



# Guidelines for Health and Safety in Workplace in the Federal Government

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هيئة اتحادية | Federal Authority





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# Introduction

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## 1.1 Definitions

For the purpose of Federal OHS Policy Framework, the following terms and definitions apply.

- **The Government:** The Government of UAE
- **The Cabinet:** Cabinet of UAE
- **The Ministry:** Any ministry established in accordance with provisions of Federal Law no. 1, year 1972 regarding ministries specializations and ministers, authorities and amending or other law
- **The Federal Entity:** Public Federal Authorities and Entities
- **The Authority:** The Federal Authority for Government Human Resources
- **The Human Resources Law:** The Human Resources Law at the Federal Government no. 11 of year 2008, and relevant amendments and executive regulation of the law
- **Acceptable Risk** – risk that has been reduced to a level that can be tolerated by the entity having regard to its legal obligations and its OHS policy.
- **Audit-** Systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining ‘audit evidence’ and evaluating it objectively to determine to the extent of which audit criteria is fulfilled.
- **Cabinet** – UAE cabinet
- **Controls-** Measures designed to eliminate or reduce hazards. Examples include – Engineering controls, administrative controls, PPE etc. Hazards can be controlled at the source, along the path to the worker or at the worker.
- **Continual improvements-** recurring progress of enhancing the OHS management system in order to achieve OHS performance consistent with the Federal OHS policy.
- **Competent Employee** – Employee who is qualified because of his or her knowledge, training and experience to follow safe practices at workplace and has knowledge of any potential or actual danger to health or safety in the workplace.

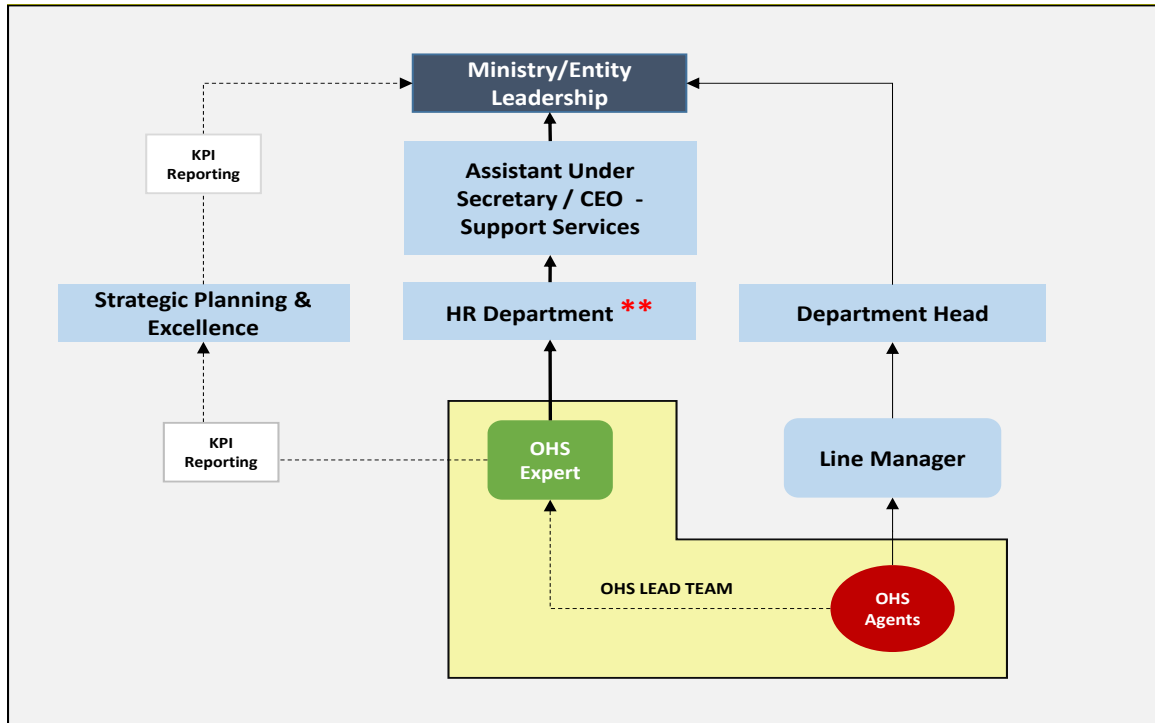
- **Corrective Actions-** actions to eliminate the cause of a detected non-conformity or other undesirable situation. Corrective actions are taken to prevent reoccurrence of an incident.
- **Employee-** Individual employed in budgeted positions by any UAE Federal entity
- **FAHR-** The Federal Authority for Government Human Resources
- **Federal Entity-** Any federal authority or federal public organizations
- **Hazard-** Source, situation or act with a potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill health or a combination of these. Hazard is a situation in the workplace that has the potential to harm the health and safety of people and equipment. Workplace hazards can come from a wide range of sources. General examples include any substance, material, process or practice that has the ability to cause harm or adverse health effect to a person under certain conditions.
- **Hazard Identification** – is a process of recognizing that a hazard exists defining its characteristics.
- **Ill health** – identifiable, adverse physical or mental conditions arising from and/or made worse by a work related situation.
- **Incident-** work related events in which an injury or ill health or fatality occurred or could have occurred.
- **Line Manager-** Person with direct managerial responsibility for a particular set of employees. Line manager directly supervises employees for the expected level of performance.
- **Non-conformity-** Non fulfillment of requirements
- **Occupational Health and Safety** – Conditions and factors that affect, or could affect, the health and safety of employee or other workers, visitors or any other person in the workplace.
- **Occupational Health and Safety Management System** – part of an organizations management system used to develop and implement its OHS policy and manage its OHS risks.
- **OHS Agent-** OHS agent is identified as a Champion to implement change related to OHS in the organization. He / She should be adequately trained and qualified.

