



Good Governance Practice for Managing Health and Safety Risks

The Government has established a new, stand-alone workplace health and safety agency to significantly improve New Zealand's workplace health and safety record (Worksafe N.Z.). The creation of a stand-alone Crown agent was a key recommendation of the Royal Commission on the Pike River Coal Mine Tragedy.

The new agency has a dedicated focus on health and safety and is committed to ensuring people are well protected from injury and death when they go to work each day. The Crown agent is enforcing workplace health and safety regulations, and is working collaboratively with employers and employees to embed and promote good workplace health and safety practices.

Recently changes were passed into law via the Health and Safety at Work Act with more responsibility being placed on employers to reduce work place injuries and harsher penalties being applied.

Site leadership remains important in maintaining a safety conscious culture.

Step 1: Health and Safety Governance Review

The Telarc Health and Safety Governance Assessment provides independent, pragmatic, impartial assessments to help directors and senior leaders ensure that their business is running an effective health & safety system for all their staff and that the governance practices for overseeing health and safety at work are implemented and monitored.

The Telarc Health and Safety Governance Analysis is based on the IoD (Institute of Directors) health and safety checklist with an assessment criteria based on the new Act and AS/NZS4801 designed to provide directors and senior leaders with governance assurance, reduce their risk and provide the required steps to minimise work place incidents. An executive summary is produced based on the criteria articulated above and is provided to directors and management to prioritise by importance the findings of the assessment.

Step 2: Analysis Against International Standards

Telarc will provide an in-depth gap analysis on the company's health and safety system. This will form the basis of the audit for the third step. The gap analysis is based on the International Health and Safety Standards AS/NZS4801 and BS OHSAS 18001, and in the not to distant future ISO45001.

Step 3 : Formal Certification, ongoing assurance against BS OHSAS 18001 and AS/NZ 4801

Using the International Health and Safety Standards AS/NZS4801 and BS OHSAS 18001 management systems standards as the basis of the audit and using the findings of the gap analysis, a robust audit will identify any areas of concern and risk.

The process will include an in-depth assessment of the standards, including site visits. Formal certification will be granted once all the variances are addressed.

The process requires an annual audit to retain certification, it provides high level assurance that your organisations health and safety processes remain implemented.

Why effective governance of health and safety is important

A well-implemented health and safety culture beginning at the board table and promulgated through the organisation will add significant value to businesses in a number of ways, including:

- Corporate social responsibility is a key factor in business. Enhancing organisational reputation by demonstrating concern for employee wellbeing and decreasing reputational risk from publicity resulting from employee harm improves the businesses standing in the community among suppliers, customers, partners and investors
- Healthier and more secure employees are happier employees. A good organisational culture spreads much wider than health and safety, so employees will be better motivated to act in the interests of your business and increased productivity/profitability can result
- Decreased employee absence and turnover. This reduces costs and minimises legal risk to the directors and the organisation
- Decreased downtime resulting from serious accidents

Telarc Training and Improvement Solutions

Telarc, the country's leading ISO Standards certifying body has broadened its training offering with the launch of Telarc Training and Improvement Solutions so that any New Zealand business, no matter what size, can take advantage of the training service for their organisation.

About Telarc

Telarc annually assesses the management systems of over 2,000 New Zealand organisations across both public and private sectors.

As a Crown Entity Subsidiary, Telarc aims to help companies become compliant, thus ensuring higher growth rates for sales, employment, payroll, and average annual earnings. Telarc Training and Improvement Solutions also assist in reducing running costs and reduce overall risk, while ensuring the efficient use of resources, promoting stakeholder reassurance and industry compliance.

To find out more or to apply to begin the certification process, contact us on 0800 004 004 or email admin@Telarc.co.nz