africa. Our sincere condolences go out to his family, friends, and colleagues. SAIOH will do an obituary in the next issue of the African OS&H magazine.

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.jvvuuren@gmail.com

Corlia Peens: PCC chairperson, e-mail: corlia.peens@sasol.com

Certification assessments

A summary of results from the March to August 2023 assessments is provided in Table 1 below, which reflects the Q1 and Q2 written and oral assessment results.

Certification Categories	Written assessment results						Final assessment results - written and oral				
	Total YTD assessed 2023	Total assessed 2022	YTD passed 2023	YTD failed 2023	YTD pass rate % 2023	Pass rate % 2022	Total YTD assessed 2023	YTD passed 2023	YTD failed 2023	YTD pass rate % 2023	Pass Rate % 2022
OH Assistants	74	166	69	5	93,2%	91,0%	74	69	5	93,2%	91,0%
OH Technologists	37	61	21	16	56,8%	52,5%	23	12	11	52,2%	73,5%
Occ. Hygienists	34	51	19	15	55,9%	41,2%	21	17	4	81,0%	65,5%
TOTAL	145	278	109	36	75,2%	73,4%	118	98	20	83,1%	84,4%

Oral assessment improvements

The PCC technical teams continue to revise the PCC oral assessment format and questions in line with the occupational hygiene self-assessment tool.

Two PCC technical teams are working in parallel. The first is updating the SAIOH self-assessment tool and revising the PCC oral assessment format, and

the second is developing questions and the required answers. Improvements in the assessment format will encompass the growing field of occupational hygiene and ensure that the assessment format and tools are relevant and current.



Occupational hygiene skills forum (OHSF)

The OHSF was instrumental in co-ordinating the development of a series of asbestos training courses. The most recent, "Asbestos Assessments in Buildings, section 1: introduction" is now available for use by OHSF registered training providers.

The assessments are administered by SAIOH for a certain fee per candidate.

Please contact Lee Doolan for more info (lee@saioh.co.za).



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The optically corrected lens ensures a clear, undistorted view and easily adapts to different face shapes.

In order to meet all requirements concerning respiratory protective equipment, the Advantage 3000 comes in two versions, each in three different sizes. Choose between Advantage 3200 with bayonet connection and Advantage 3100 with EN 148 standard thread filter connection.

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The Advantage 400 is available with single thread EN 148-1 connection (Advantage 410) or with a twin bayonet connection (Advantage 420).

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Moreover, we are dedicated to pushing the boundaries of industry-leading design and innovation.

Interceptor constantly explores and addresses the diverse risks inherent in various workplaces, reinforcing the paramount importance of occupational safety.

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Breathalyser results in employee dismissals

Media coverage on the Samancor Chrome Ltd v Willemse dispute earlier this year may have created a false impression that breathalyser results alone cannot be used to dismiss an employee, without corroboration from a blood alcohol test. Such media coverage is incorrect and misleading.

Breathalyser results can and should be used as evidence in appropriate cases of dismissal, but these need to be supported by accurate reporting in line with company policies regarding alcohol and its related protocols.

BREATHALYSERS GIVE RELIABLE RESULTS

It is critical to reaffirm the reliability of accurately-calibrated breathalyser testing devices to maintain health and safety standards within an organisation, along with the importance of implementing comprehensive alcohol and substance abuse policies.

Misconstruing the use and purpose of breathalysers will have severe consequences for workplace safety, and if employers lose confidence in the reliability of these devices or disregard their importance, the risk of accidents and subsequent injuries or deaths is likely to increase.

CASE STUDY: PROCEDURAL MISHANDLING

Employee dismissal

On 29 May 2023, the Labour Court delivered judgment in the case of Samancor Chrome Ltd (Western Chrome Mines) v Willemse and Others, questioning the reliability of breathalyser testing in enforcing an employer's zero-tolerance alcohol and drugs policy.

The employee in question had been dismissed based on three positive breathalyser tests (on two different devices) indicating alcohol content, but he denied consuming alcohol and visited a medical practitioner to obtain a negative blood test result.

In this scenario, the employer's policy considered any positive test as gross misconduct, leading to summary dismissal.

Incorrect reinstatement

The employee challenged his dismissal at the CCMA, where the arbitrator incorrectly determined that blood test results were more accurate and found that the employee did not breach the policy, resulting in retrospective reinstatement.

The Labour Court, upon review, confirmed that the employer failed to prove the presence of alcohol in the employee's bloodstream.

The court incorrectly stated that breathalyser tests are unreliable, can produce false positive results and are less reliable than blood tests. The employer's review application was dismissed, and costs were awarded against them.



Rhys Evans, Managing Director of ALCO-Safe

CORRECTING THE MISTAKE: FOLLOWING THE PROPER PROCEDURES

Timeline is important

What the court failed to see was the evidence presented in this case overlooked the importance of the timeline of events.

It is imperative to note that the concentration of alcohol in a person's system changes over time. A person's blood alcohol concentration declines at a rate of about 0.020% per hour, as the alcohol in the bloodstream is processed by the individual's liver.

The evidence presented in this case showed that the accused had a blood alcohol concentration of 0.013% BAC. Later when the doctor took a blood sample, the concentration was less than 0.010% BAC. This is to be expected. The blood alcohol test reading would therefore reflect a zero result.

This timeline information was overlooked by the medical practitioner (who was called as an expert witness) and the mining organisation's attorneys, which would have provided the proper perspective.

Another problem must also be considered in this type of scenario. Certain substances like breads and cough mixtures can cause a positive breathalyser result due to the mouth-alcohol effect. To eliminate

CHOOSING THE CORRECT SUPPLIER OF BREATHALYSERS

It is important for companies to choose suppliers that can assist end-to-end with their workplace alcohol and substance abuse policies and protocols in maintaining organisational health and safety.

The right supplier will

- assist in drafting and implementing clear and effective policy documentation
- conduct workplace awareness training on the dangers of substance abuse.
- ensure that testing protocols and procedures are optimally aligned to the risk associated with the specific job function and working environment,
- supply the necessary equipment and training.
- ensure that the equipment is properly calibrated to uphold accuracy and reliability
- ensure that the equipment is regularly maintained to uphold accuracy and reliability.
- provide guidance in the event that any disciplinary action arising from policy enforcement is challenged at the CCMA. The supplier will be able to take the company through the reporting procedures to be followed, along with providing expert testimony in a legal dispute setting, to ensure that decisions to dismiss an employee based on breathalyser results are correctly upheld.

this possibility considering the timeline, it is recommended that two tests should be conducted 20 minutes apart.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CLEAR WORKPLACE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

In a case of dismissal, it is necessary for organisations to be very clear and deliberate in their approach to alcohol and substances in the workplace.

It is not enough for organisations to state that they have a 'zero tolerance' approach. This must be substantiated by a clear workplace policy that highlights the risk of intoxication while defining what counts as contravention of the policy (usually any reading above zero). Details on how the policy will be enforced (usually by means of breathalyser testing before entry to the workplace is permitted) must also be clarified, as well as the consequences of contravention.

The company must ensure that their procedures and protocols in this respect are inscrutable.

It is recommended when an individual receives a positive screening test result, that the test is followed up with two confirmation tests performed

20 minutes apart. It is also advisable to perform the follow-up tests in a private office on a confirmation breathalyser, preferably with a printing kit.

PUTTING A PRICE ON SAFETY

Testing for alcohol in the workplace is not one of the areas where businesses should be looking to cut costs. Only high-end breathalysers that are certified for law enforcement use should be used to test employees in the workplace.

The consequences of not having the right procedures in place alongside reputable breathalyser instruments, can be very expensive.

PARTNERING WITH EXPERT PROVIDERS

It is important for companies to choose suppliers that can assist end-to-end with their workplace alcohol and substance abuse policies and protocols in maintaining organisational health and safety.

In a legal dispute scenario, the supplier should be able to provide expert testimony to ensure that decisions to dismiss an employee based on breathalyser results are correctly upheld.

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Joint health and safety committees

As businesses grow and the number of employees increases, the legislation in most Canadian jurisdictions requires that a Joint Health and Safety Committee be formed.

The development of the JHSC may feel like a daunting task. Committee members must be chosen or appointed. Training requirements must be met. Meeting agendas and JHSC worksite inspections require development.

In the following steps, we will walk you through setting up an effective Joint Health and Safety Committee.

JHSC REQUIREMENTS AND CRITERIA

Make a plan

The importance of a good plan should never be minimised! It will serve you well over the coming months as you guide the development and set in motion a Joint Health and Safety Committee

Get familiar with the requirements

Ensure that your company meets the criteria for forming the JHSC. Smaller companies may only require the appointment of a safety representative.

Take advantage of the resources provided. Many jurisdictions supply informative "HOW TO" booklets to download, as does Safety Projects International Inc.

Your plan may extend over a few weeks so make



Dr. Bill Pomfret brings an unrivaled perspective on risk, regulation and liability from over 50 years of experience as a safety consultant working for leading companies around the world.

He also spent nearly a decade in the North Sea exploration and production as a safety manager.

