



Construction OS&H

Fundamental principles

Summary

'Decent Work' and 'well-being at work'
Ethics and humanity
Corporate social responsibility
National policy
Need for holistic culture and systems
Requires real commitment from all involved
Basic concepts of hazards and risks
The business case for OH&S and business decisions
Monitoring, reporting and reviewing performance

“.... the promotion of the common welfare.”

(from the Constitution of the ILO)

“The Conference recognizes the solemn obligation of the International Labour Organisation to further among the nations of the world programmes which will achieve ... adequate protection for the life and health of workers in all occupations”

(ILO Declaration of Philadelphia, May 1944)

“This Report proposes a primary goal for the ILO in this period of global transition — securing decent work for women and men everywhere. It is the most widespread need, shared by people, families and communities in every society, and at all levels of development. Decent work is a global demand today, confronting political and business leadership worldwide. Much of our common future depends on how we meet this challenge.”
(“Decent Work”, Report of the Director General, ILO 87th Session, June 1999.)

“At the level of the firm, the key social protection issue is occupational health and safety. Every year about 250 million workers suffer accidents in the course of their work, and over 300,000 are killed. Taking account of those who succumb to occupational diseases, the death toll is over 1 million people a year. Yet international concern with awareness of health and safety at work remains surprisingly modest, and action is limited. Many developing and transition countries have little public information on this subject and need to reinforce their capacity to design and implement effective policies and programmes. Even today, many new investment decisions continue to ignore safety, health and environmental considerations.”

(“Decent Work”, Report of the Director General, ILO 87th Session, June 1999. P64.)

NEWS

HEALTH & SAFETY

Construction industry fatalities fall by 9%

By Seán Flynn

Fatalities in construction fell by 9% last year, but the rate of reported major injury remains the highest of any main industry group, Health and Safety Executive (HSE) statistics revealed last week.

There were 72 fatal injuries to workers in construction in 2007/08, seven fewer than the previous year.

Of these 72 fatalities, 54 were employees and 18 were self-employed, compared to 54 and 25 in 2006/07. Fatal injuries in construction nevertheless accounted for 31% of all fatal injuries at work 2007/08.

The rate of fatal injury to workers in construction decreased

Fatalities in construction fell by 9% from 79 to 72 in 07/08

09%

to 3.4 per 100 000 workers, from 3.8 per 100 000 workers in 2006/07. The rate of fatal injuries in construction had been falling until last year, when a spike of fatal injuries was blamed on non-English speakers being more vulnerable in construction.

An HSE spokesman said the number of deaths and injuries had been falling until last year.

Topic for discussion

The article shows a 9% decrease in fatalities in the United Kingdom during 2007/08.

This is seen to be a good achievement. But there are still 72 fatalities in this period the UK, which has one of the most developed OS&H systems in the world.

What could be the reasons for this? Spend a few minutes in discussion with the person sitting next to you, and try to offer ten reasons.

Possible reasons from the discussion

- Lack of national laws and authorities
- Inadequate human and other resources to enforce legislation
- Clients' and their designers' lack of understanding of their overall responsibility for OS&H
- Clients' and their designers' lack of understanding of their power to influence OS&H
- Clients narrow focus on 'the bottom line'
- Project managers focus mainly on quality, time and cost; OS&H as an 'add on'
- Generally poor project management: poor planning and control
- Lack of a preventative safety culture
- Lack of effective processes and systems
- Lack of understanding caused by inadequate training

Possible reasons from the discussion

If 80 000 people are killed every year in the worldwide construction industry, does this mean that construction clients have a right to allow people to be killed on their projects?

Ethics and humanity

Ethically, the ILO's view of OS&H is quite clear:

Safety and health is a human right

Safety and health is a value

Human damage is incalculable

Signs of improvement:
a sign seen on major road-works

**Please drive carefully and
observe the speed limits**

**Our employees do not
come to work to get
injured or killed**

Signs of improvement: Contractor's advertisement

“Experts in construction

Experts in safety

At Murphy, nothing comes higher on our list than safety. And to achieve such high safety standards, we make sure our workforce is full trained and ready for anything, whatever the conditions, whatever the project. The Health and safety of our employees is paramount”

Signs of improvement: 'Zero incident policy'

Bovis Lend Lease will operate Incident & Injury Free and is committed to realising this wherever the Group has a presence. This philosophy reaches every part of the Group's operations and extends to clients, suppliers, sub-contractors and other stakeholders.

Bovis Lend Lease believes:

That working Incident & Injury Free is a choice and a basic human right.

