



BS OHSAS 18001 Health and Safety Management

CASE STUDY RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

Summary

Needs

- Identify and control health and safety risks
- Reduce the potential for accidents
- Demonstrate compliance with health and safety legislation
- Achieve employee buy-in
- Maintain continual improvement

Benefits

- 38% reduction in the number of working days lost through industrial injury
- Increased awareness of health and safety in the workplace
- Positive cultural change within the organisation
- Increased employee involvement in improving standards for the provision of safe service
- Significant increase in the number of employees gaining qualifications accredited by the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health
- Employee access to occupational health services
- Continual improvement ensuring world class health and safety standards



Renfrewshire Council Chief Executive,
Service Directors, Elected Members and
staff receiving their certificate from BSI.

Background

Renfrewshire Council is based in the west central region of Scotland and has approximately 9,500 employees. It is responsible for the provision of all local authority services delivered through eight services for 178,000 people. Renfrewshire is one of the first local authorities in Scotland to achieve the recognised health and safety management standard, BS OHSAS 18001.

Customer Needs

Renfrewshire Council has always worked to best practice by complying with the British Standard, BS 8800 and the Health Safety Guide, HSG 65. Brian Mitchell, Personnel Manager Health and Safety, chose to embark on BS OHSAS 18001 to encourage employee buy-in and catalyse a cycle of continual improvement.

Since the inception of the process in September 2001, Renfrewshire Council has rolled out the standard across all services, concluding with Environmental Services, which gained certification in March 2009.

Benefits

David Marshall Head of Personnel Services – Corporate Services, notes that 'since the initial introduction of BS OHSAS 18001 during 2001, the authority has seen a 38% decrease in the number of working days lost through industrial injury. This trend is helped by the increased awareness of health and safety in the workplace and the efforts by services to improve their health and safety performance'.

Since implementing BS OHSAS 18001, Renfrewshire Council has seen a number of benefits leading to a marked change in the culture of the organisation. Each of the eight services within the Council is increasingly taking ownership of health and safety and ensuring employees are involved in improving standards for the provision of safe services.

Since the introduction of this health and safety management system standard, there has been a significant increase in the number of employees gaining qualifications accredited by the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health such as: Managing Safely, Supervising Safely and Working Safely.

As part of the overall strategy for meeting these standards Renfrewshire Council employees now have access to occupational health services, which, David Marshall notes, 'is proving very beneficial to increasing numbers of employees.'

Implementation of the management system also demonstrates to Council employees and stakeholders that there is a robust health and safety management system in place that is compliant with BS OHSAS 18001.

The standard increasingly demands measurable performance indicators and Renfrewshire Council intends to use independent assessors to eventually allow the Council to benchmark its efforts against other local authorities and the private sector, including setting a standard for their suppliers to aspire to.

BSI's Role

By working in partnership with BSI, Renfrewshire Council has been able to achieve a high standard in health and safety management for its service users and providers. The ongoing audit system delivered by independent auditors demands continual improvement, thereby ensuring that world-class health and safety standards at Renfrewshire Council services are maintained.

Brian Mitchell explains that, 'Renfrewshire Council chose BSI as its business partner because of its international reputation for excellence. As one of the largest and most respected management systems registrars in the world, it provides a service of the highest quality and integrity'.

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