

3.3 Recommend Justified Improvements to Strengthen Compliance Governance





Learning Outcome

By the end of this session, learners should be able to recommend justified improvements that strengthen compliance governance within an Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OH&SMS). Learners will examine how revising procedures, escalating significant issues, improving competence, and strengthening governance structures enhance legal compliance and organisational accountability.



Learning Objectives

After completing this topic, learners will be able to:

1

Recommend improvements to organisational procedures and controls.

2

Evaluate escalation processes for significant compliance issues.

3

Assess the importance of competence and training in compliance governance.

4

Explain how governance accountability structures support legal compliance.



Introduction

Compliance governance ensures that occupational health and safety responsibilities are effectively managed throughout an organisation. When audits, inspections, or investigations identify weaknesses, organisations must implement improvements that address the root causes and strengthen governance arrangements. Effective compliance governance reduces legal risks, improves accountability, and supports continual improvement.



1. Revising Procedures and Controls

Policies and procedures should be reviewed whenever:

- Legislation changes.
- New risks are identified.
- Audits reveal non-conformities.
- Incidents occur.
- Organisational changes affect operations.

Improvements may include:

- Updating safe work procedures.
- Revising risk assessments.
- Introducing additional engineering controls.
- Improving documentation and record keeping.

Regular review ensures that controls remain effective and relevant.

1. Escalation Processes to Senior Management

Serious compliance issues should be reported promptly to senior management.

Issues requiring escalation may include:

- Major legal breaches.
- High-risk audit findings.
- Serious incidents.
- Repeated non-conformities.
- Significant regulatory actions.

Senior management should:

- Review the risks.
- Allocate appropriate resources.
- Approve corrective actions.
- Monitor implementation.

Effective escalation supports informed decision-making and demonstrates leadership accountability.

1. Competence and Training Oversight

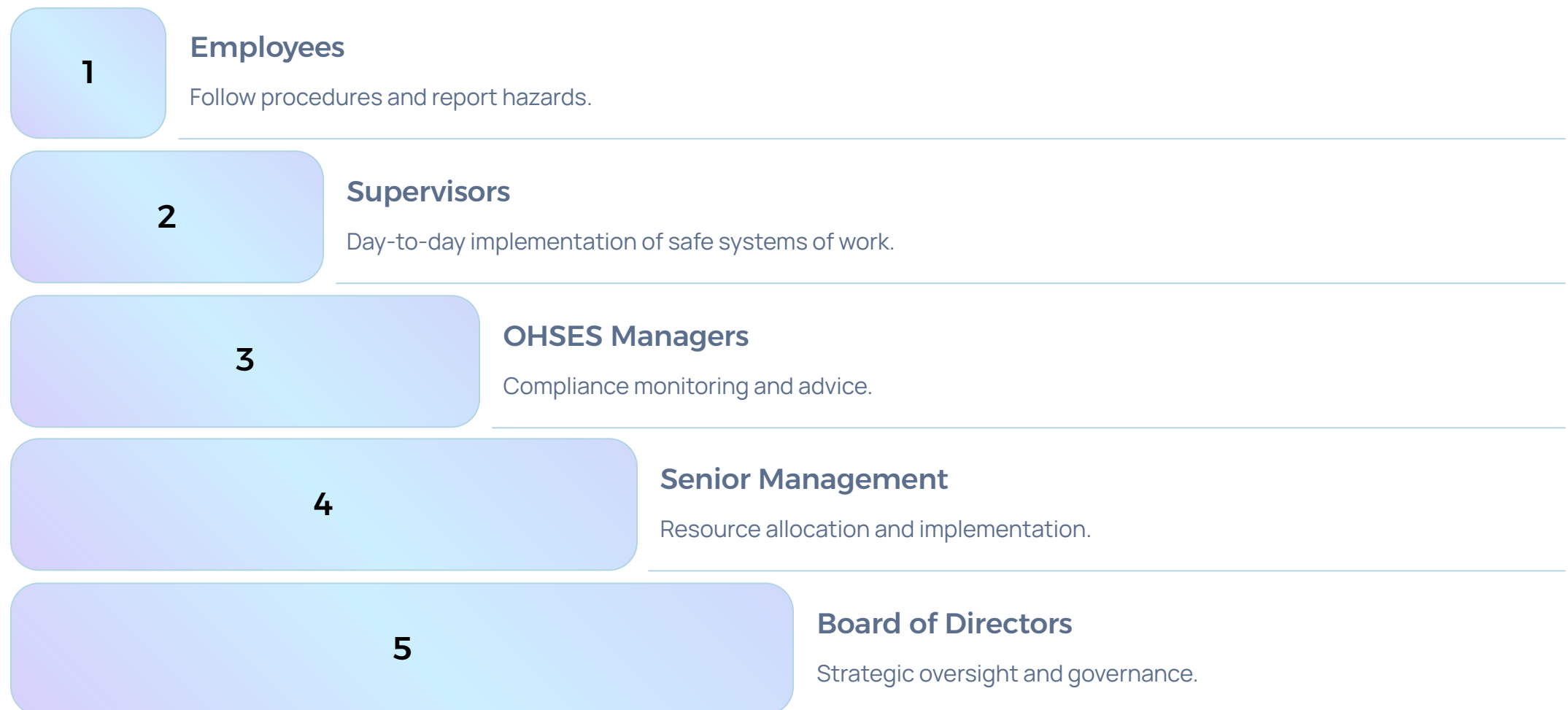
Competent employees are essential for maintaining legal compliance. Organisations should ensure that:

- **Employees receive appropriate training.**
- **Competence is regularly assessed.**
- **Refresher training is provided.**
- **Supervisors understand their legal responsibilities.**
- **Training records are maintained.**

A competent workforce is more likely to identify hazards, follow procedures, and prevent incidents.

1. Governance Accountability Structures

Effective governance requires clear roles and responsibilities. Typical accountability structure:



Clearly defined responsibilities improve accountability and strengthen compliance governance.

Practical Example

An internal audit identifies repeated failures to complete machinery inspections on time. The organisation:

01

Revises the inspection procedure.

02

Introduces digital inspection reminders.

03

Provides refresher training for supervisors.

04

Escalates the issue to senior management.

05

Monitors completion rates through monthly performance reports.

Outcome: Inspection compliance improves, risks are reduced, and governance oversight becomes more effective.



Critical Evaluation

Strengthening compliance governance requires more than correcting individual non-conformities. Organisations should review procedures, improve employee competence, establish effective escalation processes, and maintain clear accountability at all organisational levels. Governance improvements are most effective when they address systemic weaknesses and are supported by leadership commitment, adequate resources, and continual monitoring.



Summary Table

Governance Improvement	Purpose
Revising Procedures	Keep controls current and effective
Escalation Processes	Ensure significant risks receive senior management attention
Competence and Training	Improve employee capability and legal compliance
Accountability Structures	Clarify responsibilities and strengthen governance

Reflective Questions

1

Why should significant compliance issues be escalated to senior management?

2

How does employee competence contribute to effective compliance governance?

3

Why is reviewing procedures an important part of continual improvement?

4

How do clear accountability structures strengthen legal compliance?

Key Takeaways

Compliance governance should continually evolve in response to audits, inspections, incidents, and legislative changes.

Procedures and controls should be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain effective.

Significant compliance issues should be escalated promptly to senior management for appropriate action.

Competence, training, and clear accountability are essential for maintaining legal compliance.

Strong governance structures improve organisational oversight, reduce legal risks, and support continual improvement within the OH&SMS.