International Safety Awards 2022

Chief Adjudicator's Report

British Safety Council

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Results

A total of 647 applications were received for the International Safety Awards in 2022 and 85% of these successfully achieved a Pass, Merit or Distinction grade.

The grading distribution among the applications submitted in 2022 was as follows: -

Distinction	135	(21%)
Merit	204	(32%)
Pass	210	(32%)
Fail	98	(15%)

There was a significant increase in the number of Distinctions awarded in 2022 compared to 2021 – up from 13% to 21%. The awards of Merit and Pass grades in 2022 was broadly in line with the grades achieved in 2021 – 32% of applicants achieved a Merit in 2022 compared to 27% in 2021; 32% of applicants achieved a Pass grade in 2022 compared to 31% in 2021.

The overall percentage increase in the number of applicants receiving an International Safety Award in 2022 – 85% of applicants were successful – resulted in a significant fall in the percentage of applicants who were unsuccessful, 15% in 2022 compared to 29% in 2021.

The number of award applications increased from 533 in 2021 to 647 in 2022. Importantly the applications we received demonstrated that the fight to prevent COVID-19 impacting on workplaces, workers and the wider public has not been at the expense of ensuring the effective management of the broader hazards posed to health, safety, and wellbeing in the workplace.

British Safety Council's International Safety Awards are truly international. We received award applications from organisations in thirty-nine countries. Whilst China, India, Middle East countries and the UK were strongly represented it is important to note the increasing importance of the awards globally including in countries in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Central America.

The International Safety Awards have a key role to play in helping to drive continuous improvement in the management of workplace health, safety, and wellbeing. The Chief Adjudicator's Report is intended to assist organisations in identifying what high performing organisations are doing each day to effectively manage the risk of injury and ill-health and to emulate their success.

British Safety Council and the panel of adjudicators look forward to the continued success of the International Safety Awards evidenced by the determination of the applicants to ensure that their workers and workplaces are kept healthy and safe.

General comments

Organisations were provided with a number of online easily accessible aides to assist them in the preparation and submission of their award applications. These included:

- The 2022 International Safety Awards question set and marking scheme
- The Chief Adjudicator's Report for the 2021 International Safety Awards
- A Guidance note concerning the eligibility requirements
- The list of 2021 International Safety Award winners
- British Safety Council's webinar in December 2021, which was available to all applicants. The webinar hosted by the Chief Adjudicator and the award scheme's Independent Adjudicator sought to assist applicants in addressing the questions.

The importance of applicants accessing and understanding all of the International Safety Awards requirements as set out in the documents and aides listed above cannot be overstated.

A small but significant number of applicant organisations failed to follow the extensive advice and guidance and their scores suffered in consequence. We urge applicant organisations which were unsuccessful in 2022 to apply again in 2023 and succeed having taken advantage of the extensive support material freely available.

Applicants who provided short answers inevitably failed to provide the evidence necessary to score more than one mark. There were examples of answers running to just a couple of sentences which did no more than confirm, for example, that the applicant had systems or arrangements in place to address the risks associated with the hazard in that particular question.

One of the most important messages that the adjudicators are keen to get across to applicants, is to make sure that you have properly read and understood the question. Too often low scores for particular questions resulted from an incomplete reading and understanding of what was being sought and/or theoretical answers that failed to identify what precisely was being undertaken at that particular site.

Two examples. On Question 5, concerning the management of the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of organisations extensively described the controls they had put in place to manage infection in the workplace but had inadequately described how those control measures had been communicated to staff.

On Question 9, a number of applicants successfully defined what an effective management of change process encompasses but failed to relate the theory to the practice in their particular organisation. Specific reference was required to an example in which stakeholders had been involved, clearly demonstrating how the change process worked. The overly theoretical approach to answering questions was evident in responses to a number of questions. The adjudicators need to understand what is happening in the applicant's organisation, not what the textbooks tell you.

