

Key features of ISO 45001

ISO 45001 is being developed to:

- Enable organisations to improve their occupational health and safety performance
- Prevent work related injury and/or ill health
- Provide safe and healthy workplaces.

While the exact precise content of the standard will not be known until the publication of the Final Draft International Standard (FDIS), at the end of November, we are confident of the following key features:

1. Adoption of Annex SL

ISO 45001 adopts Annex SL, thus sharing a high-level structure, identical core text, and terms and definitions with recently revised ISO management systems standards, e.g. ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015.

The implications of this are significant. The common structure, content, and themes (e.g. risk-based thinking, process approach, leadership and top management commitment) will greatly support organisations wishing to align or integrate their management systems.

2. Top management commitment, risk-based thinking, and process approach

Top management is accountable for OH&S management and needs to demonstrate both leadership and commitment; indeed this is explicitly identified as a critical success factor.

Risk-based thinking and adopting a process approach are both emphasised through-out the standard.

These are consistent with Annex SL management systems standards, including ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015, and considered essential to the success of the OH&S management system.

3. Consultation and worker participation

Consultation and participation of workers participation in identifying hazards and risks, and the development and operation of the OH&S management system. Consultation and participation of workers may extend beyond operating the OH&S management system into its design review, and improvement.

This is also considered essential to the success of the OH&S management system.

4. Preventing ill-health and injury

An organisation must take into account factors with a potential to cause injury and ill-health. This explicitly includes the mental and cognitive condition of people, as well as their physical condition.

Causes of ill-health and injury can be immediate (e.g. accidents), or long-term, such as repeated exposure to harmful substances, or a stressful working environment.