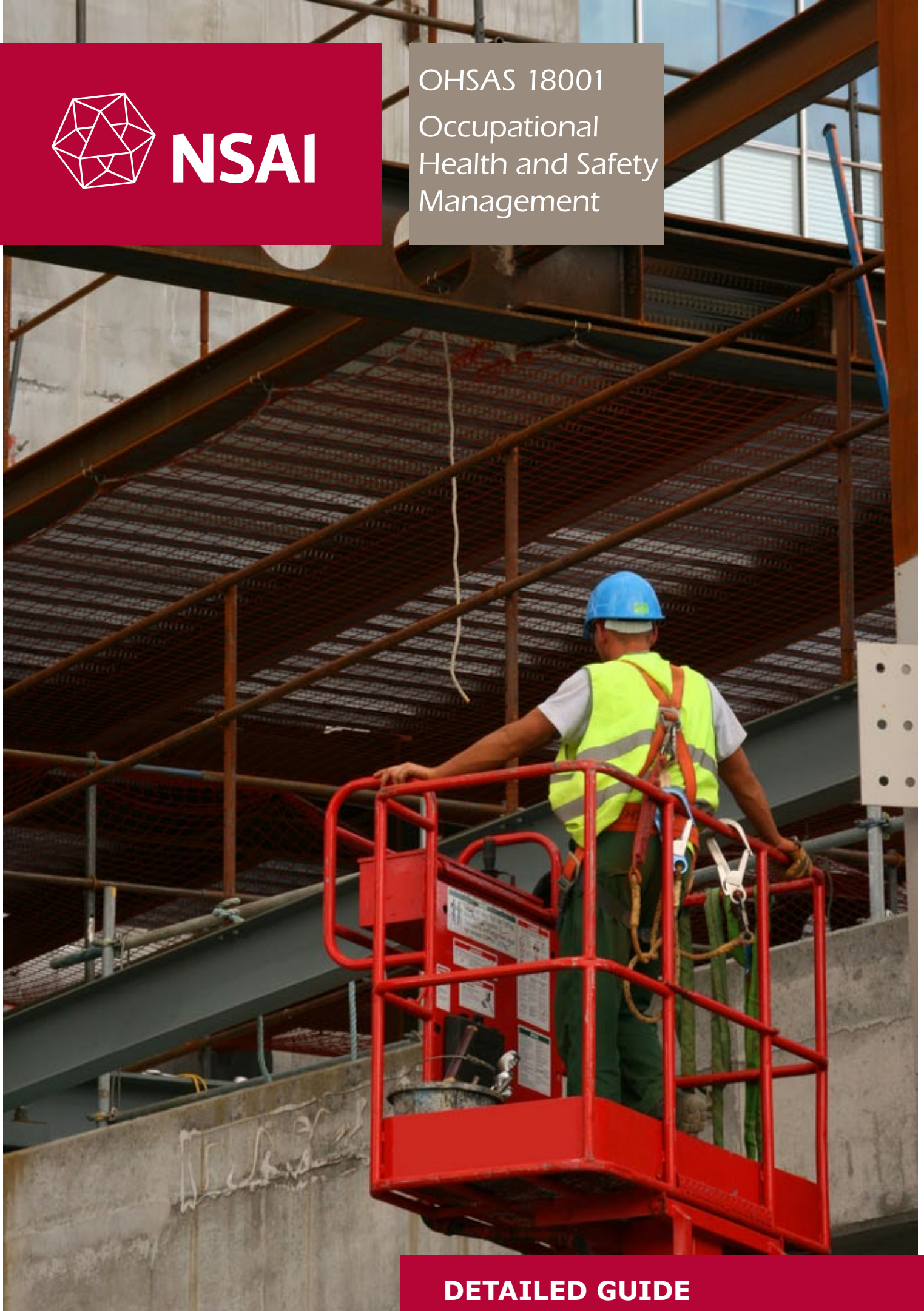




**NSAI**

OHSAS 18001  
Occupational  
Health and Safety  
Management



**DETAILED GUIDE**



# OHSAS 18001 Background

OHSAS 18001:2007 and accompanying OHSAS 18002, Guidelines for the implementation of OHSAS 18001, have been developed in response to customer demand for a recognizable occupational health and safety management system standard against which their management system can be assessed and verified.

OHSAS 18001 has been developed to be compatible with ISO 9001:2008 (Quality) and ISO 14001:2004 (Environmental) management systems standards, in order to facilitate the integration of quality, environmental and occupational health and safety management systems by organisations, should they wish to do so.

Organisations of all kinds are increasingly concerned with achieving and demonstrating sound occupational health and safety (OH&S) performance by controlling their OH&S risks, consistent with their policy and objectives. They do so in the context of increasingly stringent legislation, the development of policies and other measures that foster good OH&S practices.