Dr. Bill is a passionate advocate for safety training.

room to add details as you move forward. Be sure to address these points:

- Selection of committee members
- Training of committee members
- The meeting agenda and minutes
- Other duties of the committee members

Once you have a clear plan in place, take some time to define the purpose and responsibilities of the JHSC.

By doing this at the beginning of the process, you and all the other stakeholders can easily identify what will be expected of them when the committee is formed.

SELECT THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Put your plan in motion

As you put your plan in motion, keep your management and workers informed.

- Encourage input and ensure that everyone is aware of the purpose and responsibilities of the committee.
- Build support for the formation of the JHSC.
- Showcase the benefits of having representation from both the management and the workforce looking at safety issues and recommendations together.

Selection of committee members

Now it's time to get the committee together! Some may be appointed by management, while others are selected by their peers.

Follow the process and requirements of your jurisdiction. Once the committee members have been selected, a committee chair or co-chairs will be nominated.

Role of the committee

- Promoting health and safety in the workplace
- Consulting with workers and employers about worker safety and health.
- Taking part in scheduled inspections of the workplace
- Making recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the company's OSH programme
- Participation in incident investigations promoting compliance with occupational health and safety provision for their jurisdiction.

Everyone selected must have a full commitment to safety in the workplace and to the mission of the JHSC. Take time with each member to clearly lay out expectations. Many jurisdictions have legislated duties for the committee. It is important to clarify these specific duties.

Be sure to address the training that will be required at this time, too.

Train committee members

Most jurisdictions require that members of a Joint Health and Safety Committee receive certified training at or near the beginning of their tenure. JHSC training is the responsibility of the employer and can be in a classroom or by online self-study. Research training options and present them to management for approval.

Once the training method has been determined, inform the committee members. Each committee member is paid as though they are in the workplace during the hours of training.

Follow the process that your company has in place for retaining certificates.

SET UP THE MEETING AGENDA AND MINUTES

Follow a well laid out process

When the JHSC meets for the first time, it will set up the rules of procedure or terms of reference, so that the scope and mandate of the committee are determined.

Unlike daily toolbox and other safety meetings, the JHSC meetings are formal and will follow what is known as "Robert's Rules of Order" or parliamentary procedure. This is not nearly as arduous as it sounds. It merely involves following a well laid out process.

Agenda

Advanced notice of the meeting should be sent to

each committee member with the agenda for the meeting attached, including the date, time, and place of the meeting. But first, let's see how the agenda looks.

This format will be used at every JHSC meeting so once the template is in place, the real work is done. Typically, the agenda will include:

- Roll call
- Adoption of previous minutes
- Review of relevant reports
- Old business
- New business
- Move to adjourn.

Minutes of the meeting

Each meeting will follow the same order. Someone, not necessarily a committee member, will be designated to take the minutes of the meeting.

All discussion and recommendations should be documented in these minutes.

As topics from the agenda are addressed, each will require a Motion and a Second.

Going paperless is a good idea and will reduce the impact on the environment.

Monitor and evaluate to ensure your committee is working effectively

Now that all the setup work has been completed, it is important to establish an ongoing process for determining the effectiveness of the committee. This should be monitored both internally, by the committee, and externally, as well.

Ongoing assessments should include:

- How successfully does the committee communicate with workers?
- Are members available and approachable?
- Are the minutes of the JHSC meetings available to workers?

ANNUAL EVALUATION - A THOROUGH ASSESSMENT

Many jurisdictions provide tools for the annual evaluation.

This is the time to examine consistency with meetings and inspections, the fulfillment of duties and functions, employer support for committee recommendations and the overall effectiveness of the committee.

A strategic plan for improvement should be put in place for ongoing improvement. Goals and target dates must be defined.

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Why should we consider ESG?

ESG is a collective term for considering a business or organisation's impact on the environment and society as well as how robust and transparent its Governance is in terms of company leadership, executive pay, audits, internal controls, and shareholder rights. It measures how your business integrates environmental, social, and governance practices into operations, as well as your business model, its impact, and its sustainability.

In 2010, International Standards Organisation (ISO) published the ISO 26000 Social Responsibility guideline which serves as an international standard designed to assist organisations in effectively evaluating and addressing their social responsibilities. It helps them identify and prioritise what is relevant and significant to their mission, vision, operations, and processes. Additionally, it encourages organisations to consider the impact of their actions on customers, employees, communities, stake and the environment.

Unlike some other well-known ISO standards, ISO 26000 cannot be certified. Launched in 2010, the it provides valuable guidance rather than enforceable requirements. Its purpose is to assist businesses and organisations in understanding and implementing social responsibility principles effectively, regardless of their activity, size, or location. In essence: it serves as a global resource by sharing best practices related to social responsibility.

THE ESG PRINCIPLES

The ISO 26000 standard encompasses seven core principles that serve as a foundation for companies to develop their action plans. Each principle addresses various strategies for action, providing guidance for responsible and sustainable practices:

- **Organisational governance** - Focuses on promoting transparent and accountable decision-making processes within organisations, encouraging integrity and ethical behaviour.
- **Human rights** - Covers a wide range of human rights aspects, including combating discrimination, upholding civil and political rights, ensuring fair working rights, and fostering equal opportunities for all individuals.
- **Working relations and practices** - Emphasises the importance of maintaining positive employer-employee relations, promoting social protection measures, ensuring workplace health and safety, and fostering a positive work environment.
- **Environmental responsibility** - Emphasises the significance of environmental stewardship, including measures for pollution prevention, sustainable resource management, energy efficiency, waste reduction, and the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
- **Fair operating practices** - Focuses on promoting



By Leighton Bennett,
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fair business practices, such as implementing anti-corruption measures, ensuring fair competition, respecting intellectual property rights, and promoting responsible marketing and advertising.

- **Consumer protection** - Emphasises the importance of protecting consumer rights, including fair marketing practices, product safety, privacy protection, and providing accurate and transparent information to consumers.
- **Contribution to sustainable development** - Encourages organisations to actively contribute to sustainable development in their communities and beyond. This can include initiatives such as community involvement, job creation, the support of education and training, and the promotion of social welfare.

The guidelines provided by ISO 26000 make a significant contribution to embracing Sustainable Development (SD), which entails an economic growth approach that considers long-term perspectives and integrates ecological and social considerations.

The concept of sustainable development, encompassing economic, social, and environmental aspects, aligns closely with the themes covered by ISO 26000. As a result, the implementation of the ISO 26000 standard can have a positive impact on various areas, leading to improved business and/or organisational performance.

Business and organisations may already have adopted and implemented various risk management processes, but one needs to understand where and how ESG Principles, cited above, can be incorporated and integrated into the existing management system standards highlighted below.

SOME MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS BACKGROUND

Over recent years many international business organisations have used creative accounting within their financial records and consequently failed in their good governance compliance. Consequently, the issue of managing risk in business has resulted in Good Governance Codes being promulgated by various countries, (e.g., the Sarbanes-Oxley Act 2002, COSO Framework (2003 – 2017), the UK Corporate Governance Code (1998 – 2018) and the King Codes I to IV (1994 – 2016) in South Africa) which are applicable to Stock Exchange listed companies and all companies in general.

In November 2009, the International Standards Organization (ISO) introduced the ISO 31000 Risk Management Standard, comprising structural three pillars, The Principles, The Framework and the Risk Management Process, and a Risk Management vocabulary guide (ISO guide 73 / SANS ARP 70:2009). This Risk Management standard was upgraded in 2018. (ISO/SANS 31000:2018)



ISO then followed by introducing the ISO 9000 Quality Management System Standard, the ISO 14000 Environmental Management System standard and the ISO/OHSAS 18000 Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) Management System standard.

Since 2015 these four standards have been upgraded to a 10-clause format structure, which facilitates that all these standards can now be easily integrated into a uniform Integrated Management System (IMS). The ISO/OHSAS 18000 OHS standard was replaced by the ISO 45001 OHS Management System Standard in 2018.

Today many organisations around the world have adopted the ISO Management System Standards as an effective method to manage the governance and the various risks impacting on their organisations. Consequently, these organisations have embarked on establishing an ISO based Integrated Management System (IMS) to manage all these management systems within a collective framework across their business operations and activities.

Recently, Benrisk Consulting in association with Abeam International Zambia offered a course in Lusaka on “Understanding a Risk Management Approach to ESG” that provided insights into the issue of managing the risks in business that have resulted in Good Governance Codes being promulgated by various countries, and with the aim to guide and support businesses that have adopted the various ISO management standards and to facilitate and promote their management of Risk, Quality, Environment, OHS, IT Security, Energy, Social and Financial Governance, as examples.

Furthermore, the managing risk issue involves the need to have an Integrated Management System (IMS) to manage all these management systems within a collective framework across the business operations and activities, while now also introducing the ESG Principles within the existing risk management systems.

With the ISO standards many have adopted a 10-clause standards layout across their management standards to achieve collective framework. Many businesses have over the years (post 2009) introduced some of these ISO management standards and are now looking to integrate the ISO 26000 ESG thinking into the existing ISO management system processes.