The dividing line between a Fail and a Pass, a Pass and a Merit and a Merit and a Distinction can be wafer-thin. A couple of marks lost for a poorly answered question, or inadequate or irrelevant supporting evidence can make the difference.

The time taken to properly understand the question and fully address the issues is time well spent and will make the difference to your grade. Time spent reviewing your application to ensure that the questions have been properly addressed is key to success.

This year the word count for answering each of the substantive questions was seven hundred words. As part of the review of how well the 2022 Awards worked, British Safety Council will be considering reducing the word count for answers to the substantive questions to five hundred words. We will be seeking a cross-section of views from award winners on the benefit of such a change. We do need to be mindful of the time applicants have to spend preparing their responses to the questions and the time adjudicators spend judging the applications. One applicant provided

a 5,168-word answer to Question 5 concerning the communication to the workforce of COVID-19 controls. Going forward the word count limit will continue to be rigorously enforced.

Ensuring the provision of relevant supporting evidence for Questions 4, 5, 9, 10 and 12 is critical to success. This supporting evidence attracts a total of five additional marks. Used effectively, the supporting evidence can lift scores making the difference between a Fail, Pass, Merit and Distinction. No marks were awarded, for example, for a photograph lacking explanation.

The satisfactory provision of relevant evidence concerning accreditation is also important in earning additional marks. Five stars from British Safety Council's Five Star Audit within the 2022 Awards eligibility period attracted three marks. A current ISO 45001 certification or a four star outcome from the British Safety Council's Five Star audit within the awards eligibility period attracted two marks. A three star outcome from British Safety Council's Five Star audit within the awards eligibility period attracted one mark.

No marks were awarded to applicants who submitted copies of audit reports, internal or external, which were not the result of British Safety Council's Five Star Audit or were uncertificated.

The application of practical real-life examples from the workplace are important and a key requirement in a number of questions. The adjudicators want to understand how things operate in practice, in that particular site or workplace. This approach brings the application to life and helps improve the adjudicator's understanding of the effectiveness of the measures you have in place. The highest-scoring submissions were noted for their consistently focused, site-specific nature and use of examples. The adjudicators again reported many instances of good or even exceptional initiatives among the submissions.

The adjudicators were once again greatly encouraged to see the importance that the senior management of many applicant organisations attached to ensuring the safety, health and wellbeing of their respective workforces and the wider community. Wellbeing has rocketed up the corporate and business agenda. We applaud the efforts made by many applicant organisations to identify and implement the improvements that are necessary to ensure the health and wellbeing of their workforce and those in the wider community impacted directly or indirectly by their activities.

Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic has been a trigger in encouraging organisations to broaden their health and safety objectives to include wellbeing this is not the only trigger. It is quite apparent from the breadth of applications we received for the 2022 International Safety Awards that boardrooms and their organisation's stakeholders are increasingly focussing on the tremendous benefits that the time, effort and resources invested in good health, safety and wellbeing brings.

Applicants were asked to provide details of any Improvement Notices, Reportable Injuries, Dangerous Occurrences or Occupational Ill Health cases and any remedial actions taken. Although not attracting marks this is important contextual information for the adjudicators. There were organisations, whilst not having had any enforcement action taken by the regulator, including notices served or prosecutions brought, injury or ill health occurrence or occupational disease, provided a mass of information which would have been more appropriate in answering questions 1, 2 and the relevant subsequent questions.

The adjudicators hope that the information provided in this report helps you not only in preparing for the 2023 International Safety Awards but equally importantly, in providing information that helps you to continue to meet the challenges you and your colleagues face in preventing injuries and ill health occurrences and ensuring wellbeing in your workplace. We wish you every success in 2023.

Question 1

Describe the nature and scope of the main operational activities carried out at the site.