- **OHS Experts-** OHS Expert is identified as an Expert who will guide the OHS Agent and or other employees in all OHS Matters. He/ She should be adequately trained and qualified.
- **OHS Objectives-** OHS goals in terms of OHS performance that a ministry or entity sets itself to achieve.
- **OHS Performance-** Measurable results of an organizations management of its OHS risks.
- **OHS Policy-** overall intentions and direction of an organization related to its OHS performance and formally expressed by Ministries & Federal Entities leadership.
- **Preventive actions-** Actions to eliminate the cause of a potential non-conformity or other undesirable potential situations.
- **Procedure-** Specifies way to carry out an activity or process.
- **Record-** Document stating results achieved or providing evidence of activities performed.
- **Risk-** Combination of the likelihood of an occurrence of a hazardous event or exposure and the severity of injury or ill health that can be caused by the event or exposures.
- **Risk assessment-** Process of evaluating he risk arising from a hazard, taking into account the adequacy of any existing controls, and deciding whether or not the risk is acceptable.
- **Workplace** – any physical location in which work related administrative activities are performed under the control of the entity.

## 1.2 OHS Policy Operating Model

A well designed OHS Policy Operating Model will support the Ministries and Federal Entities in smooth and efficient implementation. It will support in fulfilling the key legal and social obligation. Operating Model will help recognize the basic value of good OHS, where people do not get harmed or ill in any way at workplace (even at a minor level).

**Figure No 1- OHS Policy Operating Model**



*\*\* For Ministries and Federal Authorities where a dedicated **HSE Department** exists, then in such case OHS Expert/s will report to the HSE Department Head.*

An OHS Policy Operating model will support the workplace safety practices and improve motivation of employees, increase competitiveness and profitability of the organization.

### Key Features of Operating Model of OHS Policy Framework-

- For implementation of the OHS Policy the Ministries and Federal Entities Leadership shall set up an Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Lead Team
- The OHS Lead Team should work in partnership with the other core business units
- The OHS Lead Team should keep a track of the OHS performance of the Ministry or Federal Entity
- The OHS Expert/s should be part of HR department reporting to the Assistant under Secretary / CEO Support services

- In Ministries and Entities where dedicated HSE Department exists, the OHS Expert/s will be part of HSE Department and will report to the HSE Department head
- The OHS Expert/s will develop and implement the OHS Action plan to keep the Office based environment safe and track the OHS performance
- The OHS Expert/s will act as an advisor to the Ministries and Federal Entities in all OHS related matters
- OHS agents will be identified as recommended in OHS Procedures Manual.
- The OHS agent will act as a system champion for designated area and continue to report to core business unit. OHS agents will have indirect reporting to the OHS Expert for functional purpose only.
- The OHS Agent will support in the implementation of the OHS Action Plan and conduct all the corrective and preventive actions in the office based environment
- In case of shared OHS responsibility for Agent or Expert, clarity in role and bifurcation between core business role and OHS duties should be ensured.

