



# A NEW ERA OF MANAGING EMPLOYEE HEALTH & WELLNESS

THE OPPORTUNITIES PRESENTED  
BY THE NEW GRI 403 OH&S STANDARD



WORLDWIDE REACH.  
HUMAN TOUCH.

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## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, workplaces around the world have experienced a quiet revolution in the area of occupational health & safety (OH&S). What was once exclusively focused on certain high-risk workers is now thoroughly in the mainstream of business globally. Where it previously was concerned with the backward-looking analysis of accidents and illnesses, it is now framed around proactive management of holistic health and wellness.



This revolution reflects the increasing awareness among businesses that OH&S and workplace wellness carries significant costs for failure – one estimate placed the annual cost of deaths, accidents and diseases at work at \$2.8 trillion<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore, business leaders increasingly understand that the most prevalent and costly OH&S risks derive not from workplace hazards per se, but from the same

factors that affect health among the general population, such as heart disease, obesity and mental ill health. In light of this evolving sophistication, businesses are rapidly adjusting their approach to identify and take account of the most common risk factors affecting employees – at work, at home and in the community – across the spheres of physical, social, mental and financial wellness.

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## The SDGs: Global progress toward sustainable development

Since their launch in 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) have emerged as a powerful tool for institutions, citizens and organisations alike to understand and act towards sustainability. The SDGs are a set of 17 global goals addressing the core economic, social and environmental challenges in our world, and are further supported by specific targets designed to help achieve the goals in practice by 2030.

For businesses, the SDGs are increasingly used as a reference for their own sustainability initiatives – giving substance to their programmes and providing a framework against which to collect evidence of progress and performance.

Health and wellness programmes can be built to help achieve the SDGs in specific, explicit ways – from SDG 3 (Good health and well-being) and 8 (Decent work and economic growth), to SDG 5 (Gender equality), SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) and more.

The SDGs help bring your initiatives to life. Using the SDGs as a reference point in reporting can help demonstrate leadership and show the relevance of your organisation's contribution at national and international levels.



1. <https://www.internationalsosfoundation.org/OH-Sustainability-Reporting>

## SUSTAINABILITY AND BUSINESS RESPONSIBILITY

For most businesses, regardless of their sector, activities and places of operation, people are critical to success. While this may be obvious on a day-to-day basis, it is also one of the foundational pillars of a company's commitment to responsible and sustainable activities – workers, neighbours, investors, authorities and management alike are all deeply invested in employee wellness at the heart of a productive workforce. The company's strategy to attract, retain and develop employees usually forms a significant part of their general commitment to sustainability and corporate responsibility. Employee wellness is likewise a significant focus area for performance management in business, a subject of increasing investor interest, and even a matter for sophisticated information tracking across relationships with other companies in a supply chain.

For this reason, it is vital to use the best tools and management approaches to identify and report on employee OH&S and wellness – including in sustainability reports. Despite this, company action on health, safety and wellness has not kept pace with the sustainability agenda. In our most recent research (Ipsos MORI/International SOS Business Resilience Trends Watch 2019), we found that only 9% of companies have updated their sustainability programme to take account of travel risk. In a similar research conducted the year before, we found that only 10% have introduced a wellbeing policy – in spite of the risks posed to the business.

## IN THE COMMUNITY, WORKING TOGETHER

Health issues affect not only employees, but their families, neighbours and friends, contributing to the foundations that keep people healthy and resilient across all the different pillars of wellness. Working in communities not only supports health outcomes for employees – and thus contributes to business success – it can also help underpin wider local, regional, national and international objectives.

Community health and wellness is often synonymous with partnership: collaborating with independent organisations, government or health authorities allows each partner's strengths to come to the fore, and can provide longevity and sustained results across a wider group of people served. An emphasis on collaborating in the community is increasingly viewed as a mark of sophistication – and it is of course an excellent source of case studies and examples that show the results of your efforts in action.

## WHY SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING?

A sustainability report is a management tool that helps to capture and express a wide range of strategic priorities for companies, alongside their business and financial impacts, as well as the expectations of stakeholders. A sustainability report expresses a wide-ranging view of what a company does, how it creates value, and the risks and opportunities associated with its activities.

