



BS OHSAS 18001  
Occupational Health and  
Safety Management  
It's your duty  
Your implementation guide

# Background

**BS OHSAS 18001** is the globally recognized standard for occupational health and safety management.

To date the standard has helped organizations from all sectors and of all sizes put in place structured management frameworks to minimize their operational risks, deliver optimum working conditions and meet legal, industry and customer requirements.

But BS OHSAS 18001 is not just about protecting people – it is also essential for protecting the longevity, health and integrity of an organization.

This guide will help you understand how BS OHSAS 18001 can help you provide a safe working environment, reduce the likelihood of accidents and potential legal breaches, and improve your corporate reputation by demonstrating your commitment to best practice.

BSI can support you all the way along this journey - through training, guidance, independent assessment and software solutions.

We can help you manage your risk and secure a safer future using BS OHSAS 18001 – and with BSI your journey starts here.



# Reaping the benefits of health and safety management

No organization can afford to ignore its duty of care to its employees and members of the public. Stringent legislation and a greater awareness of employee wellbeing, mean that organizations are under increasing pressure to demonstrate that they are actively managing these risks. Failure to do so will clearly jeopardize the commercial longevity and reputation of an organization.

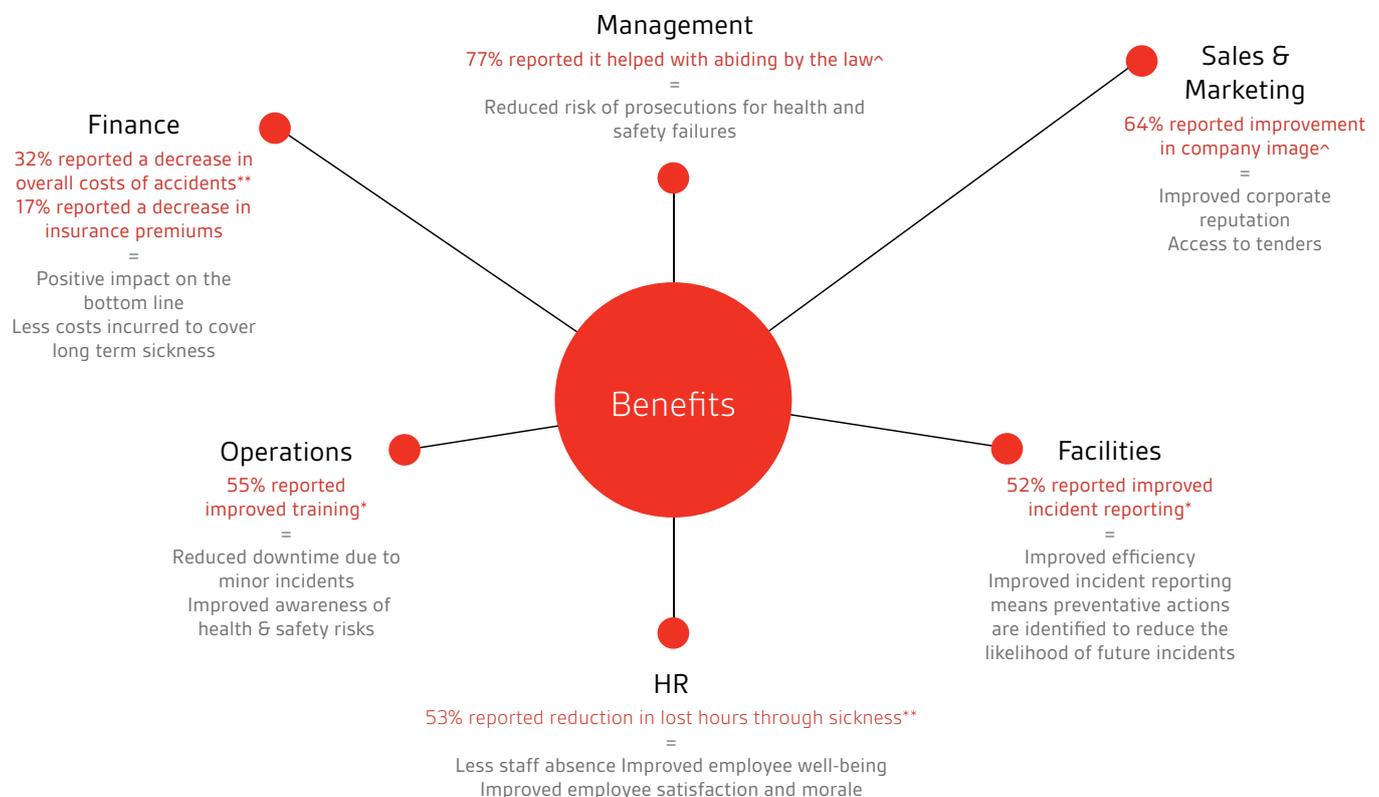
Using a management system approach can help your business address these issues.

