

# New Framework Provides Clarity on Role of OHS Professionals



The International Network of Safety & Health Practitioner Organisations (INSHPO), which acts as a forum for international collaboration among professional organisations to improve safety and health at work, recently released the OHS Professional Capability Framework to provide greater clarity around the generalist OHS professional role.

Safety professionals can use the Framework:

- As a reference for their professional practice;
- To aid the development of continuing professional development plans; and
- To assist in promoting the OHS professional role.

Employers can use it to help in developing position descriptions for OHS roles and in recruiting OHS personnel.

The Framework explains that because only a few countries have a regulated requirement for practice, unqualified people are practicing in this area—which not only affects the quality of OHS advice, but also creates a negative perception of the subject, the role and the profession. The lack of clarity around the OHS role has also negatively affected the perceived value of the OHS professional role in organisations.

Although there may be a range of OHS roles in the workplace, INSHPO has recognized the need to formally define the OHS role in two clear categories:

- The **OHS Practitioner**, who's vocationally-educated; and
- The **OHS Professional**, who's university-educated (or has attained a similar level of higher education).

This Framework focuses on the OHS Professional and has four components:

1. Context
2. Role of the OHS Professional
3. Knowledge
4. Skills.

An appendix to the Framework lists the kinds of hazards OHS Professionals can be expected to manage.