



DOI: 10.7251/JTTTP2101019M

UDC: 005.52:005.334]:656.614.2

PROFESSIONAL PAPER

# Comprehensive Approach to Achieving Business Continuity and Sustainable Success of the Transport Organization

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Received: June 10, 2021

Accepted: September 23, 2021

**Abstract:** Achieving business continuity and sustainable success of the transport organization requires a comprehensive approach that involves the consideration and resolution of a large number of factors that affect its business and arise from the specifics of its activities. Based on the author's experiences, in this paper discusses issues of importance for achieving sustainable success and business continuity of the transport organization in a modern, very complex and dynamic business environment. Coordinated consideration and resolution of all these issues is the essence of an approach that enables the achievement of expected results. As a the most important factors for achieving the organization's ability to achieve sustainable success and business continuity the following factors are highlighted: understanding the context of the organization, the organization's resilience to environmental influences, application of approaches "Risk-based thinking" and "Risk-based management", integration of management systems, continuous improvement and application of international standards for management systems. The application of the described approach is possible, except in transport, in other organizations, taking into account its specifics

**Key words:** transport, transport organization, sustained success, business continuity, management, resilience, risk.

**JEL Klasifikacija:** M14 Corporate Culture; Diversity; Social Responsibility; R4 Transportation Economics.

## INTRODUCTION

The business of a transport organization in a modern, dynamic and very demanding business environment is exposed to frequent, often unexpected, changes in business conditions as well as the risks and opportunities that arise from it. The impacts of these changes, risks and opportunities can be fateful for an organization, including changes in its status ranging from achieving high results measured by financial and non-financial indicators, to complete disappearance from the market. In order to survive and operate successfully in such conditions, the organization needs to be *resistant* to the negative influences of the environment and *able* to respond effectively and efficiently to all (negative and positive) factors of its business environment. This is especially important in situations such as the current pandemic, natural and other disasters (floods, earthquakes, fires, etc.), global and regional social, political and economic changes and crises, market changes, climate change, etc.

The basic goals of any serious and, especially, *socially responsible*, transport organization are to achieve

*sustainable success* and *continuous business* over a long period of time. This means that, according to the definitions of these terms,<sup>1,2</sup> given in the international standards ISO 9000: 2015 [1] and ISO 22301: 2019 [2], the organization should *be able to operate successfully in some (read: longer) period of time, ie. to anticipate and meet the needs, requirements and expectations of all relevant stakeholders and strive to continuously increase their satisfaction*. Also, the organization *should be able to, in case of disturbances that affect or may affect its business, continue to provide transportation services in, for the user and other relevant stakeholders, in acceptable time frames and predefined parameters such as quantities, dynamics, quality, etc.*

Achieving these goals must be the "goal of all goals" of the transport organization: the realization of all other goals must be focused on the realization of these

<sup>1</sup> Sustainable success: Success over a period of time. [1]

<sup>2</sup> Business continuity: Capability of an organization to continue delivery of products and services within acceptable time frames at predefined capacity relating to a disruption. [2]

two basic goals. At the same time, the ability of the organization to achieve continuous business and achieve sustainable success is a very significant support to achieve other business goals.

#### *How can an organization achieve these goals?*

The answer to this question is very simple and, at the same time, very complex!

The simplicity of the answer lies in the fact that in order to achieve these goals, an *effective and efficient management system capable of enabling the achievement of these goals is needed!* And that's the end of simplicity! What follows is the question of the *structure of that and such a management system.*

A management system that will be able to ensure the achievement of sustainable success and business continuity of the organization must provide effective and efficient management of all factors that affect or may affect the achievement of sustainable success and business continuity of the organization. This implies the adoption and application of an approach to considering and resolving these issues, which includes a comprehensive consideration of all factors that affect or may affect the business of the organization, their interrelationships and mutual influences, forms and intensity of influence on the organization, etc. This also implies a certain type of *redesign of the existing management system* of the organization, and the basic elements and success factors of this process are:

