

# SAFE SYSTEM OF WORK PLAN

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Construction remains one of the most hazardous industries worldwide.

The prevention of accidents and ill health within the sector has always been a challenge. The management of site safety is paramount in accident prevention.

Safety management must reach all those involved in the project and in particular the worker actually carrying out the construction task itself. Involving the workers in the management of safety is an essential key to success but one that poses many challenges especially given the changing face of the construction industry. For example, the workforce on any given site now comprises many different nationalities and as a result many different languages. The safe systems of work implemented on site must now be presented in such a way that they are easily understood regardless of language skills.

The Safe System of Work Plan (SSWP) is an ongoing construction safety improvement strategy aimed at reducing injuries and deaths on construction sites. The Health and Safety Authority in Ireland launched this initiative in 2005.

The primary objective of the SSWP is to help management and workers to identify hazards associated with work activities and to ensure that appropriate controls are in place to eliminate or reduce the risk, before work begins. The involvement of workers in the system provides a bottom up approach to safety management.

The system, which is based on, the use of Pictograms to portray hazards and the appropriate controls, provides management with a tool to plan each construction activity. The system incorporates the workers involvement in their own safety by enabling them to identify hazards and appropriate controls in a manner that is user friendly and language independent.

The SSWP accommodates many other National objectives;

- Through the use of pictograms it creates a Global Language that can communicate with persons regardless of their literacy or language skills.
- The SSWP remains with workers until the task is complete as a reminder that the agreed safety controls must be in place at all times.
- It provides a mechanism for increasing workers safety awareness and is a valuable learning tool.
- A general safety DVD, which includes training on the use of the SSWP for all duty holders.
- It is user friendly, interesting and effective.