### **1.3 Roles and Responsibility**

When implementing an Occupational Health and Safety Management System each and every employee of the organization has a role to play. The Federal OHS Policy framework identifies the following key roles and responsibilities.

#### **Cabinet**

- The Cabinet will approve Federal OHS Policy and implementation framework
- Review OHS performance of all Ministries & Federal Entities based on Annual OHS Performance reports

#### **Federal Authority for Government Human Resources (FAHR)**

- Design Federal OHS policy & procedures manual for Office based work environment
- Govern the annual OHS External Audit program scheduling
- Periodically receive analysis & statistics for major incidents
- Monitor OHS compliance and effectiveness using KPIs reported in Annual OHS Performance Report
- Advise the Ministries & Federal Entities on OHS matters, as and when necessary

#### **Ministries & Federal Entities Leadership**

- Comply with OHS Policy and OHS management system requirements
- Approve OHS Action Plans, OHS Activities & management review process
- Monitor OHS implementation within the entity or ministry
- Provide directions on improving OHS performance

- Report the Annual OHS performance to Cabinet

### **HR Department**

- On-boarding of OHS Lead team as per policy requirements
- Facilitate the training process for OHS expert and OHS agents for the successful implementation of OHS management system
- Integrate OHS guidelines at all employee touch points e.g. Onboarding documents, Handbook, EPMS, Trainings, Disciplinary process, career planning etc.

### **OHS Expert**

- Develop OHS Action Plans and Emergency Response Plan
- Facilitate OHS preventive activities as per action plan
- Investigate incidents and determine controls along with corrective activities within the Ministries & Federal Entities
- Measure & Monitor OHS Effectiveness
- Perform periodic internal audits and develop compliance reports
- Comply with published annual audit program by acting as external auditor
- Consolidate annual report on OHS effectiveness
- Support leadership in OHS Management Review and performance reporting
- Act as advisor to OHS agents and Ministry / Federal entity leadership on OHS matters

### **OHS Agent**

- Act as OHS system champion for designated area
- Assist OHS expert in developing action plans and emergency plan
- Conduct OHS promotional activities, Risk Management, supplementary preventive activities
- Facilitate OHS Expert to investigate incidents, determine controls and implement corrective actions within the Ministries & Federal Entities
- Report progress on preventive & Corrective actions
- Participate in internal audit and support OHS Expert during external audit program



## Line Manager

- Act as a role model by following individual safety practices
- Assist OHS experts and agents by complying with policy requirements
- Participate in all OHS related preventive activities
- Support in Risk assessment and implementing controls
- Report incidents and participate in corrective actions

