Guiding businesses toward a sustainable health & safety system
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Welcome to ZeroQuest®

Are you looking for an effective way to eliminate workplace injury and illnesses? The strategy to make it happen calls for a managed approach to safety that would identify potential hazards, categorize risk levels and maintain controls. This is the basis for ZeroQuest®. It is an auditing program designed to guide workplaces to implement, sustain and continually improve their health and safety management system. While each firm is unique, ZeroQuest® is designed to ensure that any company’s health and safety system has the components necessary to succeed.

Components of ZeroQuest®

ZeroQuest® is comprised of four levels:

- Commitment
- Effort
- Outcomes
- Sustainability

Each level builds upon the previous one. The goal of ZeroQuest® is to guide participants through the process of building a sustainable health and safety system. By becoming involved in the process, through such initiatives as sharing best practices and joining working groups, individual firms working their way through the program will find themselves becoming contributing members of an interdependent community of companies with similar needs and qualities – all working together to achieve zero injuries.

The Commitment Level is the first step in the process. It requires firms to reflect upon and demonstrate how they are committed to a sustainable health and safety system. Although the primary focus at this level is on how well a firm has planned its health and safety system, the commitment you make is to the entire program.

At the Effort Level, a firm works toward integrating its health and safety system with productivity and profitability. This is done by establishing measurable strategic objectives and setting goals to attain them.

The Outcomes Level requires firms to assess the efforts made to maintain and sustain its health and safety system, while checking and identifying areas for improvement, and correcting them.
At the Sustainability Level, a firm must be constantly engaged in planning, implementing, checking and correcting the health and safety system.

While most firms will advance through the levels of ZeroQuest® at different rates, it is expected that no firm will remain at any level for more than two years. If two years are exceeded at any level, firms will be required to re-apply to the Commitment Level. This stipulation reflects the continuous improvement philosophy behind the ZeroQuest® program.

IHSA has determined that there are four components (or paths to zero) that must be present at all levels in order for the program to be a success. They are:

**Risk Management** – the overall managed approach to creating an environment where risks are identified, quantified, and, ultimately either eliminated or controlled.

**Best Practices** – any method, solution, or practice that has been evaluated as superior, implemented successfully and has been supported through research or practice-based evidence to recognize, assess and control health and safety risks.

**Health and Safety Culture** – the safety-related values, attitudes and beliefs of all employees in an organization. In other words, safety culture represents the values and attitudes that employees hold in regard to safety.

**Internal Responsibility System (IRS)** – a system in which everyone has a direct responsibility for health and safety as an essential part of their job.

**Compliance** – Meeting the intention of a minimum standard. Standards referenced in this guide are Ontario’s Occupational Health and Safety Act and its associated Regulations.

*Compliance with a ZeroQuest® element does not infer removal of risk nor should it be interpreted to mean any level of legal absolution. Employers are entirely responsible for their own workplace risks regardless of the recommendations of this guide."
Working through ZeroQuest®

Upon completion of each level, a firm will be recognized for its achievement and join a growing number of firms that are actively demonstrating their commitment to zero injuries and illnesses.

Once a level is complete, a firm will be eligible to receive recognition, in the form of a plaque and a letter of confirmation. These will be presented at a ceremony at the firm’s location as soon as possible.

Proceeding through the various levels of the ZeroQuest® program requires that firms first complete and submit an application form to IHSA. After this, depending on the level, the evaluation will consist of a documentation review and on-site verification interviews.
Commitment
The Commitment Level is the first step in ZeroQuest®. This step exemplifies a firm’s dedication to completing all steps necessary to create and sustain a successful health and safety system. Although IHSA recognizes the unique qualities of individual companies, there are components in any health and safety system that remain constant. ZeroQuest® helps firms ensure they have all the components necessary to succeed.

At the Commitment Level, a firm must demonstrate that its employees recognize the importance of integrating a health and safety program into the firm’s business plan.

The Commitment Level requires firms to plan for a sustainable health and safety system. This includes not only having the basic documentation that meets the needs of the firm, but also ensuring each person within the organization has internalized the critical information to work safely.

IHSA has found that many firms are able to quickly proceed through the Commitment Level and proceed to the Effort Level. Typically, the process takes no more than 90 days.