Sustainability reporting has existed for several decades and is a well-established practice among leading companies. It virtually always includes information about OH&S, but until recently, this has been largely focused on the more traditional measures of incidents, accidents and diseases. Following an extensive international consultative process, the Global Reporting Initiative – the leading organisation producing standards for organisational sustainability – released a new standard on OH&S reporting in 2018. The *GRI 403: Occupational Health and Safety Sustainability Reporting Standard 2018* can now be used to drive entirely new thinking and action on OH&S and worker wellness that responds to today's global, cross-border workplace realities.



The background of the page features a large, stylized graphic. It shows the silhouettes of two people from the chest up, set against a warm, golden-yellow sky that suggests a sunset or sunrise. In the background, there are dark silhouettes of power lines and a lattice structure, possibly a bridge or industrial framework. The overall composition is modern and professional.

“For most businesses, regardless of their sector, activities and places of operation, people are critical to success.”

## ABOUT THE GRI 403 STANDARD




The GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards are used by over 90% of the world’s largest corporations to inform their measurement and communications across the range of economic, social and environmental activities and performance.

Over 30 GRI standards may be used as appropriate to reflect an organisation’s own individual sustainability strategy and relevant topics:



**3 UNIVERSAL STANDARDS**  
provide the starting point for all organisations, and give instructions and guidance on how to report generic information about a company, its governance and management processes.



**30+ TOPIC-SPECIFIC STANDARDS**  
cover a wide range of economic, environmental and social issue areas, and should be individually selected based on the most important issues for the organisation.

This modular structure makes it easy to focus a sustainability report on what matters most – building on internationally-recognised best practices, sector-specific expert views, accounting standards and others.

The newly-revised GRI 403 Standard:

1.

Strengthens the focus on health and wellbeing, in line with internationally-agreed best practice
2.

Helps organisations better measure their contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of workers
3.

Broadens the standard measurements of OH&S management, while remaining accessible and practicable for professionals across the globe
4.

Demonstrates the clear relevance of OH&S as a material topic for management, especially for organisations where the traditional measures of performance are less relevant
5.

Relates explicitly to the UN SDGs, particularly SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth – and SDG 3 – Good health and well-being.

It is noteworthy as well that other GRI standards – in addition to GRI 403 – may be relevant and useful for exploring and describing your organisation’s health and wellness initiatives. GRI 413 (Local communities) can be used for complementary disclosure of community-based impacts and activities, of which health and wellness may be a vital part.



## WHAT IS COVERED?

**OH&S management systems**  
403-1, 403-8

**Hazard identification, risk assessment and incident investigation**  
403-2, 403-9c

**Participation, consultation and communication with workers**  
403-4

**Worker training**  
403-5

**Occupational health services**  
403-3

**Promoting worker health**  
403-6

**Ill health**  
403-10

## WELLNESS BUILT IN

So what does this all mean for professionals? This new standard brings the evolving field of OH&S and wellness much closer to the centre of business strategy. This means companies can use it to track their performance in a more business-relevant way, but also to drive value to the company from OH&S and wellness. It does this through encouragement of a holistic view of wellbeing, one that considers social, mental, physical and financial realms as interrelated elements.

The GRI 403 standard increases focus on hazard identification, risk assessments and the investigation of incidents. It builds more explicit information about worker engagement, including processes for worker consultation and

participation, in addition to joint management-worker health and safety committees. Organisations can use the standard to discuss the functions in place for identifying and addressing issues, workers' access to voluntary and non-occupational health services, and the causes and effects of ill health in the workforce.

The interrelated disclosures and guidance serve not only to improve the information that reporters provide about this topic, but also to shine a light on what management activities can make the overall approach to wellness performance more effective.