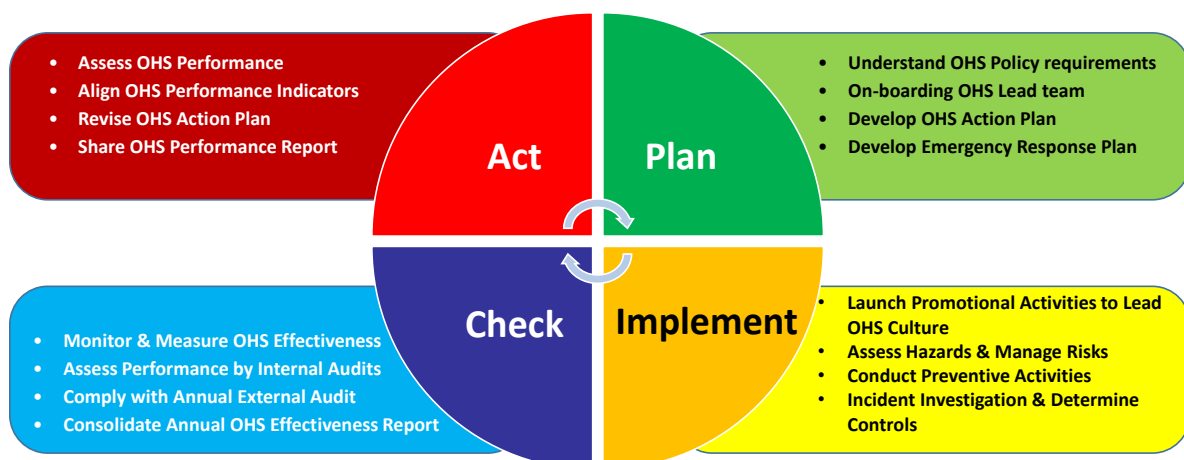
## Employee

- Participate in all OHS related activities as guided by OHS agent
- Inform about all OHS hazards and near misses in the designated area
- Share incident details with Line manager and/or OHS agent
- Assist line manager and/or OHS agent in complying with the policy requirements

### 1.4 Occupational Health & Safety Management System

Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS) specifies guidelines for implementing Federal OHS Policy framework. The four phase approach of OHSMS is based on the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) methodology. Planning phase focuses on getting competent OHS team onboard and developing the OHS action plan. Implementation phase is all about executing OHS action plan, spreading OHS awareness and incident management. Check phase ensures measurement and monitoring of OHS compliance. Finally, the Act phase assess OHS performance and explore potential improvements for better performance in future.

Figure No 2- OHS Management System



The Ministries and Federal Authorities should establish, document, implement, maintain and continually improve an Occupational Health & Safety Management System (OHSMS).

## Plan Phase

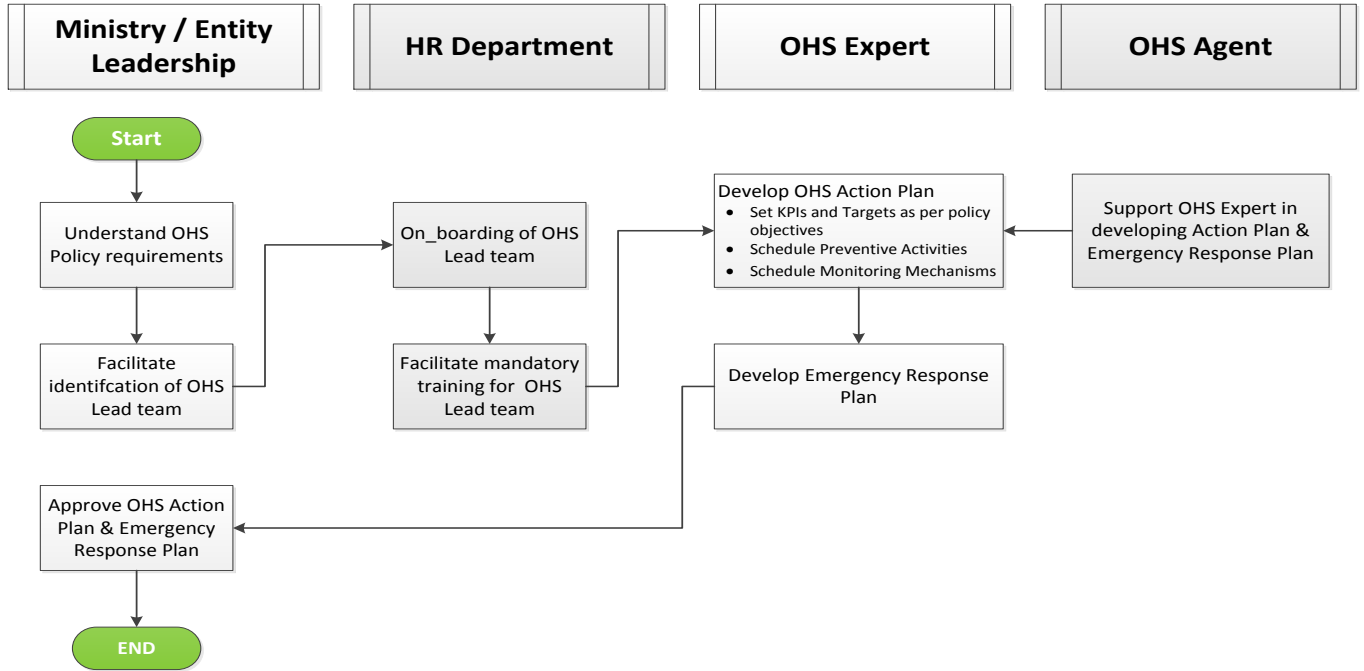
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Planning is the key for successful implementation of Occupational Health and Safety Management System. As part of planning, the Ministries & Federal Entities conduct some key activities which include-