- *completely knowledge and understanding of the factors of the business environment* (context) of the organization and their impact on its business, as well as monitoring changes in these factors,
- *achieving the required degree of resilience* to negative environmental influences and business disruptions,
- *application of the approaches "Risk-based thinking" and "Risk-based management",*
- *integration of management systems*, which means merging and harmonizing all subsystems of the organization's management system into a highly functional, effective and efficient whole,
- *continuous improvement* of transport and, if necessary, other services,<sup>3</sup> processes and systems,
- *effective (substantial, not formal) application of international standards for business continuity management systems* and achieving sustainable success of the organization EN ISO 22301: 2019 Security and resilience - Business continuity management systems - Requirements and ISO 9004: 2018 Quality management - Organization quality - Guidance for achieving sustainable success, as well as other international standards

for management systems important for achieving sustainable success and business continuity of the organization (ISO 9001: 2015, ISO 14001: 2015, ISO 45001: 2018, ISO 27001, etc.).

In the following text, the importance, potential benefits and the manner of application of the mentioned factors will be pointed out in the basic outlines.

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## UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT OF THE MODERN TRANSPORT ORGANIZATION

### Organization context - general considerations

The context of a modern organization or *the environment* (external and internal) in which it operates can be *briefly described as complex, demanding, changeable, full of risks (but also opportunities).* Managing an organization in such conditions is often, one might say, a nightmare for managers, but at the same time, it is also a great challenge! The main task of managers in such conditions is *to seek and find answers to the impacts of the business environment on the organization, its business, success and survival in the market.*

It is generally known (from the literature, experience, ...), factors that exist or may exist in the environment of the organization and affect or may affect, negatively or positively, various aspects of its business. However, it is not very often known *which factors, in what way and with what intensity* affect or can affect a *specific organization*, as well as what are, or can be, *the consequences of these impacts!* This is something that must be fully known to every manager. It should be borne in mind that environmental factors and their potential and actual impact on the organization are changing and that these changes can be very dynamic, sometimes dramatic! This, of course, means that the manager, in addition to knowing the factors of the business environment of the organization must *constantly monitor all events in that environment that have or may have an impact on changes in these factors!*

The forms of impact of the context factors of the organization, according to the consequences on its business, can be *negative* and *positive*. Negative impacts or *risks (hazards)* are manifested by various adverse events, occurrences and results related to the business of the organization. Positive impacts or *opportunities* are reflected in the possibility of achieving certain benefits for the organization. It is obvious that the organization must make an effort to eliminate the risks and their consequences or reduce them to an acceptable level, and to use the opportunities as much as possible.

Why is it necessary to know the factors of the context of the organization, the manner and intensity of their actions, the type and intensity of their consequences and their changes?

<sup>3</sup> It should be borne in mind here that some transport organizations are also engaged in providing other services, e.g. tourism, catering, logistics, as well as the some organizations, in addition to their core business, are also engaged in providing transport services.

Given the fact that the context factors of the organization contain various *risks* and *opportunities*, it is obvious that their impact on the organization's business, primarily on business continuity and long-term business success, can be very large and even crucial! It follows that the organization, in the first place the top management, must systematically manage the influences of the factors of its business environment (context) to ensure business continuity and achieve sustainable success *by providing an effective response* to factors that affect or may affect, negatively or positively, to business of the organization and its survival in the market. For that, it is necessary that an effective *process of monitoring and analysis of the context of the organization* to be established and applied in the organization, which should include the identification, analysis and understanding of:

- *factors of the business environment* (internal and external) that affect or may affect the business of the organization,
- *type and intensity of actual and possible impacts* of business environment factors on the organization's business (risks and opportunities),
- *entities in the organization* (products / services, processes, systems, ...) *that are or may be affected* by business environment factors, including the types and intensity of these impacts for each identified site of influence,
- *changes in the business environment* and their impact on the organization's business.

