

Safety Management Systems

– Why They Fail and How to Avoid It

Presentation by Clive Brookes to the
Revitalising Network
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Some SMS systems

- BSC 5 star
- ISRS and bespoke derivatives
- BS 18001
- Du Pont
- Bespoke in-house

ISRS Management Control Model

- Identify causes of loss
- Standard setting to reduce losses
- Measuring
- Evaluating
- Commending and Correcting error

“ISMEC”

Reasons for Failure

- Companies
- Sector culture
- Senior Management
- Middle Management
- Line Management
- People in the company
- Safety advisers
- Inflexibilities of proprietary SMS systems
- Inadequately scoped bespoke systems
- Consultants

Companies

- Size and Growth Rate
- Existing Culture
 - Management style, Alan Sugar or sugar?
 - Command or consensus?

“You can’t make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear”

Sector Culture

- Risk profile
- Conservative or progressive?
- Bench markers?
- Public and customer perceptions and drivers
- Size

The next slide is where it can really go
wrong - **BIGTIME**

Board/Senior Management

- Latest fad in a history of fads
- Too many issues on the agenda
- Power politics splits
- SMS is associated with a faction
- Needs more than a champion – it needs unity
- Board is technically naïve and does not understand the beast
- Better realise that SMS is a call to change management

Change management is only successful
when management change

Middle Management

- Day to day pressures and deadlines
- Age profile
- Stick in mud
- Diversity of experience, qualifications
- Empowered or not
- Confusing messages
- No clear strategy
- Engagement – not convinced and educated

Line management/supervisors

- The whole company culture has to be one that will allow SMS seeds to grow and be nurtured
- Will make or break it
- Engagement and education
- What's in it for me?

Safety department

- Made responsible for implementation
- Incompetence / failed line managers shifted sideways
- Lack of training
- Lack of wide experience
- Not looking for big picture
- Not getting backing

Next follows the most important slide dealing
with the most important ingredient

People

- Actions speak louder than words
- They must believe or you are lost
- (in time) Build in performance indicators to individuals targets (and remuneration?)
- Sort out your accident / incident / investigation procedures
- Always follow up recommendations
- Deliver and audit on deadlines

Ohm's Law and people

Rebels 4%	High Performers 20%
"M&M S" 16%	Main Stays 60%

SMS

They tend to give you the objective but not the detailed method of implementation

Inflexibilities of proprietary SMS systems

- Insistence on rigid compliance to allow external accreditation and verification
- Poor on contractor interfaces and project management
- Health issues do not follow COSHH requirements
- Forgetting some SMSs are not UK but globally orientated
- SMS compliance is not legal compliance
- Biting off more than you can chew - All the SMS system components are started at once

Inadequately scoped bespoke systems

- Stripping out key features – emasculation
(paper)
- Highlights the wrong runners and riders
- False weighting (engineering)
- Monitoring inadequacies

SMS Consultants

- Beware epiphytes and worse, parasites
- Foot in door
- Sell you what you don't necessarily need
- Will sell you training and audit

What should we do?

Everyone sing along.....

“It ain’t what you do - it’s the way
that you do it,
that’s what gets results”

Or another view of –
what should we do?

Don't panic Mr Mainwaring

Think 3-5 years out

Think COMMEND before correct

You cannot communicate too much

A few ideas but pick your own strategy

What should we do?

- Identify your risk portfolio properly
- Get the Board to back the risk control strategy
- Don't set out to do more than you have to
- Engage the management and workforce
- Get quick wins under your belts
- Take the best from proprietary systems
- Ensure prioritisation and closure

More do-dos

- Near miss reporting / investigation system
- Instant feedback and commitment to an answer
- No fanfares – stealth- bring in board behaviours change
- Major on structured workplace inspection
- Top down set the middle management thinking
- Quick wins
- Things easily done by directors but with big impact
- Read INDG 277

Avez-vous des questions s'il vous plait?