

How to Keep the Ball Rolling with your Safety and Occupational Health Management System During a Change of Command

Leadership involvement, commitment, and support are the foundation of a successful safety and occupational health management system (SOHMS), as leaders establish SOHMS expectations and provide resources for an effective SOHMS.

Department of Defense (DoD) organizations experience leadership change every few years. This turnover makes it difficult to maintain leadership involvement, commitment, and support during the transition. Incoming leaders increase their involvement in safety and health (S&H) and your SOHMS once they understand their roles and responsibilities and where your organization stands in the SOHMS journey. This one pager provides education and engagement ideas for new leadership so your SOHMS doesn't fall behind or regress.



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EDUCATE NEW LEADERS ON YOUR SOHMS

Schedule a face-to-face meeting between SOHMS representatives and your new leadership. If possible, schedule this meeting **before** the leadership transition at your worksite. Ask your current leaders to brief the new leader on your SOHMS. If not feasible, hold the meeting soon after the leadership transition. Make sure your new leader is knowledgeable on your SOHMS before moving forward with new plans and ideas. Items to cover in the meeting include:

- Explain the Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 6055.01 SOHMS requirement (your Service or Agency may have a requirement too)
- Inform the new leader of the SOHMS criteria your organization is implementing
- Provide an overview of your organization's past and current SOHMS efforts, successes, and organizational improvements
- Discuss the benefits of a SOHMS, including how your SOHMS helps accomplish your organization's mission without interruption due to injury or loss
- Describe leadership roles and responsibilities in a SOHMS, what actions you need from them, and how you can help as a SOHMS advisor
- Give ideas on how to demonstrate visible involvement, support, and commitment for S&H and your SOHMS (e.g., lead or attend executive safety council meetings, reward safe behaviors, hold others accountable for S&H responsibilities, participate in workplace walkthroughs, encourage two-way communications)
- Describe your organization's operational hazards and risks and how the SOHMS addresses them
- Explain the risks of not supporting the SOHMS and the opportunities for improvement if they do support your SOHMS efforts
- Discuss top SOHMS actions, goals, and expectations.



CREATE AND SHARE A SOHMS CONTINUITY BINDER WITH LEADERSHIP

A continuity binder is an organization-specific guide to help your leaders understand current and planned SOHMS implementation and sustainment efforts. It assesses SOHMS performance and provides necessary planning materials to foster continuous improvement. If your organization developed a SOHMS continuity binder, make sure it is up to date, and share it with your new leader.

Information to include in a Continuity Binder

- Summary including a general overview of the SOHMS and how it supports the mission and why it is being implemented
- Key target dates for SOHMS implementation
- List of key personnel assigned to lead or support the SOHMS
- Gap analysis results showing completed actions vs. needed actions for full SOHMS implementation
- Status of current SOHMS efforts
- List of visible leadership activities performed and successful in the past

Additionally, ask your new leader to review:

- **Command Strategic Plan:** Describes how the SOHMS is considered and integrated into all business processes
- **Most Recent Annual SOHMS Self-Evaluation:** Identifies SOHMS strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement.

UPDATE SOHMS DOCUMENTATION

Create a list of documents your new leader needs to review and sign, or rewrite and reissue. Inform the new leader of the importance of updating these documents. Key documents to update include:

- **S&H Policy Statement:** Make this policy a top priority and include your new leader's own safety-related philosophy statement. Have top leadership sign the statement and personally communicate it to the workforce
- **Communication Policy:** Ask the new leader to re-sign your SOHMS communication policy, if applicable, to encourage open communication and feedback.

Replace newly signed leadership documents on official safety bulletin boards, internal websites, and anywhere else where previous leadership documentation may be posted.

If you are an OSHA VPP STAR site:

Inform your regional OSHA office of your leadership change within 30 days.

Mention the leadership change as a "significant event" in the annual self-evaluation

NOTIFY SOHMS AUTHORITIES OF LEADERSHIP CHANGES

Some SOHMSs include a requirement requiring notification of the approval or certification body of a leadership change within a certain timeframe. Review your SOHMS criteria to see if this requirement applies.

It is also a good idea to mention any leadership change in your annual SOHMS self-evaluation reports.

For additional information on the SMCX's services, please visit the SMCX-hosted website at: <https://www.smscx.org/>.