A management system is simply a structured framework to help you manage your people, processes and resources and in the case of BS OHSAS 18001, your occupational health and safety risks.

For example your health and safety management objectives may include: reducing or eliminating operational risks and hazards, create better working conditions for employees or meeting legal, industry or customer requirements.

Whatever your focus, this guide will help you understand that you can use BS OHSAS 18001 to establish an occupational health and safety management system which is both flexible and scalable to your business and one that will be able to evolve to meet the specific needs of your market and your organization.

## Benefits which BSI clients have experienced as a result of implementing a BS OHSAS 18001 occupational health and safety management system:



Understanding and communicating the benefits above will help you structure your processes and secure commitment and support from your organization - these are critical factors for ensuring the success of your health and safety management system.

# Getting started with BS OHSAS 18001

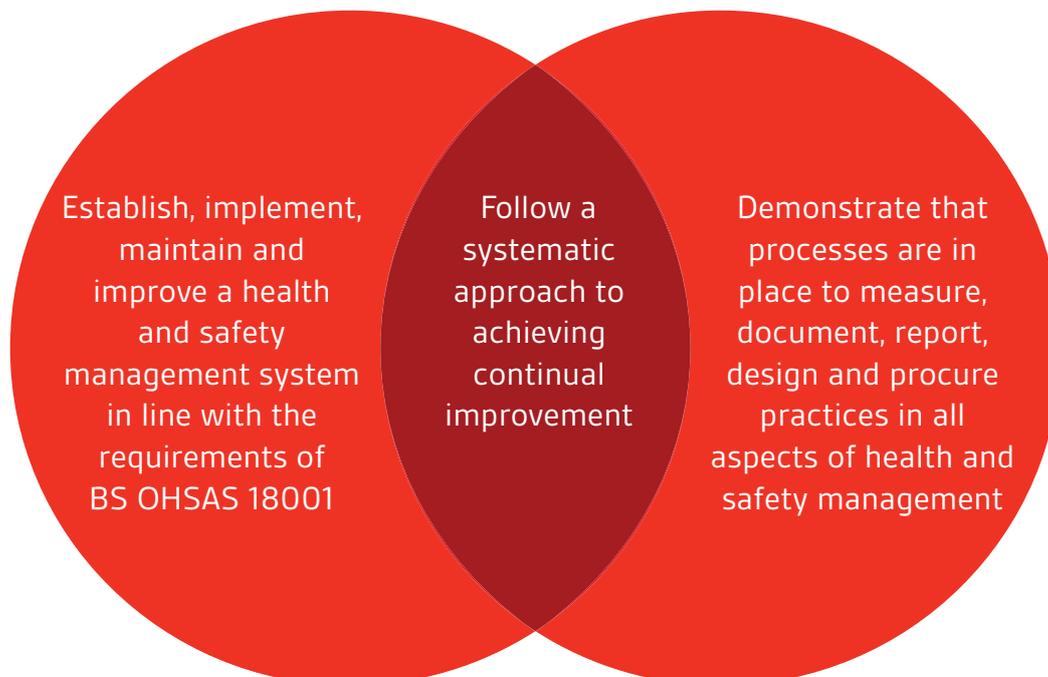
**BS OHSAS 18001** is not just applicable to high risk sectors such as waste and recycling, manufacturing, construction and engineering. The standard is suitable for any organization regardless of its size, sector or geographical location. While the standard sets out a best practice framework for health and safety management, it is written in a way which gives you the flexibility to adapt it to meet your individual business objectives.

