

Health and safety

We are committed to being a safe, secure and reliable organisation.

Key highlights

- ▶ Executive leadership completed Directors' role in health and safety training course.
- ▶ New Electronic Quality Management System (EQMS) introduced and operational.
- ▶ Mental health awareness training deployed across the business.
- ▶ New Training Academy in Bolton fully operational.
- ▶ Certification for ISO accreditations 9001, 14001, 27001 and OHSAS 18001 maintained.
- ▶ Transition plan from OHSAS 18001 to ISO 45001 on target.
- ▶ Engineering systems platform upgraded for health and safety and audit management.
- ▶ Mandatory SHEQ training ongoing.
- ▶ ISO 50001 Energy Management Systems accreditation achieved.

Introduction

SMS has maintained a dedicated focus on its safety, health, environment and quality (SHEQ) journey through 2019. The year began with a series of mandatory health and safety courses for Directors and senior managers. This set the tone and underpinned executive leadership's commitment to the Company's core values, with safety as the priority.

Our SHEQ training programme is fundamental to the improvements that were targeted in 2018 and the benefits are now being realised with IOSH Managing Safely courses delivered to managers across the country in the year. Increased staff awareness, engagement and ownership of health and safety are evident throughout the business and participation in regional SHEQ forums has ensured that the SHEQ strategy is delivered consistently to all parts of the business.

The 2019 strategy and action plan continued to build on the foundations and experience that SMS has, with over two decades in the sector, and ensures that we are ready for the challenges of the future.

Overall, performance has been positive, with ongoing progress made towards our objectives and targets, and we continue to invest in SHEQ to meet current and future needs.

Occupational health

People Asset Management (PAM) was appointed as the occupational health provider for the Group. Working closely with SHEQ and Human Resources (HR), PAM is providing support nationally for the business' occupational health needs. This includes expert advice on occupational illness and injury and delivery of our drug and alcohol screening programme.

A mental health awareness training package has been developed and deployment commenced in 2019. This will extend through 2020 as we continue to support our employees with any mental health issues they are experiencing whilst raising awareness of the debilitating effects associated with poor mental health.

ISO accreditations

The business maintained all ISO accreditations in 2019 with no major non-conformances recorded during the audit processes.

Certification was awarded for ISO 50001 Energy Management Systems (EnMS) in November. This underlines our sustainability aspirations and we expect further reductions in energy usage in 2020.

The transition plan from OHSAS 18001 to ISO 45001 for the Occupational Health and Safety Standard is on target.

Systems

Our new electronic quality management system (EQMS) is live. EQMS is the cornerstone of our risk management processes and we are already experiencing improved reporting, better action tracking and the centralisation of our SHEQ documentation. The investment in and ongoing development of EQMS will ensure we are in a strong position to meet the needs of Industry 4.0, the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) and the Connected Worker. It also takes us a step closer to predictive analytics.

Over the course of the year, we have been working to make improvements to our Field Service Manager (FSM) engineering management platform. These improvements will enable our engineers to record safety related information on job cards and strengthen our auditing capabilities.



Competence

During the year, the business fully established a new Training Academy in Bolton. This increased the depth and breadth of our internal training capability and improved the geographical spread of the business with centres in the east and west of the country.

One of the key features of the facility is the purpose-built street scene where engineers undergo training in an environment that is very similar to what they will encounter whilst in the field. This blend of bespoke practical and classroom-based training ensures that SMS engineers are trained to the highest standards and further emphasises the business' commitment to leading the smart energy revolution.

The training delivered in the academies is further supported in the field via the Company's eLearning platform Nimble. Nimble is a modern and efficient learning environment that allows us to create content specific to the works that we undertake.

The ongoing improvements to our training offering will ensure that our engineers and other staff maintain the proper competencies to flourish in their respective roles.

Accidents and incidents

Our performance over the year remained stable with the accident frequency rate at 0.16 (December 2019). This is encouraging as our engineering workforce increased significantly in 2019. We regret to report four injuries under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR); however, none of these were considered significant. The injured parties have all returned to work with no long-term effects expected. The injuries were all related to manual handling and ergonomics and we have looked closely at the root causes and identified a bespoke training package, which is being assessed for suitability. This will reduce the risks from manual handling and ergonomic issues and raise awareness amongst our engineering teams.

Operational road risk continues to be monitored closely. Numerous initiatives are underway to improve driver behaviour including accreditation with the Fleet Transport Association (FTA) and personal driver assessments.

2020 and beyond

The continued growth and diversification of the business means an ever-changing risk profile. The SHEQ team works closely with the Sales and Business Development functions to ensure that we have suitable and sufficient mechanisms in place to manage existing and emerging risks.

Our targets and objectives, for 2020 and beyond, reflect the dynamic nature of the business and specific measures are detailed relating to competencies, training and sustainability as we move further into new territories such as the smart homes sector.

Over the past few years we have invested significantly in SHEQ technology to support the growth and diversification of the business. These systems are now embedded, and they will facilitate the improvements that make up some of our key objectives for 2020 and beyond.

Summary

Health and safety is, and always will be, our number one priority. We are committed to being a safe, secure and reliable organisation and will act diligently to protect our employees' health and safety and others who may be affected by our activities at all times.

Safety is one of our core values and we will continually strive to improve our performance to meet our aspiration of zero harm across our business.

