



Talking of GRADING... by Geoff Wright

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Certification

What is OHSAS 18001?

OHSAS 18001 is one of the latest certifications specifically intended for **Occupational Health and Safety** management in the work place and is mainly based on published criteria such as may be found in **BS 8800** and the **Management Regulations 1992**. It should be noted that it is an **audit certification specification**, not a *legislative requirement* or for that matter a guide to implementation.

Some **LPHCA Members** have already engaged in a programme to put this certification in place and like many other accreditation's once the company concerned has achieved the requisite standard they will be awarded a certificate indicating that they have met the related criteria and for which they will be the subject of continual surveillance visits by the issuing **Certification Body**.

In principle, **OHSAS 18001** registration will be overseen by an independent approved third party who will work with the company concerned to monitor and record that Company's commitment to implement, maintain and improve, where considered necessary, the way in which they manage their **Health and Safety** regimes.

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The first step is to evaluate the needs of your staff and visitors and having done this the next step is to appoint an organisation or qualified person to start the process of registration to **OHSAS 18001** thus ensuring that the company management can be more confident about meeting **Health and Safety** targets considered to be appropriate for their organisational needs bearing in mind that not all companies will have the same agenda.

Clearly the requirements for companies delivering the supply of **'Special Needs Transportation Services'** for **Local Authorities** will not be the same as say,

those required of a **'Chauffeur Only'** company, albeit that there will be threads of common denominators in both types of activities.

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As for any other **Certification** there will be a requirement to appoint internal assessor(s) and these persons would be responsible for the ongoing implementation, monitoring, maintaining and improving the **Health and Safety Policy** of the organisation ensuring that such activities are fully recorded throughout those processes.

Like any other **Quality Management System** it will be necessary to maintain fully up to date manuals as well as keeping the members of the **Management and Staff fully informed** on the need to conform to any new legislative requirements that may have been introduced. Regular documented audits by the appointed internal assessors are essential for such procedures.

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Certification can add a great deal of kudos to a Company's portfolio. In the everyday activities for which our diverse industry is subjected it is vitally important that **Health and Safety at Work** is both *adequately and properly implemented* and **OHSAS 18001 Certification** can add a great deal of kudos to a Company's portfolio. Falling foul of the **HSE** can result in a great deal of hardship if it is proven that a Company has been negligent in its statutory obligations in not providing the applicable **Health and Safety** information to its **Staff and Visitors** and although

not mandatory for all companies, it is wise to set out *your Company's Policy* in a statement which should be liberally displayed in your workplace.

Such statements will need to be updated from time to time to encompass any legislative changes that may be introduced and should make it quite clear that your **Staff and Visitors** have an obligation to observe the requirements of the policy that you have displayed.

It is worth bearing in mind that if your company already has either **ISO 9001** and/or **ISO 14001** in place there will almost certainly be common elements between those systems and **OHSAS 18001** such as document control, corrective action and periodic management reviews which would interface with each other and could be integrated, possibly resulting in effective cost savings when third party audits take place.

If you require further information on this topic please contact us and we will endeavour to point you in the right direction where you may obtain further guidance.

