

## Further reading

- 1 *Responsible care management systems* (Fourth edition) Chemical Industries Association 2003. Order online at [www.cia.org.uk](http://www.cia.org.uk)
- 2 BS 8800: 2004 *Occupational health and safety management systems. Guide* British Standards Institution.
- 3 *Major Incident Investigation Report: BP Grangemouth, Scotland 29th May-10th June 2000*. View online at: [www.hse.gov.uk/comah/bpgrange/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/comah/bpgrange/index.htm)
- 4 *Guidance on safety performance indicators* OECD. View online at: [www2.oecd.org/safetyindicators/](http://www2.oecd.org/safetyindicators/)
- 5 *Leading health and safety at work: Leadership actions for directors and board members* Leaflet INDG417 HSE Books 2007 (single copy free or priced packs of 5 ISBN 978 0 7176 6267 8) [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg417.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg417.pdf)

## Further information

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**This leaflet contains notes on good practice which are not compulsory but which you may find helpful in considering what you need to do.**

This leaflet is available in priced packs of 15 from HSE Books, ISBN 978 0 7176 2905 3. Single copies are free and a web version can be found at: [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg277.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg277.pdf).

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Health and Safety  
Executive

# Leadership for the major hazard industries

Effective health and safety management



Demonstrated senior management commitment and involvement are vital for successful health and safety performance.

This booklet has been produced for senior managers to help them achieve the continuous improvement in health and safety which should be a key objective of every organisation.

## Introduction

This booklet was originally designed for the offshore industry, but it has been revised by the Hazardous Installations Directorate of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to help industry leaders further improve the health and safety performance of all major hazard industries, both on and offshore.

In the booklet we refer to 'senior managers'. By this we mean executive directors and other managers reporting to board members whose position and responsibilities have the potential for significant impact on the health and safety performance of a business.

The booklet is divided into four sections:

Health and safety culture  
Systems

Leading by example  
Workforce

Each section consists of brief key points, followed by a more detailed explanation. These issues have been selected as being some of the more important means of ensuring effective leadership but are by no means exhaustive.

The booklet aims to:

- refresh your knowledge of effective health and safety leadership;
- encourage you to reflect on your current approach; and
- challenge you to continuously improve health and safety performance in your company.

# Health and safety culture

Achieving a positive health and safety culture in our organisation is fundamental to managing health and safety effectively. I know and understand what influences the health and safety culture of our organisation.

## Key points

1 I will develop a personal understanding of the influence different levels of management have on the organisational climate of an organisation.

2 I will make sure that all managers are committed to promoting health and safety.

3 I will develop an open and honest organisation, which is as receptive to bad news as it is to good news.

4 I know that improving 'worker health and safety motivation' is fundamental to improving safety. I must ensure this phrase is understood and we all take action to ensure it happens. I must convince key groups such as supervisors of their importance to our safety culture.

5 Corporate social responsibility principles tell me that it makes sound business sense to manage all business risks effectively. Health and safety is not an optional extra.

# Health and safety culture

1 I recognise that the attitudes and decisions of senior managers are critical in setting the priorities of the organisation. My attitudes and those of my senior managers will impact on the styles of behaviour and priorities of those below us in the organisational hierarchy. If I think it is necessary I will organise training for myself or any of my managers so that we all understand this.

2 A manager's role is not simply restricted to directing work and monitoring compliance with rules and regulations. Managers must act as leaders and facilitators: they must encourage suggestions, motivate their staff and engage with the workforce to solve health and safety problems.

3 We must, at senior management level, want to hear what is really happening, not what our managers think we want to hear. We should know where there are problems and where things could go wrong. Our staff must feel able to tell us this. When they do, we must work with them to find a solution.

4 I want my staff to work safely and comply with the rules, but I also want them to show initiative and be proactive in improving health and safety. Employees play an important part in shaping the safety culture of the organisation. To do this I must engage with them and encourage joint involvement of supervisors with employees in safety activities, wherever possible.

5 I make sure that health and safety is not viewed as a separate function, but as an integral part of productivity, competitiveness and profitability and that our health and safety risks are recognised as part of our business risks.

# Leading by example

I know that what my senior managers and I do influences the health and safety culture of my organisation. I show health and safety is an important issue for me and everything that I do reinforces this. I lead by example.

## Key points

6 I mention health and safety whenever I can and to a wide range of audiences.

7 I discuss health and safety early in the agenda of every management meeting and I want to hear the bad news as well as the good news.

8 Health and safety is a significant element of performance reviews. Employees are encouraged to be proactively involved in health and safety. I ensure adequate resources are provided to enable staff to achieve their objectives.

9 Our performance measures show how well we are controlling our major hazards.

10 I set longer-term health and safety goals and show a commitment to continuous improvement.

11 I am visible and spend time with the workforce and show them that health and safety is a core value – as important as all other business values.

12 I discuss health and safety issues with my own managers, but also with clients, contractors and sub-contractors.

13 I hold line management and staff accountable for health and safety and I do not tolerate blame. I foster a 'just culture' and I do not tolerate poor health and safety attitudes or performance.

# Leading by example

Does what I do show everyone in the company that health and safety is important to me?

6 Whenever I discuss health and safety I make it clear that an exemplary health and safety performance is our aim and that we value the health and well-being of our workers, contractors, visitors and members of the public.