The process should be documented, defining:

- process activities, their order and mutual connections,
- competencies, responsibilities and authorities for the implementation of the process as a whole and activities within the process,
- methodology of data collection and analysis,
- methodology of processing and presenting the results of the analysis,
- dynamics of process realization and activities within the process,
- other that, depending on the specifics of the organization, is necessary for the effective implementation of the process.

For the realization of this process, it is necessary for the organization to provide appropriate resources (human, material, intangible).

The result (output elements) of this process should be actual, accurate and precise information and data on the state and trends in the business environment of the organization. Their usability depends on:

- *characteristics and methods of process implementation*, which may include the structure of the process, consistency in the implementation of the process and its activities, competencies

and awareness of participants in the implementation of the process on the importance of the process for the organization (including all levels of management), etc.

- *availability of data and information* on context factors and their actuality, accuracy and precision,
- *adequacy of the applied methodology* of data collection, processing and analysis.

The establishment and implementation of this process is one of the mandatory requirements of several international standards for management systems. However, the authors' experiences indicate to, often, inappropriate application and satisfaction of this requirement and, in connection with that, small, it can be said, insignificant benefits from that. This is, most often, a consequence of insufficient understanding of the essence of this request, the way of satisfaction and the benefits that the organization can have from it. In practice, the satisfaction of this requirement is often reduced to a formality that needs to be met because "it is required by the assessors"! Also, when "describing" the context of the organization, several factors listed in the literature are mentioned, but without essential consideration of their real influences in a specific situation. Unfortunately, some assessors accept and support and, it can be said, promote such approach!

What are the benefits of this approach? Of course, we can't talk about any benefits here - on the contrary! In addition to no benefit, certain negative consequences are possible in case, due to insufficient and inadequate knowledge and understanding of the context of the organization or changes in it, decisions are made whose results will be unfavorable for the organization and, perhaps, *some of its stakeholders. Is that acceptable? Does this lead to sustainable business success and continuity?*

It follows from the above that monitoring and understanding the context of the organization and changes in it must be permanent, it can be said daily, *the task and activity of top management*. Having up-to-date, accurate and precise data and information about events in the business environment of the organization enables decision-making based on verified facts, which reduces the degree of uncertainty that accompanies decision-making. Also, it is possible to effectively respond to changes in the environment that may affect the implementation of decisions.

#### **The context of the transport organization**

The context of a modern transport organization contains, to a certain extent, all the above characteristics, with smaller or larger differences in relation to organizations engaged in other activities.

A number of factors are of special importance, so their consideration must be approached with special care. Some of these factors are:

- New technologies in the field of means of transport,
- Changes in the characteristics of the object of transport which result in specific and stricter requirements regarding the mode of transport and handling during transport.
- Social, demographic, cultural and other characteristics of passengers as users of transport services.
- Changes in national and international legislation in the field of transport.
- Administrative and physical barriers (eg still unfavorable visa regime for professional drivers, unacceptably long stays at border crossings, etc.), negatively affect the competitiveness of our carriers in the international market of transport services.
- Performing international transport activities, for the most part, in the quota regime of bilateral and multilateral CEMT licenses.

In addition to the above, depending on the specifics of the organization and its business environment, the existence of other environmental factors and their impact on the organization's business should be considered. It should be borne in mind that certain factors of the business environment, starting from the fact that the transport organization performs some of its activities in environments whose characteristics (geographical, climatic, political, legislative, ethnic, ...), can be very different. This primarily refers to organizations dealing with international transport and requires effective and efficient analysis of these factors as well as adaptation to specific conditions.

## RESILIENCE OF THE TRANSPORT ORGANIZATION TO THE IMPACTS OF THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

In the modern business environment, the transport organization, as stated above, is exposed to the action (negative and positive) of numerous and various factors, the consequences of which can be very important for the functioning of the organization and its survival.

