

What is OHSAS 18001:2007?

In the last issue of Safety Corner, I introduced the *OHSAS 18001: Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems – Specification*, which sets out requirements for establishing and implementing an OH&S management system. The document has recently been updated to *OHSAS 18001:2007 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems – Requirements*.

OHSAS 18001:2007 supersedes the 1999 edition with the following key changes:

- *OHSAS 18001:2007* now refers to itself as a standard, not a specification, or document, as in the earlier edition. This reflects the increasing adoption of *OHSAS 18001* as the basis for national standards on OH&S management systems.
- A much greater emphasis on "health" rather than just "safety" has now been given.
- New definitions have been added, and existing definitions revised.
- Incorporated significant improvement in alignment with *ISO 14001:2004* throughout the standard; and with improved compatibility with *ISO 9001:2000* to facilitate organizations in developing "integrated management systems".
- A new requirement has been introduced for the consideration of the hierarchy of controls as part of OH&S planning
- Management of change is now more explicitly addressed
- A new clause on the "Evaluation of compliance" has been introduced, as per *ISO 14001:2004*.
- New requirements have been introduced for participation and consultation, and for the investigation of incidents.

For those organizations that have already achieved certification to *OHSAS 18001:1999*, or are in the final stages of achieving it, a two-year "transition" period has been agreed, in order to allow them to make the change to using the new standard. The transition period will end on 1 July 2009.

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