



Issue - What is good governance in H&S?

It's the application of the principles - and the *ethos* of good governance - to H&S in an integrated and strategic way. In our experience, boards can benefit from focusing on three key areas - leadership, risk management and corporate governance processes.

Why is this important?

H&S is higher profile than ever before - so are the costs of getting it badly wrong. This can include significant damage to organisational value; the safeguarding of which is a board's primary responsibility. More positively, most boards, including those already strong on H&S, can get further gains, confidence and reduced risk exposure from good governance in H&S.

What should we be thinking about?

Some expectations are fairly well established; notably the HSE / IoD guidance on 'Leading Health and Safety at Work' (INDG417) - which is also linked with the tests for Corporate Manslaughter. The HSE has also sponsored some good research (RR506), but overall, good governance in H&S is not yet a mainstream issue. The indisputable fact, however, is that all types of organisation are increasingly expected to demonstrate, and be held accountable for, good governance - the more forward thinking organisations recognise that H&S is, or should be, an integral part of this. There is an important opportunity for boards to think more strategically about H&S, including the bigger picture where H&S links with, and supports, issues such as wellbeing, corporate responsibility, resilience and sustainability.

Can you give me some suggestions?

Leadership

Developing H&S leadership vision, values, behaviours and employee engagement through defined leadership frameworks for H&S (as well as H&S 'roles & responsibilities'), and maximising the fundamental link between good leadership and organisational culture.

Risk management

Ensuring board awareness of organisational risk profile and top H&S risks (eg strategic, operational, aggregated); effective use of risk registers; quality of H&S risk assessment processes; assurance of H&S risk controls including integrated risk-based H&S auditing.

Corporate Governance

Clarity of board roles for H&S including exec and non-exec roles; board sub-committee(s) ToR on H&S; linking the Audit Committee effectively with H&S; quality of board information on H&S; quality of board annual Review of H&S and board H&S skills evaluation.

Where can I find out more?

Please call Neil Molyneux, Principal Consultant, for an informal discussion of your needs and to find out more about the training, briefings and services we can provide.

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Leadership | Risk Management | Corporate Governance