## GRI 403 AT A GLANCE

TOPIC	DISCLOSURE	WHAT IT ADDRESSES
OH&S management systems	403-1, 403-8	<p>General information that describes the organisation's management approach as well as OH&amp;S management systems</p> <p>Description, purpose and coverage of management systems – which workers, activities and locations are included</p> <p>Description of scope of the workforce that fall under the system, the role of internal or external auditing, any exclusions and necessary information regarding data methodology</p>
Hazard identification, risk assessment and incidents investigation	403-2, 403-9c	<p>Description of how hazards and risks are identified and assessed, and how controls are applied to eliminate them</p> <p>Description of how hazards are reported, how workers can remove themselves from hazardous situations, and how work-related incidents are investigated</p> <p>Work-related hazards that pose a risk of high-consequence injury: how these are determined, whether they have been associated with injury, and the actions taken to minimise and eliminate them</p>
Participation, consultation and communication with workers	403-4	<p>Processes in place for workers' consultation and participation in the OH&amp;S system development, implementation and evaluation</p> <p>Description of any formal joint management-worker health and safety committees, their responsibilities, meetings and decision-making authority</p>
Worker training	403-5	Description of training for workers relating to OH&S issues
Occupational health services	403-3	Description of occupational health services' functions that help identify and eliminate hazards and minimise risks, and how workers are ensured access to them
Promoting worker health	403-6	<p>Description of non-occupational medical and healthcare services, and how the organisation facilitates access to them</p> <p>Voluntary programmes offered that address major non work-related health risks</p>
Ill health	403-10	<p>Main types of work-related ill health, for employees and non-employee workers of the organisation</p> <p>Fatalities and recordable cases due to work-related ill health</p> <p>Description of hazards that pose a risk of ill health, any exclusions and necessary information regarding data methodology</p>



## ABOUT INTERNATIONAL SOS AND WHY WE ARE IN THE BEST POSITION TO SUPPORT YOUR WORKPLACE HEALTH AND WELLNESS EFFORTS

International SOS is the world's leading medical and security risk services company. We have been in the business of protecting and saving lives, providing health and security risk management solutions for organisations deploying people globally for over 30 years.

Our solutions reinforce the health and safety of global workers and their dependants by giving them access to country-specific risk ratings, expert medical and security advice or referral, and 24/7 assistance prior to travel, during travel, and in the event of an emergency.

Because our solutions span both ends of the Duty of Care spectrum, from prevention to crisis management, we are able to ensure that risk management is addressed in the most comprehensive and responsible way by employers. Relevant to workplace health and wellbeing, our strength stands in the following expertise:



**Health hazard identification,  
risk assessment and consulting**



**Occupational health  
management systems**



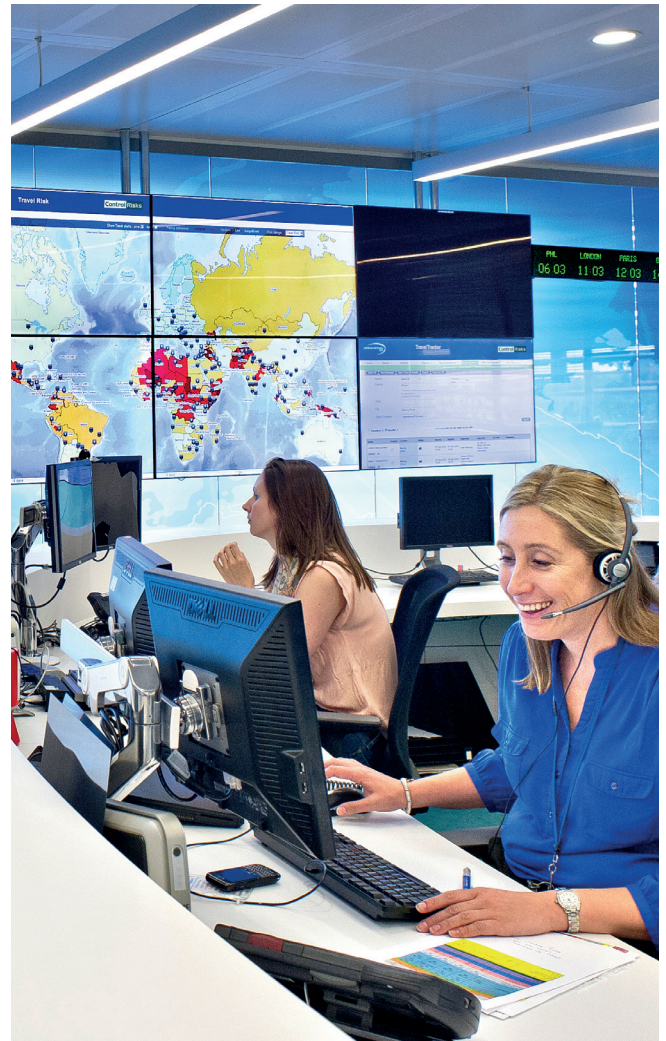
**Occupational health and  
community health services**



