ACTION PROGRAMME

Once companies are allowed into the ACTION programme, there are accessed according to the criteria outlined in this document. Depending on their performance during this assessment they may be granted the following awards:

(1) **Bronze –**Safety and health management system (SHMS) should be 30 % operational and 85% compliance with the Safety and Health at work Act

(2) **Silver** –The SHMS should be at least 70% operational and 85% compliant with the Safety and Health at Work Act.

(3) **Gold** – The SHMS must be at least 95% operational. and at least 95% compliant with the Safety and Health at Work Act and

(4) **Platinum** –the same as gold but an active promoter of safety and health within the community

For further information on the programme please contact the below

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Implementing

a

Safety and Health

Management System

A COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING OUR NATION

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The following are examples of the ways that you can proactively check whether your safety and health plan is working:

- Informal workplace inspections. This could be as simple as walking the floor of the plant to see if workers are wearing their personal protective equipment, engaging in unsafe acts or ignoring safety procedures;
- Systematic workplace inspections using a checklist;
- Inspections of plant and machinery according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Unfortunately, sometimes accidents do happen and it is important that the events leading up to the accident be reviewed so that, as an organization, you can learn from the accident and prevent recurrence.

ACT

Any problems discovered during the Check phase should be corrected and where possible every effort should be made to improve performance. Improvements can often be made through very simple changes in the way that work is carried out but sometimes planning for more complex and long-term changes is necessary. Any changes in both the internal and external factors that are affecting your safety and health organization should be considered. Opportunities should then be taken to make improvements to the safety and health plan. The key would be to make continuous improvements to the way that safety and health is managed.

- **Communicate:** Information concerning the hazards that exist in the working environment should be communicated to each worker. This includes ensuring that equipment manuals and Safety Data Sheets are readily available.

- **Risk control measures:** Workers have to be protected from situations or conditions that can cause injury or ill-health. This would involve measures such as ensuring that guards are in place on dangerous machinery, good housekeeping practices are in place and suitable personal protective equipment is available. When developing control measures, priority should be given to control options which are more reliable in preventing injury and ill-health. The below hierarchy, with (1) being the most reliable and (5) being the least, provides guidance:
    1. elimination of the hazardous articles/processes;
    2. substitution of the hazardous articles/processes for a less hazardous one;
    3. institution of engineering controls to provide a physical barrier between the employee and the hazard;
    4. institution of administrative controls such as written rules, signage and warnings; and
    5. the provision and correct use of personal protective equipment

CHECK

The safety and health plan and systems implemented in the aforementioned stages should be checked to ensure that they are working effectively. It is not a good idea to wait until an accident occurs to then determine whether the safety and health plan is actually protecting the workers. It is important to be proactive.

Introduction

The Labour Department in the year 2013, developed the ACTION (A Commitment to Improving Our Nation) programme with the overall aim of promoting the management of safety and health at the enterprise level. In so doing, a number of other positive outcomes are anticipated including greater social protection of workers and better compliance with the requirements of national labour legislation.

Principles

Safety and health management systems are based on the **Plan – Do – Check – Act (PDCA)** approach which seeks to identify all safety and health risks and all opportunities to improve safety and health performance, while minimising negative outcomes. The main aim of this approach is to actively manage these risks and opportunities so that injury to workers is prevented. The four steps involved in the PDCA cycle are listed below and further explained in this document.

- **Plan**: decide what the organization wants to achieve (taking into account the needs of interested parties, risks and opportunities), and put in place the necessary processes and resources.

- **Do**: put the plans into action.

- **Check**: monitor processes and measure performances against requirements and what you want to achieve.

- **ACT**: take actions on lessons learned and improve performance

PLAN

It is important that you understand the hazards that are associated with your business and what you need to do to prevent workplace ill health and injuries. In this regard consideration needs to be given to both internal and external factors which can affect the safety and health performance of your company

External factors could include:
- Demands of suppliers and contractors;
- Expectations of consumers, visitors and local communities;
- Local and International regulations.

Internal factors could include:
- Size, nature and activities of the business;
- Resources, knowledge and competence available to the company;
- Technologies and equipment used in the workplace.

Bear in mind that even though small organisations often have less complex safety and health issues than larger ones, this is not always the case. A small company, based on the nature of its operations and the associated hazards, may have safety and health issues that must be properly managed. The detail that goes into the planning phase of the cycle should be commensurate with the complexity of the hazards that exist in the company, regardless of size. The planning would typically involve the following elements:

- **Health and Safety Policy:** This is usually a one-page statement which outlines the company's commitment to certain safety and health objectives. It includes a commitment to ensuring that the necessary resources are made available for maintaining high standards of safety and health.

- **Hazard identification, risk assessment and controls:** Hazard identification helps the organization to recognize and understand hazards in the workplace in order to plan how to eliminate them and reduce the risks. The process should identify work-related sources, situations or circumstances with the potential to cause injury or ill-health

- **Legal and other requirements**

- **Set safety and health objectives and targets:** Examples of objectives and targets that could be set include:
    - 100% of employees wearing personal protective equipment correctly and at appropriate times
    - 100% compliance with Safety and Health at Work Act

DO
The decisions that were taken in the Planning stage of the cycle now have to be implemented. To do this, attention needs to be given to the following:

- **Organization:** All members of the organisation need to be given responsibility and made accountable for ensuring different aspects of the safety and health plan are carried out.

- **Consultation:** It is important to get the buy-in of all employees. Since they are often at the front line of the work activities, they have valuable insights on the existing hazards and measures that can be used to protect themselves. Employees should be consulted in the development of measures that will improve safety and health standards in the workplace.

- **Training, awareness and competence:** It should not be taken for granted that workers know how to work safely. Thus training, supervision and mentoring are often needed.