As explained in the marking scheme *"This question is not marked but is **mandatory** as the response is essential for the adjudicators to understand the context and background of scored Questions 3-12."*

A comprehensive answer detailing the full extent of the activities undertaken at the applicant's site is crucial to assist the adjudicators' understanding of the business operation. The focus must be on the activities at the applicant's site. Although corporate information, for example, ownership and detailed coverage of the activities undertaken across the organisation is interesting, the focus in answering this question must be on the site. What was required was a description of the activities undertaken at the site including by whom and how.

Question 2

What are considered to be the most significant issues at the site in relation to: (please provide at least one example of each)
• Occupational health hazards
• Occupational safety hazards
• Wellbeing concerns

The marking scheme explains that *"This question is not marked but is **mandatory** as the response is essential for the adjudicators to understand the context and background of scored Questions 3-12."*

Whilst not marked, carefully considered and articulated responses to this **mandatory** question were essential for the adjudication of the scored component of the application, namely questions 3-12. Award winning applicants answered all three elements of the question focussing on the most hazardous activities at that site and the risks these posed to the safety, health, and wellbeing not only to their workers but also, for example, to contractors and other stakeholders including where appropriate the wider community. Less successful applicants listed hazards without an explanation of their significance.

Question 3

Explain how control measures implemented for <u>one</u> of the significant health, safety and/or wellbeing hazards identified within question 2 are monitored for effectiveness (<u>maximum of five marks</u>).

Question 3 was specifically linked to Question 2. The question sought to explore how the control measures put in place were monitored for their effectiveness – negatively or positively. "Effectiveness" was the key word.

Higher scoring submissions were able to articulate the significance of the hazard, the control measures put in place, the arrangements for monitoring the effectiveness of the control measures, the impact of those measures and very importantly how the results of monitoring influenced any changes in the management of the particular hazard that resulted. Evidence to demonstrate that the organisation had applied the necessary resources to monitoring the effectiveness of the control measures contributed to a high score as did the application of new and emerging technologies to assist the process.

It was essential that applicants provided detail of the actions to mitigate the risks associated with the identified hazard as far as was reasonably practicable.

A small number of applicants replicated all of the hazards at the site listed in their answer to Question 2 with little additional information. This resulted in a superficial answer and consequently

a low score. Other low scoring answers focused solely on the process of carrying out the particular operation, whilst not providing sound evidence of how control measures were monitored to ensure effectiveness.

Question 4

Explain how the organisation identifies and ensures relevant competency requirements for those staff with specific health and safety roles (<u>maximum of five marks</u>).

This question was designed to elicit the identity of those persons in the organisation with specific health and safety roles. Not only 'who' but also 'what' the responsibilities of that role involved and 'how' that role was performed. This evidence needed to include how the competency requirements for those roles was assessed and the arrangements that had been put in place to develop and maintain the necessary level of competence for their staff and the staff of external contractors.

High-scoring applicants explained not only how the knowledge and skills to carry out key roles were identified and assessed as part of the selection process but the importance too of ensuring the attitude of these staff were in line with the organisation's values and objectives. High-scoring organisations detailed the systems in place to ensure that competency levels among the staff with specific health and safety roles were regularly reviewed, maintained, and refreshed. A description of how this process was carried out also contributed to a high score.

Lower-scoring applicants, for example, detailed the qualifications and experience sought for specific health and safety roles but gave no explanation of how the competency requirement had been determined and competency continuously assured.

Question 4b

Submit supportive evidence, for example, training needs analysis, training plans, etc. (<u>one additional mark</u>).

Examples of supporting evidence submitted by applicants that attracted the one additional mark included: matrices setting out details of training course requirements by department and by individual personnel; annual training programmes; details of training courses undertaken; specimen job descriptions setting out competency requirements; copies of relevant training course and qualification certificates; copies of competency test attainment certificates.

Question 5

Describe how the organisation has effectively communicated with staff regarding implementation of control measures related to the management of COVID-19 infection within the workplace (<u>maximum of five marks</u>).