Those who view Incident & Injury Free working as a given, and make this happen, will become leaders in the property industry.

Bovis Lend Lease recognises:

That this vision is achievable if our employees and stakeholders are totally committed to it.

That the commitment to being Incident & Injury Free requires individuals to take a personal stand and in doing so, demonstrate great courage and trust.



Yet, as stated in the ILO report “Beyond death and injuries”, despite some progress on a legal framework:

“ .. a plateau seems to have been reached when it comes to achieving decent, safe and healthy working conditions in reality.”

Corporate social responsibility

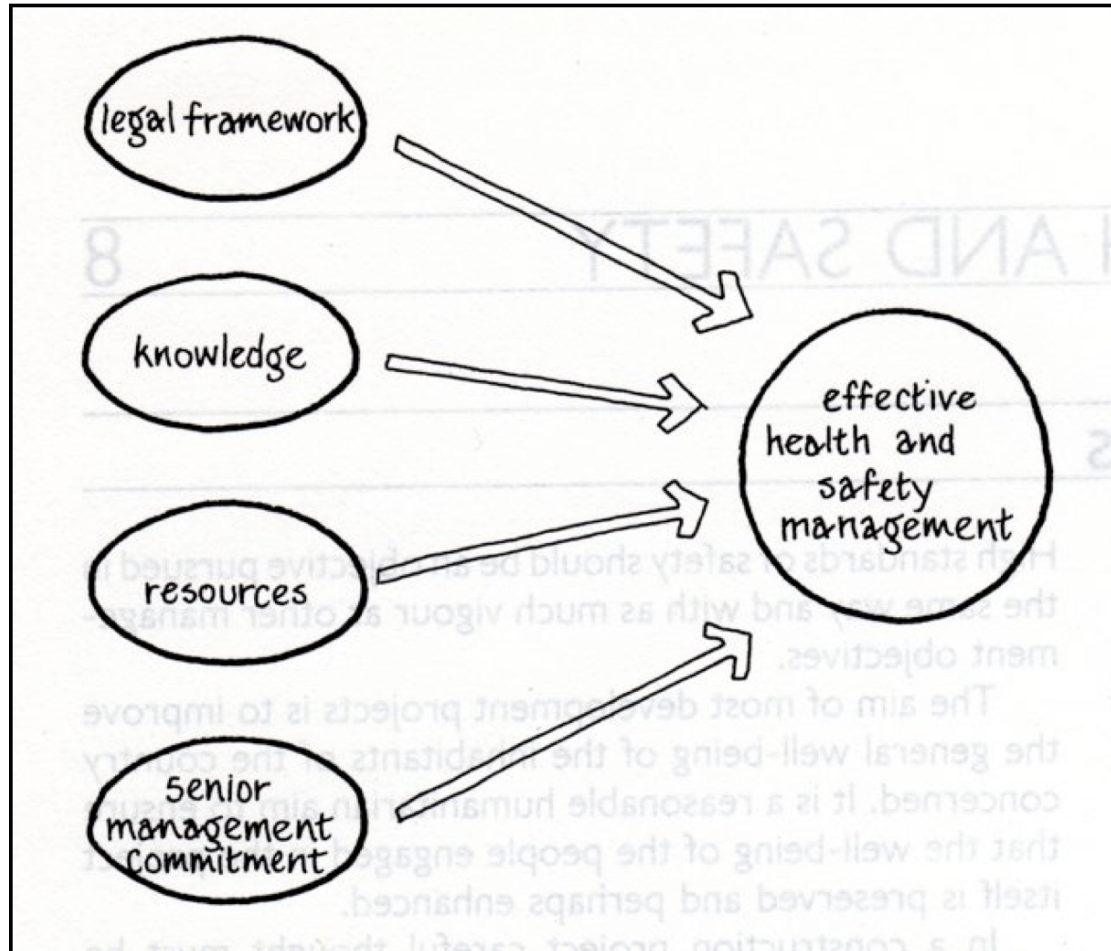
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a way in which enterprises give consideration to the impact of their operations on society and affirm their principles and values both in their own internal methods and processes and in their interaction with other actors. CSR is a voluntary, enterprise-driven initiative and refers to activities that are considered to exceed compliance with the law.