Commitment is the initial step to eliminating all injuries and illnesses.
Entering the Commitment Level
The first step toward completing the Commitment Level is applying to participate in the program. Prospective participants are asked to fill out and submit a completed Application to the Commitment Level (together with any applicable fees). The form can be found in this Guide, on IHSA’s website (www.ihsa.ca) or by contacting the IHSA office. The application form requires signatures from both management and labour representatives. The commitment date is a target firms set when they are prepared for an IHSA representative to conduct the evaluation. This consists of a documentation review and on-site verification interviews.

Preparing for Evaluation
In order to complete the Commitment Level, a firm must demonstrate its commitment to a successful health and safety system. To determine a firm’s commitment, IHSA will evaluate the following documents:

- Health and safety policy statement
- Organizational chart
- A representative sampling of detailed job descriptions
- A representative sampling of meeting agendas and minutes (these can be from various sources – including management meetings, departmental meetings, safety meetings and joint health and safety committee meetings)
- Orientation program for new/young/temporary/contract workers
- Return to work policy
- Training matrix
- Job planning procedure

It should be emphasized that the requirements should be integrated. To help firms understand how the documents will be evaluated, refer to the guide in this section.

Evaluation
Success at the Commitment Level is verified by an IHSA representative through a documentation review and on-site employee interviews. The documentation review will determine if the firm meets the criteria outlined in the ZeroQuest® Guide and if those documents have been tailored to meet the needs of the firm.
Along with the documentation review, the Commitment Level also requires verification interviews. Using a small sample of employees, the verification interviews will assess whether the firm has internalized its health and safety commitments. The interview questions are based primarily on commitment and culture with lesser emphasis on compliance and procedural issues. Each interview at the Commitment Level will be approximately 20 minutes in length. A firm must work with its IHSA representative to set a date for the interviews and agree on the interview demographics.

**Evaluation Report**

Based on the results of the documentation review and verification interviews, the IHSA representative will prepare an evaluation report for the firm. This report includes general observations, as well as strengths and areas of opportunity within the company.

**NOTE:** Firms must submit an action plan to address areas of opportunity within 90 days of receiving the evaluation report. Some firms may have to fulfill certain areas of opportunity identified in the report before receiving the Commitment Award.

**Award Presentation**

After successful completion of the evaluation, and the submission of the Effort Level application (including payment of any applicable fees) the firm will be presented with the Commitment Award. This framed medallion can be presented at a ceremony at the firm’s location. The award ceremony will be a presentation highlighting the firm’s results from the evaluation, presentation of the plaque, and introduction of the Effort Level.
At this level, a firm is asked to assess its documentation to determine if it meets basic requirements as outlined below. These are minimum requirements only. The documentation may have to be more comprehensive to meet the needs of the firm. It is important that the documentation reflect the firm and the type of work the firm does.

The verification interviews that are part of the evaluation process will determine whether or not employees have internalized what is stated in the documentation. Training and guidance may be needed if major changes in the documentation are required. Firms may request assistance from IHSA throughout the process.

The following questions outline the requirements needed to achieve this level:

**Health and Safety Policy Statement**
- Does the firm’s statement include a clause that illustrates the CEO/owner’s commitment to continually improve the firm’s occupational health and safety performance?
- Does the statement reflect the true scope of the organization? (e.g. size, remote worksite, multiple locations, visitors, suppliers, etc.)
- Does it take into consideration what resources need to be allocated to health and safety?
- Does the statement express the desire to, at a minimum, comply with all current/applicable legislation?

In short – is it a comprehensive and realistic demonstration of the firm’s commitment to health and safety?

**Organizational Chart**
- Have all positions been included?
- Is it up to date?

**Job Descriptions**
- Are job descriptions available for all positions identified in the organizational chart?
- Are these current? What is the schedule for their review, and whose responsibility is this?
- Have measurable health and safety responsibilities been clearly outlined for each position?
Management Meetings (agendas/minutes) – if applicable
• Are there terms of reference for these meetings?
• Are action items being tracked and followed up in a timely manner?

Safety Meeting Minutes
• Are there terms of reference for these meetings?
• Are action items being tracked and followed up in a timely manner?