IMPLEMENT ESG INTO EXISTING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

The following ESG component aspects will need consideration for being incorporated and integrated into the existing management systems.

Environmental+

The environmental aspect focuses on how the business minimises its impact on the environment. It covers the business's products/services, the supply chain and operations. ESG allows the business to target different areas of its organisation and implement more sustainable, ethical practices.

Examples of environmental business practices include:

- reducing energy and using renewable energy sources to become a net zero organisation.
- developing greener products and services
- switching to zero-waste products or sustainable packaging using biodegradable materials
- reducing carbon emissions by changing to LED lighting

- encouraging recycling and reducing the amount of waste destined for landfill.

Social+

The social aspect focuses on how a business impacts wider society and workplace culture. Organisations can positively contribute to fairness in society, investing in fair and equal opportunities and conditions for employees, people working in the supply chain, and local communities.

Equality and fairness are at the heart of this aspect and examples of social and ethical business practices include:

- ensuring products are safe and customer data is secure. (In South Africa we have the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI Act))
- preventing abuses within the supply chain, such as labour rights, including modern slavery and freedom of association
- providing training and supporting health and safety, and wellbeing
- promoting equality in the workforce with diversity and inclusivity policies
- investing in local community projects, such as funding educational initiatives.

Governance+

Governance refers to the processes of decision-making, reporting, and the logistics of running a business. It also looks at the business's ethical behaviour and its transparency with stakeholders about its activities.

Governance is linked to the environmental and social aspects of ESG in that it looks at the transparency and decision-making behind them.

Examples of governance practices include:

- accurate reporting to stakeholders on financial performance, business strategy and operations
- ensuring business leaders and managers are accountable for risk and performance management
- undertaking business ethically, such as preventing bribery
- ensuring diversity in any leadership team and being open about executive pay.

Ensuring good governance in your business can appeal to investors and your supply chain and practising good governance may also help enable businesses to grow.

WHY SMALLER COMPANIES SHOULD EMBRACE ESG+

Even if your business isn't looking for investment, adopting an ESG framework has benefits – from reducing risk and lowering costs to improving reputation and attracting new customers.

CLOSING THOUGHT

ESG is a collective term for measuring a business's impact on social and environmental issues and its governance beyond simply generating revenue or making a profit.

While traditionally, companies have focused on measuring performance indicators such as turnover, costs, and other financial related measures, today's businesses are adopting measures that show their impact on the environment, local communities, and topics such as diversity and employee wellbeing.

Implementing an ergonomic programme:

Ergonomic Regulation 2019

REQUIREMENTS

On the 6th December 2019, the Ergonomic Regulations were promulgated and will be included in your annual health and safety audits.

WHAT IS ERGONOMICS?

Ergonomics is the scientific discipline concerned with the understanding of interactions among humans and other elements of a system. It is the profession that applies theory, principles, data, and methods to design, to optimise human well-being and overall system performance.

In other words, ergonomics assists in optimising or creating a balance between humans and systems/things with which they interact in the workplace.

To apply ergonomics in the workplace, we must have a broad understanding of the full scope of the discipline.

Ergonomics promotes a holistic approach and must consider factors such as:

- Physical
- Cognitive
- Social
- Organisational
- Environmental
- Other

There are three domains within the discipline of ergonomics:

1. Physical Ergonomics
2. Cognitive Ergonomics
3. Organisational Ergonomics

We cannot look at each domain in isolation – it is about a holistic view of human beings and their interaction within a system that includes tools, tasks, and environment.

The value of ergonomics is that a SYSTEM approach must be always taken, and the regulations require that this holistic systems approach must be included in your normal health and safety management system and must be viewed as a strategic continuous improvement process that will make a positive impact on the entire business.

THE VALUE OF AN ERGONOMIC PROGRAMME

- Matches the job demands to the capabilities and needs of your workforce and is good for the well-being of your staff.
- Staff work more safely and efficiently leading to fewer injuries and accidents.
- Ergonomic risks are controlled. Can impair human well-being and overall better experience for the user which is good for business.



Delene Sheasby has over three decades of experience, excelling in health and safety educational training and development. Her skills include impeccable knowledge of legal compliance, and a deep commitment to occupational health and safety.

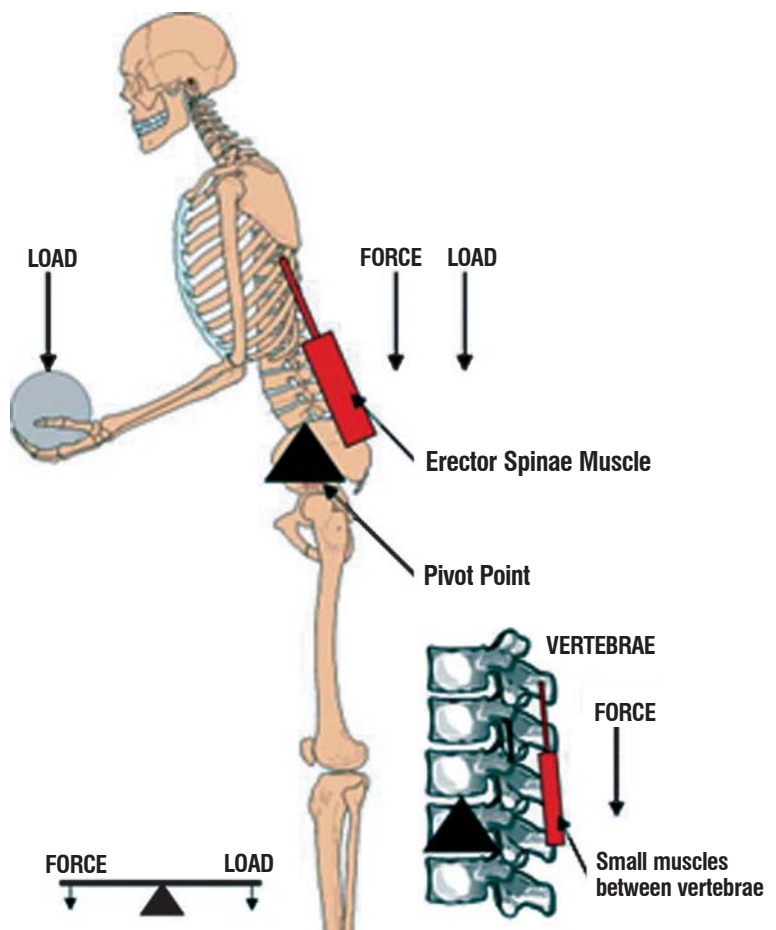
DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING AN ERGONOMIC PROGRAMME

- Appropriate policies and procedures must be developed on the management of ergonomics. Education and awareness of ergonomics and existing ergonomic risk to everyone in an organisation is required.
- Medical surveillance programmes need to adequately identify and manage the effects of ergonomic exposure.
- A culture of managing ergonomic risks needs to be included by all stakeholders within the organisation.

For the programme to succeed, the organisation needs to know where they are now and where they want to be.

Elements of an effective ergonomic programme

1. Leadership and stakeholder participation
2. Planning
3. Hazard identification and prevention
4. Education and awareness
5. Continuous improvement



What are ergonomic risks?

Certain actions in the workplace may result in injury or strain, impairing human well-being. See Figure 1.

Ergonomic Risks Assessments (ERA)

The regulations state that ergonomic risk assessments must be done, and control measures implemented, as far as is reasonably practicable.

The definition in the regulation's states that: *An ergonomic risk assessment is a programme, process, or investigation implemented to identify, evaluate, analyse, and prioritise any risk from exposure or risk associated with the workplace.*

According to the regulation 6.1 of the Ergonomic Regulations, an ERA must be conducted: *Before the commencement of any work that may expose employees to ergonomic risks by a competent person:*

- After consultation with the Health and Safety committee or the Health and Safety representatives designated for that workplace or the different section thereof.

The Regulation (6.2) stipulates that an ERA must be conducted at intervals not exceeding two years and include a complete hazard identification

The identification of all persons who may be affected by the risk:

- How the employees may be affected by the ergonomic risks.
- The analysis and evaluation of the ergonomic risks.
- The prioritisation of ergonomic risks.

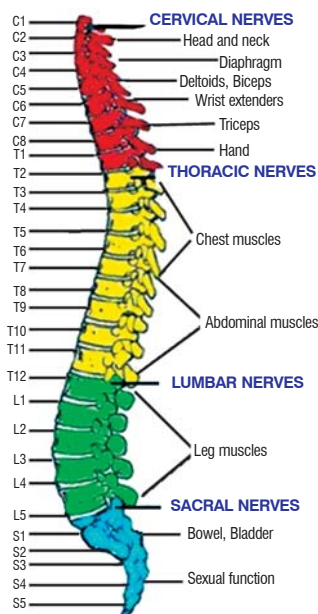
Controls

Ergonomic risks should be reduced to the lowest reasonably practicable level through control and prevention measures – (the hierarchy of controls) in the order of priority below:

1. **Elimination:** The job should be redesigned so that the hazard is removed from the workplace.
2. **Substitution:** The current task should be replaced with a less hazardous task. It is important to ensure that the new design is less hazardous than the original.
3. **Engineering controls:** Use equipment or other measures to reduce the risks associated with tasks. Priority should be given to measures that protect collectively over individual measures.
4. **Administrative controls:** Identify and implement new procedures that will allow work to be done safely.
5. **Personal protective equipment:** Only once all the previous measures have been tried and shown to be ineffective in controlling risk to a reasonably practicable level, personal protective equipment (PPE) should be considered. When PPEs are used it is important that employees are involved in the fitting and consulted in the selection of fit-for-purpose PPE.

