Qudos Management Pty. Ltd.
Quality | Health & Safety | Environmental management
320 Adelaide Street, Brisbane, QLD 4000
Tel: +61 (07) 3010 9259
3 Spring Street, Sydney, NSW 2000
Tel: +61 (02) 8249 4670
Email: info@qudos-software.com
Web: www.qudos-software.com

How to develop and maintain an AS/NZS 4801 Health & Safety Management System faster, better, and smarter

With increasingly strict legislation and heightened community awareness, organisations are more than ever looking to achieve and demonstrate sound health & safety performance and risk management. The accepted way of doing that is to develop and maintain a management system based on a recognised standard, and subject it to verification – such as by internal audit and perhaps to an independent certification audit.

What is a health & safety management system?

A Health & Safety Management System may be considered as a formal documented system that includes the following elements:

1. A safety policy
2. A programme for training and ensuring competency
3. A framework for involving employees in the management of health & safety
4. The collection, analysis and reporting of safety performance data
5. The identification of hazards in the workplace
6. The assessment of the risk they pose to people
7. The elimination or control of those risks
8. The evaluation of the effectiveness of the control measures
9. Arrangements for emergency preparations and response
10. Systems for monitoring the effectiveness of health & safety arrangements
11. Systems for monitoring the health of workers
12. Systems for the reporting and investigation of accidents / incident
13. Controls over documents and records
14. A programme of internal audits and management review to ensure that the system continues to meet objectives and requirements

A Health & Safety Management System should address the relevant legislative and regulatory requirements. Many jurisdictions specify the actual method of consultation, training, incident reporting, emergency responses, health surveillance / monitoring, and risk management.

Copyright © 2009-2013 Qudos Management Pty. Ltd.

What is the AS/NZS 4801 standard

It is a standard or specification jointly published by Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand for an occupational (or work) health and safety management system. It is naturally most widely used within those countries. The standard may be used by any organisation to establish and maintain a system to control risks to personnel and others associated with its activities. Its requirements are stated in a series of clauses that refer to various aspects of an management system, including: Hazard identification, risk assessment, planning controls, training and awareness, consultation and communication, operational control, emergency preparation and response, incident investigation, corrective and preventive action, control of documents, control of records, internal audits, and management review.

Developing your Health & Safety management system

Developing your system can be quite a major project. Like any such project, it may at first appear to be daunting and too complex to get a firm grip on. However, it can be more easily managed by being divided into bite-sized pieces. The following is an example of how that can be done. Initially the project is divided into 5 stages:

Organisations have traditionally developed control measures to meet applicable legal, regulatory and contractual requirements. There is a trend towards greater 'systemisation' and basing those systems on standards such as OHSAS 18001. Of course, you still need to meet those legal, regulatory and contractual requirements. The intention of a standards-based system is to provide a solid base on which your organisation can better comply with them - for now and into the future.

There are a number of development options available to you, and each has its own particular advantages. The development option that you choose will affect your method of system development. Consultants and other sources of external help will have their own standard methodologies. The options include:

- Working on your own
- Using a consultant
- Attending workshops / training courses
- Using a software package
- A combination of the above

A Gap Analysis and Project Plan may be prepared to guide and record progress.

The documentation stage may include preparing:

- Policies
- Various documented procedures
- Health & safety plans
- Forms
- Risk assessments / work method statements
- and other documents

Documenting a system from scratch can take up a great deal of time – particularly if it's a task that you are not used to. However, remember that the documentation should be appropriate to the nature of your organisations' activities and the risks associated with its operations.

Step 4 - Implementation

Of course, documents only form a part of a system. They are a means to an end - not an end in themselves. People, their commitment, and the training / resources / methods they are provided with are vitally important.

Implementation may include tasks such as risk assessments being performed, and physical risk control measures such as barriers, labeling, and signage, and PPE (Personal Protective Equipment).

Fig.1 Floor Stands warn people of a slippery floor

Fig.2 Foam ear plugs are a simple form of PPE

Fig.3 Posts and chain barrier to help separate people from a hazard

To be of maximum true value, your system needs the broad support of people within your organisation. This is often best achieved with a softly, softly approach - consultation, communication, then participation in introducing changes. The following guidance may be useful:

One senior person should have overall authority and responsibility for managing the system
In larger organisations, a team of co-ordinators or local representatives can assist them.