Essentially BS OHSAS 18001 requires you to demonstrate that you take a systematic approach to ensuring your organization is legally compliant and is effectively managing potential risks and hazards. Once you have put processes and procedures in place to achieve this, the standard then asks you to review and improve your system to ensure on-going best practice and a commitment to continuous improvement.

Purchasing a copy of the standard is your first step. Then simply follow the steps in this guide to help you meet the core requirements of BS OHSAS 18001.

Learn more about the standards and guides available from BSI [bsigroup.com/Shop](https://www.bsigroup.com/Shop)

The principal requirements of the standard are illustrated below:



The next few pages of the guide will take you through more specific requirements of BS OHSAS 18001 using the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) methodology.

# Understanding the principles of continual improvement

The Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle is the operating principle of all ISO management system standards, including BS OHSAS 18001.

By following this cycle, you can effectively manage and continually improve your organization's effectiveness.

Whether you are the managing director setting the direction of the business, or an individual focusing on a specific task, the PDCA cycle is very useful in achieving continuous improvement.

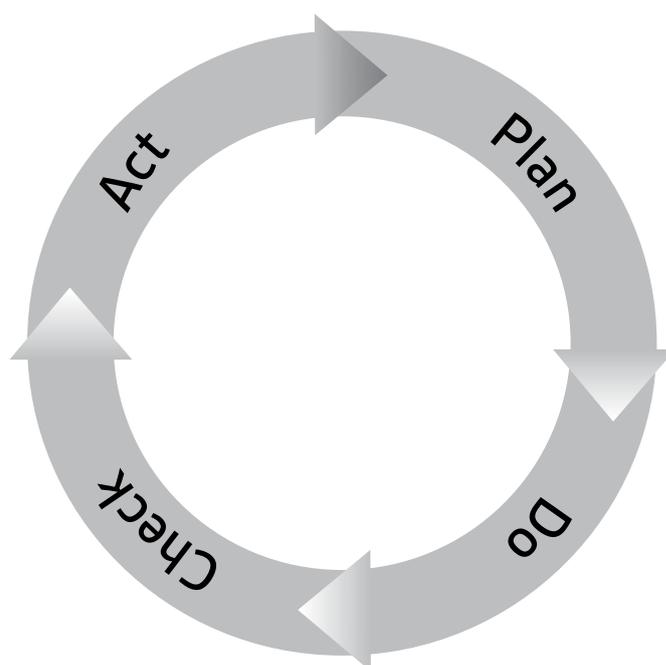
The four phases in the Plan-Do-Check-Act Cycle involve:

## Act

Correct and improve your plans to meet and exceed your planned results

## Check

Measure and monitor your actual results against your planned objectives



## Plan

Establish objectives and draft your plans (analyse your organization's current systems, establish overall objectives, set interim targets for review and develop plans to achieve them)

## Do

Implement your plans within a structured management framework



"The BS OHSAS 18001 standard has helped us deliver a step-change in the culture of our business and to manage and mitigate health and safety risks. Our on-going drive towards zero accidents and incidents resulted in the achievement of an Accident Frequency Rate (AFR) of 0.11 in 2011, which represents a reduction of 27% over the previous year and a 35% reduction in the last four years."

**Tony Blanch**, Business Improvement Director, Costain

# Plan – defining your policy, objectives and targets

BS OHSAS 18001 outlines the following planning steps in order to build a robust occupational health and safety management system:

## Hazard identification, risk assessment and controls

Use these processes to form the basis of your management system. The flexibility of the BS OHSAS 18001 standard allows you to manage the complexity of these processes relative to the size of your business, your own workplace situations and the nature and significance of your specific hazards.

## Legal and other requirements

The standard asks that you develop and evaluate procedures that enable you to identify the legal and other health and safety requirements relating to your organization.

## Objectives and programme

The way to achieve your health and safety policy is through defined objectives. When setting these make sure they are specific, measurable, agreed, realistic and time bound. Responsibility and authority for achieving these objectives need to be evident as well as a plan to review them at regular intervals.

Examples of objectives may include: to plan and implement an action plan to reduce site transport risks to a level as low as reasonably practicable within six months; or to increase usage of hearing protection in designated hearing protection zones from the present value of 20% to 100% within one year.

