

Safety Management System Modules

Element 13 – Consultation

What and Why

It is essential that once an SMS is established, changed or reviewed, a key group of people must be consulted.

1. People likely to be affected by the SMS (principally rail safety workers);
2. Health and Safety Representatives;
3. Any union representing Rail Safety Workers; and
4. Any other rail transport operator with which the operator interacts. An example would be a RIM of the infrastructure that a rolling stock operator has access to (or vice versa).

Operators should consider if any other persons should could be included as part of the consultation process when considering the individual details of what is being reviewed, developed or changed.

How

There are generally four stages to consultation:

1. Providing information with details about what is being proposed, and the process that will be followed;
2. Seeking feedback from impacted persons or their representatives;
3. Reviewing feedback received; and
4. Responding to feedback and implementation of the change

The following are examples of consultation:

- Risk assessment is organised as part of the change management process, where key stakeholders are included in the discussions;
- Regular volunteer and/or operations meetings;
- Information on Notice Boards or websites seeking feedback from rail safety workers; and
- Emails to museum members or volunteers;

There is no set timeframe or approach for consultation. Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) laws often prescribe the essential components for consultation for each state or territory.

Who

Operators must keep a record of the opportunities you provided them for consultation, the suggestions they made and your evaluation of those suggestions.

WHS representatives should keep records of consultation processes as evidence of participation.

The Executive Committee/ Board may wish to sign off on these procedures as part of their governance processes.

ONRSR will review what steps were made to consult with key stakeholders when reviewing an operators SMS, applications (or variations) for accreditation, notifications of change, and may also include this in audits and inspections.

When

Consultation should occur when the management of change procedures are applied, and where changes to accreditation are considered. Good consultation usually results in improved safety outcomes and quicker take up of new initiatives/procedures.

List of relevant documents (internal)

Element 2 – Safety Policy

Element 8 – Review of SMS

Element 12 - Management of Change

Element 14 – Internal Communication

Links (external)

[ONRSR Website –SMS Guideline](#)

Various private safety websites for example (and not endorsed by ONRSR)

[Fair Work Ombudsman](#)

[SafeWork Australia](#)

Appendices / Examples

None