Of all the questions that formed part of the 2022 Awards this one generally attracted the highest marks. It was clear across all of the applications we received that the COVID-19 pandemic had seriously disrupted the operation of the business and impacted adversely on the health and wellbeing of the workforce.

Whilst organisations detailed the arrangements, they had put in place to prevent the spread of infection and to control the infection where it had impacted, a number of applicants failed to adequately explain how the control measures were communicated to the respective workforce. Demonstrating effective communication was critical in answering this question.

High-scoring organisations set out the detail of the various communication measures they had put in place – the 'how, why and when.' The effectiveness of the communications approaches was referenced taking account of preferences for the method of communication, ability of staff to read and the need in some cases to adopt a multi-lingual approach. High-scoring organisations also

detailed how they had been able to assess the effectiveness of communication measures and adapt communication approaches accordingly.

High-scoring organisations also detailed how staff contributed to the process of ensuring the effectiveness and completeness of communications.

Question 5b

Submit supportive evidence, for example, staff briefings, guidance information (<u>one additional mark</u>).

Examples of supporting evidence submitted by applicants that attracted the one additional mark included: copies of COVID-19 prevention plans; copies of preparedness plans; photos of various of methods used to communicate key prevention and preparedness messages; photos illustrating particular infection prevention measures.

Question 6

Describe how senior management positively influence staff and external stakeholder health and safety behaviour (<u>maximum of five marks</u>).

This question concerned the effectiveness of the actions taken by senior management in influencing the health and safety behaviour of staff and external stakeholders.

Weaker applications tended to focus on providing a cursory explanation of senior management's commitment to health, safety, and wellbeing, for example, "Our senior management have health and safety as their top business priority" without explaining the detail of the actions and measures taken to succeed in influencing behaviours. This approach failed to properly address the nub of the question.

Lower-scoring applications also failed to identify the relevant external stakeholders.

Higher-scoring applications detailed the involvement of senior management in ensuring that the policies, objectives, and systems for managing the risks associated with health, safety and wellbeing were effective and successful. It was important in answering this question to provide significant detail of the precise actions taken by management, for example, participation in systems audits, performance reviews and target setting.

The mechanisms for interaction of senior management with both staff and external stakeholders needed to be explained including, for example, attendance at safety committee meetings, team briefings and toolbox talks. The adjudicators needed to be assured that not only were we being told that senior management 'Walk the talk' but how and when this was done and importantly to what effect. Senior management involvement in recognising and rewarding staff who had played an important part in helping the organisation achieve its health and safety goals was evidenced in high-scoring applications.

Question 7

Explain how the organisation ensures the safe of evacuation of persons with specific requirements during an emergency event (<u>maximum of five marks</u>).

This question was designed not only to ascertain how applicant organisations managed emergency events but also, importantly, how they addressed the particular challenges of evacuating "persons with specific requirements." It was essential for applicants to provide details of the nature of the conditions of persons at their site with specific requirements. The evacuation of persons with specific requirements often poses particular risks, for example, those with limited mobility, hearing loss or difficulties with their vision.

Many applicants provided a mass of information concerning the emergency systems they had in place. This information included details of members of staff with specific responsibilities in the event of an emergency, the processes involved that were in place to address diverse types of emergencies and the arrangements in place to review the emergency arrangements were sufficiently robust. The information also detailed the involvement of external stakeholders such as the emergency services. High-scoring applications provided details of the training and information staff across the organisation received, in order to help ensure safe evacuation.

A couple of sentences from an applicant stating that the organisation complied with the relevant legal requirements concerning evacuation in the event of an emergency was not sufficient to merit any marks.

But in order to merit a high score, applicants needed to detail, with examples, the persons at the site with specific requirements and how the organisation had assured itself that the arrangements in place in the event of an emergency had or would meet the needs of those persons. The existence of a 'personal evacuation plan' for such persons was evidence that their particular needs in an emergency were being addressed. Regular drills were also evidence of robust procedures for tackling an emergency necessitating an evacuation of people with specific requirements.