(ILO Subcommittee on multinational enterprises, GB.295/MNE/2/1
Geneva, March 2006)

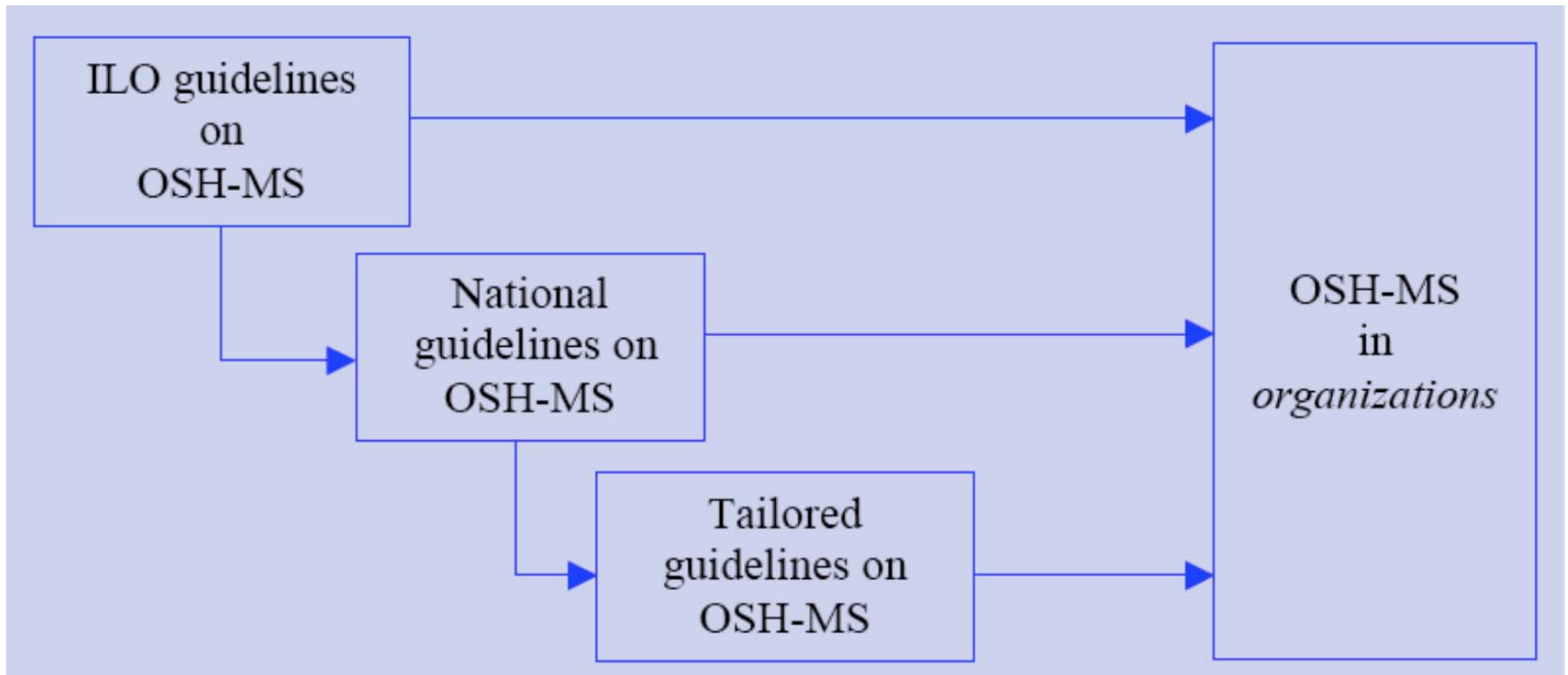
Corporate social responsibility

The principal consideration of the relevance of CSR to OS&H is that the safety, health and general well-being of employees and all stakeholders in a construction company or project has to be taken into account in a much more comprehensive way than narrow compliance with legislation.

Principal factors in effective health and safety management



Legal framework



ILO's recommendations for a national OSH system

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A NATIONAL OSH SYSTEM

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legislation, and any other relevant OSH instruments;• One or more authorities or bodies responsible for OSH;• Regulatory compliance mechanisms, including systems of inspection;• A national tripartite advisory mechanism addressing OSH issues;• Arrangements to promote at the enterprise level, cooperation between employers and workers;• OSH information and advisory services;• Systems for the provision of OSH training; | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Occupational health services;• Research on OSH;• A mechanism for the collection and analysis of data on occupational injuries and diseases;• Provisions for collaboration with relevant insurance or social security schemes covering occupational injuries and diseases; and• Support mechanisms for a progressive improvement of OSH conditions in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, and in the informal economy. |
|--|--|

Requires real commitment from all involved

“High standards of safety should be an objective pursued in the same way and with as much vigour as other management objectives.

The aim of most development projects is to improve the general well being of the inhabitants of the country concerned.

