

1 HSE: Health Safety and Environment unpacked and simplified

- **What is Health Safety and Environment?**

Health Safety and Environment comprises tools, systems and processes set to identify potential hazards, then initiate and adopt best practices to mitigate hazards and incidents. HSE system further ensures that legal requirements are adhered to in relation to environmental issues and the health of employees in the workplace. HSE also requires that employees be trained for accident prevention, accident response and emergency preparedness et cetera.

- **What is the purpose thereof?**

The purpose of HSE is for workplaces to safeguard the health, safety and overall wellbeing of their employees, suppliers, contractors and visitors of the organization. This can be achieved by putting in place effective health and safety management systems, practices and regular maintenance thereof. It is imperative that the workplace employ safety officers and supervisors to carry out supervisory roles within operations, production, including other areas of the organization. Health and environmental specialists should also monitor energy consumption and performance, carbon emissions as well as greenhouse gas exchange.

HSE practitioners and specialists should advise senior and top management accordingly regarding important matters on environmental and occupational health risks and performance. The effective management of HSE systems will ultimately improve overall business performance. Organisations which do not conform to standardized compliance measures implemented by regulatory bodies and authorities whom set the HSE framework shall be held liable to a fine or jail sentence or even both. Nonconformance caused by work activities which result in death, and a negative impact on the environment is deemed unacceptable by regulatory bodies and HSE Acts which seek to protect the health and safety of personnel and others as well as preserving the environment.

- **Why is it important for business to understand HSE?**

An organization that does not fully grasp the concepts of HSE and why it is necessary to be implemented and managed will not be able to ensure legal compliance let alone take care of the health and safety of the workforce and the environment. It is important that organizations understand world HSE standard and requirements in order to implement

extensive HSE solutions which will help offset their profitability and thereby ensuring longevity in sustaining the organization and its workforce.

Obtaining certification for health, safety and environment compliance from a verified institution or company is the suggested route to take, for example, international ISO is one of the institutions that deals with verification and issuing of certificates to ensure that businesses implement environmental and safety management systems framework as per their obligation in ensuring standards are met.

- **Key principles and best practices of Health Safety and Environment**

Below are some of the key principles of HSE:

- Thorough legal compliance of the OHS and NEM Acts is a must for organizations
 - Develop and implement effective safety management systems and safety protocol to minimize hazards and risks in the workplace
 - Health hazards need to be reduced and work executed in a healthy manner to eliminate occupational illness in the workplace or at least reduce it
 - Reducing carbon footprint through the implementation of effective environmental health policy and management compliance such as energy efficiency, minimizing the use hazardous materials, waste reduction. These aspects will help curtail the rapid pace of climate change, help protect our environment and ultimately build a sustainable future for all.
 - Include the input of workers, participation and communication regarding Health, Safety and Environmental Management as they are acquainted with a wide variety of working environments and therefore their input can contribute towards implementing control measures and safety policies that function.
 - Consult the services of an accredited HSE safety training and service provider that would train workers to elevate safety performance such as identifying hazards and managing risks, reporting and investigating incidents, and putting in place control measures that are in line with safety management systems of the organisation.
- **B-Safe Africa Training Academy can assist you and your business to fulfil the purpose of HSE**

B-Safe Africa Training Academy is a fully accredited skills development institution with Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) and Department of Labour. We offer training in Health and Safety Practitioner, First Aid, Firefighting, Hand and Power tools, OHS and MHS legal liability, Basic rigging, SHE Rep, and a

plethora of other safety related courses. We are also known to develop, implement and maintain organizations' health and safety management systems across all industries.