Consult and communicate with employees
Apart from being a requirement of the standard, this can help to allay any fears and suspicions that people may have about the reasons for process and/or organisational change.

Participation should be encouraged
All employees have a role to play. Workload can be shared and a range of ideas can come from people with different perspectives.

Step 5 - Verification

Results should be monitored, and the system fine-tuned as you go.

Following the principle of Dr. Demings' PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle, having planned our system and put it into practice, we need to check or verify that it is working effectively.

All control systems need feedback mechanisms to help their controllers keep the system on track. Management systems are no exception, and internal audits are their key feedback mechanism. To illustrate the importance of internal audits, they are a **mandatory** requirement of the OHSAS 18001 standard. They audits offer a very beneficial and low-cost method to help your organisation maintain compliance, and achieve its objectives. There

Copyright © 2009-2013 Qudos Management Pty. Ltd.

are also other aspects of verification, including measurement and monitoring, employee surveys, and periodic review by top management.

For a new system, or one that has had a major upgrade, it would be good practice to audit the system thoroughly after quite a brief period of implementation. It is quite likely that a little bit of fine-tuning to your system will be necessary. After that, your audit schedule may be on a risk basis - with those processes that are most important or that have had problems in the past being audited more regularly than others. You may also choose to have an external audit of your system (against a standard such as OHSAS 18001) by a Certification body or Registrar.

Results of audits and other verification techniques should be fed back to the management Review process, for top management to consider progress, and plan any remedial action or perhaps set new objectives.

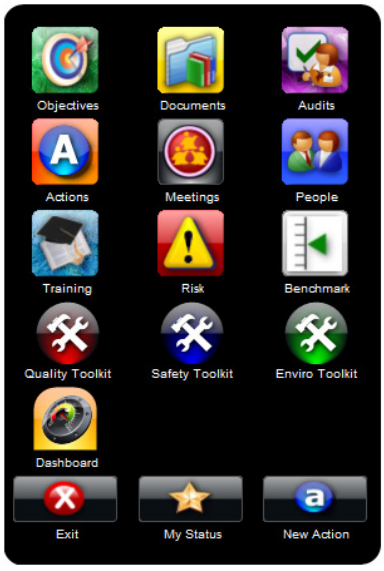
A faster, better, and smarter management system

There are many different ways to develop and maintain a management system based on OHSAS 18001. The trick is to do it in a cost-effective and user-friendly manner. Organisations have many competing calls on their resources – and personnel in particular. So the system needs to be low-impact in terms of the time needed to develop and maintain it. Many a well-intentioned system has fallen by the wayside because its design meant it was too burdensome to keep going. So, as competing demands for resources took precedence, the system gradually fell into disuse. The days of administrators updating multiple hard-copy manuals are now - or should be - long gone.

The next generation of systems used documents on server drives or an intranet, and offered some improvement. However, they too have limitations. There is still a considerable gap between what such systems deliver and what is expected or needed. A large proportion of information on intranets is poorly indexed or not indexed at all – leading to what is known as the 'Invisible Intranet'. If it can't be found it can't be used, and the time taken to create the information is wasted. Research by international marketing company IDC indicates that 35-50% of available information is not indexed. Even when it is, many of the documents, schedules and records that form part of a management system are usually kept in separate folder locations – wasting time and sometimes causing difficulty in accessing them. Manual updating of indexes in Excel workbooks and similar means extra work, double-handling, and introduces the possibility of discrepancies.

What is needed to overcome these issues is purpose-designed software that makes the system quicker to develop, easier to use and access data, with automatic indexing and email notifications / reminders. In essence, something that is faster, better and smarter.