### *What does the organization have to do?*

The first step is *to know and understand own context*, ie. environmental factors of the organization that affect or may affect the business of the organization. This is, in outline, discussed in the previous chapter of this paper. That, of course, is not enough on its own!

*The next step is to prepare (make capable) the organization to respond* to the identified (actual and potential) influencing factors in accordance with the identified or assessed form and intensity of their actions and possible consequences for the organization. In other words,

the organization must achieve an appropriate degree of *resilience to the influences of its environment and be able to manage the risks that may lead to disruption of its business*. The definition of the term *resilience*<sup>4</sup> is given in the international standard ISO 22300: 2018 Safety and resilience - Terminology. [3]

The resilience of the transport organization to the influences of the environment and its ability to manage the risks arising from the action of factors of its business environment are the basis for *ensuring the business continuity* of the organization, ie. for *achieving the ability of the organization to, in case of any adverse event (incident, change in the environment, etc.), in the shortest possible time, continue the implementation of its business activities at the same level and scope as before the incident or at a predefined level and scope, with a tendency to quickly return to pre-incident conditions*. An effective way to achieve this organizational capability is to establish, operate, maintain, and continually improve an effective *business continuity management system*. This system must:

- be designed and implemented in accordance with:
  - characteristics and specifics of the transport organization, its organizational structure, systems and processes, which arises from the characteristics of its activity,
  - the needs of the transport organization arising from the characteristics of its environment,
  - the amount, types and intensity the impacts of factors of context that the organization can (or cannot) withstand in the event of a business interruption caused by an incident
  - needs, requirements and expectations of relevant stakeholders in case of disturbances,
- enable the realization of the policy and goals of business continuity and, thus, other goals of the organization,
- enable the organization to achieve the required level of ability to respond effectively in the event of a disturbance and continue to operate in a previously defined manner,
- enable sufficiently fast recovery of the organization and elimination of the causes and consequences of the disorder,
- providing learning and gaining experience from incidents and disorders, as well as responding to them.

Business continuity management system, as well as other management systems, contains the following elements:

- policy and goals of the business continuity management system (BCMS),

<sup>4</sup>Resilience: *the ability to adapt to a changing environment*.

- competent people at all levels,
- unambiguously defined responsibilities and authorities,
- documented management processes, which include:
  - analysis and understanding of the context of the organization,
  - defining and implementing the policy and goals of BCMS,
  - planning of the BCMS (strategic and operational),
  - realization of operational activities of BCMS,
  - support processes (resources, communication, documented information, ...),
  - monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of the BCMS,
  - inspections and review of BCMS,
  - continuous improvement of BCMS.

The system must be documented to the extent and in a manner that provides operational management of the system and the processes within it, as well as an assessment of the effects achieved. Its structure must be in accordance with the structure of the management system of a particular transport organization, and a good, but not mandatory, basis for this is provided by the international standard EN ISO 22301: 2019 Safety and resilience - Business continuity management systems - Requirements. Guidance on the use of this standard is given in EN ISO 22313: 2020 Safety and resilience - Business continuity management systems - Guidance on ISO 22301. [4]

The benefits that a transport organization can have from the business continuity management system are multiple, and can be observed from several aspects:

- From the aspect of business, BCMS contributes to the resilience of the organization and enables the achievement of strategic goals, creation and maintenance of competitive advantage, preservation and strengthening of the image, reputation and credibility of the organization in the conditions of business disturbance.
- From the aspect of process implementation in the organization, BCMS enables maintenance of the required level of capabilities of key processes in conditions of disturbances or business interruption, proactive management of risks and opportunities, as well as potential "vulnerabilities", ie. elements of processes and systems which are sensitive to the action of factors that cause disturbances.
- From the aspect of spending financial resources, the BCMS enables the reduction of direct and indirect costs that occur or may occur due to disturbances or business disruptions.
- From the aspect of relations with interested parties, the BCMS enables, in the conditions of

disturbances or disruptions of business, the satisfaction of their needs, requirements and expectations within the envisaged framework. It also enables the protection of human life and health, property and the environment. It thus demonstrates its ability to achieve sustainable success, while giving relevant stakeholders confidence in its capabilities. It also shows a high degree of social responsibility.