Table 1. Ergonomic risks

TASK/ACTIVITY RELATED PHYSICAL RISK FACTORS	
Working in an awkward posture	Pushing, pulling heavy loads
Bending	Reaching
Compression or contract stress	Reaching overhead
Forceful exertions	Repetitive motions
Insufficient rest breaks	Static or sustained postures
Lifting heavy items	Vibrations
TASK/ACTIVITY-RELATED COGNITIVE RISK FACTORS	
Complex unfamiliar tasks	Cognitive workload
Sustained attention tasks	Excessive memory demands
Monotonous repetitive task	Divided attention tasks



WHAT ARE MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS?

MSDs include a group of conditions that involve the nerves, tendons, muscles and supporting structures such as intervertebral discs

They represent a wide range of disorders which can differ in severity from mild periodic symptoms to severe chronic and debilitating

- conditions including:
- Carpal tunnel syndrome
 - Tenosynovitis
 - Tension neck syndrome
 - Low back pain

Records

The employer must ensure that records are kept for;

- a. information and training provided to employees, ergonomics risk assessments conducted at the workplace, the results of health examinations conducted on employees
- b. action plans for the implementation of control measures and the maintenance of such control measures.

Due to the nature of ergonomics adverse health effects occurring over time, retention of records is needed to investigate any causal relationship, if any, between exposure to ergonomic risks and diagnoses.

Records of incidents must also be kept determining whether there was an exposure to ergonomic risks.

Offences and penalties

Any person who contravenes or fails to comply with a provision of this regulation shall be guilty of an offense and liable on conviction to a fine or imprisonment or both.

When the new Bill is passed the existing fines and penalties of all the regulations will be changed.

Ergonomic Risk Assessment Checklist



Note: This checklist should be used as a general guide. Specific regulations and requirements may vary, so it's essential to consult South African regulatory authorities and experts in occupational health and safety for up-to-date and detailed guidance.

1. WORKER-RELATED RISK FACTORS	COMMENTS
Physical Health and Capabilities:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the worker's physical fitness and health status. Consider any pre-existing medical conditions or disabilities. Determine if the worker has any known ergonomic risk factors. 	
Workstation Design and Layout:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that workstations are adjustable to accommodate different worker heights and body sizes. Verify that chairs have proper lumbar support, adjustable seat height, and armrests. Check that workstations are well-lit to prevent eye strain. 	
Training and Awareness:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm that workers have received ergonomic training. Ensure that workers are aware of ergonomic best practices. Assess if workers know how to set up their workstations correctly. 	
2. TASK-RELATED RISK FACTORS	COMMENTS
Repetitive Tasks:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify tasks that involve repetitive motions. Evaluate the frequency and duration of repetitive tasks. Determine if job rotation is implemented to reduce repetitive strain. 	
Forceful Exertions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify tasks that require excessive force or exertion. Assess the force required to complete these tasks. Ensure that workers have access to ergonomic tools or equipment to reduce force. 	
Awkward Postures:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify tasks that force workers into awkward postures. Evaluate the duration and frequency of these postures. Ensure that workstations are adjustable to accommodate proper posture. 	
3. ENVIRONMENTAL RISK FACTORS	COMMENTS
Workspace Layout:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that workspaces are organized efficiently. Verify that walkways are clear and free from obstacles. Check for proper ventilation and temperature control. 	
Lighting:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm that lighting is adequate to prevent glare and eye strain. Assess natural lighting, if available, and adjust artificial lighting accordingly. 	
Noise and Vibrations:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify sources of excessive noise or vibrations. Measure noise levels and vibrations in the workplace. Implement noise-reducing measures or provide hearing protection. 	
4. CONTROLS AND MITIGATIONS	COMMENTS
Ergonomic Equipment:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide adjustable chairs, desks, and computer equipment. Supply ergonomic accessories such as keyboard trays and monitor stands. Ensure workers have access to ergonomically designed tools. 	
Workstation Setup:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train workers on proper workstation setup. Conduct regular ergonomic assessments of workstations. Encourage workers to report discomfort and issues promptly. 	
Job Design and Rotation:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redesign tasks to reduce repetitive motions and forceful exertions. Implement job rotation to diversify tasks and reduce strain. Ensure tasks are structured to allow for regular breaks. 	
Worker Feedback:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a system for workers to report ergonomic concerns. Encourage workers to provide feedback on workstation design and layout. Address reported concerns promptly. 	
Documentation and Compliance:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain records of ergonomic assessments and training. Regularly review and update ergonomic policies and procedures. Ensure compliance with South African ergonomic regulations and standards. 	
Review and Evaluation:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Periodically review the effectiveness of ergonomic controls. Adjust controls and mitigations based on feedback and assessment results. Continuously improve ergonomic practices in the workplace. 	

It's essential to involve workers, safety officers, and health professionals in the ergonomic risk assessment process to ensure a comprehensive and effective approach to ergonomic compliance in South Africa. Additionally, consult with relevant authorities and experts for specific regulatory requirements and guidelines applicable to your industry and location

Fatality reports

Place: NW(Rustenburg)

Date: 30 September 2023

Deceased occupation: Golden Tropic Mining Contractor working under Highly Blue Trading

Commodity: Granite quarrying

Fatal Notification

An employee involved in accident on 30 September 2023 passed away in the morning of the 4 October 2023. The fatality was not reported by the employer and was only uncovered during a section 54 presentation to the PIOM.

Description of incident:

At approximately 11h30, while changing the blade on the stone cutting machine a strong wind blew the saw blade loose from its hook, the blade tipped over knocking the 2 workers over.

One employee sustained a broken leg and the other sustained a head injury. Both employees were transported to mediclinic in Brits.

The employee with the head injury was airlifted to Milpark hospital in Johannesburg the same day and put into ICU. The employee had complications during the night and passed away in the early hours of Wednesday 4th Oct 2023.

Punitive Action for failure to report a fatality:

1. A recommendation for an administrative fine has been issued.
2. CEO has been summoned to account.
3. The mine remains on stop until certain conditions of compliance are met.

Place: Kusasalethu

Date: 26 August 2023

Deceased Occupation: Contractor crew

Description of incident:

Two employees lost their lives. A seismic event triggered a FOG in 113 lev 29 cross cut. The FOG seems to have been a sidewall ejection. There was no evidence of any FOG from the hanging wall. There is a 10m dyke intersection in the cross cut and the sidewall ejected in the dyke formation area. The crew were doing secondary support of the dyke when the seismic event occurred. One member was totally trapped under the FOG and another's leg was trapped by a rock.

The second employee was freed and evacuated but sadly lost his life on route out of the mine.

The trapped employee was sadly recovered later with no vital signs.

Place: Western Cape Mine - Bridge Town Quarry

Date: 03 August 2023

Time: 15h00

Deceased Occupation: Mobile Crusher Operator

Description of incident:

There were no eye witnesses. The deceased was found lying half in the crusher. He had already passed away. It would appear that he was removing clay from the crusher. He had opened the crusher to gain access. Injuries to his leg was found. The crusher was not locked out. A Section 54 issued.

Place: Booyensdal North Merensky South Ledge Decline below SC-11-A

Date: 26 August 2023

Time: Approximately 16h00

Deceased Occupation: Engineering Assistant – Fitting

Description of incident:

Two employees were walking up the decline, when a Utility Vehicle (UV), UCC16, was on its way down the same decline.

The operator of the UV, was allegedly looking down and when he looked up, he saw the employees directly in front of him. The employees on the decline were warned by the operator of the machine. One employee stood at a place of safety and subsequently to that the other was injured by the machine. Emergency services were dispatched to the scene.

Place: NW(Rustenburg): RBPlat Styldrift Mine

Date: 11 September 2023

Commodity: Platinum

Description of incident:

On the 11 September 2023 at approximately 00h40 Control Room was informed of a FOG related accident in Section 125.

A Drill Rig Operator, since 01 May 2016, was reported to be trapped underneath a rock as a result of FOG whilst assisting with drilling operations at 600L S05W B08.

Proto and paramedic teams were mobilised and the person was recovered and certified dead at around 09h10.

In loco inspection is in progress by the Inspectorate and the stakeholders.

Zambia in the news

PATIENT SAFETY DAY IN ZAMBIA

On the 17th September, Patient Safety Movement Foundation - Zambia successfully commemorated the World Patient Safety Day in Kitwe on Copperbelt province Zambia.