## The advantages of an effective OHSAS management system:

- > • Provides a structured approach for managing OH&S
- > • Establishes and maintains a commitment to occupational health and safety
- > • Demonstrates strong commitment to safety excellence
- > • Organisational structures in place with clear roles and responsibilities
- > • Existence of a continuous improvement culture
- > • Strong levels of trust and communication
- > • Reduction in incident levels with increased measures of performance.
- > • Contributes to business performance by reducing cost and liabilities.



Organizations which have attained registration through NSAI maintain that it leads to improved internal and external communications and a more disciplined attitude among employees to health and safety matters through continuous improvement. OHSAS ensures a consistency of approach, which assures compliance as a minimum.

# Fundamental Elements of OHSAS 18001



Occupational Health and Safety is based on:

- > Hazard identification
  - The process of recognizing that a hazard exists (source or situation with the potential to cause harm in terms of human injury or ill-health)
- > Risk assessment
  - The process of evaluating the risk arising from the hazard (combination of the likelihood of a hazardous event or exposure and the severity of injury or ill health that can be caused by the event of exposure)
- > Determination of applicable controls
  - Measures relevant to eliminate or reduce risk to an acceptable level. Measures are based on the hierarchy of control measures.

In order to achieve an effective health and safety system it is vital for organizations to handle these with greater significance. The three aspects above provide the ever important foundation for implementing OHSAS 18001 and without them, the overall system would surely fail. They are, theoretically, considered a part of the 'PLAN' step (explained later), but most auditors and consultants agree that these aspects should be dealt with before designing the system as a whole.

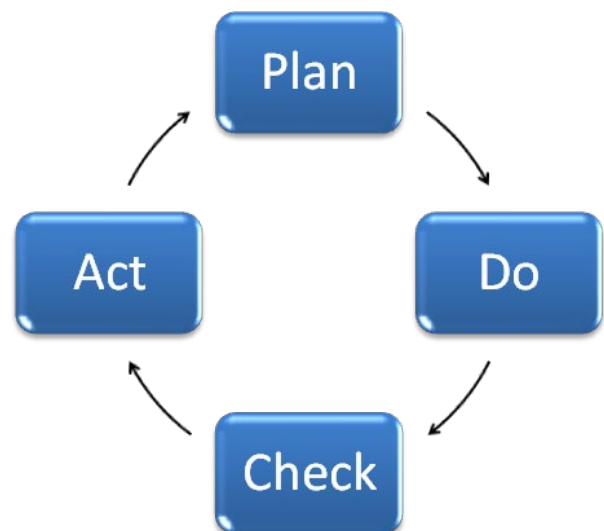
OHSAS 18001 Occupational Health and Safety Standard uses a management approach tool called the PDCA cycle. PDCA is an ongoing process that enables an organisation to establish, implement and maintain its health and safety policy based on top management leadership and commitment to the safety management system. It consists of the following:

**Plan** – establish the objectives and processes necessary to deliver results in accordance with the organisation's OH&S policy

**Do** –implement the process

**Check** –monitor and measure performance against OH&S policy, objectives, legal and other requirements, and report results

**Act** – take actions to continually improve OH&S performance



The standard can be implemented to your whole organization or to just a part of it. The best results though come when the whole organization is working on the same system and OH&S policy is integrated into other management systems and into the culture of the organization.



## Understanding the Detail

### Plan

The planning stage of the process requires the organization to:

- > • Devise an OH&S policy
- > • Plan for hazard identification, risk assessment and determination of controls
- > • Identify relevant legal requirements
- > • Plan for emergencies and responses
- > • Manage change effectively
- > • Devise procedures for performance measuring, monitoring and improvement
- > • Provide and ensure the appropriate use of safety equipment
- > • Train in order to introduce an OH&S culture and establish the importance of organization's safety statement, policies and objectives
- > • Consult employees and communicate



At first, the management has to be consulted in order for them to feel confident in supporting the new system and constantly driving it forward. Then the workforce has to be consulted. It is very likely that the lower level employees have valuable insight, ideas and feedback about the new system. Since they are the ones that are going to be most affected by it, it is logical to ensure they believe and understand the need for change. Failure to realize this could result into much resistance throughout your organization and thus result in a system that is impractical to operate.

### Do

The implementation stage should be the easiest part of this process. If the planning stage is done the right way then it is just a matter of following the documentation and procedures that have been created. In order to ensure smooth implementation a lead senior manager should be in charge of the new OH&S system and at the same time each element of the process should have an 'owner' or a person that looks after that part of the system. This ensures the appropriate structure at your organization and effectively minimizes risk.

