

Insight aims to provide useful information, links and tips in the areas of Risk Management, Work Health and Safety, Business Continuity Management, and other areas relating to management systems and corporate governance.

Can we keep it simple?

Like most families, our fridge is the focal point of keeping us organised. Its door contains a calendar, emergency numbers, the shopping list and the 'To-do' list.

In very basic terms it is a 'management system' - it is something that tells us what needs to be done, by whom & by when, and can be used by an 8 year old.

It is underpinned by an informal process - if you need to be somewhere it goes on the calendar and if you finish the milk you write it on the shopping list.

Workplaces, however, are more complex - the risks and the consequences are more significant than running out of milk and there is a need to have a documented system in place to:

- a. ensure that everyone knows what the processes are, and
- b. to encourage operational efficiency (making sure that a key step is not forgotten) & to reflect legislative compliance (or 'good or best practice') as well as retain the organisation knowledge, and
- c. when related to Safety, prevent injury and harm to people.

But why have we over-complicated basic simple processes and let our management systems snowball into unmanageable beasts with hundreds of pages?

Organisations, nation-wide have these beast-like management systems in place. Some may be the result of the organisation's self-imposed document management rules and formats, while others are laden with 'cut & paste' from Codes of practice. It should be acknowledged that some are sharply written and maintained, but others are dusty and written in **Times New Roman** font that says to any auditor 'look at me, I'm old'. They have pages upon pages of detail and some of it is only read by auditors when they come through every couple of years.



So how do we look these beast-like systems in the eyes and trim them down to a more manageable size?

Developing (or re-developing) a management system needs to start with some research, by observing work being undertaken, and talking to the workforce to gain an understanding of what they think of the procedures. Ask them for their insights as to whether they think the procedures add value for either themselves or for new starters.

The outcomes of this research will shape where and how the Management system may be able to be trimmed, but the secret to making this work is the initial and ongoing consultation.

In most cases, procedures need to address the 'what' and 'how' as opposed to over-emphasising the 'why.' When you tell people, in a succinct manner, what to do and how to do it, there is a good chance they will do it.

QRMC's consultants have reviewed hundreds of management systems and we have a good idea of what type of system may be better suited to a specific work environment. We are happy to run an objective eye over your system and provide our professional thoughts to consider, along with the consultation and feedback from the workforce, as part of a Management System review process.

Please [contact QRMC](#) for more information.

How Do you Keep Up To Date With WHS Regulatory Changes?

Whether your organisation is aiming to have its Safety Management System comply with ISO 45001 OHS Management Systems Standard, the Self-Insurance National Assessment Tool (NAT), or simply to be compliant with the applicable state Work Health and Safety Act (WHS), one of the core requirements is to keep up to date with knowledge of WHS matters. "WHS matters" is a very broad term but certainly includes being kept up to date with WHS legislative and regulatory developments, changes and updates.

What is Required?

- ISO 45001 for example, requires organisations to have access to up-to-date legal requirements that are applicable to its OHS hazards and risks, and to consider these when establishing, implementing and maintaining its OHS management System.
- The NAT has several references relating to legislative and regulatory requirements with the aim of ensuring compliance with current legal, technical and industry standards, and Codes of Practice to identify whether alterations are needed to current work methods.
- The WHS Act in Queensland places a duty on Officers to ensure there are appropriate processes for receiving and considering information regarding hazards and risks, as well as mandating compliance to applicable Codes of Practice for managing the hazards and risks arising from the organisation's work activities.

What To Do?

Larger organisations tend to utilise their in-house legal team or have a relationship with an external legal firm to provide them with regular legislative updates. Alternately, there are many online services that provide daily and weekly communications of regulatory changes, industry updates and WHS news such as recent prosecutions and events. Having a

subscription with one of these services and receiving this up-to-date information however, is only part of the story. It is how this information is used is where the rubber really hits the road.



Organisations must:

- Communicate the regulatory changes to the persons within the organisation who are exposed to the hazards and risks, as well as to the persons with the accountability for managing the hazards and risks.
- Consider the impacts of the changes on work methods, including any additional resources (human, financial, tools and equipment) that may be required.
- Implement the necessary changes to maintain compliance and review the updated changes to ensure that hazards and risks continue to be managed effectively, as well as to identify if there has been any inadvertent risk that has been introduced as a result of changes that needs to be addressed.

Many organisations have developed and implemented a Legislative Updates Procedure that often includes a simple process flow chart setting out the process for managing changes to legislation. An important aspect of this is to identify the difference between 'major' and 'minor' updates. A 'major' update will often require a risk assessment and greater consultation before implementing any change, whereas a 'minor' update may simply require updating a procedure and communicating the changes made.

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