**Overview of Plan Phase**

# Plan Phase : Federal OHS Policy Framework



## 2.1 Understand the Policy Framework Requirements

The Federal Government has rolled out an Occupational Health and Safety Policy for its Ministries & Federal Entities. The scope of this policy is limited to office based environment. This policy covers only the administrative areas and it does not cover the operational areas of Ministries & Federal Entities core business.

After conforming the OHS policy framework & its associated commitments at high level, the Ministry Leadership and OHS Experts shall explore all the touch points where OHS policy can be included. OHS experts should analyze and develop a list of such touch points bearing in mind all the office interactions that could have any effect on health and safety of all the employee or stakeholders.

List of stakeholder touch points includes, but not limited to-

- Contractual conditions (Vendor selection)
- Agreements with other authorities
- HR documents (Handbook, On board document etc.)
- Non-regulatory guidelines

The Ministries and Federal Entities as a part of understanding the policy requirements should do initial review of the Occupational Health and Safety situation against what is stated in the policy. The initial review will provide information which the OHS Expert can use in formulating action plans for implementing and prioritizing improvements to the OHS Management System.

The aim of initial review should be to consider all OHS risks faced by the Ministries and Federal Entities, as a basis for establishing the OHS Management System.

The Ministries and Federal Entities should consider (but not limit to) the following items for its initial review-

- Policy requirements
- List of OHS Hazards and Risk (if any)
- OHS Assessments (if any)
- Review of existing systems, practices, processes and procedures
- Past history of OHS incident investigations

OHS Policy should be established, document implemented, maintained and continually improve OHS management system. The Federal Occupational Health and Safety Policy includes *Codes of Practices for Office environment*. This document can be used to understand and get details about cause, effect and standards of all the OHS Hazards within office environment.