**Health protection, health  
promotion and training**



**Crisis preparedness  
and response**



From a UN SDGs viewpoint, our services help organisations enhance their health and wellbeing performance for a sustainable business. From a sustainability reporting standpoint, our health and wellbeing solutions are aligned with the reporting requirements of GRI 403. Indeed, the GRI 403 disclosure helps our clients achieve their commitment to the UN SDGs, with a focus on two SDGs: SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and Target 8.8 of SDG 8 (Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment).

## HOW DO HEALTH AND WELLBEING SOLUTIONS BY INTERNATIONAL SOS SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS WITH THE GRI 403 REPORTING FRAMEWORK?

The following matrix highlights the nexus between the health and wellbeing solutions delivered by International SOS and the ten disclosures of GRI 403:

	Travel health risk mitigation solutions	Health promotion, wellbeing and training	Health consulting	Site-based health risk mitigation solutions	Healthcare services (Health checks, clinics)
<b>403-1</b> Occupational health and safety management system	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>403-2</b> Hazard identification, risk assessment, and incident investigation	✓	✓	✓		
<b>403-3</b> Occupational health services	✓		✓	✓	✓
<b>403-4</b> Worker participation, consultation, and communication on occupational health and safety			✓		
<b>403-5</b> Worker training on occupational health and safety	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<b>403-6</b> Promotion of worker health	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>403-7</b> Prevention and mitigation of occupational health and safety impacts directly linked by business relationships	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>403-8</b> Workers covered by an occupational health and safety management system				✓	✓
<b>403-9</b> Work-related injuries	✓			✓	✓
<b>403-10</b> Work-related ill health	✓			✓	✓



The following case studies illustrate how International SOS has helped clients build their own OH&S management and reporting capabilities:

## **Case 1** **MINING COMPANY**

### Newcrest - 2018 sustainability report<sup>2</sup>

**Topics related to GRI 403-1, 403-3, 403-5, 403-6, 403-8, 403-9c, 403-10**

Newcrest is one of the world's largest gold mining companies, for which safety at work; people and sustainability are integrated and inclusive. Communities, employees and contractors are among their key stakeholders of the health, hygiene and safety agenda.

International SOS has been delivering medical assistance services for Newcrest since 2002.

Newcrest, in consultation with an external fatigue specialist, developed tailored fatigue awareness training. This includes the translation of content into indigenous languages and customised to suit local cultures. Newcrest employees delivering fatigue awareness training were given training as well.

Several of their sites have implemented wellbeing programmes designed to help employees and business partners to maintain and improve their physical and mental health. In collaboration with International SOS, one site developed a wellbeing programme that initially focused on the physical health and wellness of employees and business partners, and has now shifted its focus to mental wellness, providing site-based counsellors and psychological support.

Another site has partnered with an external specialist provider to develop a one-day mental health workshop designed to address issues relating to working in a fly-in-fly-out environment.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.newcrest.com.au/media/sustainability\\_reports/2018/181112\\_Newcrest\\_Sustainability\\_Report\\_2018.pdf](http://www.newcrest.com.au/media/sustainability_reports/2018/181112_Newcrest_Sustainability_Report_2018.pdf)



## Case 2

### **MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANK**

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ADB - Asian  
Development Bank  
Sustainability Report  
2018: Investing for an  
Asia and the Pacific  
Free of Poverty<sup>3</sup>

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**Topics related to GRI 403-1, 403-3, 403-6, 403-8,  
403-9c, 403-10**

For the past eight years, ADB has partnered with International SOS for medical assistance services, health consulting, health promotion, training services and traveller tracking solution. The traveller tracking solution provides the organisation visibility of their global footprint, enabling their team to quickly locate their global workers in the event of an incident. Through International SOS, their people enjoy access to updated medical information such as alerts and announcements on serious diseases such as polio, measles, tuberculosis, dengue, skin cancer, and musculoskeletal system disorders due to workstation arrangement via a dedicated portal.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/425836/sr-2018-gri.pdf>



### Case 3

## MULTINATIONAL AUTOMATION COMPANY

# ABB - Sustainability report 2017<sup>4</sup>

Topics related to GRI 403-1, 403-2, 403-3, 403-8, 403-9c, 403-10

ABB has been a client of International SOS for the past six years.

