

# Cape Argus

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## Clients Responsibilities

### CLIENTS ARE NOW RESPONSIBLE FOR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTORS ON SITE

The Construction Regulations were promulgated on July 18, 2003 and the “client”, being any person for whom construction work is being done, is now responsible to ensure that any contractor working at their site complies with Occupational Health and Safety Act provisions. The Primary responsibility for Health and Safety will no longer begin (and end) with the main/principal contractor, as this has been moved to clients. Construction work has a very wide definition, which includes any work in connection with erection, maintenance, alteration, renovation, repair, and demolition and civil engineering structures, to mention a few.

## Managing Compliance

### Clients’ six basic steps to manage compliance on construction sites include:

- Clients have to provide a documented Health and Safety specification to their contractors. This specification must address all risks foreseen during construction and anything that might affect the Health and Safety costs during a project;
- Contractors have to present a job-specific Health and Safety plan based on the specifications and for the classes and types of construction work to be performed that addresses the identified and likely hazards that would be encountered while performing the work. Clients are to ensure that this Health and Safety plan, and all other required documents (appointments, inspections, compliance certificates, letter of good standing and more) should be kept in this health and safety file on site;
- Clients have to assess the Health and Safety plan of contractors and measures it against the Health and Safety specification and safety legislation. If the plan covers all elements to reduce hazards, clients must approve the Health and Safety plan and appoint their contractors in writing;
- Clients must audit their contractors monthly to ensure compliance and should stop contractors who work unsafely and not according to their approved plan;
- When changes are brought about to the design or construction, sufficient Health and Safety information and appropriate resources are to be made available to contractors in order to execute the work; and
- Clients can appoint a Health and Safety agent in writing and the responsibilities as imposed by the regulations upon a client shall, as far as reasonably practicable, be transferred to the Health and Safety agent.

## Criteria

The following criteria are advisable before appointing Health and Safety agents:

Health and Safety agents are to be competent to do the work. Request a CV, view a company profile or make sure they have at least five years experience.

At least have a National Certificate/Diploma in Safety Management or Environmental Health.