Joint Health and Safety Committee Meeting Minutes – if applicable
• Are there terms of reference for these meetings?
• Are action items being tracked and followed-up in a timely manner?

Orientation Program for New/Young/Temporary/Contract Workers
• Is there an orientation program for new/young/temporary/contract workers?
• Is this program adequate to ensure that all new employees are made aware of existing documentation, and their rights and duties as outlined in the Occupational Health and Safety Act?

Return to Work Policy
• Does the firm’s return to work policy meet the legislative requirements set out by the WSIB?
• Have individual roles and responsibilities been clearly outlined?

Training Matrix
• Does the firm have a training matrix to track training requirements and training that has been completed for each employee?

Job Planning
• Is there a documented job planning procedure?
• Are there clear criteria outlining when a written job plan is required?

This information should be useful in better understanding the documentation requirements at the Commitment Level. Remember that it may not reflect all documents required to meet the needs of a specific firm. It is meant only to assist in focusing on areas of the firm’s health and safety system that may need improvement.

Efforts in creating and reviewing the documentation will prove vital at the Effort Level. Remember to include input from all levels of the firm (e.g. employees, supervisors, management) and the joint health and safety representative (if applicable). It is also important to continually review the documentation to ensure that it is sufficient to meet the needs of the firm and reflects any changes in legislation and/or industry standards and lessons learned through operating experience.
Document list at Commitment Level

Please forward the following documentation to the IHSA office at least one month prior to the scheduled evaluation date:

- Copy of the firm’s health and safety policy statement
- Organizational chart
- A representative sampling of detailed job descriptions
- A representative sampling of meeting agendas and minutes (can be from various sources including management meetings, departmental meetings, and safety meetings)
- Orientation program for new/young/temporary/contract workers
- Return to work policy
- Training matrix
- Job planning procedure

All submitted documentation will be either returned to the organization upon request, or destroyed upon completion of the evaluation.
Statement of Commitment: We (the undersigned) are committed to continually improving the occupational health and safety performance of our organization. We will endeavour to embrace the precepts of world-class health and safety management systems and to this end we welcome the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association’s evaluation of our system.

Firm name: ____________________________

Firm contact: __________________________

Date: _________________________________

Goal date for document review and verification interviews*: ___________________________

Number of workers: ______________________

Health and Safety Representative: ________________________________

Joint Health and Safety Committee: ________________________________

Upper Management members’ signatures: __________________________

__________________________

CEO/Owners’ signature (or equivalent): __________________________

Please contact the IHSA office at 1-800-263-5024 or (905) 625-0100 or visit www.ihsa.ca for an application

* NOTE: Evaluation fees vary depending on firm size. Contact your IHSA representative for details.
The key to success at the Effort Level is the integration of health and safety into the firm’s business plan. Effort will not replace any existing system but will evaluate all systems based on their strength and sustainability. At the Effort Level it is required that the firm implement elements of a managed health and safety system.

The most important component of a managed approach to health and safety is the use of a continuous cycle of planning, implementing, checking, and correcting. In the Effort Level, the planning and implementing aspect of managing a health and safety system will be evaluated. Checking and correcting are not required until the Outcomes Level.

IHSA recommends firms take advantage of the following resources while working through the Effort Level:

**Working Groups**
IHSA has created several Working Groups throughout the province. Within these groups ZeroQuest® members at the same program level share ideas and best practices as they work together in the continual development of their health and safety systems. Firms interested in joining a working group should contact their IHSA representative.

**On-Line Best Practices Database**
IHSA has also created a Best Practices on-line database (www.ihsa.ca), which acts as a clearinghouse for the collection, classification and distribution of best practices. A best practice can be as simple as a solution to a problem, or as complex as a reporting system. An important aspect of an interdependent community is our willingness to share knowledge and experiences with those around us.
Entering the Effort Level

The application form requires signatures of both management and worker representatives. The commitment date is a target firms set when they are prepared for an IHSA representative to conduct the evaluation. The evaluation consists of a documentation review and on-site verification interviews.

Preparing for Evaluation

To complete the Effort Level a firm must demonstrate it has planned and implemented a sustainable health and safety system. Firms must perform a risk assessment to identify and prioritize hazards which can then be used in the development of a health and safety business plan.