7 Health and safety is on the agenda of any board or management meeting and the company routinely reports our health and safety performance as part of our commitment to corporate social responsibility. I expect health and safety to be on the agenda of management meetings at all levels in the company.

8 Health and safety performance is an important element of performance reviews. Managers are accountable for the health and safety performance of their departments. They have specific and reasonable responsibilities. I ensure my managers know we have adequate resources to carry out our work in a healthy and safe manner and that I do not tolerate 'corner cutting' on health and safety standards. I make sure they know that the health and safety policy, the major accident prevention policy or the company safety cases or reports are not just token documents but that I expect them to be implemented.

9 I know we are able to measure our health and safety performance through useful and meaningful indicators. These measures compare our performance both internally over time, and also externally against others working with similar hazards.

10 I set long-term goals for the control of major hazards and health and safety as I do for financial and production goals and have a plan

to meet these. Every opportunity for learning is taken and used in our drive for continuous improvement.

11 I meet the workforce regularly and discuss health and safety with them. I encourage staff to raise health and safety concerns and issues. I ensure a specific and timely response to each suggestion made. I know that individuals who raise issues or make suggestions are provided with positive feedback on their contribution and are informed personally of the actions taken as a result of their input.

12 I am confident that contracts are awarded to companies who can demonstrate a good health and safety performance and who have a good understanding of the hazards they will encounter while working for us. I meet regularly with the managers of our contractors to review their health and safety performance against our clearly defined expectations and to consider how their activities can impact on our health and safety performance.

13 All incidents and near misses are investigated fully to identify the underlying causes and follow up on the agreed action. While I acknowledge that people make mistakes, I do not accept accident investigation reports that identify 'human error' as the sole cause of an accident.



# Systems

For our systems to support our objective of first-class management of health and safety I must ensure that:

## Key points

14 I understand the hazard profile of the organisation and there are systems in place that take account of human factors as well as technical issues to ensure the risks are adequately controlled.

15 There is a system in place for developing and maintaining appropriate levels of management and employee competence.

16 Reliable performance indicators are in place and they reflect the hazards to which our staff are exposed.

17 Our accident/incident/near-miss investigation procedure is designed to discover the root causes and ensures corrective action is taken to prevent them happening again.

18 I encourage all staff to look for and discuss health and safety issues, good and bad.

19 Our systems ensure integrity of design and construction.

20 Our systems ensure the integrity of the existing plant and its operation and maintenance.

21 Control of organisational and technical change is robust.

22 Annual reviews are comprehensive and not just tracking.

# Systems

14 I demonstrate that I understand where in our activities major accidents and incidents can occur and that suitable engineering/technical and human controls are in place. This is not at the expense of conventional health and safety issues, but I understand that the control of major hazards is a priority.

15 I am confident my staff are competent to carry out the tasks they are required to perform. Our competence management system identifies safety critical roles and tasks and these are routinely reviewed.

16 I know we have developed key performance indicators for major hazards and that process safety performance is monitored and reported against these parameters.

17 Our accident/incident investigation procedure ensures we consider all issues, including human factors. It ensures immediate, as well as underlying management-related, causes are identified, without attributing blame, and that corrective action is taken to prevent the incident happening again.

18 I will make sure that arrangements are in place to facilitate communication and enable people to discuss health and safety. I know my managers encourage the staff to be involved in making health and safety decisions wherever possible. Anyone can, when they perceive the need, intervene in the work process to prevent hazardous working and suggest safer methods. They are fully supported by me, their supervisors and line managers in this approach.

19 I know that the technical integrity of my plant and equipment rests on good initial design, feedback from operations, thorough

hazard studies, competent risk assessment and high standards of construction. I have systems that deal with all these issues.

20 I know that the technical integrity of my existing plant and equipment rests on good maintenance plans and in carrying out maintenance to the highest standards. My systems reassure me that all these issues are under control and they are independently audited.

21 I know that many incidents result from poor control of organisational and technical change. I am confident the systems on which I rely are up to date and subject to monitoring and review.

22 Our systems give me a comprehensive review of the company's performance, based on all sources of information including accidents, high potential incidents, verification of results and monitoring of the important performance standards.



# Workforce

I recognise the importance of my employees and I want to ensure their health and well-being at work. Employee participation is a 'must have' not a 'nice to have'.

## Key points

23 My aim is an involved and consulted workforce.

24 I will ensure the company employs a variety of joint working arrangements to ensure involvement and consultation. I fully support and encourage safety representatives.

25 I will ensure everyone understands our goal is always continuous improvement.

# Workforce

23 I understand that successful businesses increasingly encourage active participation of the workforce in the management of health and safety. I will ensure that I am tapping the knowledge of how to do things better, more simply and more safely, that resides in the large number of people who work for us. This includes our contract force and workforce representatives.

24 I know that involving staff in the process of identifying and managing risks is a key aspect of managing health and safety successfully. I know that there are a number of ways of involving my employees in improving our management of health and safety, for example (but not exclusively) using safety representatives (unionised or non-unionised), safety committees and work councils. I will use the most appropriate methods for this organisation.

25 I review our progress against agreed objectives at regular intervals and set performance measures. As a result of this review I clarify opportunities for improvement and develop an improvement plan.