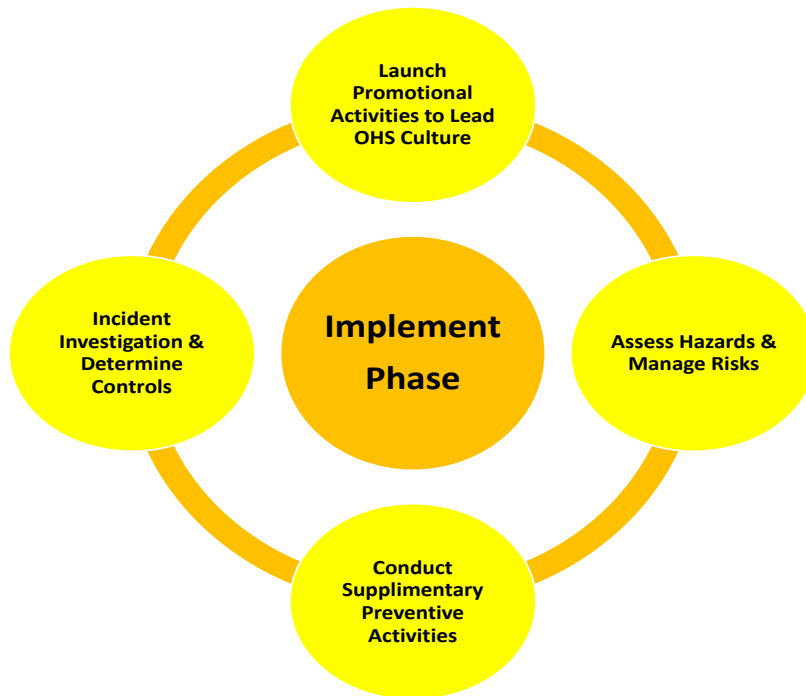
## 2.2 Get the OHS Lead Team on board

In order to successfully implement the Federal OHS Policy the Ministries leadership should engage competent employees. As per the Operating model (See Chapter 1 Section 1.2) an OHS Lead team should be formed. The OHS Lead team once on board need to acquire required skills through mandatory trainings e.g. NEBOSH diploma or certifications etc. Such competent OHS Lead team can understand the policy requirements in detail and start developing the action plan. The profile of the OHS Lead team is described below-

### Implement Phase

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The implementation phase is the most important phase of the OHS Management system. This phase will start with the OHS Lead team conducting promotional activities to create OHS awareness among stakeholders. These activities will include conducting educational programs for employees, awareness sessions regarding the general safety matters like stress at work, dealing with emergency etc. These activities will lead to a behavioral cultural change in the entity.



Overview of Implement Phase

Simultaneously, OHS Lead team will start assessing and mitigating the Health and Safety risks. The risk management process includes identification of hazards, conducting risks assessment, mitigating the risk by determining the controls. Line managers will support Risk Management by implementing the controls.

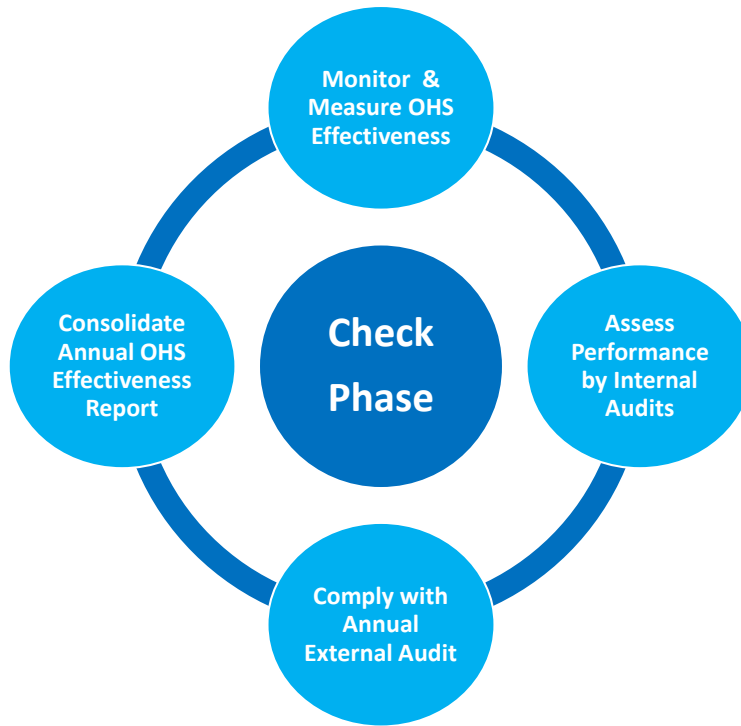
As a part of preventive activities the OHS Lead team will conduct inspections, emergency drills to test the Emergency Plan. The gaps identified in the emergency drills and inspections will be reported by OHS Agent and a corrective action plan will be developed to address these gaps. Additionally Preventive Activities will include activities such as Tool box talks, employee consultations, specific trainings about fire fighting's, first aid etc.

Incident Investigation is also a major aspect of OHS implementation. As and when the Incidents will occur they will be investigated by the OHS Lead team. Corrective action plan will be developed to mitigate the further risk. The OHS Lead team will execute the commutation plan where all stakeholders will be engaged, informed, consulted or provide approvals.

## Check Phase

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The Ministries and Federal Entities will monitor and measure OHS performance on a regular basis. This will include both qualitative and quantitative measures. Monitoring will be done to the extent to which organizational objectives are met. Monitoring will be also done to the measure the effectiveness of controls.