Patient Safety Movement Foundation, Zambia partnered with the Ministry of Health who fully supported the event and

the Permanent Secretary (Administration) Professor Simoonga represented the Minister of Health, Honourable Sylvia Masebo as a guest of honour.

Over three hundred people from various institutions on the Copperbelt Province attended.



Dr Elizabeth Nkumbula, Ambassador for Patient Safety from the Patient Safety Movement Foundation



NIGERIA DEVELOPS NATIONAL PATIENT SAFETY POLICY

by Ehi Iden

I am lucky to be part of the Technical Committee that has been working on the draft of the National Patient Safety Policy for almost a year. It has been a task that we all saw as a call to national assignment and we are happy to see it materialise and ready for National Launch.

The project includes, the National Policy on Patient Safety, The Strategic Objective Document, The Monitoring and Evaluation and the Implementation Plan. This is a big win for Nigeria and will reduce preventable harm and errors in the Nigerian Healthcare system if well implemented.

We are all happy at the outcomes and hoping this will bring about the desired peace of mind to both patients, patients' families and healthcare workers alike. A huge section of this policy is dedicated to the safety of healthcare workers.

While the excitement seems high, it is important we keep in mind that improved healthcare funding is required if we must reap the fruit inherent in this strategic project. We call on the government of Nigeria to critically strive towards implementing the Abuja Declaration which mandated all Governments across Africa to increase the budgetary allocation to Healthcare to two digits. We need to see this as a clear addendum to support the realisation of the great efforts under the leadership of Federal Ministry of Health.

We look forward to more of such transformational strides.



VISION ZERO 2023 ZAMBIA

The International Vision Zero conference in Africa was hosted by Zambia from 7-8 September 2023 at the Avani Resort, Livingstone. The ISSA Construction Section 55th Anniversary celebrations were then successfully hosted on 9th September 2023.

Over 500 delegates, from 18 countries gathered to attend this momentous event which was organised by Africa Vision Zero Network with the major sponsor Workers' Compensation Fund Control Board together with other sponsors and supported by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

The conference was officially opened by the Vice President of Zambia Her Honour Mutale Nalumango. Delegates were also welcomed by Professor Noetel Karl-Heinz, ISSA President Construction Section and the Minister of Labour and Social Security, Honourable Brenda Tambatamba.

“We were impressed by the simplicity and commitment to workplace safety, health and wellbeing as shown by the Vice President of Zambia, Her Honour Mutale Nalumango and the Minister of Labour and Social Security, Brenda Mwika Tambatamba. We salute the Permanent Secretary, Mr Luhanga Chairman of the National Steering Committee and his teams, Chairman and CEO Workers Compensation Fund Control Board.

“This is only the second International Vision Zero Conference in Africa. It has already gathered much momentum and will get better by the years. The first was successfully held in Lagos, September 2021.

“The conference was characterised with mind stimulating presentations from very distinguished speakers bent on transforming our thought patterns and succeeded in achieving that. We all came out better informed on issues surrounding workplace safety, health and wellbeing being the tripod on which Vision Zero is anchored.

“It will be unfair if I do not speak of the hospitality of the people of Zambia from arrival until the evening before the morning we all left. It was all fun and great networking moments for everyone,” commented Ehi Iden.



Ehi Iden, and Zambia's Minister of Labour & Social Security Brenda Tambatamba



Ehi Iden, Prof Karl-Heinz Noetel, President of ISSA Construction Section and Zambia's Vice President Her Honour Nutale Nalumango



Congratulating Kampala, Uganda who will host the next Africa Vision Zero conference



Handing over ceremony to Kampala Uganda



Zambian singer Mooya Shamambo entertained the delegates



A photograph of two workers in safety gear (hard hats, harnesses, and safety vests) working on a high-altitude structure, possibly a bridge or tower. They are suspended by ropes and have buckets attached to their harnesses. The background is a clear blue sky.

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SAPEMA Annual Golf Day 2023

On Wednesday 27th September 2023, SAPEMA hosted its Annual Golf day at Glendower Golf Course in Johannesburg.

It was once again a wonderful, eventful day attended by many and enjoyed by all.

Just our luck it so happened to be the first real rain we had this year and the skies opened up half way through the afternoon. The weather soon cleared and play resumed. What a treat it was for all.



With 5 Hole sponsors, and 20 four balls it was an intimate event, a little smaller than usual but exactly what was needed for the day.

The banter and comradery on the day is always a pleasure to watch.

As a tradition and in terms of our MOU, Saiosh very generously sponsored our Dinner for the evening.

A HUGE thank you to all our sponsors, it makes it easy to host such a great day with you all on board.

Till 2024, we golf again next year.

SPONSORED HOLES	
COMPANY	HOLE NO
BSI	4
Dromex	17
HSE Solutions	6
Specialised Exhibitions	10
uvex	1

4 BALL TEAMS	
COMPANY	NO OF 4 BALLS
BBF Safety Group	2
BSI	1
Dromex	3
DuPont	1
Hi-Tec Sports Distributors	2
HSE Solutions	1
Noise Clipper	1
Protekta Safety	1
REBEL Safety Gear	1
HASS	1
Select PPE	1
SAIOSH	1
Specialised Exhibitions	1
uvex	3

PRIZES

- Closest to the pin was taken by Stanley Fabri (Prize sponsored by Hi-Tec)
- Longest Drive taken by Dillon from Protekta (Prize sponsored by uvex)
- Best Dressed team went to HSE Solutions
- Best Sponsored Hole was uvex
- Other prize sponsors included Rebel, DuPont, 3M, Fastelle and Idube.

1ST PLACE (105 POINTS)

Team BBF2

(Prize sponsored by Hi-Tec)

- Alex
- Rafi
- Aldo
- Dylan

2ND PLACE (103 POINTS)

Team Saiosh – 2022 winners

(Prize Sponsored by BBF)

- Garreth
- Leon
- John
- Ockert

3RD PLACE (100 POINTS)

Team Rebel

(Prize sponsored by Safeco)

- Ryan
- Craig
- Ryan
- Megan

Prevention Through Design (PtD) in construction Health and Safety (H&S)



Yaseen Francis,
Director ACHASM



Simamneke Ngxesha

Prevention through Design (PtD), Safety in Design (SiD) or Design for Safety (DfS) is a concept that aims to introduce engineering control measures during the design or development of a structure, building, product or project.

(PtD) has been proven to be one of the most effective risk mitigation strategies and has a high probability of influencing H&S throughout the project lifecycle, which aids the reduction of incidents on construction projects.

This article intends to highlight the barriers that are associated with implementing the (PtD) concept and potential solutions to overcome these barriers.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT FOR PTD

The Occupational Health and Safety Act (No 85 of 1993) prescribes stakeholders certain duties to fulfil during the undertaking of construction work - these duties include clients.

Research and industry perspectives allude to the notion that clients are not fully aware of their duties and responsibilities. This lack of knowledge is further impacted by insufficient communication by Construction Health and Safety (CHS) practitioners and professionals to clients. These challenges tend to go unnoticed as poor prosecution and conviction for H&S non-compliance is relatively low, and the inherent culture of inadequate H&S commitment, management, and performance within the South African construction industry.

Moreover, a big component of the challenges is the ineffective H&S inspection programmes under the Department of Employment and Labour (DEL). The DEL inspectorate primarily focuses on workplace H&S as part of their inspection protocol. This is centred around first aid arrangements, provision for employee PPE, and compliance to labour laws for a particular workplace or contractor; however, clients and designers are not being audited for compliance in terms of their duties relative to H&S design, which is much higher in the hierarchy of controls than the admin-related factors that the DEL focuses on.

Research from Smallwood (1998) found that the client has the ability to influence H&S intervention throughout the project lifecycle.

The lack of collaboration among project stakeholders undertaking the design risk management process is evident in research and practice. Project stakeholders, specifically contractors and the end user, can provide pertinent input into the design that ultimately influences the construction process and the H&S of workers. Contractors may highlight

specific installation constraints relative to the design that may have an impact on worker safety, e.g., the installation of large plant and equipment to be installed in plant rooms poses an ergonomic risk during the installation (construction phase), and space constraints during the (maintenance phase).

Research has found substantial evidence that designers are to be held liable for incidents and fatalities that occur (Karakhan, 2016). Furthermore, the case studies examined by Karakhan (2016) demonstrate that in the United States, courts may not only take into considerations of the OSHA regulations and professional codes but also observe evidence of negligent behaviour or failure in the design to address construction site safety.

Although liability concerns are at the forefront, professionalism, ethics, and sustainability are important factors to consider when designing for worker H&S.

PTD EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND INDUSTRY GUIDELINES

Studies have highlighted that the lack of H&S in tertiary education within the built environment discipline is a significant barrier to implementing H&S prevention through design and construction (cidb, 2009).

Despite recent improvements relative to the inclusion of H&S in tertiary curriculum, implementation is lacking and may be attributed to on-the-job training and practical experience relative to the concept, which extends beyond curricular.