Qudos 3 is a modern, integrated, software solution that will help with many of the tasks needed for the operation of your management system:



- **Plan Health & Safety Objectives and Targets** and how they will be achieved
- **Document** policies, procedures, forms, letters etc. with our huge library of samples and templates
- Make documents easily accessible over your intranet or internet – with powerful search facilities to **find the right document quickly and easily**
- Plan and record **document reviews and revisions**
- Schedule and record **internal audits and other checks**
- Plan and record **minutes of management review, committee and other meetings,** and distribute them
- Maintain records of **Health & Safety training** – with convenient tools to query refresher training needs
- **Assess Health & Safety performance** with automated pie and bar charts that have millions of drill-down display and reporting options
- **Consider and evaluate risks** that might affect your people
- Record **accidents, incidents, issues, hazards and suggestions**
- Plan **preventive / corrective / improvement action** and then assign, record and track those actions
- **Remind people** about tasks that are due / overdue with automated emails
- **Escalate** overdue actions

Copyright © 2009-2013 Qudos Management Pty. Ltd.

- Generat**e pie charts, bar charts and tabular reports**

The software also includes **Safety Manager** - a comprehensive toolkit for developing an OHS management system based on the requirements of both AS/NZS 4801 and OHSAS 18001. The **Safety Manager** component alone provides a great kick-start to developing or updating your management system with:

- An introduction to the subject of health & safety management systems
- A commentary on the requirements of the standards
- Case studies that illustrate possible methods to comply with those requirements
- Tools to help you plan the development of your own system - based on the standard
- A large quantity of sample documents such as policies, procedures, forms and letters. Just use your familiar word processor to customise those selected for your organisation
- MS PowerPoint presentations for employee training

The following chart illustrates how Qudos 3 can help you more effectively and efficiently implement a Health & Safety management system to address the AS/NZS 4801 standard.

Copyright © 2009-2013 Qudos Management Pty. Ltd.

AS/NZS 4801 Standard Requirements	Qudos 3 modules: Objective	Documents	Audits	Actions	Meetings	People	Training	Risk	Benchmark	Safety Manager	Notes
Clause 4.1 General requirements											
										✓	Overview
Clause 4.2 OHS Policy											
OHS Policy										✓	Explanation of requirements and sample policy statements
		✓									Policy statement maintained and accessed via Master Document List.
Clause 4.3 Planning											
Planning risk management										✓	Explanation of requirements, concepts and methods, and sample procedures, forms, and training materials
Objectives and targets										✓	Explanation of requirements, case study, activity plan, sample procedure / other documents / tools
	✓										Recorded in Objective Form. Each objective may be assigned to a responsible person, quantified for priority against up to 4 user-definable drivers, assessed for progress, and include attached documents.
			✓								Each Objective may generate up to 100 separately tracked Action plans.
OHS Management plans										✓	Explanation of concept / requirements, gap analysis, planning tools, and sample procedures
		✓									Procedures and other important documents maintained and made available via Master Document List.
Clause 4.4 Implementation											
Structure and responsibility										✓	Sample Organisation chart, Table of Authorities, and Job descriptions
Training and competency										✓	Explanation of requirements, sample procedures, induction checklists, and other documents
							✓				Training records are created for each person in the organisation. These are maintained in the Training Schedule, and may be queried for planning / review purposes.
						✓					Individual Development Plans may be created for each person in the organisation. This provides a tool for planning their development path and assessing progress against defined standards. Password-controlled sign-off by individual and 2 levels of management.

	Qudos 3 modules										
	Objective	Documents	Audits	Actions	Meetings	People	Training	Risk	Benchmark	Safety Manager	
AS/NZS 4801 Standard Requirements											**Notes**
Consultation, communication and reporting										✓	Explanation of requirements, case study, activity plan, sample procedure, form, and many standard letters
					✓						Dedicated meeting module to schedule and record minutes of meetings, create custom agendas for meeting types such as consultative committee meetings, merge email agenda or minutes
				✓							Assign action points (progress on each may be individually tracked). Actions List includes a category for "Raised by Meeting" - enabling the list to be filtered and queried to provide custom reports.
Documentation										✓	Explanation of requirements, case study, activity plan, sample documents
Document and data control										✓	Explanation of requirements, case study, activity plan, sample Document control procedures
		✓									Master Document List to provide easy and controlled global access to the current version of policies, procedures, and any other important documents. Global list of distribution for any hard-copies.
		✓									Revision control - maintaining a history for each individual document and indication of revision status
		✓									Automated archiving facility to look after superseded versions of documents. Maintains searchable lists of revisions and deletions.
		✓									Automated scheduling of document reviews. Email reminders to document owners. Record of review findings.
Hazard identification			✓								Action form to log and classify hazards identified, and email to relevant Health & Safety personnel
Risk Assessment								✓			Risk Assessment form provides matrix-based framework, text entry fields, and facility to attach external data such as reports, statistics and photographs