#### **Overview of Check Phase**

The OHS Lead team will conduct periodic Internal Audits to measure OHS performance within the organization. The audit program will determine whether the OHS Management System is conforming to the OHS objectives. Effective implementation and maintenance of OHSMS will ensure compliance of Federal OHS Policy.

Annual External Audits will be conducted across UAE Federal Government entities. The OHS Lead team will comply with the external audit program. The objective of the external audit is to check the level of compliance with the Federal OHS Policy.

The OHS Lead team will consolidate the annual OHS Effectiveness report. The report will include details about preventive activities like trainings, drills, awareness programs, inspections, risk management etc. in addition to corrective activities like incidents and/or accident and work related ill health etc. The annual OHS audits along with key findings, recommendations and level of compliance will be put together in an Annual OHS Effectiveness Report.

## Management Review

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The Ministries and Federal Entities Leadership will assess the OHS performance based on the annual effectiveness report. This would include points like key gaps, level of compliance, status of incident investigation, status of risk assessment recommendations and corrective or preventive actions etc.



**Overview of Management Review Phase**

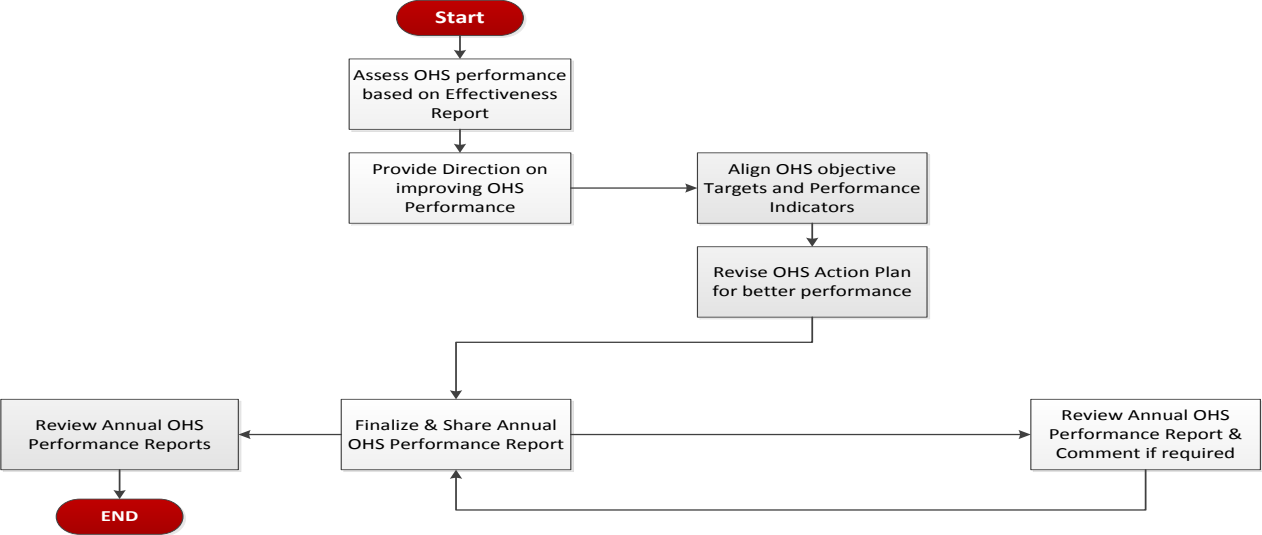
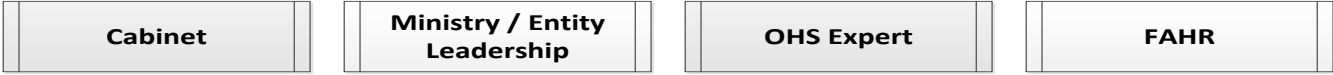
The leadership will also explore recommended improvement areas and take management decisions regarding the impending issues or corrective actions.

The OHS Lead Team will assess the need for change and accordingly align the OHS targets and KPIs based on Leadership directions. The OHS Lead team will further revise the OHS Action Plan as necessary.

The annual OHS performance report along with level of compliance, key findings, and management decisions on recommended improvements will be shared with the Cabinet.



# Act Phase : Federal OHS Policy Framework



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