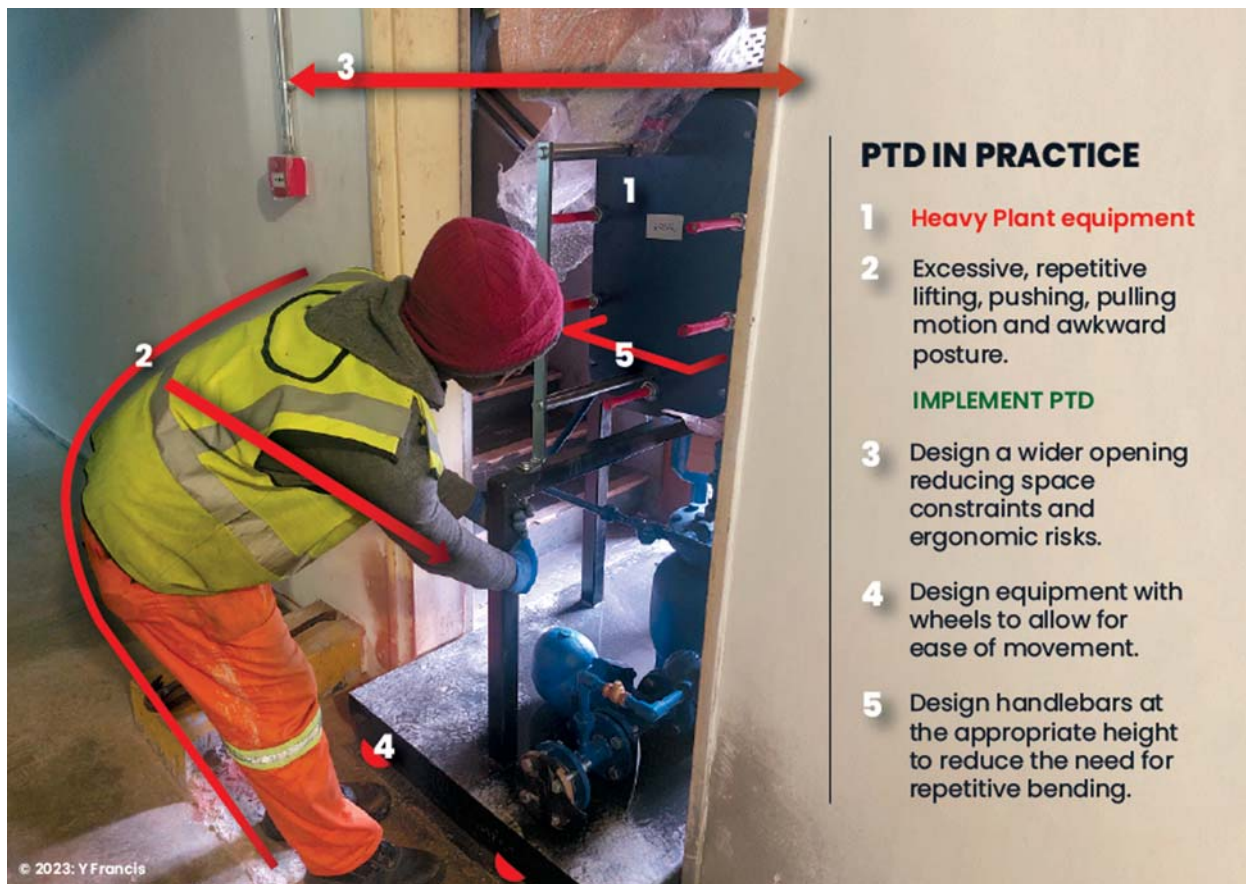
Limited (PtD) Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training is not made available to designers and (CHS) professionals to enhance their knowledge and further prompt practical implementation within the industry.

Even though the Construction Regulation 2014 requires that designers consider H&S as part of the design process, there is a lack of industry guides or frameworks that govern the (PtD) process outlining how designers should go about designing out hazards e.g., a practical guide outlining the design approach for college workshops and the design considerations relative to H&S.

DESIGNER ATTITUDES, VALUES, BELIEFS, AND OPINIONS

Designer attitudes play a significant role in the successful implementation of the concept. Designers are genuinely surprised when prompted by the (CHS) professional to consider H&S as part of the design process. The usual responses received are "I have never been requested to take H&S into





PTD IN PRACTICE

- 1 Heavy Plant equipment**
- 2 Excessive, repetitive lifting, pushing, pulling motion and awkward posture.**
- IMPLEMENT PTD**
- 3 Design a wider opening reducing space constraints and ergonomic risks.**
- 4 Design equipment with wheels to allow for ease of movement.**
- 5 Design handlebars at the appropriate height to reduce the need for repetitive bending.**

consideration. Is that not the duty of the H&S professional?" Or "why should H&S evaluate my design concept?"

Designers are generally of the opinion that they comply with 'safety requirements' in terms of the SANS 10400 building standard; however, the standard primarily emphasises the safety of the occupants (end-user), i.e., fire and emergency evacuation provisions, as opposed to workers safety during construction, operations, and maintenance.

There needs to be more understanding that the concept of (PtD), as well as the duties of designers' regulation, extends beyond the general building requirements and should prioritise the safety of workers.

SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE IMPLEMENTATION AND AWARENESS OF THE CONCEPT

Early appointment of the professional construction health and safety agent (Pr. CHSA) to educate designers and coordinate OHS design risk management, which includes issuing designers with the H&S designer specification promoting the (PtD) process throughout the project lifecycle.

Include specialist contractors in the OHS design risk management process (HVAC, fire, roofing). Specialist contractors can provide pertinent input in the construction process due to an in-depth understanding of the practicalities of the installation itself. They may highlight potential H&S constraints and risks introduced by the design, by providing input into the design process, thereby reducing the need for redesign, modifications and retrofitting of equipment and improving worker safety.

Monitoring and enforcement by regulatory authorities (DEL) should extend inspection beyond workplaces and contractors

and focus on clients' compliance, including investors and funders, to ensure compliance with H&S at project inception stage.

Clients should be held accountable for OHS performance similar to that of the contractor, placing further importance on H&S. Designer professional bodies and councils are to incorporate standard guidelines into existing material, competency requirements, and the development of CPD training aimed at (PtD).

CONCLUSION

To overcome the current barriers relative to the implementation of (PtD) within the construction industry, industry stakeholders within the built environment should foster a collaborative and participatory design risk management process and environment (Designer, CHSA, and Contractors), highlighting the crucial role that professional bodies play in the advancement of (PtD) through education, training, and implementation within the construction industry. (PtD) in practice has the potential to reduce fatal incidents if leveraged accordingly.

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Navigating Avian Flu Outbreaks:

Safeguarding poultry, safety officers, and the public



Herman (Harry) Fourie, Vice Chairman of the Safety First Association has a passion for occupational health and safety and has been working in the industry for many years. He has several diplomas and certificates and continues his studies through different organisations. Herman is a part time consultant creating software systems.

In recent months, South Africa has witnessed a significant outbreak of avian influenza, commonly known as bird flu. This outbreak has led to the culling of millions of birds and the destruction of countless egg.

In response to this crisis, African OSH Magazine has compiled essential information and recommendations to assist Safety Officers and the general public in understanding bird flu and implementing effective preventive measures.

Bird flu, also known as avian influenza, is a contagious viral infection that primarily affects birds, especially poultry. Bird Flu may occasionally infect humans and other animals.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment and preventive measures are critical for managing the risk of bird flu (avian influenza) outbreaks at chicken farms. Here is a general guideline on how to conduct a risk assessment and the preventative measures:

1. Location and Farm Environment:

- Assess the farm's proximity to wild bird habitats, wetlands, and other potential sources of the virus.
- Consider the farm's biosecurity, including physical barriers like fences, to prevent contact with wild birds.

2. Poultry Housing and Management:

- Evaluate the design and cleanliness of poultry housing, including ventilation and temperature control.
- Review flock management practices, including stocking density and hygiene protocols.

3. Poultry Species and Origin:

- Consider the species of poultry raised on the farm.
- Assess the source of poultry (hatcheries, other farms) and their health status.

4. Human Traffic and Visitors:

- Assess the frequency of human traffic on the farm, including farm workers, visitors, and deliveries.
- Implement strict visitor protocols, including visitor logs and designated entry points.

5. Biosecurity Measures:

- Evaluate existing biosecurity measures, such as access control, disinfection stations, and personal protective equipment (PPE) usage.
- Ensure that employees and visitors follow biosecurity protocols.

6. Disease History:

- Review the farm's history of avian influenza outbreaks and any past control measures implemented.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

1. Biosecurity:

- Enhance biosecurity measures, including perimeter fencing, controlled access, and foot baths.
- Implement a "clean and dirty" zone system to prevent contamination.
- Train farm workers and visitors on biosecurity protocols.

2. Poultry Health Monitoring:

- Establish a regular health monitoring program for poultry, including routine testing for avian influenza.
- Isolate and report any sick or dead birds immediately.

3. Wild Bird Control:

- Minimise contact between poultry and wild birds through netting, scare tactics, or other deterrents.
- Ensure feed and water sources are not accessible to wild birds.

4. Poultry Vaccination:

- Consult with veterinarians about the suitability of avian influenza vaccines for your specific poultry species and region.

