AMONG OTHER ELEMENTS, WHAT MIGHT AN EFFECTIVE WHSMS DISPLAY?

✔ Management commitment driving improvement through consultation

✔ People at all levels in the organisation are involved for success

✔ Ongoing WHS consultation and communication

✔ Across the organisation safety underpins what people do

✔ The focus is about preventing harm

✔ The system complexity is fit for purpose, not unnecessarily complex or process driven, suiting the needs of the business

✔ Training and information is provided based on risk

✔ The system is reviewed regularly and always following change to address system weaknesses and gaps.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

See the AS/NZS 4801 and 4804 available on the SAI Global site as well as the Code of Practice—How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks on the SafeWork Australia website.
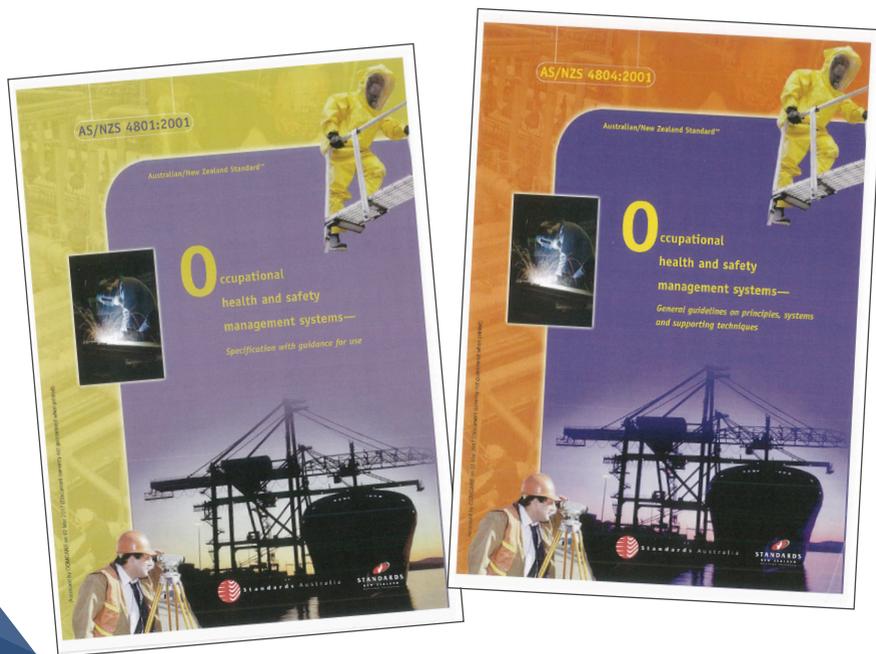
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WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (WHSMS): A SNAPSHOT

The implementation of a work health and safety management system (WHSMS) can contribute to optimal work health and safety outcomes for all parties at work. A WHSMS can assist in reducing workplace illness and injury while minimising the costs associated with workplace incidents that might occur.

A WHSMS can demonstrate, both internally and externally, that an organisation is undertaking a systematic approach to controlling the risks to workers and others associated with work related activities, products and/or services.

So, what exactly is a WHSMS?

Think of the WHSMS as a set of policies, procedures and plans that systematically manages health and safety at work.

The WHSMS should be seen as a functional component of the organisation's broader quality management system which will also influence outputs from other business areas.

Outputs, for example, from teams like procurement, human resources or information, communication and technology will be influenced by the priorities determined in the WHSMS; these priorities, in turn, influencing the contributions of these teams to the wider outcomes of the business or undertaking.

A WHSMS can therefore be distinguished for its *whole-of-organisation* impact.

Australian/New Zealand Standards (AS/NZS) 4801 and 4804 (2001) outline five key principles that must be present in a functional WHSMS as:

> Policy

> Planning

> Implementation

> Measurement and evaluation

> Management review

The interaction of the principles, adapted from the Australian Standard 4801, might be represented as:

GETTING STARTED: WHAT MIGHT THESE PRINCIPLES INCLUDE IN PRACTICE?

In Principle …	In Practice …
Policy	Decide, commit and communicate the WHS vision, where this might encompass: > Developing policies, procedures and plans, in consultation with workers, that support enduring WHS outcomes for the business or undertaking > Document control and review > Providing the necessary resources for success > Driving WHS outcomes through leadership at all levels of the organisation
Planning	Set WHS goals to be achieved and plan for their success, through: > The allocation of responsibility and accountability for WHS outcomes > Consultation > Specific WHS programs > Training > Reporting > Communication, information and awareness
Implementation	Where the WHS policies, procedures and plans are in place and effective, evidence of this might include: > Hazard identification arrangements > Risk assessments > Risk control > Emergency management > Injury management and return to work > Supervision > Training > Reporting > Communication, information and awareness
Measurement and evaluation	Routinely measuring WHS outcomes against agreed goals, including: > Audits > Reviews > Incident data > Registers and records
Management review	Undertake continuous performance evaluation and improvement, where this might include: > Evaluate performance against targets > Develop new and review existing plans for continuous improvement