One company's journey towards ISO 45001 certification

We asked early adopters preparing for ISO 45001 certification how they were getting on. Here, IOSH member Toni Baran gives her organisation's story so far.

Name of organisation	AB Glass
Size (number of employees)	37
Sector	Manufacturing and construction
Location	Swansea
Main OSH hazards	- Work at height - Manual handling - Machinery saws/crimpers - Forklift operations - Power tools/vibration - Use of chemicals
Existing certifications	- ISO 9001 - CHAS - Green Dragon L5

What are your organisation's main reasons for seeking ISO 45001 certification?

To develop an up-to-date comprehensive health and safety system which integrates with our existing 9001:2015 and provides a framework for continual improvement of our operations and enables the organisation to develop a strong safety culture which will involve all the workforce.

What are your organisation's first steps towards gaining top management commitment (eg raise at Board level or other internal committee)?

Establishment of health and safety ISO 45001 steering committee with Director and Managing Director on board. Items covered include development of OH&S Manual and associated processes which comply with ISO 45001 to provide framework for new system.

At the outset of the process

What are your organisation's main strengths regarding OSH?

- Manager commitment, willingness of top management to be involved in health and safety and to change to a new system eg introducing processes and flowcharts instead of pages of old-style procedures.
- Motivated and diverse workforce with different skills able to contribute to introduction and development of the system.
- Sufficient resources, IT equipment, expertise and staff numbers etc.
- Understanding of Annex SL and pre-existing attainment of 9001:2015 which has elements common to ISO 45001

What are your organisation's main areas for improvement re OSH?

- Staff involvement in health and safety at all levels within company
- Developing a comprehensive positive safety culture
- Ensuring all sites and diverse activities are incorporated including office, manufacturing in factory, transport, site operations etc
- Developing a pro-active approach to health and safety throughout the organisation

What are the main challenges your organisation faces and how will they be overcome?

The main challenges are insufficient time and staff available to focus on developing the new system amongst dealing with general health and safety issues. Co-ordinating the new system with directly employed staff, subcontractors, different sites and diverse activities and risks was quite a challenge.

The lack of an existing externally audited health and safety system such as 18001 proved to be an obstacle as management were not used to having to be so involved and demonstrating commitment to the system or having a thorough audit of the system. Conversely, we were able to start with a blank canvas and came up with completely new ways of approaching health and safety management such as the introduction of processes using flowcharts and documented information eg email correspondence rather than procedures.

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What sources of information about ISO 45001 have you used so far?

Primarily the draft ISO 45001 documents downloaded from the IOSH website, general IOSH information and forums on ISO 45001, BSI updates on developments of the new standard, Annex SL which is common to ISO 45001 and 9001:20015 quality standard. General online searches including information provided by ISO audit companies and LinkedIn Groups.

What do you anticipate the benefits of ISO 45001 certification will be to your organisation?

There are several benefits to ISO 45001 certification. Within our organisation it will ensure we follow a standard that: incorporates top management commitment at all stages, allows for worker involvement, emphasises the continual improvement element of the Plan-Do-Check-Act model including review and preventive action, considers the operating context of the organisation in addition to being aligned with company objectives and existing 9001 system.

It will provide clients, customers and the public with confidence in our health and safety operations as it provides evidence we are working to the highest and most up-to-date standard which is recognised and respected internationally.

Once you have gained certification to ISO 45001, would you be willing to provide an update to your case study?

Yes, however at this stage, we are not sure if we will seek certification as soon as the standard is introduced. The exercise has been invaluable whether we gain the accreditation or not. By following the draft principles of ISO 45001 it has enabled the organisation to completely re-evaluate its approach to health and safety in a straightforward logical way and ensures we continually improve our standards.

Are you an ISO 45001 early adopter with your own story to tell? Complete our case study template which is available at **www.iosh.co.uk/45001template**