BS ISO 39001 Whitepaper

Road Traffic Safety Management Systems

Signposting the way to safer roads

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Road traffic safety: A global concern

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) a staggering 1.3 million people die each year as a result of road traffic accidents. For young people, aged between 15 and 29, road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death. The WHO's research also indicates that over 90% of fatalities on the road happen in low and middle income countries, while nearly half of those dying on the world's roads are pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists.

These worrying statistics have a major impact on the world's economy too. The World Bank recently reported that road accidents cost developed countries between one and three percent of Gross National Product (GNP), and developing countries around $100 billion per annum.

In a quest to tackle this global concern, the governments of the world joined forces with the UN in 2010 and declared 2011 to 2020 as the Decade of Action for Road Safety. While many countries have successfully managed to reduce the number of deaths on their roads since then, others are still seeing an increase year after year.

Road traffic safety: Why is it so important?

Without taking critical action, road traffic accidents will cause the deaths of around 1.9 million people annually by 2020. These accidents will also be the world's fifth largest cause of death by 2030 – so it's not surprising that various groups around the world want more laws in place to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on the roads.

The United Nation's Decade of Action for Road Safety aims to prevent five million road deaths globally by 2020. A tough challenge considering the slow pace of legislative changes and the lack of universal laws concerning speed, drink-driving, motorcycle helmets, seatbelts and child restraints.

One way of helping governments around the world hit this target, is by getting more road authorities and transportation organizations to follow a standardized approach to make the roads a safer place for everyone. That is where BS ISO 39001 comes in.

BS ISO 39001: An overview

BS ISO 39001 is a best-practice management framework that helps organizations actively reduce the risk of death and serious injury from road traffic in areas directly within their sphere of influence. The standard is designed to help save lives, support social responsibility programmes, improve road traffic safety results beyond compliance and subsequently cut accident-related costs and downtime.

Who should consider implementing BS ISO 39001?

BS ISO 39001 is applicable to public and private organizations that use the road traffic system to conduct their business. These include road authorities, organizations with fleets of company cars, freight and delivery operators, and public transport – all divided in three main groups:

Road users or vehicle operators: Haulage companies, bus or coach companies, couriers and taxis, organizations with a mobile field force, businesses with company cars, organizations with staff travelling by road – for example post office workers or waste collectors – and emergency services.

Road constructors or maintainers: Local authority planning departments, architects and construction companies.

Organizations creating a demand for the road: Public services, schools, hospitals, car parks, private amenities, supermarkets, sporting grounds and event venues.

Why is BS ISO 39001 so important for road safety?

With an effective Road Traffic Safety (RTS) management system in place, organizations can develop a holistic safe system approach. This includes managing risks and bringing together existing road traffic initiatives. The standard is internationally recognized, so its framework can be applied worldwide to reduce road risks – leading to better business performance, an enhanced reputation for safety and access to new tender opportunities.

BS ISO 39001: A holistic safe system approach to road traffic safety

BS ISO 39001 was created to improve traffic safety by decreasing the number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads. Thanks to its clear focus on road traffic safety results and evidence-based actions to reduce risk, the standard is now associated with the United Nation's Decade of Action on Road Safety.

It also helps organizations to get actively involved in other global road safety initiatives. These include the Road Safety 10 Project (focuses on preventing road traffic injuries in low to middle income countries); Save our Lives (contributes to worldwide road safety with vital knowledge, experience and tools); and FIA Action for Road Safety (helping its member organizations to educate and advocate for safer roads, vehicles and behaviours).

How does BS ISO 39001 work?

The standard clearly sets out the requirements for an effective RTS management system and addresses the managers of an organization who are directly or indirectly responsible for road traffic safety. Built on the plan, do, check, act approach, BS ISO 39001 is an approach to ensure organizations achieve their planned and desired RTS results. This format is in line with the new high level framework of all new ISO management system standards.