- From the aspect of the impact on individual mobility and accessibility of near and far areas, as well as due to its significant impact on the rational use of time, BCMS enables transport organizations to influence the quality of life of people in a broader sense.
- From the aspect of long-term goal - membership in the European Union, which the Republic of Serbia has set as its strategic and national interest, BCMS enables transport organizations to define their European position; they create and implement a transport policy that will use their own opportunities and concentrate on their own advantages.

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## APPLICATION OF THE "RISK-BASED THINKING" AND "RISK-BASED MANAGEMENT" APPROACHES IN THE TRANSPORT ORGANIZATION

The two most common questions of every manager are:

- What *hinders* us from achieving sustainable success and business continuity?
- What *can help us* achieve sustainable success and business continuity?

The greatest threat to successful and continuous business lies in the risks that are an integral part of a large number of activities directly or indirectly related to the business of the organization. The term *risk*, according to ISO 9000: 2015 [1] is defined as "*the effect of uncertainty*", where *uncertainty* is defined as "*a condition that occurs due to complete or partial lack of information and knowledge about an event, which affects the understanding of the event, especially its causes*", and "*effect*" as "*deviation from the expected - positive or negative*".

In practice, the term "*risk*" is most often used when only negative consequences are expected. However, in accordance with the above definition, we can also talk about "*positive risks*", ie. *events that may occur and, if they occur, have or may have a positive impact on the achievement of the objectives*. In practice, the term "*opportunities*" (or possibilities, chances, ...) is used for such events. *Opportunities* are contained in a large number of factors that affect or may affect the business of the or-

ganization and can, if recognized and used, have a significant positive impact on achieving sustainable success and business continuity.

Given the above, it is obvious that, due to the lack of reliable data and information on all key (but also other) factors that affect or may affect (*positively or negatively*) the business of the organization, its sustainable success and business continuity can be brought to question. It should be borne in mind *that both*

*risk and opportunity that are not recognized and to which an adequate response is not provided can have equally negative consequences!*

*What risks and opportunities can affect the organization's sustainable success?*

Each *identified risk* and each *identified opportunity*, in a certain way and in certain conditions, can have some impact on achieving sustainable success and business continuity of the transport organization through the impact on:

- quality of its services,
- satisfaction the needs, requirements and expectations of stakeholders and relations with them,
- impact on the environment and the working environment,
- level of safety and health protection at work,
- security of data and information,
- energy efficiency,
- business continuity of the organization,
- fair pricing in transport,
- strengthening the internal market and strengthening the external dimension of the market (transit and export of transport services).
- degree of social responsibility of the organization,
- connecting the EU (TEN network) with its neighbors and strengthening regional integration in the long run, etc.

*What should be done?*

Apply the approaches "*Risk-Based Thinking*" and "*Risk-Based Management*" in the management of the organization.

**Risk-based thinking:** All phenomena in the internal and external environment of the organization important for the its business *should be considered from the aspects of risks and opportunities* that may affect the implementation of the organization's activities, ie. from the aspect of *positive and negative* influences of their input and output elements on the business of the organization. In doing so, make a selection according to the type, manner and intensity of the impact and possible consequences. The outcomes of applying this approach are one of the most important input elements for applying the "*Risk Based Management*" approach.

The "*Risk-Based Thinking*" approach consists of systematically dealing with factors that affect or may affect (*positively or negatively*) the organization's operations, which includes:

- *understanding the context* of the organization,
- *consideration of risks and opportunities* in all elements and processes of the management system,
- *consideration of possible directions and ways of action of the organization* in order to provide an adequate response to the influences of business environment factors and to make adequate management decisions.

