

Planning is key to the successful implementation of a health and safety (H&S) policy. Effective planning should deliver a health and safety management system that identifies and controls hazards and risks, reacts to changing demands and encourages a positive H&S culture.



The plan should co-ordinate the actions of an organisation's members. The plan should cover all business aspects including managing and coordinating purchasing, recruitment, contractor selection, design, maintenance, general operations, storage, transport, waste, product and packaging. Planning should be a systematic approach that answers where are we now, where do we want to be and how do we get there? The planning process should cover three areas; accurate information about the current situation, suitable benchmarks for comparisons to be made against and competent people to carry out the process. The outputs of the planning process should include:

- A plan with timescales and objectives for developing, maintaining and improving H&S management
- Detailed specifications for management arrangements, working procedures and risk controls
- Performance standards which identify the contribution of specific individuals.

The requirement for a plan to ensure the health and safety of workers is made specific in the construction sector. Not only is the Principal Contractor required to develop a health and safety plan for the project but they should also consult contractors on the plan, give them access to parts of the plan relevant to them and allow contractors to plan for the work they are required to do.

## Best practice standards

The following points will help a business with the health and safety planning process:

✓	Planning should involve people from all areas and levels of a business and can help improve safety culture.
✓	Plans should be co-ordinated to give consistent implementation of policy, avoidance of error and duplication.
✓	Organisations need to assess their legal compliance. The basic objective should be legal compliance.
✓	Using risk assessments is good for prioritising and deciding the best path forward.
✓	A plan should have timescales and priorities, the first priority being able to achieve legal compliance.
✓	Plans should be recorded and shared with the workforce so employees know what to work towards.
✓	Ensure the plan targets resources proportionately according to the risk profile of the business.
✓	A large organisation may have different plans which need to be aligned to give a coherent approach.
✓	Plans, objectives, action points and associated key performance indicators should be SMART i.e. Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timescaled.
✓	Knowing who should do what, when and with what result, helps measure progress against the plan.
✓	Displaying health and safety plans on a wall chart for all operatives to see assists in communication.
✓	Using photographs and sketches in a construction health and safety plan can simplify explanations.
✓	Splitting a construction H&S plan into sections makes it more available to designers and contractors.
✓	Monitoring the implementation of a plan may highlight necessary changes; these should be communicated to relevant persons.



## Legal requirements

Regulation 23 of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 requires a principal contractor to prepare a construction phase health and safety plan before work starts. Throughout the project the plan must be updated, reviewed, revised and refined to ensure construction work can be carried out as far as is reasonably practicable without risk to health and safety of persons who carry out the work or may be affected by the work. The Approved Code of Practice to the above Regulations requires the plan to be written and tailored to the particular project. It suggests the plan should be clear, focused and easy for contractors to understand and emphasise key points without giving large amounts of detailed generic risk assessments. Monitoring arrangements to ensure the plan is being followed should be agreed with the project client.

## Guidance and useful information

- Want Construction Work Done Safely? INDG411 HSE 2007
- A Guide to Measuring Health and Safety Performance HSE 2001
- Managing Health and Safety, 5 Steps to Success HSE INDG275 2008
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007
- Managing Health and Safety in Construction L144 HSE 2007
- Successful Health and Safety Management HSG65 HSE 1997

## Further information

For more information please visit: [www.QBEurope.com/rs](http://www.QBEurope.com/rs)  
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