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16.1 Introduction

An Occupational Health and Safety Audit is a systematic, objective, and documented examination to determine whether safety controls that an organization has developed are effective. The purpose of an OHS Audit is to identify the strengths and opportunities for improvement of the OHS Program. The expected outcome of the audit is the promotion of a healthy workplace and the reduction of workplace injuries or illness.

Internal audits are an essential tool for safety assurance, helping Managers and Chairs in charge of activities supporting the delivery of safety services, and ensuring that, once safety risk controls have been implemented, they continue to perform and are effective in maintaining operational safety.

There are many benefits to auditing the OHS Program, including:

- provides information for management review;
- demonstrates senior management's commitment towards safety;
- improves personal awareness, participation and motivation;
- provides opportunities for continual safety improvement;
- verifies conformance with legislative requirements; and
- provides an accurate picture of the safety and health of the organization.

16.2 Internal OHS audit program at Saint Mary's University

The Saint Mary's OHS Audit will be a compliance audit to establish the degree of implementation and effectiveness of the OHS Program. The OHS Office, in consultation with Financial Services, will develop a safety audit instrument consisting of:

- standardized questions for management, employees and safety committees;
- documentation review; and
- observation questions.

A total of 10% of employees (including management and safety committees) will be interviewed. Financial Services will create a random list of employees to be interviewed. The OHS Program will be audited periodically by Financial Services and the OHS Office.

A copy of the final report will be given to the Executive Management Group, safety committees and to any employee who requests a copy. Deficiencies noted in the audit will need to be addressed and will be followed up by the JOHSC.