5. Record Keeping:

- Maintain detailed records of bird health, vaccinations, and farm visitors.
- Use electronic records to facilitate contact tracing in case of an outbreak.

6. Emergency Preparedness:

- Develop an outbreak response plan that includes culling, disinfection, and quarantine procedures.
- Ensure you have access to personal protective equipment and disinfectants.

7. Communication and Reporting:

- Establish clear communication channels with local veterinary authorities.
- Report any unusual poultry deaths or signs of illness promptly.

8. Education and Training:

- Educate farm workers, contractors, and visitors about avian influenza risks and prevention.
- Provide training on proper PPE usage and disposal.

9. Contingency Plans:

- Have contingency plans for poultry culling, disposal, and compensation in case of an outbreak.

10. Collaboration:

- Collaborate with local and national veterinary authorities and neighbouring farms to monitor and control the spread of avian influenza.

Regularly reviewing and updating your risk assessment and preventive measures is essential, as the risk landscape can change over time.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

PPE for avian flu is essential particularly for those working in high-risk settings such as poultry farms, laboratories.

1. Disposable Gloves:

- Latex or nitrile gloves should be worn to prevent contact with infected materials, including contaminated surfaces, bird faeces, and bodily fluids.
- Gloves should be worn when handling sick or dead birds, cleaning contaminated areas, or performing any tasks that involve potential exposure to avian influenza virus.

2. Protective Clothing:

- Disposable coveralls or full-body suits should be worn to cover all exposed skin, including arms and legs.
- The clothing should be impermeable to liquids and easy to decontaminate.

3. Respiratory Protection:

- N95 or FFP2/FFP3 Respirators: These masks provide a level of respiratory protection against airborne particles, including viruses. They should be used when working in areas with a risk of airborne transmission.
- Powered Air-Purifying Respirators (PAPRs): These should be used in high-risk settings, PAPRs with a hood or helmet and a filtered air supply may offer better protection.

4. Eye Protection:

- Safety goggles or a face shield should be worn to protect the eyes from splashes or airborne particles.

5. Head Cover:

- Disposable hoods or head covers should be used to protect the head and hair.

6. Footwear and Boot Covers:

- Disposable boot covers or dedicated work boots should be worn to prevent contamination of footwear.

7. Double Gloving:

- In high-risk situations, double gloving may be recommended to provide an extra layer of protection.

8. Apron or Disposable Gowns:

- Disposable aprons or gowns, may be required.

9. Proper Donning and Doffing Procedures:

- Training on how to properly don and doff PPE.

10. Hand Hygiene:

- Proper hand hygiene, including hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitiser before and after donning and doffing PPE.

It's essential to follow recommended PPE guidelines and receive training. PPE should be properly disposed of and decontaminated according to established protocols.

MONITORING PROGRESS

1. Establish Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- Identify specific KPIs related to avian flu prevention and control. These can include the number of bird health checks, the frequency of cleaning and disinfection, compliance with biosecurity measures, and the response time to report sick birds or unusual poultry deaths.

2. Regular Inspections and Audits:

- Conduct regular inspections to assess compliance, ensuring that the inspections are thorough and cover all aspects.

3. Record Keeping:

- Maintain detailed records which should include information about bird health, vaccinations, cleaning and disinfection schedules, and any incidents or outbreaks.

4. Training and Education:

- Monitor the effectiveness of training programmes for farm workers, contractors, and visitors.
- Assess whether individuals understand and consistently follow biosecurity protocols and PPE usage guidelines.

5. Health Surveillance:

- Implement a system for monitoring and regularly testing sample birds for avian influenza or other diseases.

6. Biosecurity Checks:

- Continuously evaluate and improve biosecurity measures.
- Check that barrier, access controls, and hygiene stations are functioning correctly.

7. Response Time:

- Measure response times to report and address any signs of avian influenza, sick birds or unusual poultry deaths.
- Assess the effectiveness of emergency response plans.

8. Communication and Reporting:

- Monitor the communication and reporting channels between the farm, local veterinary authorities, and neighbouring farms.
- Ensure incidents or outbreaks are reported promptly and accurately.

9. Data Analysis:

- Analyse the collected data to identify trends, areas of improvement, or potential weaknesses.
- Use data analysis to make informed decisions about adjustments or enhancements to the controls in place.

10. Feedback and Continuous Improvement:

- Encourage feedback from farm workers and stakeholders using this to improve practices and procedures.

11. Collaboration:

- Collaborate with local veterinary authorities, government agencies, and neighbouring farms to share information.
- Monitor regional disease trends and adapt control measures.

12. External Audits and Reviews:

- Periodically engage external experts or auditors to review the farm's avian flu prevention and control programme.

13. Document Results and Findings:

- Document the results of your monitoring efforts, including any findings, deviations from established controls, and corrective actions taken.

The avian influenza outbreak in South Africa has underscored the importance of preparedness and vigilance in the face of health and economic threats.

Safety officers, poultry farms, and the public all have roles to play in managing the crisis effectively.

Dangers for seamen consuming alcohol at sea



Rob van Hemert was associated with the magazine from the early 70s to 2017, regularly contributing articles on industrial and process safety and risk, including many varied and occasionally life threatening personal experiences during his various careers. He retired from all work in 2015 and enjoys a daily walk on Jeffrey's Bay's beaches with his dogs.

In the last publication this subject was given prominence and certainly stirred some memories in me. At age 18 I went to sea with Shell Tankers NV, the Dutch side of this company. Before we even sailed out of Rotterdam on my first trip I had an inkling of alcohol usage by seamen. I joined two other crewmen for a night out. I liked a beer but those two blokes knocked back the drinks like the world was going to end. When we had to get back they could barely walk and we had no money left for taxi fare so I decided to use a bicycle, of which there were hundreds just propped up against walls in the streets. One guy on the crossbar and one on the back and we were off. There are no hills in Rotterdam but there are places where the road rises to a bridge over a waterway. On the other side will be a downhill. We were going well and fast down such a slope when I noticed that there was another bridge that had opened in front of us. Applying the brakes had no effect so I directed the bike to a tree, which we luckily hit just before entering the canal. No-one was hurt but the bike was moer toe. My introduction to sailors and their alcohol usage!

At sea we were each given two 350ml bottles of beer every night. Some of my colleagues, though, would hoard their beers and drink the whole lot on one night.

At most of the ports we visited we would be there for only a short time, and those who could would be off and running for a bar. On return they may have been on duty for the following four hours at least. The seamen would be required to handle ropes and winches in sometimes difficult conditions (rain and wind and darkish) and dangerous situations, where the bight of a rope on deck would suddenly straighten out as the rope was pulled by a tug. If you were standing in such a bight you could lose a leg. This actually happened on another ship many years later. Being sober when on duty was therefore an imperative. However, no-one ever checked on this! Orders would be shouted, whistles blown and bleary eyed men would actually perform their jobs safely and competently.

EXXON VALDEZ

One of the infamous ship disasters was the Exxon Valdez where the drunk captain gave orders that caused the tanker, full of crude oil from the North Shore Alaska, to strike a rock and spill its cargo creating a huge and lasting environmental disaster. I'm pretty certain that if there was no alcohol policy in place for seamen by then, that disaster would have prompted one being put in place.

LNG SHIP LOADING FACILITY

In the early '80s I was resident in Singapore, back with Shell, and at the time being used as a regional

safety coordinator, visiting several of Shell's facilities in the region and making safety observations. One of these visits was to gauge the safety of an LNG ship loading facility in Brunei. They were sending out one tanker of LNG to Japan every two days from this plant. I was taken about 10 miles offshore to board the tanker on its way to the loading gantry and got onto the bridge at about 8am to meet the captain and the significant rest of the crew. On shaking hands with the captain I noticed a distinct smell of alcohol on his breath. I put that to the back of my mind as he would not be the main actor in this operation – the first officer was tasked with positioning his ship and connecting with the gantry. We had lunch – the captain and I at one table. A bottle of wine was produced and I gladly accepted one glass but refused any refills. The captain had the rest! Now, he was in charge of the ship, although it was now moored between four buoys and fastened to a huge gantry crane. Still, it rankled and I did mention it in my report, but kept it low key.

MOSSEL BAY DISASTER OPERATION

Fast forward 10 years and I was tasked with surveying another shipboard operation, this time in Mossel Bay, SA. Shell delivered fuel to it installation there by chartered tanker. It would be spread moored between four buoys and pick up a hose from the sea floor to pump fuel to shore. The operation was a disaster with the female 3rd officer on the stern making a huge mistake that caused a rope to snap and wrap itself around a stanchion on deck. Luckily everyone on deck, including me, had hit the deck by then. OK, that had (hopefully) nothing to do with alcohol. When all was secured and the oil being pumped ashore the captain invited all the officers and I to have a drink. These drinks flowed copiously and I noticed that the female 3rd was no stranger to alcohol. At the time I did not consider that there may have an influence of alcohol on her lack of judgement in causing the mishap, but now I'm not so sure. The officers, at least, were quite okay with drinking on the job.