Below is a list of the health and safety system components that will be assessed. Firms are expected to demonstrate that these components have been implemented and integrated into its business:

- Evidence of fulfilling the action plan submitted at the Commitment Level
- Leadership
- Risk management
- Health and safety business plan
- Hazard and incident reporting
- Training
- Controls measures
- Inspections
- Emergency planning and response
- Management of change
- Credible third-party/IHSA audit with criteria at least equal to the WSIB Workwell Audit
- IHSA Internal Responsibility System (IRS) Audit or equivalent
- IHSA Safety Climate Survey or equivalent

NOTE: There may be other components that a firm will want to share with IHSA to show its health and safety system is sustainable.
Evaluation
The firm’s effort will be verified by an IHSA representative through a documentation review and a series of on-site interviews. Prior to successful completion of the Effort Level, the firm must demonstrate it has addressed the areas of opportunity from the Commitment Level evaluation report and continues to meet the criteria at the Commitment Level.

Using a representative sample, the verification interviews will confirm that a firm’s employees have a clear understanding of the health and safety system employed by the company.

Evaluation Report
IHSA will prepare an evaluation report for the firm based on the results of the documentation review and verification interviews. The report will include general observations and a breakdown of the firm’s strengths and areas of opportunity.

Award Presentation
After successful completion of the evaluation and the submission of the Outcomes Level application (including payment of any applicable fees) the firm will be presented the Effort Award. This consists of a framed medallion which can be presented during a ceremony at the firm. The award ceremony will be a presentation highlighting the firm’s results from the evaluation, presentation of the plaque, and introduction of the Outcomes Level.
This section is meant to provide more detail on the key elements of the health and safety system that will be evaluated. At the Effort Level, IHSA wants to learn about the system being used, as well as the firm’s health and safety plan for its continual development and improvement.

As each firm is unique, the methods of executing and managing the components within that system will also be unique. It is expected that for each component, at a minimum, legislative requirements will be fulfilled.

Documentation must include input from all levels of the firm as well as the joint health and safety committee or health and safety representative. It is also important that documentation be evaluated to ensure that it is effectively meeting the needs of the firm.

**Leadership**

*Health and Safety Resources*
- Has the employer designated an individual who has the knowledge and experience to co-ordinate the worksite health and safety activities?
- Does his/her job description reflect this?
- Are there management personnel dedicated to ensuring changes in the work environment are reflected in the health and safety system?

**Performance Evaluations**
- Are performance evaluations being conducted?
- Are health and safety performance factors included in the evaluation?

**Risk Management**

*Hazard Identification*
- Have all existing workplace hazards been identified? Has a procedure been established to capture newly identified or newly created hazards from the risk assessment?

*Risk Assessment*
- Does the risk assessment take into account the inherent risk, prior to managing it (i.e. the probability and consequence), control measures that are currently in place, the legislative requirements, and previous non-conformances for all identified hazards?
Risk Control
• Once hazards have been prioritized, have engineering, administrative and personal protection controls been considered for each hazard?

Re-evaluation of Risk
• Is there a regular review of the risk assessment to evaluate new hazards resulting from changes in the work environment, work methods or controls established to address previous hazards?

Purchasing
• Are purchasing guidelines available?
• Is hazard analysis a requirement prior to purchasing?

Health and Safety Business Plan
A health and safety business plan is the overall strategy for the planning and implementation of a health and safety system. It should include:
• Long and short-term health and safety targets and objectives
• Assignment of responsibilities
• Target dates for completion
• Anticipated financial resources
• A set of metrics to track performance

Hazard and Incident Reporting
• Is there a written procedure and form in place for reporting incidents?
• Does the procedure include the processes to be followed for the investigation of incidents?

Training
• Has a training needs assessment been conducted to determine training requirements for all levels of the organization?
• Has this assessment taken into account legal requirements, in addition to training to improve job performance?
• Are all employees aware of their roles and responsibilities in conforming to the health and safety policy and procedures, and the requirements of your health and safety system?
• Does the training program address new/young/temporary/contract workers and highlight their responsibilities and duties within the Internal Responsibility System and under the Occupational Health and Safety Act?
Control Measures

• What control measures are in place to eliminate or reduce health and safety risks at the source? (i.e. design modifications, procedures, personal protective equipment)
• Do your procedures outline personal protective equipment requirements, including proper inspection and maintenance?
• Are inspection and maintenance records kept and reviewed?

