



New South Wales
Government

at-a-glance brochure

OHS Management System Guidelines



4th edition, June 2004

A managed systems approach is considered the most effective way to improve OHS performance. The OHS Management Systems Guidelines apply to all NSW Government construction agency construction projects, and provide the framework for applying a systematic approach to the management of OHS.

Questions and answers

Q1. On what date do the new OHS Management Systems Guidelines commence?

The Guidelines will apply from 1 December 2004, where after service providers for NSW Government construction contracts will be required to develop and implement OHS management systems and plans that are consistent with the *OHS Management Systems Guidelines*.

Q2. How do I know if my organisation is a service provider?

Service providers include principal contractors, contractors, subcontractors, consultants and suppliers that carry out construction and/or related services.

Q3. Does my organisation need an accredited Corporate OHS Management System to gain pre-qualification or pre-registration by a NSW Government agency?

Yes in some circumstances. Applications for pre-qualification and or expressions of interest for pre-registration of service providers by Government agencies may only be accepted from organisations with an accredited Corporate OHS Management System for some types and sizes of contracts, depending on the agency's specific requirements. You should contact the agency your organisation proposes to do business with to confirm their requirements.

Q4. How do I gain accreditation for my organisation's Corporate OHS Management System?

NSW Government construction agencies review and accredit Corporate OHS Management Systems.

It is recommended that you contact the agency your organisation does business with to confirm their requirements. Alternatively, you may contact the Construction Agency Coordination Committee.

Q5. What is the accreditation process and is there a fee involved?

Once your organisation's management system is received, a review will be carried out of the documents involved. This will include checking the management system against Appendix A of the *OHS Management Systems Guidelines*.

If the person accrediting your management system has any questions regarding the documentation, you will be contacted. Following the review, the accrediting agency will provide you with a copy of the review report and accreditation recommendation for comment. The agency will take any comment into account before making a decision on accreditation. There is unlikely to be a fee for accreditation, but it is important to check this with the accrediting agency.

Q6. Does accreditation apply for all NSW Government agencies?

Government agencies may (but are not obliged to) accredit a service provider's Corporate OHS Management Systems without a further review if it is accredited by another agency.

Q7. Does my organisation need an accredited Corporate OHS Management System to tender for NSW Government agency construction contracts valued at \$1 million or more?

CACC member agencies will only consider tenders from tenderers with an accredited Corporate OHS Management System after 1 December 2004 or an earlier date decided by the agency.

Q8. What about for contracts valued at under \$1 million?

Agencies do have the discretion to lower the threshold for an accredited Corporate OHS Management System, therefore it is important to check with the agency you are doing business with, to determine the threshold required.

However, unless a higher standard is specified by the NSW Government agency you are lodging a tender with, tenders will only be accepted from tenderers that demonstrate they are able to prepare and implement an acceptable Site-specific Safety Management Plan.

Q9. My organisation has already been accredited. Is this accreditation still valid?

Organisations must resubmit their organisation's System for accreditation against the new *OHS Management Systems Guidelines* if they wish to tender for NSW Government construction contracts with CACC member agencies after 1 December 2004 or any earlier date determined by the agency.

Q10. If my organisation has OHS policies, procedures Safe Work Method Statements and safety training in place, but not a formalised OHS management system, can I apply for accreditation?

You can apply for accreditation, but it is important to remember that an accredited Corporate OHS Management System must include documents that describe the organisation's OHS policy, OHS manual, OHS procedures for all activities, work procedures and instructions, and the various forms and records used.

An accredited Corporate OHS Management System must also address and describe how the organisation will manage the 12 key elements outlined in the *OHS Management Systems Guidelines*.

Q11. Do the OHS Management Systems Guidelines relieve my organisation of any of its responsibilities under the OHS Act 2000 and OHS Regulation 2001?

No. The Guidelines provide a framework for Government agencies and service providers for applying a systematic approach to the management of OHS.

Service providers are and remain responsible for meeting their obligations under OHS, workplace injury management and workers compensation laws and regulations.