	Qudos 3 modules										
	Objective	Documents	Audits	Actions	Meetings	People	Training	Risk	Benchmark	Safety Manager	
AS/NZS 4801 Standard Requirements											**Notes**
Risk Controls			✓								Action form to plan and record corrective / preventive action
Legal and other requirements										✓	Explanation of requirements, case study, activity plan, sample procedure, web links to legal and regulatory information
Emergency preparedness and response										✓	Explanation of requirements, case study, activity plan, sample procedure and various checklists
		✓									Master Document List to provide easy and controlled access to important documents.
				✓							Action Form used to record incidents and accidents – with link to generate multiple Injury Forms to record injury details. Other sections of the Action form used to record Action Planned, Action Taken
Clause 4.5 Measurement and evaluation											
Monitoring and measurement										✓	Explanation of requirements, case study, activity plan, sample procedure and various checklists
									✓		Benchmark module includes a form to record a score-based assessment of any aspect of the management system that you need to measure. All assessments in any category may be compared with each other in a summary report
			✓								Maintain housekeeping checklists as Audit Records
Incident investigation, corrective and preventive action										✓	Explanation of requirements, case study, activity plan, sample procedures
				✓							Action Form used to record Corrective action, preventive action, root cause analysis etc. Each may be separately assigned, and emailed to a responsible person with attachment if required. Actions List may be queried in numerous combinations to generate custom reports.
Records and records management										✓	Explanation of requirements, case study, activity plan, sample records management procedures
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Records for all modules maintained in centralised, robust SQL server database. For cloud hosted clients, Qudos also takes care of back-up arrangements for the software

AS/NZS 4801 Standard Requirements	Qudos 3 modules: Objective	Documents	Audits	Actions	Meetings	People	Training	Risk	Benchmark	Safety Manager	Notes
	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		database and associated documents / records.
OHSMS audit										✓	Explanation of requirements and sample procedures
			✓								Audit Schedule and individual audit records. Facilities to replicate checklists + Audits training presentation.
				✓							Each item in an Audit Record may generate up to 100 separately tracked Action plans. Actions List may be queried by those raised at audits to provide custom reports.
							✓				Auditor training records planned and maintained in Training Schedule and course records. Optional, certified on-site training facilities available.
Clause 4.6 Management review											
Management review									✓	✓	Explanation of requirements and sample procedure. A training presentation on effective meetings is also included.
					✓						Management reviews scheduled and recorded in Meeting Minutes. Default agenda provided. This may be customised as required. Agenda / minutes may be emailed to all attendees.
				✓							Each Discussion item may generate up to 100 separately tracked Action plans. Actions List may be queried to provide custom reports.

Copyright © 2009-2013 Qudos Management Pty. Ltd.

Integration

With its modular design, high level of user-configuration, robust SQL database and web technology, Qudos 3 offers the power of integration of:

- Your key activities for addressing the standard
- Similar activities for other standards and compliance issues (ISO 9001 Quality / ISO 14001 Environment etc.)
- Activities relating to one or many sites

The tools are here right now to help you make an immediate start on developing faster, better, smarter management system. Qudos 3 is available as Self-hosted server-based software, or cloud hosted with fully licenced or leased options.

Gap analysis, coaching, training and system development / maintenance services are also available from Qudos and its partners. To find out more, contact:

Qudos Management Pty. Ltd.
Quality | Health & Safety | Environmental management
320 Adelaide Street, Brisbane, QLD 4000
Tel: +61 (07) 3010 9259
3 Spring Street, Sydney, NSW 2000
Tel: +61 (02) 8249 4670
Email: info@qudos-software.com
Web: www.qudos-software.com

Images in Figures 1-3 are courtesy of Seton Australia.