Job Planning Program

• Is there a written job planning procedure?
• Are work procedures available for routine jobs? Have job safety analyses been incorporated into these procedures?

Contractor Management

• Do written job contracts explicitly state the firm’s health and safety expectations?
• Have regular meetings and inspections been written into the terms of the contract? Are these meetings and inspections documented?
• Has the firm established a contractor orientation program?
• Are procedures in place to ensure that contractors are made aware of the hazards present in the workplace, and the controls (e.g. engineering controls, work practices) that are in place to protect employees?

Preventive Maintenance Program

• Is there a preventive maintenance program in place?
• How is it ensured that schedules are being met? Has someone been assigned the duty of reviewing the schedules to ensure they are kept up to date?
• Are records kept for all maintenance performed?

Inspections and Site Visits

• Are workplace inspections and job site visits being conducted regularly by various members of the organization (e.g. managers, supervisors and employees)?

Emergency Planning and Response

• Has a plan been established that specifies procedures for handling unexpected situations?
• Does the plan include detailed lists of personnel including telephone numbers and each person’s duties and responsibilities?
• Does the plan include a schedule for performing rescue practices and drills?
• Is the plan co-ordinated with local fire, police and emergency personnel?

Management of Change
• Are procedures in place to ensure that changes in legislation are reflected in the documentation?
• Is there a process that deals with succession plans for integrating key personnel’s responsibility when they leave the position?
• Are measures in place to ensure documentation is current, obsolete documents are removed from the system, and new procedures/policies are communicated to all appropriate employees?
• Are procedures in place to support a return to work policy?

Program Assessment
• Are plans in place for a credible third-party/IHSA audit of the system?
• Are plans in place for IHSA’s IRS Audit or equivalent?
• Are plans in place for IHSA’s Safety Climate Survey or equivalent?
Please forward the following documentation to the IHSA office at least one month prior to the scheduled evaluation date:

- Risk assessment
- Training needs assessment
- Training matrix
- Health and safety business plan
- Procedure for the ongoing identification of hazards
- Purchasing guidelines
- Blank performance evaluation form
- Hazard reporting procedure and form
- Incident reporting procedure and form
- Inspection and maintenance records for personal protective equipment (e.g. rubber gloves or fall protection)
- Job planning procedure
- Sample job plan
- Sample job contract (personal information can be deleted if preferred)
- Records from the firm’s preventive maintenance program
- Emergency plan
- Workplace inspection form
- Job site visit form
- Return to work program

All submitted documentation will be returned to the organization upon request, or destroyed upon completion of the evaluation.
Statement of Commitment: We (the undersigned) are committed to continually improving the occupational health and safety performance of our organization. We will endeavour to embrace the precepts of world-class health and safety management systems and to this end we welcome the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association’s evaluation of our system.

Firm name:

Firm contact:

Date:

Goal date for document review and verification interviews*:

Number of workers:

Health and Safety Representative:

Joint Health and Safety Committee:

Upper Management members’ signatures:

CEO/Owners’ signature (or equivalent):

* NOTE: Evaluation fees vary depending on firm size. Contact your IHSA representative for details.
Outcomes
The Outcomes Level is the next step in the ZeroQuest® program. At this level IHSA requires that a firm continue to develop its health and safety system addressing hazards as identified in the risk assessment. It is also expected that the firm review the measurable outcomes that were chosen at the Effort Level, to determine if they are adequate to gauge the success of the health and safety system.

To complete the Outcomes Level, the firm must demonstrate that it has evaluated its health and safety system through both internal assessments and a credible third-party/IHSA health and safety audit that has been completed within the previous 24 months. This may also be an appropriate time to conduct a follow-up IHSA IRS Audit and Safety Climate Survey or suitable equivalent.