It is a reasonable humanitarian aim to ensure that the well-being of the people engaged in the project itself is preserved and perhaps enhanced.”

The need for a holistic culture and systems

Those involved:

Clients

Authorities

Project managers

Local communities

Designers

Contractors

Other consultants

Sub-contractors

Suppliers

Workers

Users

At all stages of the project:

Briefing

Design

Procurement

Construction

Commission

Requires real commitment from all involved

The employer should show strong leadership and commitment to OSH activities in the organisation and make appropriate arrangements for the establishment of an OSH management system
(ILO-OSH-2001)

Requires real commitment from all involved

“Only senior management has the influence, power and resources to take initiatives and set standards. Positive attitudes of senior managers will be reflected in a high degree of health and safety awareness throughout the project.

The converse is also true, and lack of demonstrable interest by senior management in the welfare of the people involved will have a strongly detrimental effect on general morale and team spirit.”

Example of comprehensive OS&H

“Tourists will soon be able to visit one of Angkors greatest treasures: the 11th century Baphuon temple. Now the temple is the centre of a huge archaeological reconstruction effort. Safety training means today’s Khmer construction workers are reclaiming this piece of their heritage without the dangers their ancestors faced.”

Video of Rebuilding Baphuon Temple in Angkor, Cambodia

<http://tv.ilo.org/documentaries>

Basic concepts of hazards and risks

The following quotations are taken from the ILO-OSH-2001:

Hazard: The inherent potential to cause injury or damage to people's health

Hazard assessment: A systematic evaluation of hazards

Risk: A combination of the likelihood of an occurrence of a hazardous event and the severity of injury or damage to the health of people caused by this event

Hazards? Risks?

Anything wrong with this painter's workplace?



Hazards? Risks?

The painter is standing on a plastic crate on an un-braced scaffold platform, with no handrails, toe-boards, or safe means of access and egress. He is a danger to himself AND the public.

There are two main HAZARDS which have a high potential to cause injury and damage:

He may lose his balance and fall

The platform may collapse

The RISK is high because of the high potential and the height from which he could fall (>2m)



Basic concepts of hazards and risks

“3.10.1.1. Hazards and risks to workers' safety and health should be identified and assessed on an ongoing basis. Preventive and protective measures should be implemented in the following order of priority:

(a) eliminate the hazard/risk

(b) control the hazard/risk at source, through the use of engineering controls or organizational measures

(c) minimize the hazard/risk by the design of safe work systems, which include administrative control measures

(d) where residual hazards/risks cannot be controlled by collective measures, the employer should provide for appropriate personal protective equipment, including clothing, at no cost, and should implement measures to ensure its use and maintenance

Basic concepts of hazards and risks

Clause 3.10.1.2 states that hazard prevention and control procedures or arrangements should be established and should:

- (a) be adapted to the hazards and risks encountered by the organization
- (b) be reviewed and modified if necessary on a regular basis
- (c) comply with national laws and regulations, and reflect good practice
- (d) consider the current state of knowledge, including information or reports from organizations, such as labour inspectorates, occupational safety and health services, and other services as appropriate

The business case for OS&H

“Disease and injury do not go with the job nor can poverty justify disregard for workers’ safety and health.”

(ILO-OSH-2001)

“We promote the social dimension of sustainable development in economic growth, environmental conservation and society since it will not make construction more expensive. For example, a good working environment reduces the risks of heavy physically demanding work, leads to fewer accidents at work, fewer sick days and thus shorter times and lower costs for the total construction.”

(BWI)

The business case for OS&H

Business arguments for effective OS&H practices include:

- Incidents (accidents) have a very negative effect on staff motivation and morale generally
- Incidents cause delays and disruption, which has financial costs
- Delays and disruption may result in overall project delays
- Incidents may result in damage to the works, requiring remedial work
- The number and severity of incidents has an effect on insurance premiums
- A poor reputation for OS&H makes it difficult to recruit good employees
- A poor reputation for OS&H may influence potential clients, who may not wish to have their own reputations impaired

Monitoring, reporting and reviewing performance

As a final conclusion, all organisations should strive towards ‘zero incidents’ and provide a healthy working environment for all those involved in all their construction projects. This can only be achieved through the formulation, application and continual revision and improvement of comprehensive management systems.

The ILO’s ‘Guidelines on occupational safety and health management systems’ provides expert guidance on such systems, which are depicted diagrammatically in the next slide.

Monitoring, reporting and reviewing performance

The cycle of 'continual improvement' shown in the diagram is a crucial concept, and the information provided in the preceding slides shows that, in the construction industry, there is much scope for improvement.