BSI has a range of training courses to support you on your journey.  
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## Do – implementing your health and safety management system

You have the commitment and direction from management and the necessary resources to do the job. Now it's time to put your plan into action.

### Resources and responsibility

Encourage your senior management to appoint a management representative who will ensure the availability of resources for the project. This person will assume responsibility for reporting performance and compliance of the management system against the requirements of BS OHSAS 18001.

### Competence, training and awareness

You need to ensure that your employees are competent to deliver the management system. Make sure they understand their roles and responsibilities and the importance of conforming to the health and safety policy and procedures – consider training to plug any knowledge and awareness gaps.

### Communication, participation and consultation

Participation and involvement of staff in hazard identification, risk assessments and incident investigation is necessary, as are good levels of internal communication. Your external contractors and visitors also have a role to play and must be briefed.

### Documentation and control

Consult the BS OHSAS 18001 standard to understand the essential documentation and records which you must hold, how you should control and update them. You must make sure you have a framework and procedures for managing deviation from your policy and for the review of objectives and targets. Ensure that your suppliers and contractors adhere to these too.

### Operational control

You will need to regularly check that your risk control measures are being properly managed. This includes the development of appropriate procedures and the maintenance of records. These records may relate to purchased goods, equipment and services, contractors, visitors and more.

### Emergency preparedness and response

Make sure you have plans in place to be able to respond to emergency situations and accidents and periodically test and review these plans to ensure they work.

Consider using BSI's Entropy™ Software to manage your system.  
Call us on +971 4 3364917 or visit [bsigroup.ae/entropy](https://bsigroup.ae/entropy)

# Check and Act – measurement review and improvement

Your management system is a living framework which needs to be reviewed on a regular basis. Make sure you continue to review your health and safety performance and management objectives frequently to ensure your system remains relevant and appropriate to the organization.

## Performance measurement and monitoring

A process for monitoring and measuring is required. This will give you the confidence that you are in control of your health and safety risks and should provide a mechanism to determine your progress towards achieving your objectives. Where equipment is required to monitor or measure performance, this equipment should be calibrated and records kept.

## Evaluation of compliance

Meeting and keeping abreast of legal requirements is essential, as is the evaluation and documentation of your organization's performance against these criteria.

## Incident investigation, non-conformity, corrective and preventative action

Procedures are required for the handling, investigation and analysis of accidents, incidents and non-conformities in order to eliminate the actual or potential cause. You will also be required to put in place a procedure to address non-conformities and for taking corrective and preventative actions.

## Control of records

Ensure you are able to identify, store, protect, retrieve, retain and dispose of records in accordance with the standard and ensure they remain legible.

## Internal audits

These are required at regular intervals to assess your system's suitability and on-going effectiveness. Audits provide evidence that your health and safety system is working and that you are in control. Make sure that your audits are impartial and objective.

## Management review

Your top management will need to meet periodically to ensure that the management system is still suitable and effective. Use these meetings to review your organization's policy and performance against its objectives. The review should also consider the changing business environment and the future management programme.

Consider an optional gap-analysis to help you identify any weaknesses or omissions prior to formal assessment.

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## tips on making BS OHSAS 18001 work for you

- 1 Top management commitment is vital if the system is to be introduced successfully. Make sure senior managers are actively involved, approve resources and agree the key processes of the business with regard to the system.
- 2 Review systems, policies, procedures and processes you have in place at the moment. Then compare those with what BS OHSAS 18001 asks for. You may be surprised how much you already do. The standard will allow you to keep the things that work for you while refining those that don't.
- 3 Make sure you have good internal communication channels and processes within the organization. Your employees need to be involved and kept informed of what's going on.
- 4 Give some thought to how departments work together. It's important that the people within your organization don't work in isolation but work as a team for the benefit of your customers and the business.
- 5 Don't ignore the impact that introducing these systems will have on your key stakeholders. Speak to them to gain insight as to how they feel improvements could be made.
- 6 Clearly lay out a well-communicated plan of activities and timescales. Make sure everybody understands them and their role in achieving them.
- 7 Consider using your IT systems or software such as BSI's Entropy™ Software to manage your system and documentation more efficiently. The nature and complexity of your documentation will depend on the scope of the system, the size of an organization and the nature of its activities and the organizational culture.
- 8 Use competitions and incentives to encourage input – for example an incentive for the first completed OH&S process. Make the achievement of BS OHSAS 18001 engaging and fun. This will increase motivation.
- 9 Train your staff to carry out internal audits of your system. Auditing can help with an individual's development and understanding as well as providing valuable feedback on potential problems and opportunities for improvement.
- 10 And lastly if you feel you are doing something just for the sake of the standard and it doesn't add any value to your business – question whether it's necessary.