Assessing the effectiveness of practices and procedures within the health and safety system and correcting identified gaps are key elements in a managed approach to health and safety.
Entering the Outcomes Level
The application process at the Outcomes Level is the same as at the Effort Level. The application form requires signatures of both management and worker representatives. The commitment date is a target firms set when they are prepared for an IHSA representative to conduct an evaluation. The evaluation consists of a documentation review and a series of on-site verification interviews.

Preparing for Evaluation
There are three areas of focus at the Outcomes Level:
• Reviewing and assessing the effectiveness of measurable outcomes
• Incorporating, checking and correcting processes into the health and safety system
• Planning and implementing new health and safety initiatives

At the Outcomes Level, IHSA expects firms review the measurable outcomes chosen at the Effort Level to gauge the success of its health and safety system, in order to determine if these performance indicators are effective. The firm must also demonstrate efforts to evaluate its health and safety system (through both internal assessments and a credible third-party/IHSA health and safety audit conducted within the previous 24 months) and react to areas of opportunity identified through these evaluations. Further methods to identify areas of opportunity include IHSA’s IRS Audit and the IHSA Safety Climate Survey.

It is expected that a firm will have investigated solutions to fix identified gaps and will have determined the best action to meet the needs of the firm. Once corrective actions have been taken, IHSA requires that a firm conduct a follow-up evaluation to determine if the changes have had a positive effect on the health and safety system. Planning and implementing new health and safety initiatives to control identified hazards in the risk assessment is also an expectation at the Outcomes Level.

Evaluation
Once an application for Outcomes has been received by IHSA, a pre-evaluation meeting is held to determine the areas of focus for the evaluation. At the Outcomes I pre-evaluation meeting it will be determined if the multiple site model will be followed. Once the evaluation proposal is approved, IHSA will create a customized evaluation
for the firm. To successfully complete the Outcomes Level, the firm must demonstrate that it has addressed the areas of opportunity outlined in the Effort Level evaluation report and continues to meet the criteria of both the Effort and Commitment Levels.

**Single Site Model**

*Outcomes year one* – Complete Outcomes level evaluations. This is comprised of a full documentation review and verification interviews.

*Outcomes year two to five* – Documentation review on select topics. This will include, at a minimum, evaluation of:
  - Health and safety business plan
  - Risk assessment
  - Top three areas of opportunity identified in previous evaluations

This would also be an appropriate time to conduct a follow up IRS audit and/or safety climate survey.

**Multiple Site Model**

*Outcomes year one, three and five* – Complete Outcomes level evaluations. This is comprised of a full documentation review and verification interviews.

*Outcomes year two and four* – Documentation review on select topics. This will include, at a minimum, evaluation of:
  - Health and safety business plan
  - Risk assessment
  - Top three areas of opportunity identified in previous evaluations

This would also be an appropriate time to conduct a follow up IRS audit and/or safety climate survey.

**Evaluation Report**

IHSA will prepare an evaluation report based on the results of the documentation review and verification interviews. The report will include general observations and a list of strengths and areas of opportunity. (Some firms may have to fulfill certain areas of opportunity identified in the report before receiving the Outcomes Award.)

**Award Presentation**

After successful completion of the evaluation, firms will be presented the Outcomes Award – a framed medallion which can be presented during a ceremony at the firm. The award ceremony will be a presentation highlighting the firm’s results from the evaluation, presentation of the plaque, and an introduction to the Sustainability Level.
Outlined in this Guide are several key elements of the health and safety system that will be evaluated. At the Outcomes Level, IHSA wants to learn how the firm is evaluating and continually improving its system to ensure that it is meeting the firm’s needs.

It is expected that the firm will have developed processes to evaluate the effectiveness of existing practices and procedures and identify any gaps within its health and safety system. Once these areas of opportunity have been identified the firm is required to investigate solutions to the identified gaps, and conduct follow-up evaluations to determine the effectiveness of the changes once corrective actions have been taken. When evaluating the health and safety system and planning corrective actions, include input from all levels of the firm as well as the joint health and safety committee or health and safety representative.

Data Tracking
Review the measures chosen by the firm in its plan put forward at the Effort Level to determine the success of the health and safety system. After tracking these measures while working through the Effort Level the firm should be able to determine if the indicator is effective in evaluating strengths and weaknesses in the health and safety system.