Adopting and implementing a "*Risk-Based Thinking*" approach should be an important basis for strategic and operational planning. It should be borne in mind that this approach is not a risk management system!

**Risk-Based Management:** Manage the organization as a whole and the processes and systems within it *using the results of a detailed analysis of risks and opportunities* arising from the context of the organization. This implies:

- *Proactive action* by defining, planning and taking measures in accordance with the identified and / or potential influence of the factors of the context of the organization,
- Making and implementing decisions (strategic and operational) in accordance with *the estimated effects of uncertainty, ie. expected deviations (positive or negative) from the planned values*.
- Management of processes and systems by applying procedures that:
  - risks (hazards) are eliminated or reduced to a minimum (acceptable) level,
  - eliminate the causes of danger and risk,
  - make maximum use of identified opportunities,
  - create conditions for exploiting opportunities.

It can be said that the described approaches, in fact, represent *two inseparable parts of a unified approach* whose goal is to make effective management decisions with *mandatory consideration of risks and opportunities* arising from the influence of internal and external business environment. However, given the continuity and variability of these factors, it is obvious that the application of these two approaches has a different function and application. *Risk-Based Thinking* encourages the *creation of awareness* in the organization about the comprehensiveness and continuity of existence and changes in risks and opportunities, as well as the need for continuous monitoring and analysis of places, ways and intensity of their occurrence and action. *Risk-Based Management* is the application ("*materialization*") of the outcomes of the *Risk-Based Approach*, and its goal is to create awareness of the need to consider risks and opportunities in making managerial (strategic and operational)

decisions at all levels of management. It is obvious that the separate application of these two approaches cannot give the necessary and possible results!

The described approaches are defined and promoted by the latest editions of international standards for management systems (ISO 9001: 2015, ISO 14001: 2015, ISO 22301: 2019, ISO 26001: 2011, ISO 27001: 2017, ISO 28000: 2007, ISO 31000: 2018, etc. ) like:

- very effective and efficient approaches to issues and problems of management processes and management systems in the organization, which
- encourage the organization to identify and manage the factors in its environment that affect or may affect its business.

These approaches have always, in a certain, but not completely implicit way, been present in the stated standards, but without direct (explicit) expression in the requirements of the standard. Therefore, very often, they were not recognized as a significant factor in the functioning of the management system.

In the latest editions of international standards for management systems, consideration of issues related to risks (and opportunities, chances, possibilities...) is explicitly included in the requirements for the establishment, functioning, maintenance and continuous improvement of the management system to which a particular standard refers.

What can be the benefits of applying these approaches?

Of course, the benefits depend on the consistency in the application of the described approaches, as well as the applied methodology for solving certain issues related to their application. In any case, some significant benefits can be:

- preventing the influence of negative factors in the context of the organization and achieving sustainable success and business continuity,
- exploiting the positive influences of the context factors of the organization in the business of the organization,
- increasing the degree of effectiveness and efficiency of the management system and its subsystems and processes,
- developing awareness of the importance and value of considering issues related to risks and opportunities,
- establishing a proactive culture of continuous improvement of transport (and other) services, processes and systems,
- ensuring the harmonization of processes and services,
- high level of trust and satisfaction of users and other relevant stakeholders.

## INTEGRATION OF THE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OF THE TRANSPORT ORGANIZATION

Since the beginning of mass application of international standards for management systems in the eighties of the last century (series ISO 9000, ISO 14000, OHSAS 18000, ...), a large number of organizations have harmonized some of their management systems with the requirements of appropriate standards. This harmonization was realized, on a case-by-case basis, in different time periods, whereby, most often, the standard for quality management systems was applied (ISO 9001), and then, after a certain period, some of the existing standards (ISO 14001, OHSAS 18001 (now ISO 45001), ISO 27001, etc.). That process continues today.

