

## A Framework to Evaluate Health and Safety Management Strategies in Supply Chains

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Many large organisations across various industrial sectors (especially in *supply, engineering and manufacturing, construction, etc*) are increasingly outsourcing their operations to contractors/suppliers, thereby becoming vulnerable to risk importation from their suppliers. There are evidences that these suppliers, especially Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) have low standards of health and safety management. There are also further evidences to suggest that earlier initiatives, *by governments and industry groups*, have not been effective in raising safety management standards in these SMEs. SMEs contribute to a stronger economy through job creation and innovation, and this has greatly influenced the current concerns and efforts by the relevant agencies to raise health and safety standards in SMEs.

There have been recommendations from earlier studies (e.g. Bibbings, 2003 and Wright, 1998) on the need to study the effectiveness of supply chain network as a medium for addressing the issue of poor Health and Safety performance. However, there are no empirical works to date that have either evaluated the effectiveness of supply chain Health and Safety strategy or developed a framework for best practice in the sector.

This research addresses these gaps. First of all it aims to develop a theoretical and practical framework to critically evaluate the effectiveness of health and safety strategies in supply chains in the UK. Secondly, it *establishes or proposes the development of an effective* system that encourages organisations to evaluate their safety systems along the entire supply chain.