High-scoring applicants provided a detailed description of how emergency arrangements were communicated to persons with specific requirements.

When undertaking a change programme or capital project, for example, high-scoring organisations detailed how they identified how the consequences of that change or project may impact on persons with specific requirements and what action needed to be taken.

Question 8

Describe how the organisation provide support for staff returning to the workplace following a period of absence (<u>maximum of five marks</u>).

This question was about ensuring that the applicant's organisation had effective systems in place for re-integrating people back into the workplace after a period of absence for whatever reason. This was intentionally a wide-ranging question, encompassing the full spectrum of issues that go to the heart of workplace health, safety, and wellbeing.

High-scoring applications recognised the positive benefits for both the member of staff and the organisation of a timely, well-planned, and well-executed return-to-work process. These applications detailed the various absences that had occurred at their site and the different approaches that were necessary, not only to manage particular risks, but also meet the mental, financial, and other needs of the returnee. High-scoring applications detailed the return-to-work guidelines that were in place, including the roles of various departments across the organisation to whom had the responsibility for ensuring the guidelines were adhered. Examples were provided of the different approaches adopted by the organisation to meet the challenges posed by the differing conditions and needs of returnees.

High-scoring applications invariably set out the arrangements in place for staying in touch with the absent worker and the preparatory work in helping ensure a well-managed return to work. The ongoing needs of the absent worker remained very much in the minds of high-scoring managers.

Low-scoring applications provided little more than a description of the types of absence within their organisation. Some provided a limited explanation of the arrangements for the return-to-work interview but no detail of how the risks would be managed, and the wellbeing of the returnee safeguarded.

Question 9

Explain how relevant stakeholders participate in the management of change process (<u>maximum of five marks</u>).

This question was designed to explore the effectiveness of the applicant's organisation in identifying and managing the risks associated with a change including, for example, in technology, processes, plant, materials, people, hours of work or the location of work.

High-scoring applications provided a comprehensive explanation of how the potential impact on health, safety and wellbeing was identified, assessed, and managed. These applicants well understood the serious consequences that change could have and demonstrated that they had arrangements in place to identify and manage the associated risks. High-scoring applications provided at least one example, sometimes two, of changes detailing how relevant stakeholders were identified and how the process had been managed. These applicants also described the measures taken through the regular management review process to assess the effectiveness of the changes that have been made and to capture important learning for the future.

Low-scoring applications often did little more than provide a textbook definition of the management of change with little or no explanation of how management theory regarding change was applied in practice in their particular workplace. These applicants failed to provide sufficient information. Relevant stakeholders were not identified, nor an example provided of the management of change at that site.

Question 9b

Submit supportive evidence, for example, risk assessment, training records (<u>one additional mark</u>).

Examples of supporting evidence submitted by applicants that attracted the one additional mark included: project plan; copies of risk assessments detailing the change project, personnel involved, the hazard, the risk, the risk rating, existing controls, additional measures; method statements; notes of risk assessment briefings; photos of the site area subject to the change.

Question 10

Explain how the organisation ensures relevant statutory duties are identified and monitored (<u>maximum of five marks</u>).

A simple statement by an applicant that the organisation complied with all of the laws concerning health and safety in that particular country was not sufficient to score any marks. Low marks were also awarded to those applicants who only provided a list of all statutory and other legal requirements affecting operations undertaking their particular activities.

Key to answering the question and gaining a high score, was a detailed description of how the applicant's organisation kept statutory and other legal requirements under constant review, and the communication of those requirements to relevant members of staff, thereby ensuring that there was effective compliance.

Different applicants had different approaches to ensuring that they were compliant. Some organisations undertook the process of maintaining an up-to-date accurate legal register in-house. Other applicant organisations brought in external expertise to provide the necessary assurance that all relevant legal requirements had been identified, in order to assist the goal of compliance. Ensuring compliance with statutory requirements was also evidenced by high-scoring organisations through the audit process.

