

First Steps When Choosing a Safety and Occupational Health Management System at Your Organization

Choosing a safety and occupational health management system (SOHMS) best suited to your organization can be a trying endeavor. Your organization needs to consider safety and health (S&H) needs, organizational priorities and goals, and what you hope to achieve with SOHMS implementation. Use this one pager to help choose which SOHMS is best suited for your organization!

REVIEW AND INVESTIGATE SOHMS OPTIONS

Some Department of Defense (DoD) Services and Agencies, and even individual Commands, set their own SOHMS criteria and expectations for you to follow. Others decide to follow a nationally- or internationally-recognized SOHMS model. Do some investigating and determine if your leadership or headquarters command require a specific SOHMS—it could make your selection easy! If your Service, Agency, or Command established an SOHMS preference, then prepare to implement that model.

Examples of SOHMS Models Used within the DoD			
Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP)	International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 45001, Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems (OHSMS)	American National Standards Institute (ANSI)/American Society of Safety Professionals (ASSP) Z10.0, OHSMS	Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Safety Management System (SMS)
Service-specific (e.g., Army Safety and Occupational Health Management Systems (ASOHMS) /Corps of Engineers (CE)-SOHMS, Air Force SMS)			

If your organization has the opportunity to choose which SOHMS criteria to implement, refer to the following information to help select the SOHMS best suited for your organization. Look at several SOHMS models and become familiar with each model by researching their websites and the [SMCX website](#). While many of the SOHMS models are similar, there are differences. Look at the specific criteria to determine if the SOHMS supports your organizational goals and priorities. Also, reach out to other organizations who have successfully implemented SOHMS models to discuss implementation, possible obstacles, and the benefits experienced.

DETERMINE ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Think about your organization’s goals for a SOHMS. What are you trying to accomplish?

Do you simply want to have a SOHMS in place? Do you want to emphasize employee involvement? Do you want to seek formal recognition from a third party? Is a SOHMS a priority at your organization? Is integrating S&H into other business processes a priority? Does the SOHMS align with your strategic plan?

Knowing what you want to accomplish will help you choose a SOHMS aligned with your organization’s aspirations.



REVIEW BUDGET AND RESOURCES

Evaluate your organization's budget and available resources to implement the SOHMS successfully.

What do you need to implement a SOHMS? What resources are already in place? Do you have enough personnel to lead SOHMS efforts? Will the SOHMS require additional training? How much time will you allocate to completing SOHMS-related tasks? Does the budget need revised?

Know how much funding and what resources are available and share this data with leadership and management before going forward.



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DETERMINE THE SCOPE OF THE SOHMS

Determine the scope of SOHMS implementation. Look at the overall mission and operations within each work area or facility you think you want to include in your SOHMS. If the mission and work operations differ vastly, you may consider choosing a different SOHMS model for each.

Will the SOHMS include just a few work areas, or all work areas? Is your organization geographically separated, maybe in a different county or state? If so, will the SOHMS include geographically-separated facilities? Who do you expect to lead your SOHMS efforts, especially if your facilities have different geographical locations?

HOLD A LEADERSHIP/MANAGEMENT REVIEW AND MOVE FORWARD

Set up a meeting with leadership, management, and other key players to discuss SOHMS possibilities. Key players may include: S&H staff, facility managers, industrial hygiene staff, S&H trainers, bargaining unit representatives, environmental staff, resource managers, and supervisors from different work areas in your organization.

Discuss the highlights and benefits of each SOHMS, why it would have a positive impact on your organization's S&H programs and culture, and any additional resources you may need to implement the criteria. Be upfront about the potential obstacles and concerns for implementing the SOHMS criteria. Be prepared to discuss the possibility of using different SOHMS models, if needed.

Work with leadership to make a final decision on the SOHMS to implement. Once your leadership makes the final decision, you can move forward with implementing your SOHMS criteria.

For more information on making a case for and implementing a SOHMS, see the SMCX one pagers:

***“The Case for a SOHMS”
“First Steps When Implementing a SOHMS”***

For additional information on the SMCX's services, please visit the SMCX-hosted website at: <https://www.smcx.org/>.



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