“Our reasons for implementing BS OHSAS 18001 were predominantly customer and legislation driven, but our desire to look after the health and safety of staff and the environment were also motivating factors.”

**Stuart Coomber**, Managing Director,  
Laminar Medica

“Although we have now been awarded certification to BS OHSAS 18001, this is where the real hard work begins. As per the requirements of the standard, we are striving to constantly improve our safety record at both our sites and will continue to adapt our processes and procedures accordingly.”

**John Frazer**, BS OHSAS 18001 Coordinator,  
Goodyear Dunlop

“Independent assessment and certification to a recognized standard is an important way for us to clearly demonstrate our commitment to the safety of our employees and the wider community. By operating to a structured risk management framework, our service is in a stronger position to minimize the evident risks associated with our activities.”

**Iain Low**, Health and Safety Advisor,  
Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service

# How BSI supports you throughout your implementation of BS OHSAS 18001

## Speak to someone at BSI to help you understand the process

If you are new to management systems then we know this may seem rather daunting at first. But don't worry - just pick up the phone to speak to one of our people. We can turn jargon into English and put you on the right track for success – **simply call +971 4 3364917.**

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## Commit to best practice and start making excellence a habit

Once we have received your application, we will identify the best people to assist you on your journey – those that know your industry sector and will clearly understand your specific challenges. We also have some useful self-assessment tools to help you get started.

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## Engage your team and the rest of the organization

Success will depend on a team effort so get the backing of your organization by helping them understand how they can contribute to the system. Consider whether people have the necessary skills and if not equip them accordingly. BSI offers a number of courses, workshops and online seminars to help you plug this knowledge gap.

**Call our training team on +971 4 3364917**

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## Gain better management control with easy reporting

BS OHSAS 18001 requires that you hold and make documents and information available. You can make life easier by using BSI's web-based business improvement software which allows you to track and report all of your key metrics in real-time – call 0845 080 9000 to find out more. – **call +971 4 3364917 to find out more.**

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## Get ahead with pre-assessment and identify potential loopholes

Many BSI customers like to get reassurance that they are on the right track before committing to the official stage 1 assessment. At your discretion BSI will carry out an optional 'gap-analysis' or pre-assessment visit to help you identify any weaknesses or omissions prior to formal assessment. **Call +971 4 3364917 to book a pre-assessment.**

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## Celebrate the achievement of your official BS OHSAS 18001 certificate

BSI will assess your health and safety management system in two stages. Our 'Stage 1' visit will involve the review of the system against the requirements of the standard. 'Stage 2' verifies that your management system has been effectively implemented and that any issues raised during Stage 1 have been satisfactorily addressed. Now it is time to celebrate your success..

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## Use your certificate to promote your business

Once certified you will be able to make your own mark by displaying the BSI Assurance Mark. It's a valuable marketing tool that you can use to promote your organization; differentiate you from your competitors and win new business.

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## Help for continuous improvement

BSI's support extends far beyond the issue of a certificate. Your certificate is valid for three years, however our team will continue to work with you to ensure that your business remains compliant and you strive for continual improvement.

**Call +971 4 3364917 to find out more about BSI's Entropy™ Software which can help you manage your systems.**

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## We know BS OHSAS 18001; BSI shaped the original standard.

BSI...

- Shaped the original BS OHSAS 18001 standard
- Has the most highly trained and knowledgeable assessors
- Offers the widest range of support solutions in the market place
- Is the number one certification body in the UK, USA and Korea
- Looks after more than 70,000 global clients
- Has an unrivalled International reputation for excellence

**bsi.**



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