Using these four planning stages, BS ISO 39001 outlines all the requirements of a successful RTS management system, covering overall corporate governance, strategy and planning, management, reporting procedures, policies, values, culture and legal compliance. Once implemented, the RTS management system can also be integrated with Quality, Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety management systems.

Main clauses

Clause 4 looks at the context of the organization. It challenges the organization to assess the scope of their RTS management system considering both external and internal issues, plus the requirements and needs of all interested parties and stakeholders. The organization should also clearly identify its role in the road traffic system, as well as any activities, processes and functions that can have an impact.

In **Clause 5**, the standard summarises the requirements that are specific to top management and their role in the RTS management system. Although top management's responsibilities and commitments have featured in management systems for years, BS ISO 39001 places greater emphasis on leadership and is more particular about the way in which commitment should be demonstrated. With road traffic safety management at board level, the business will take on a more comprehensive approach to avoiding or minimizing the risk of death and serious injuries due to accidents. This clause also ensures there is a vital link between the organization's objectives, the risks it agrees to take and the measures needed to manage danger.

Planning lies at the heart of **Clause 6**. Here, organizations are asked to follow a particular process to first review their RTS performance, determine the risks and opportunities, and then select RTS performance factors to work on. The next step is to analyse what can be achieved over a specific period of time and setting appropriate objectives, targets and plans. This includes determining who is responsible for the delivery of the objectives, what needs to be done and by when, resource requirements and how the results will be evaluated.

Clause 7 makes sure companies have adequate support to implement and maintain an effective RTS management system. It explains how to coordinate with the relevant levels and functions of an organization, so that employees and other interested parties realize how their actions can impact road traffic safety. It also gives guidance on how to ensure there is appropriate internal and external consultation and the coordination of activities to hit RTS targets. The clause includes resource requirements, the competency of everyone involved, plus an awareness of all interested parties.

Clause 8 focuses on the operation. It shows organizations how to plan, implement and control the processes they need to address risks and opportunities. This includes establishing the criteria, implementing control measures and documenting all relevant information. The clause also looks at how to address the requirements around emergency preparedness and response. Organizations are responsible for establishing, implementing and maintaining a procedure to identify road traffic accidents and stipulate how they will respond. This involves responses to actual deaths and serious injuries, and demonstrating how to prevent or mitigate adverse impacts on road traffic safety where possible.

In **Clause 9**, organizations are asked to have a procedure in place to record, investigate and analyse their road traffic accidents. This analysis should then be evaluated and concluded. The standard places particular emphasis on the setting of objectives, monitoring performance and metrics.

Covering non-conformity and corrective action, Clause 10 looks at improvement. Organizations are urged to deal with non-conformities together with corrective actions to ensure they aren't repeated. As with all other management system standards, continual improvement is a core requirement of the standard.

BS ISO 39001: Get on route with BSI

BSI follows a structured and detailed approach when helping organizations to align their RTS management systems with BS ISO 39001. The first step is understand the company's challenges, then in cultivating an understanding of the standard and certification process. This includes calculating the benefits of adopting a road safety management system. The second phase is implementation. BSI trains the relevant teams to make sure they understand the standard's principle and reviews their current business plan before putting together a bespoke implementation plan. Once the system meets the standard's requirements, BSI will carry out various assessments in preparation for certification.

What are the benefits of being certified?

With an independent third party certification, an organization can prove to shareholders, regulators and competitors that their road traffic safety management system is compliant with BS ISO 39001. This helps them to meet their safety and social responsibility targets, while instilling greater customer and employee confidence.

FM Conway achieved £56,000 (10%) cut in insurance after Stage 1 audit and a 60% decrease in claims in the first 3 months.

Contact BSI

"Any company committed to improving its road safety will benefit from the introduction of BS ISO 39001, but so will every other road user as the approach will make our roads safer for all who use them."

Kevin Cook,
Group Health and Safety Director, Mark Group

For more information or to find out how other businesses have made excellence a habit, call a BSI advisor on
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