It is advisable to start the implementation by breaking the system down into specific elements rather than tackling it as a whole. Concentrating on specific elements in a logical order creates a solid foundation for the whole system to work efficiently.

Another important aspect of health and safety is having employees do the jobs that are suited to their competencies. A matrix should be created showing all groups of personnel, their required competencies, training and status of each. These formal procedures should instil the required awareness within your organization.

# Understanding the Detail



## Check

The third step of the PDCA cycle consists of the following:

- > • Conducting internal audits
- > • Evaluation of legal compliance
- > • Identifying non-conformities and addressing them
- > • Thorough analysis of incidents and incidental data
- > • Measuring performance and monitoring

The failure to conduct internal audits periodically will most likely result in the breakdown of the system as a whole. It often happens that where there is no control, risks tend to arise especially quickly.

Any arising non-conformities should be tackled instantly using the devised corrective actions. The most effective and robust systems ensure that this process runs smoothly at all times. This means that the performance of this process should be measured as well and any non-conformities have to be dealt with. It is not only the arising non-conformities that your organization needs to think about. It's crucial for your organization to identify any possible emergencies and develop relevant response procedures, this is called preventative action.

When devising controls and measuring performance it is important to strike a balance between being overly bureaucratic and overly light on certain elements of the system. The OHSAS 18001 Occupational Health and Safety Management Specification is not supposed to hinder the performance of your organization but improve it.

## Act

The final step is the management review, it is a vital part of the continuous improvement process and so the standard itself outlines what should be included in such a review.

Management review is done by the senior management and involves reviewing the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the system. It should also include assessing opportunities for improvement and the necessity to change the OH&S policy and the OH&S objectives. If changes are needed, the senior management should also provide the necessary resources for their implementation. Providing resources is a way of presenting commitment to the new health and safety system.





# Key Steps To Getting Certified for OHSAS 18001 by NSAI

## 1. Applying

You can make certification application through our online quotations form or by phone, fax and email. We will review all the information and provide you with a company specific quotation. Our quotations cover a three-year period corresponding to the certification cycle and are calculated to make sure that every customer receives the certification service best suited to their needs.

## 2. Gap Assessment

Applicants can proceed at their own pace, with assessment dates arranged to suit. If you are unsure whether you are ready to undergo assessment for registration, we can offer you a Gap Assessment, in which we:

- > • Conduct an on-site analysis of your current system
- > • Assess this against the relevant standard
- > • Prepare a report highlighting the gaps between your current system and the standard.

A gap assessment is optional and is not a requirement of the certification process.

## 3. Preliminary assessment – stage 1

The Preliminary Assessment involves an inspection of your documentation and a review ranging over various areas including:

- > • The proposed scope of your registration
- > • The status of implementation of your management system
- > • The appropriate regulatory and legal requirements
- > • Your management policies and objectives
- > • Whether the system addresses the key areas of your business
- > • Your site-specific activities – top level process review
- > • Your key management elements, e.g. internal audits, reviews and complaints procedures
- > • Your readiness to move onto Stage 2 of the assessment, the Registration Assessment.

The Preliminary Assessment normally takes place on-site. We recommend an interval of several weeks between the Preliminary Assessment and the Registration Assessment to allow time to resolve any issues arising from the Preliminary Assessment.

After the Preliminary Assessment is completed, we will produce a brief report evaluating your readiness to proceed to the next stage and identifying any areas that need to be improved before moving to Stage 2.

If the Preliminary Assessment finds that your organization is not ready for full Registration Assessment, it becomes, in effect, a Gap Assessment. That means that a second Preliminary Assessment will have to be carried out.

# Key Steps To Getting Certified for OHSAS 18001 by NSAI



## 4. Registration assessment – stage 2

The Registration Assessment (Stage 2) involves a full review of your management system, including relevant records and documents. Its purpose is to confirm that your management system is properly controlled and has predictable outcomes.

At the end of the Registration Assessment, NSAI issues a detailed report, together with the outcome (whether to recommend registration or not). We will identify any issues found during the assessment. You in turn will be expected to submit an action plan detailing what changes are planned to be made to the management system to eliminate or reduce the risk of the same issues re-occurring.

## 5. Surveillance and re-assessment

At least once a year, NSAI visits each registered company to ensure the management system is being maintained and is achieving its expected outcomes. During each visit, part of the management system is reviewed in depth.

Certificates expire every three years, with the expiry date indicated on the certificate. Before that date, we undertake a detailed reassessment, reviewing the performance of the whole management system to make sure every element is performing satisfactorily. The results of the previous visits are taken into account.

During the period of registration, changes are inevitable. NSAI works with each registered organization to make sure the management system remains sound. Normally, change can be reviewed and assessed during routine surveillance visits. In cases where change leads to the breakdown of the system, NSAI reserves the right to suspend or revoke certification.

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