

4.4 Evaluate strategies to sustain safety performance during transition and transformation.

Learning Outcome

By the end of this session, learners should be able to evaluate strategies that sustain Occupational Health, Safety, Environment, and Sustainability (OHSES) performance during periods of organisational transition and transformation. Learners will examine the importance of communication, monitoring, workforce engagement, and continual improvement in maintaining safety standards throughout organisational change.

Introduction

Organisational transitions such as restructuring, mergers, technological change, expansion, or digital transformation often create uncertainty and introduce new risks. During these periods, maintaining safety performance becomes a strategic priority. Effective communication, continuous monitoring, active workforce engagement, and regular review of controls help organisations minimise disruption while ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of employees.

1. Communication Strategies During Organisational Change

Clear and timely communication reduces uncertainty and helps employees understand how changes affect their roles and responsibilities.

Effective communication should:

- Explain the purpose and benefits of the change.
- Communicate new hazards and control measures.
- Encourage two-way communication and feedback.
- Provide regular updates throughout the transition.

Example: Before introducing new machinery, management informs employees about operational changes, provides training, and answers questions to ensure safe implementation.

2. Monitoring and Assurance Mechanisms During Transition Periods

Safety performance should be closely monitored throughout organisational change to ensure controls remain effective.

Common assurance mechanisms include:

- Workplace inspections
- Internal audits
- Safety observations
- Incident and near-miss reporting
- KPI monitoring
- Management reviews

These activities help identify problems early and support timely corrective actions.

3. Maintaining Workforce Engagement and Reporting Culture

Employees play a vital role in sustaining safety during change.

Organisations should:

- Involve employees in risk assessments.
- Encourage reporting of hazards and near misses.
- Consult workers before implementing significant changes.
- Recognise and reward positive safety behaviours.

A strong reporting culture promotes learning and prevents incidents.

4. Continuous Review and Adjustment of Controls

Organisational change is dynamic, so risk controls should be regularly reviewed and updated.

Review activities may include:

- Evaluating incident trends.
- Monitoring performance indicators.
- Reviewing audit findings.
- Gathering employee feedback.
- Updating procedures where necessary.

Continual improvement ensures that safety performance does not decline as organisational changes evolve.

International Standards Supporting Safety During Change

- ISO 45001:2018 – Leadership, consultation, performance evaluation, and continual improvement.
- ISO 31000:2018 – Risk management throughout organisational change.
- ISO 22301:2019 – Business continuity and organisational resilience.
- ISO 14001:2015 – Managing environmental impacts during organisational transformation.

Practical Case Study

Scenario

A manufacturing company introduces a new automated production line.

To sustain safety performance, management:

- Conducts regular employee briefings.
- Provides training before implementation.
- Monitors safety KPIs weekly.
- Encourages reporting of near misses.
- Reviews risk assessments after installation.
- Updates procedures based on employee feedback.

As a result, productivity improves while maintaining a strong safety record and high employee confidence.

Critical Evaluation

Sustaining safety performance during organisational transition requires more than introducing new controls. Success depends on effective communication, continuous monitoring, workforce participation, and leadership commitment. Organisations that actively review performance data and adapt controls throughout the transition are more likely to maintain operational stability, protect employees, and achieve successful organisational transformation.

Reflective Questions

1. Why is effective communication essential during organisational change?
2. How do monitoring and assurance activities help sustain safety performance?
3. Why should employees be actively involved during periods of organisational transition?
4. How does continual review support long-term safety improvement?

Key Takeaways

- Effective communication helps employees understand organisational changes and their safety responsibilities.
- Monitoring and assurance mechanisms ensure that risk controls remain effective throughout the transition.
- Workforce engagement and a positive reporting culture strengthen safety performance and organisational learning.
- Continual review and adjustment of controls enable organisations to respond to changing risks and maintain high OHSES standards during transformation.



Thank you