In 2016, ABB worked with International SOS to revise its travel risk management process by integrating the latest technology. This includes sending automated Pre-Trip Advisories to their global workers and equipping them with relevant and timely travel risk knowledge via digital learning. A management approval process before travel departure was also implemented.

User acceptance was positive. Within five months of launch, more than 12,000 approval processes were initiated and more than 18,000 notifications sent to travellers, line managers and security managers. Portal access rates, Assistance App downloads and Assistance Centre calls for security briefings all indicate very positive progress.

This new process was recognised for its contribution to a sustainable future by global experts in Health and Safety, Sustainability, Security, Risk Management and Insurance as the Innovation category<sup>5</sup> winner of the International SOS Foundation Duty of Care Awards 2017.

<sup>4</sup> <https://new.abb.com/docs/default-source/sustainability/abb-group-sustainability-report-2017>.

<sup>5</sup> [http://images.learn.internationalsos.com/Web/InternationalSOS/%7Ba75dafec-04c2-4bcb-9461-09f4c0c2dd94%7D\\_03\\_SOS6118\\_DoFC\\_Case\\_Study\\_ABB\\_prf07a.pdf](http://images.learn.internationalsos.com/Web/InternationalSOS/%7Ba75dafec-04c2-4bcb-9461-09f4c0c2dd94%7D_03_SOS6118_DoFC_Case_Study_ABB_prf07a.pdf)

## ACTION CHECKLIST

Where to get started? Some advice for getting the most out of OH&S, wellness and sustainability strategies:

1

### What's at issue?

Start with a clear picture of the OH&S and wellness topics most relevant to your organisation. This picture will be unique to your organisation, but you can gain insight from mapping topics prominent in your industry or sector and geographies where you operate. You will need to ask:

- What are our main activities as a company? What products and services do we sell, and how do we produce them? Who is involved in this, and where?
- What are the most important drivers of our business strategy? What risks and opportunities have we identified as most significant?
- Who are the people most affected? How do we engage with our employees, management, neighbours, suppliers, investors and business partners? What do they expect of our organisation?

The answers to these questions will help you build a clear understanding of the OH&S and wellness topics at the heart of your business, and where to set your management priorities for the most meaningful results.

2

### Get out and talk to people

How do your colleagues and employees experience your most important OH&S and wellness issues in the workplace? The only way to find out is to talk to them about their real-world experiences. Consider exploring the interrelated areas of mental, social, physical and financial wellbeing, in addition to the traditional measures of risk and hazard. The people on the front lines of your activities will often have the most insight into the challenges your organisation faces.

3

### Evidence and illustrate

Information is vital: data, trend patterns and examples are essential to give evidence to your strategy. No data available? This in itself is important to understand, in order to help build systems and tools to fill in the blanks in future. Work with partners and service providers to enhance your capacity to measure and track your most important performance aspects, and to identify case studies and inspiring best practices to share throughout the organisation. Suppliers and customers can also help, not only in providing necessary information, but also in coordinating to construct coherent and consistent information approaches that will stand the test of time.



## 4

### Take aim

Work to develop meaningful targets that will help measure and manage performance powerfully. Good targets:

- Address the most important risks, opportunities or underlying factors in your business
- Show a clear direction of travel
- Help support the behaviours and decisions your strategy aims to encourage
- Provide reliable and verifiable data

Do not worry if you are not able to create robust targets straight out of the starting gates. It takes time to develop data systems, as well as the buy-in of colleagues necessary to ensure your targets will take hold in the business.

## 5

### Measure and report

Consider how you can make use of the GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards, including the new operational health and safety standard, to describe your efforts and report to your stakeholders – clearly, convincingly, regularly and authentically. Your specific audiences will reflect your business strategy and key stakeholders, but bear in mind that regardless of your intended audiences, a sustainability report will almost certainly be read first and foremost by your own colleagues and employees. This makes sustainability reporting a powerful tool for engaging their interests and helping them tell your story to others.





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