

Safety Management System Modules

Element 14 – Internal Communication

What and Why

Part of the success of a Safety Management System is that:

- it is used when undertaking daily tasks,
- it is understood by those that use it,
- the content is available to all that need to have access to it,
- incidents and accidents are reported internally.

This element refers to:

1. How operators ensure people who are to implement the SMS are aware of its content;
2. How incidents and accidents are reported within the operations;
3. How the operator communicates and provide information to everyone involved in the operations.

How

The key to achieving these outcomes can be by establishing standard procedures for communication amongst those who undertake work for the operator.

Such a procedure could include:

- Who needs to receive information about the SMS;
- A reference to the methods of consultation used by the operator;
- Mechanisms to communicate such as:
 - Safety policy is displayed on the noticeboard;
 - The steps to report an incident or accident (including the process for contractors);
 - Regular newsletters provide updates on the SMS or incidents that have occurred;
 - Procedures for incident reporting are displayed on noticeboards;
- The process to review document/procedural changes at Sign on;
- Inclusion of information in tool box talks;
- Discussions at Committee/Board meetings and volunteer briefing sessions;
- How changes are discussed at safety meetings;
- What items need to be reported to the Executive Committee or Board.

Who

A dedicated role could be nominated as the key contact for reporting incidents or accidents. This should be reflected in job/role descriptions and noted in the procedures for reporting.

The role that has the responsibility for the implementation of the SMS should ensure that internal communication procedures detailed in the SMS are followed.

Health and Safety representatives or Safety Managers may include information in their regular reports to the Executive Committee /Board.

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

When

Examples of when internal communication should occur are provided here:

- Email groups could be set up for notification on specific subjects to specific work groups – e.g. changes to track procedures to track workers;
- New Job Safety Analysis are posted on noticeboards once developed;
- Findings of incidents/accidents could be posted once investigations are completed;
- Noticeboards could be updated to notify stakeholders of the results of a review of the SMS;
- Invitations to participate in consultation mechanisms, for events such as an SMS review, could be posted or emailed to subscribers as part of regular newsletters;

List of relevant documents (internal)

Element 13 – Consultation

Element 4 – Governance and Internal Controls

Links (external)

[ONRSR Website](#)

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

[Fair Work Ombudsman](#)

[SafeWork Australia](#)

Appendices

None