

You're a Collateral Duty Safety Officer, Now What?

You always been interested in safety – having caught the eye of your Commander, leadership assigned you as a collateral duty safety officer (CDSO), and now you are responsible for various safety and occupational health (SOH)-related functions for your organization. Being a CDSO is an additional duty, and you may not have much experience with SOH. What do you do now?

LEADERSHIP SUPPORT

Leadership support is essential to your success as a CDSO. Leadership allocates the time and resources for you to support the organization's SOH programs and safety management system (SMS). Depending on your organization's mission, your CDSO duties can vary significantly, and the time allotted to conduct these tasks must be proportional to your assigned tasks.

Your safety manager should be your "go-to" for safety subject matter expertise. The safety manager, along with leadership, prioritizes safety tasks, guides your performance, and tracks overall SOH/SMS progress. As an extension of your organization's safety office, your efforts are vital to SMS success.

TRAINING

CDSO training is required for you to properly perform your SOH duties. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) [29 CFR 1960.58](#) standard requires CDSOs receive training within six months of appointment; however, your Service or Agency-specific guidance may require you complete training in a shorter timeframe. This training must fit the scope of your assigned responsibilities and duties. At a minimum, training must include basic federal program information and the specific requirements of your Department of Defense (DoD) Component SOH Program.

Basic Program Elements for Federal Employees

[29 CFR 1960](#)

[Section 19 of the OSH Act](#)

[Executive Order 12196](#)

Agency/Component SOH Program

Procedures for reporting, evaluation, and abatement of hazards

Procedures for reporting and investigating allegations of reprisal

Recognition of hazardous conditions and environments

Identification & use of SOH standards and other appropriate rules and regulations

DoD Instruction (DoDI) 6055.01, *DoD SOH Program*, also requires risk management training for the performance of your CDSO duties, specified in your organization's SOH programs.



Image courtesy of Bing Images (Creative Commons)

RESOURCES

Understanding available resources is key to your CDSO success. Build relationships with your SOH professionals and they will answer your technical questions and offer support. Their guidance ensures you can provide the highest level of risk management effort or hazard control possible. Reach out and utilize other CDSOs as resources within your organization—network and share best practices with each other!

Employees are another great resource, especially if you are trying to control hazards in their work area. Employees have a vested interest in the solution, know the process better than anyone else, and can help develop practical solutions.

Finally, every SMS needs a budget to support the recognition, evaluation, and control of SOH hazards. Give your safety manager suggestions, feedback, and input towards the budget for things like personal protective equipment, training, and program administration (i.e., ergonomic workstations, signs, inspection tools). Larger facility or process changes are generally budgeted for out of a production, Command, or higher headquarters budgets.



Image courtesy of Bing Images (Creative Commons)

Do you know where to find basic SOH program information? Here are some useful resources:

- [Basic Program Elements for Federal Employees \(29 CFR 1960, Subpart K\)](#) – OSHA requirements specific to Federal employee occupational safety and health
- [DoD Issuances](#) – Where to find DoDIs, DoD Manuals, and Forms
- [U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center](#) – Homepage with links to Army-specific information and training
- [Naval Safety & Environmental Training Center](#) — Homepage with links to Navy-specific information and training
- [Air Force Safety Center](#) – Homepage with links to Air Force-specific information and training
- [Commandant of the Marine Corps \(CMC\) Safety Division](#) – Homepage with links to Marine Corps-specific information and training

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