Q12. Does my organisation have to keep its OHS Management System up to date? Who do I notify if changes are made to my organisation's accredited OHS Management System?

Yes it must be maintained and kept up to date if it is to be accredited or remain accredited. You need to advise the agency with whom you are accredited of any significant changes. If significant changes are made to your organisation's accredited OHS Management System you should resubmit it for re-accreditation.

It is also recommended that you contact the Government agency your organisation does business with to confirm their requirements.

Q13. Will the Government agency I am working for monitor my organisation's OHS Management System performance?

Yes. Agencies will audit the implementation and effectiveness of service providers' Systems through the Project OHS Management Plans used for their projects. The results of the audits will be included, with other matters, in the Contractor or Consultant Performance Reports and other responses to performance for the project.

Q14. How will the agency I am working for audit my organisation's Project OHS Management Plan?

After reviewing your organisation's Project OHS Management Plan, the agency representative in consultation with your organisation's representative will identify the audit requirements for the project and develop an audit program. The audits will follow the process outlined in the *Guidelines for Auditing Project OHS Management Plans*.

Q15. Will the agency involve my organisation in the agency audit process?

Yes. There will be an understanding between your organisation and any agency audit team about the scope and terms of the audit. This includes participation throughout the whole audit process from entry meeting to exit meeting. The table at Appendix A of the *Guidelines for Auditing Project OHS Management Plans* provides an overview of the tasks and responsibilities of the agency and the service provider.

Q16. When will I know if non-conformances have been identified in the audit?

Non-conformances that are identified in your organisation's Project OHS Management Plan or its implementation would normally be discussed at the exit meeting held at the end of the audit. The service provider would then be expected to take early action to correct the deficiencies identified in the audit.

However, if any dangerous or life threatening situation is observed by the audit team during the audit, the issue would be raised immediately with your organisation to make sure corrective action was taken immediately.

Q17. Will the agency keep a record of an agency audit and how will the records be used?

The audits will be recorded and the results will be included, with other matters, in the Contractor or Consultant Performance Reports and other performance responses for the project.

Contractor or Consultant Performance Reports will be made available to other Government agencies on request, subject to the exchange of information procedures as outlined in the *Contractor and Consultant Performance Reporting and Exchange of Reports between Government Agencies Guidelines*.

Q18. Can my organisation's accreditation be withdrawn?

Yes. Failure by an organisation to properly implement a Project OHS Management Plan or Site-specific Safety Management Plan, or repeated safety breaches, may constitute grounds for withdrawal of the organisation's Corporate OHS Management System accreditation.

Key Features

- ❖ The new *Occupational Health Safety Management Systems Guidelines* provide an agreed framework for NSW Government agencies and their service providers to apply a systematic approach to the management of OHS.
- ❖ A fundamental principle with effective OHS management is that OHS hazards must be identified, and risks assessed and managed, during all phases of project delivery, from concept to construction completion, and in operation and asset disposal.
- ❖ The NSW Government Construction Agencies have agreed that their service providers for Government construction contracts will be required to develop and implement OHS management systems and plans that are consistent with the Guidelines.
- ❖ The Guidelines cover the procurement for all Government construction projects, including all activities concerned with demolition, maintenance, building, landscaping, civil engineering work, process engineering work, heavy engineering work and mining.
- ❖ The Guidelines are to be read and implemented in conjunction with the associated NSW Government documents *Guidelines for Auditing Project OHS Management Plans* and *How to prepare Site Specific Safety Management Plans and Safe Work Method Statements*.
- ❖ The Guidelines require that those tendering for contracts valued at \$1million or above are to have an accredited Corporate OHS Management System in accordance with the Guidelines. However, agencies have the discretion to lower the threshold, for particular contracts, and therefore it is important to check with the agency involved to determine the threshold required.

For a copy of these guidelines, or for more information, contact:

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2-24 Rawson Place
Sydney NSW 2000
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The guidelines are also available online from the Construction Agency Coordination Committee's web site at www.construction.nsw.gov.au

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