High-scoring applicants identified how relevant statutory requirements were disseminated across their organisation citing how the differing requirements were communicated to staff with different roles. Examples were provided of how changes to statutory and other legal requirements were communicated to relevant parts of the organisation.

Question 10b

Submit supportive evidence, for example, legal register procedure (<u>one additional mark</u>).

Examples of supporting evidence submitted by applicants that attracted the one additional mark included: a comprehensive list of relevant statutory and regulatory requirements detailing application to particular areas of the operation; copies of records of regulatory compliance audits.

Question 11

Describe how non-managerial staff participate in the development of health and safety objectives (targets) at the site (<u>maximum of five marks</u>).

The question was framed to enable Adjudicators to accurately assess the real extent to which non-managerial staff were consulted and actively involved in the development, review and revision of health, safety, and wellbeing targets.

The question was wide-ranging given the breadth and number of non-managerial staff across any organisation no matter its size or activities.

High-scoring organisations provided a comprehensive answer containing the full range of mechanisms used to enable staff to participate in the development of health, safety, and wellbeing objectives. Involvement in risk assessment processes was at the heart of the question. But also ensuring that relevant non-managerial staff had the skills and expertise to make a meaningful contribution.

In some organisations worker representatives are at the forefront of the various processes that underpin the development of targets. The benefit of actively involving worker representatives in the conduct of audits and the work of health and safety committees was also a feature of high-scoring applications. Examples were provided of how targets were re-focused as a result of worker involvement.

But beyond formal committee structures, a range of other mechanisms operated in high-scoring organisations to facilitate non-managerial staff involvement in target setting, including one-to-one discussions, toolbox talks and hazard-spotting walks. Involvement in regular reviews, internal and external audits were also a feature of high-scoring applications.

Lower-scoring applications lacked detail, often only providing a confirmation that the organisation regarded the active participation of the workforce in setting targets as important. Little or no details were provided of what the involvement of non-managerial staff comprised or the impact this had on target setting.

Question 12

Explain how the organisation uses the outcomes of performance monitoring to continually improve the health and safety management system (<u>maximum of five marks</u>).

The question was designed to ascertain the mechanisms that applicants used not only to monitor performance but the extent to which the outcome of such monitoring was an aide to improve health and safety management systems.

High-scoring applications provided details of the various tools used to monitor performance including, for example, inspection by the state regulator to ensure compliance, root-cause analysis

of accidents and incidents, internal inspections, regular management reviews, safety committees and internal and external audits.

Low-scoring applications often did no more than list the tools used, with little or no detail of the objective underlying the tools used and the action taken following completion of the process.

High-scoring applications gave detailed examples of how a particular mechanism was conducted, for example, British Safety Council's Five Star Audit or ISO 45001 certification or re-certification. Importantly applicants needed to explain how the wealth of information gained from the range of mechanisms used to monitor performance were translated into actions to improve their health and safety management system.

Question 12 b

Submit supportive evidence, for example, health and safety audit plan (<u>one additional mark</u>).

Examples of supporting evidence submitted by applicants that attracted the one additional mark included: copies of audit plans detailing auditable areas of the site; copies of minutes of health and safety performance review meetings; copies of tables setting out key health and safety performance data; audit reports including details of remedial actions to ensure compliance; notes of actions taken to revise health and safety management systems.

Accreditation evidence

Applicants can also gain a maximum additional three marks by uploading evidence of the following accreditations:

- **<u>One mark</u>** - 3 star outcome from British Safety Council Five Star Audit within the ISA 2022 eligibility period
- **<u>Two marks</u>** – Current ISO 45001 Certification or 4 star outcome from British Safety Council Five Star Audit within the ISA 2022 eligibility period
- **<u>Three marks</u>** - 5 star outcome from British Safety Council Five Star Audit within the ISA 2022 eligibility period.

Chief Adjudicator
On behalf of British Safety Council
March 2022