

Occupational Safety Charter

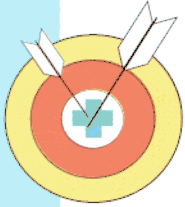


Safety is a SHARED Responsibility



Occupational Safety Charter

Vision and Mission



Safety in the workplace is of utmost importance to both employees and employers.

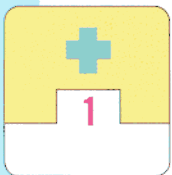
In a busy, vibrant centre of industry, trade, and commerce like Hong Kong, it is doubly important to ensure safety in the workplace. There is no shortcut to safety. One life ruined is one too many.

Our vision is for safety at work to match this vibrancy, by developing for the benefit of everyone – employers, employees, the community – a safety culture of which we can all be proud. A good safety record at work is tied to Hong Kong's international reputation as a successful modern economy.

The Labour Department, the Occupational Safety and Health Council, safety practitioners, employers and employees alike each have a role to play and we must all work in partnership to turn this vision into reality.

Our mission is to ensure that risks to people's health and safety at work are properly controlled. We cannot do this by ourselves. We need the active participation of everyone.

Safety First



Employers and employees are at the heart of the safety culture. They must develop the values and practices which underpin health and safety at work.

Safety has to be the first consideration at work. It comes before comfort and even efficiency.

Employers and employees must therefore work together to translate legal requirements and best practice into working procedures most relevant to their particular needs.

The Labour Department has drawn up a framework for introducing a Safety Management System covering all key aspects of concern in the workplace. Our aims are to inform, stimulate and assist employers and employees in promoting safety management and culture in the workplace.

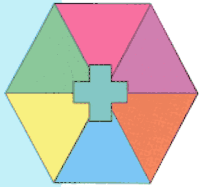
Employers in partnership with their employees should plan, communicate, implement and evaluate their own version of the system for maximum impact and effectiveness at their place of work. The Labour Department and the Occupational Safety and Health Council are ready to provide advice and guidance.

The Safety Management System

Consultation, communication and active involvement are fundamental to better safety performance.

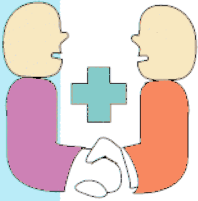
A safety management system covers the following key areas:

- Policy – helping employers to define their commitments to communicating, implementing and maintaining a safe workplace
- Planning – so that projects can be reviewed at design stage to minimize future risks, as well as ensuring that plans have been made to deal with emergencies safely and effectively
- Procedures – to ensure that all employees have a clear understanding of in-house safety rules and regulations, and their obligations under such
- Inspections – to follow guidance for monitoring hazardous conditions, take corrective action where appropriate and formulate proposals to control potential job hazards
- Investigations – to ensure that all accidents and incidents at work are analyzed, the right conclusions drawn and appropriate action taken



- Subcontracting – to ensure that your contractors are fully aware of, and capable of meeting safety management obligations

Communication and Understanding



Everyone needs to be clear about their respective obligations under a safety management system, both to themselves and to their colleagues. The active participation and involvement of both employers and employees is fundamental to turning good policy and procedure into health and safety at work.

Employers should develop:

- A safety organization to ensure that each person's role and responsibilities are understood, and that management commitments to safety can be met
- Safety training to equip all staff with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to perform their duties in a safe manner
- A Risk Assessment programme which identifies the actual and potential risks of each individual, with the aim of providing suitable equipment and use of it to ensure that risks are minimized
- A working environment that is safe and without risk to health

Additionally, employers should consider the following elements:

- A Health Assurance programme which commits administrative and technological resources to the ongoing task of protecting workers from health hazards
- A Safety Committee to take on formal responsibility for safety and health, with wide representation, including employees, from all major aspects of the operation

- Safety promotion to increase the awareness and enlist the support of everyone at work in safety management

Employees should:

- Follow the safety rules and work procedures set out in the safety management system
- Take an active part in attending safety and health training
- Report to your employer any potential job hazards
- Make suggestions on safety improvement to your supervisor and employer

Cooperate with the relevant authorities in reporting breaches of statutory requirements

How We Can Help

The *Government* has the duties to

- Legislate – enact and improve workplace safety and health legislation
- Enforce – provide adequate resources to inspect workplaces and to advise employers and employees to comply with the law and codes of practice

The *Labour Department* and the *Occupational Safety and Health Council* are ready to support employers and employees in creating a safety culture.

Our support includes:

- Advice and Encouragement – for enterprises on how to comply with statutory requirements, and arrangements for occupational health and hygiene matters
- Training & Education – accrediting and monitoring safety



training organizations, organizing courses, seminars and workshops

- Standards & Guidance – putting together guides to legislation and approving codes of practice
- Publicity & Promotion – promoting safety culture through mass media and other channels
- Others – research, safety audit and consultancy services

Professional bodies and concern groups can also contribute in the following areas:

- Rallying support and cooperating with the Government
- Participating in the promotion of occupational safety activities
- Reflecting to Government their views on existing occupational safety and health situations and making suggestions for improvement

Our main objectives are to promote and improve safety and hygiene in places of work, reduce workplace accidents and prevent occupational diseases. If we can all work together to implement the points described in this Charter, we will make a significant contribution to safety and health at work.

One Life Ruined is One Too Many

