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Consequences of non-compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act in the workplace



Non-compliance with occupational health and safety legislation and company procedures can have an undesirable effect on a workplace, leading to loss of life and limb and reduced income, to mention but a few.

Compliance with and monitoring of the health and safety programme are therefore of utmost importance for a business to reduce these work-related risks. In our series on occupational health and safety in the workplace, we discussed *the implications of non-compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)*.

In this week's blog we look at the consequences of non-compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act in the workplace.

What are the consequences of non-compliance in the workplace?

The absence of an effective health and safety management programme can affect the health and safety culture within the business, which in turn could have a disastrous impact on life, production, business continuation, time and money.

What are the consequences of a poor health and safety ethos (attitude)?

With a poor health and safety culture, employees tend to lose focus, interest and motivation to continue their work in a safe manner, which may lead to an increase in ill-health, injuries and even death. These risks could have the following consequences:

- Increase in absenteeism and staff turnaround
- Decline in output of production
- Loss of time and cost of time
- Increase in contributions to the Workmen's Compensation Fund
- Reduced quality of product and work.

What are the consequences of an ineffective health and safety programme?

Time, money, production, public perception and legal liability all have a major influence on the business's ability to remain operational, which in itself is a legal requirement.

- For example, when an employee suffers a fatal injury, people immediately respond on social media with allegations of poor health and safety management. This influences multiple facets of the business, including production, income, legal liability and business reputation. The public perception of a business can result in the business closing, which in turn increases unemployment in South Africa.

Implementation of an effective health and safety management system

It was found that effective health and safety programmes, and consequently fewer injuries, can improve morale, reduce absenteeism and enhance productivity, which in turn leads to better profit margins.

SERR Synergy's integrated *health and safety programme* merges all legislative systems and processes into one central interrelated framework that drives business excellence and ensures continual improvement. We guide clients through all the realities of compliance with occupational health and safety legislation. If your organisation needs an Occupational Health and Safety overview, policy or a safety manual, *contact us* today to find out more about our integrated health and safety programme.

About the author: Ilse-Marie van de Wall started her career as a Human Resources and Industrial Relations Practitioner in 2007. She holds a degree from the University of Pretoria and certificates in both NEBOSH and SAMTRAC. She is currently busy with a National Diploma in Safety Management at UNISA. As a professional Health and Safety Practitioner she is registered with SAIOSH and the SACPCMP. She started with SERR Synergy in 2016 as an Occupational Health and Safety Practitioner and currently holds the title of National Occupational Health and Safety Manager.

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