NOTE: For the evaluation, the firm must justify the measurable outcomes chosen by providing evidence of their value in determining the success of the health and safety system.

Evaluations
Conducting audits of the health and system is important to evaluate the effectiveness of existing practices and procedures, and to identify areas for improvement within the system. IHSA recommends that any assessments of the health and safety system be done both internally and externally. External third-party evaluations, such as IHSA’s IRS Audit and Safety Climate Survey, validate internal audit results and identify areas for improvement that may have been overlooked.
Audits of the health and safety system can focus on:
• high risk areas as identified in the risk assessment
• areas of concern as identified through incident reports
• areas that need to be reviewed based on changes in legislation or industry standards or from lessons learned through operating experience.

Using the results from both the internal and external audits, the firm should develop an action plan which takes into account the corrective action to be taken based on some type of investigative process, the person or group of people responsible for completing this task, a target date for completion and resources available.

NOTE: Evidence of internal and external audits of the health and safety system will be requested during the evaluation.

Health and Safety Business Plan
The health and safety business plan created at the Effort Level should be reviewed and updated yearly. It is expected that there will be changes to the plan to accommodate new action items from internal and external evaluations, and new goals based on changes to legislation, industry standards or lessons learned from operating experience. There may also be changes to the plan resulting from new initiatives to control high risk hazards. At the Outcomes Level, the updated plan should also include objectives for checking and correcting existing practices and procedures, and measuring outcomes of health and safety performance.

Mentoring
It is expected that firms progressing through the Outcomes Level will mentor firms. This program needs to be in place for a minimum of 12 months. A report identifying program elements and any real or proposed benefits of both mentor and apprentice firm can be included. Mentoring can include such things as active participation in one of the ZeroQuest® Working Groups or the CEO Health & Safety Leadership Charter.

Sharing best practices is also required at this level. (See www.ihsa.ca for more information concerning Best Practices.)

Measurement Criteria
To be eligible for evaluation at the Outcomes Level, any work-related critical injury or fatality within the preceding 12-month period will need to be reviewed with an IHSA representative. The purpose of this review is to determine the extent to which there may be deficiencies in the health and safety management system.
Statement of Commitment: We (the undersigned) are committed to continually improving the occupational health and safety performance of our organization. We will endeavour to embrace the precepts of world-class health and safety management systems and to this end we welcome the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association’s evaluation of our system.

Firm name: 

Firm contact: 

Date: 

Goal date for document review and verification interviews*: 

Number of workers: 

Health and Safety Representative: 

Joint Health and Safety Committee: 

Upper Management members’ signatures: 

CEO/Owners’ signature (or equivalent): 

Please contact the IHSA office at 1-800-263-5024 or (905) 625-0100 or visit www.ihsa.ca for an application

* NOTE: Evaluation fees vary depending on firm size. Contact your IHSA representative for details.
Sustainability
The Sustainability Level is the next step in ZeroQuest®. Here, the firm must continue to evaluate its health and safety system, and work to plan and implement new safety initiatives based on the risk assessment and the results of the evaluations. Throughout the Sustainability Level the firm must continue to incorporate the aspects of planning, implementing, checking and correcting into its health and safety system.

**NOTE:** Completing the Sustainability Level requires successfully re-earning the Outcomes Level for five consecutive years. A customized evaluation of the firm’s health and safety system will be conducted by IHSA each year. At the end of five years, the firm will have earned the Sustainability Award.

**Entering the Sustainability Level**

The application process at this level is the same as for the Commitment, Effort and Outcomes Levels. The application form requires signatures of both management and worker representatives. The commitment date is a target firms set when they are prepared for a IHSA representative to conduct the evaluation. The customized evaluation consists of a documentation review and a series of on-site verification interviews.

**Preparing for the Evaluation**

Once the application has been received by IHSA, the firm will be invited to a pre-evaluation meeting to discuss plans for re-earning the Outcomes Level and to determine the areas of focus for the evaluation. Upon completion of this meeting, the firm will be expected to submit a proposal stating plans to maintain the firm’s status in the Outcomes Level and the criteria for the evaluation (as agreed upon by IHSA and the firm at the pre-evaluation meeting) to ensure expectations are clearly understood. This proposal should also include a target date for the annual evaluation by IHSA.