Most people like a drop of alcohol when relaxing and it is a social thing to do. Expecting normal people to go teatotal for weeks at a time may be a bit harsh. When prohibition was stupidly introduced to the USA in the '20s or '30s it created a huge industry to supply alcohol illegally. That led to over consumption when you could get it. The same could be true for sailors. Allowing them to have a beer or two after their day's duty may be better than a total ban. However, that would also need quite tight controls put in place to ensure it was not abused.

A bit of a tough one!

Is your bedroom safe?



Christian Fournier has worked in the safety profession for more than 16 years and is currently an Occupational Health & Safety Coordinator for the province of New Brunswick (Dept. of Education), Canada. He holds two OH&S certifications and serves on the board of HSPC, Health and Safety Professionals Canada

Bedrooms! What can be so dangerous about bedrooms? You might be surprised to know that bedrooms are indeed a common area for injuries among children.

The purpose of this article is not to tell you a horror story but simply to explain some of the possible consequences of safety hazards which could occur.

Following are some recommendations to consider in reducing the risk of injury and keeping your family safe in the bedroom.

FLOORS

Floors can be an injury risk for adults as well as children, for example, when there are toys or other objects like clothing lying on them, especially if we are distracted when walking while focused on smart phones, playing a game on our tablets or texting.

And don't forget about our four-legged furry family members who also love lying on the floor.

We would risk walking into objects, hitting our toes and/or knees, tripping and falling onto the floor or against a dresser, a desk or even a bed post.

Keeping an eye on the condition of the floor/carpet is also crucial in preventing trip and falls.

The types of injuries that could occur range from a bruised ego to a bruise, a fracture, a concussion, or worse.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

In today's world, we can't live without electricity. Our society continues to look to electricity as their main source of energy.

Electrical outlets are the waypoint where we obtain that source of energy (electricity) for our appliances, televisions, computers, lamps, charging devices and so on.

Unfortunately electricity can also be very dangerous if not used properly.

Consider this, if an electrical cord is not fully plugged in you run the risk of receiving an electrical shock, or worse. You risk starting a fire in the bedroom.

It isn't hard to imagine what could happen if a fire starts in the middle of the night because a piece of material/paper falls on an electrical plug which isn't correctly plugged into the outlet.

STEPS IN FRONT OF WINDOWS

As a parent, you want to give certain tools to your children to make them more independent. For example, this may be a step stool so that they can reach a drawer to choose their own clothes.

However, this tool can be hazardous if it is placed in a location where children might come up with an unsafe idea such as climbing the steps to an opened window.

Again, it isn't hard to imagine what could happen to your child especially if their bedroom is located on a second floor of your house. But this would be even worse if you live on the 9th floor of an apartment building.

It is definitely recommended to avoid placing step stools in front of windows.

CURTAINS ON TOP OF HEATERS

Curtains as an accessory can add to a window's appearance and brighten up a bedroom in addition to keeping the sunlight out when desired. But, they can also be a safety hazard if they cover a heater. This type of safety hazard can easily turn into a fire risk.

The consequences of a curtain catching fire, is far easier to envision than the consequences of an unsafe electrical outlet, especially with children sleeping at night.

Make certain that the curtains are the proper length to avoid contact with a heater.

CHILDREN JUMPING ON BEDS

Young children enjoy having fun like jumping on beds. Even with all that fun, there are serious risks of injury.

They can lose their balance or footing, causing them to fall onto the floor, striking parts of their body against a dresser, bed post, desk or chair.

The risk of injury increases if there are more than one child jumping on the same bed. It is not uncommon for two or more children to inadvertently strike each other while jumping in the air.

The resulting types of injuries can range from a bruised ego to a more serious injury such as a bruise, a fracture, a concussion, a skull fracture, etc.

SAFETY IN THE BEDROOM

I have recently written my second children's book focusing on safety in the bedroom "Safety Dog and the Adventures of Emma & Ethan: Safety Heroes in the Bedroom." It is published through Amazon and is available in English, French and Spanish.

<https://www.christianfournier.org>



Summer foot and nail care



By Greg Robinson

<https://www.fixmyfeet.co.za>

Red, pink, blue ... any colour will do so long as toe nails that peep out of open toe shoes or flipflops are painted.

While for many women, this may be the norm during hot summer days, it is not necessarily a healthy practice. And those who on the Monday have to discard their summer shoes for safety footwear, need to be aware of the associated hazards, as well as the importance of feet care and feet health.

Colouring nails and nail care:

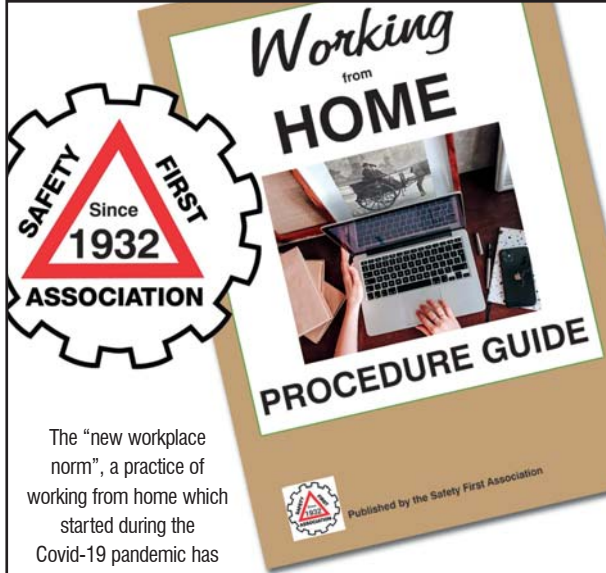
- Nail polish, gel nails, and acrylic nails should be applied in moderation and for the sake of your nail health, only for 'special' occasions.
- The nail product should be cleaned off frequently so the nails can 'get air' and exposure to natural light.
- Between pedicures, or removing your nails polish, examine your nails for discolouration as this may be the start of a nail fungus, or nail dehydration.
- Nails must be cut straight. Avoid trimming the corners so as not to get ingrown nails.

Daily feet care

- Apply foot cream / moisturiser / lotion daily to your feet to avoid dry feet and cracked heels.
- Avoid moisturising between toes. Moisture that accumulates can lead to skin fungal or bacterial infections.
- Dry properly between toes after bathing to avoid moisture accumulation, which can lead to skin fungal infection.

Shoe wear during summer

- The use of flip flops is only encouraged in communal areas i.e., gym change rooms/ gym swimming pools, so as to avoid skin and nail infections.
- Avoid going barefoot. Moist environments are signs of infection.
- Be careful when walking barefoot on the beach, mostly if you are diabetic. Sharp objects can be hidden in the sand. And the sand may be deceptively hot. Use beach shoes / sandals / flip flops.
- Your feet, your toes need sunscreen as well. Skin cancers are more common on the skin which is exposed to the sun. When sunbathing, don't forget to apply sunscreen on the soles of your feet too!
- Wear breathable footwear to avoid excessive foot sweating. It is advisable to wear cotton socks with closed shoes.
- Wearing shoes with no socks is a breeding ground for fungal and bacteria to accumulate, as feet naturally perspire, and the moisture will accumulate in the material of your shoes.
- In summer, feet tend to swell due to the rise in temperature. Rest your feet daily, cold showers may help to decrease the swelling.

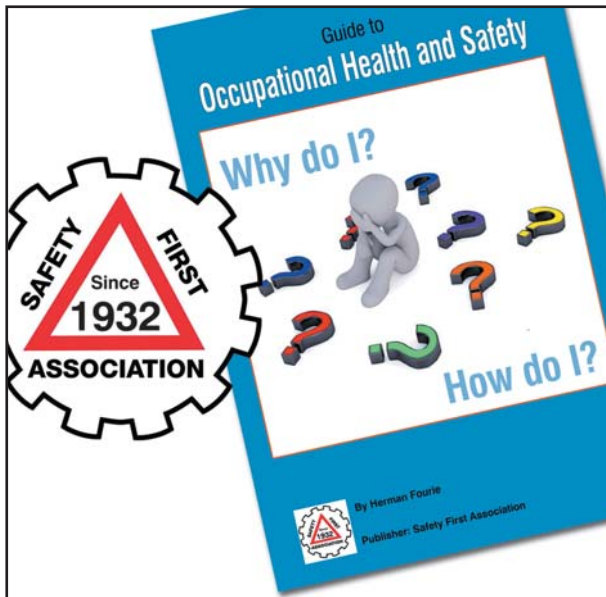


The "new workplace norm", a practice of working from home which started during the Covid-19 pandemic has continued.

The employer is required to provide, maintain and ensure a safe and healthy workplace for all his/her employees at the company premises and this extends to work at essentially a remote employee "workplace" venue where required.

This guide details all health and safety requirements that need to be applied to both the company employee working from home and the responsibility of the employer.

To order a copy email: orders@safety1st.co.za



Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) is the practice of ensuring the safety and well-being of workers in their workplace.

Employers and employees need to understand the Dos and Don'ts of OHS to maintain a safe and healthy working environment.

This guide discusses some of the key Dos and Don'ts of OHS.

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