

Chapter 2

Organisational Development for Occupational Health and Safety Management

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How occupational health and safety management (OHSM) is implemented is important. A more systematic and integrated approach to OHSM makes regulation, advice, and local cooperation on occupational health and safety (OHS) more effective and efficient. Discussion of OHSM is therefore central to consideration of the organisation and regulation of OHS. This chapter aims to provide an overview of what implementing OHSM requires of employers and their organisations, and of the obstacles to, and factors supporting, its implementation.

Central to this discussion are three key concepts. The first is 'occupational health and safety management' which is variously specified in a growing number of regulations, standards and marketed OHSM systems. I use the definition of OHSM as 'a limited number of mandated principles for a systematic management of OHS, applicable to all types of employers including the small ones' (Frick et al 2000, p 3). This explicitly distinguishes OHSM from the more complex and highly specified OHSM systems. Secondly, I use the term 'organisations' in the broad sense of employers, who have legal responsibilities, and their firms, in which these legal requirements are to be implemented. Organisations include a range of private sector firms as well as government agencies, schools, hospitals and other public sector organisations. The chapter discusses the development of OHSM in a range of organisations but does not address the special problems that small firms may have in implementing OHSM. (These are addressed in Chapter 4 in this volume, by Walters and Lamm, and see also Walters 2001.) The third key

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