Once the evaluation proposal is approved, IHSA will create a customized evaluation plan for the firm.
**Evaluation**

Similar to evaluations at previous levels, the firm’s effort at this stage will be verified by a IHSA representative through five separate evaluations which include a review of documentation and a series of on-site interviews. Prior to successfully re-earning the Outcomes Level, the firm must demonstrate it has addressed the areas of opportunity outlined in the previous Outcomes Level evaluation report and continues to meet the criteria of the Effort and Commitment Levels.

Using a representative sample of employees, the verification interviews will confirm that the firm’s employees have a clear understanding of the health and safety system employed by the company. The makeup of the interviewees will be dependent upon the evaluation criteria. The firm and IHSA will collaborate on the dates for the interviews as well as the interview demographics.

**Evaluation Report**

Based on the results of the documentation review and verification interviews, the IHSA representative will prepare an evaluation report for the firm after each evaluation. This report includes general observations and a list of strengths within the firm and areas of opportunity for the firm to examine.

As the Sustainability Level is similar to the Outcomes Level, firms may have to fulfill certain areas of opportunity before receiving a certificate indicating they have re-earned the Outcomes Level. After successfully re-earning the Outcomes Level for five consecutive years, the firm will have earned the Sustainability Award.

**Award Presentation**

After successful completion of the five evaluations, the firm will be presented the Sustainability Award. This consists of an award ceremony at your firm. The ceremony will be a presentation highlighting the firm’s results from the evaluation and presentation of the plaque.
Statement of Commitment: We (the undersigned) are committed to continually improving the occupational health and safety performance of our organization. We will endeavour to embrace the precepts of world-class health and safety management systems and to this end we welcome the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association’s evaluation of our system.

Firm name: _____________________________________________________________

Firm contact: __________________________________________________________

Date: __________________________________________________________________

Goal date for document review and verification interviews*: _________________

Number of workers: _____________________________________________________

Health and Safety Representative: _________________________________________

Joint Health and Safety Committee: _______________________________________

Upper Management members’ signatures: ________________________________

_________________________  ________________________________
_________________________  ________________________________

CEO/Owners’ signature (or equivalent): _________________________________

_________________________  ________________________________

* NOTE: Evaluation fees vary depending on firm size. Contact your IHSA representative for details.

Please contact the IHSA office at 1-800-263-5024 or (905) 625-0100 or visit www.ihsa.ca for an application

SAMPLE ONLY
**ZeroQuest® Guiding Principles**

**Worker Level Understanding** – ZeroQuest® is designed to make sure health and safety issues are understood at the worker and management levels within an organization. Front-line workers are those most exposed to risk and evaluating their knowledge of risk management is fundamental to preventing injuries.

**Internal Responsibility System** – Each person in an organization has individual responsibility for certain aspects of health and safety commensurate with their level of authority. These responsibilities vary by position and can not be delegated or abdicated.

**Transparency** – There are many stakeholders within an organization and through the application process to ZeroQuest® the signatures of the Joint Health and Safety Committee are requested to be sure both management and labour are informed evaluations of the company’s health and safety system will be taking place.

**Recognition** – The milestones within ZeroQuest® consisting of Commitment, Effort, Outcomes and Sustainability are recognized with an appropriate plaque to demonstrate an organization’s level of achievement in the program. It is the given milestone along the continuum of working toward zero injuries that is being recognized.

**Zero Injuries** – Zero lost-time injuries is the only conscionable goal for an organization to have. The achievement of zero injuries in any given time frame must be based on sound safety management efforts. It is not the intention of ZeroQuest® to celebrate the achievement of zero injuries without the corresponding effort in preventing those injuries. Zero for the sake of zero rings hollow.

**Gaps in Health and Safety Management Systems** – ZeroQuest® was designed to complement other national and/or international health and safety standards and not compete with them. Gaps were identified in other standards, and addressing these forms the basis for ZeroQuest®.
The true value of ZeroQuest® lies in its ability to manage risk, implement best practices, promote a positive health and safety culture, and share and internalize responsibility.