Many of these management systems have functioned (and still functioning!) as parallel, independent systems, and some of the consequences are:

- duplication of processes, ie. the existence of essentially the same processes in different management systems (eg document management, resource management, checks of management systems, ...), as well as different ways of implementing the same processes in different management systems,
- lack of connections and coordination between different management systems and low volume of use of data, information, knowledge and experience from other systems,
- excessive volume of documentation, duplication of documents and complex document management system,
- unnecessarily large expenditure of resources (human and material) for the functioning and maintenance of these systems,
- insufficient effectiveness of individual management systems and, as a result, insufficient effectiveness and efficiency of the overall management system of the organization,
- insufficient degree of satisfaction of needs, requirements and expectations of relevant stakeholders, etc.

In such situation, there is a need to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the management system by reducing and / or eliminating the perceived shortcomings of the existing way of functioning of the management system of the organization and its subsystems. The solution was found in the process of *integrating the management system*, ie. *merging the existing subsystems of the management system into one functional, effective and efficient whole*. In other words, *the integration of the management system implies the creation of the management system of the organization in which all its subsystems and processes in them function in a unique and*

*harmonized way, with a high and purposeful degree of interconnection, coordination and cooperation.*

In the first phases of the implementation of the process of integrating management systems (and this is often present today), activities were focused exclusively on connecting management systems that were in line with the requirements of relevant international standards. Thus, "integrated" management systems were obtained, which, most often, included only two or three subsystems. These were mainly management systems compliant with the requirements of the international standards ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001 (now ISO 45001:2018). This "integrated" management system did not recognize other subsystems of the organization's management system that existed and functioned in the organization, but were not in line with the requirements of international standards.

To achieve sustainable success and business continuity of the organization, it is very important that the management system of the organization is fully and truly integrated, i.e. that all its subsystems function harmoniously and, thus, effectively and efficiently. Such a system should be capable of effective management of key subsystems and processes of management systems, such as: strategic and operational planning, quality management systems for products and services, occupational safety and health, environmental protection, data and information security, etc., customer relationship management as well as other stakeholders, knowledge management, etc., in accordance with the specifics and needs of the organization (eg food safety in the food industry, the competence of testing and calibration laboratories, etc.).

This, in particular, comes to the fore in crisis (emergency) situations when the business of the organization is endangered by the negative effects of certain factors of its business environment. It is important to include all subsystems and all processes of the management system, and formal compliance (certification) of some subsystems of the management system with the appropriate international standards is desirable but not mandatory!

Achieving a high degree of integration of the management system is a process that must be led by the top management of the organization. The process should include the following activities:

- Analysis of the existing degree of integration of the management system, which includes the identification of:
  - interconnections and harmonization of systems and processes,
  - duplication and contradictions of processes and documents,
  - irrational use of resources,
  - other phenomena that negatively affect or may affect the output elements of the process and system.

- Defining, based on the results of the analysis, measures to increase the degree of integration of the management system.
- Planning and implementation of defined measures.
- Monitoring and measuring the effects of implemented measures and defining improvement measures.

The documents *PAS 99* and *Annex SL* provide significant assistance to organizations wishing to integrate their management system. *PAS 99 Publicly Available Specification - Specification of a common management system requirement as a framework for integration* [5], provides guidance for the integration of two or more management systems that comply with the relevant international requirements. standard. *Annex SL* prescribes an identical structure of all international standards for management systems. However, these documents primarily refer to management systems that comply with the requirements of relevant international standards, but, in a certain way, can also be applied to management systems and processes that do not comply with these (and other) standards.

It is important to keep in mind that the process of integrating the management system should be an ongoing process in the organization, given the dynamics of change in the internal and external environment of the organization, eg:

- changes in laws and other regulations: any changes in laws, bylaws, standards, etc. which, primarily, refers to one subsystem or process may, to some extent, also refers to other subsystems and processes,
- changes in the operations of competing or partner organizations, as well as other relevant stakeholders,
- changes in organizational structure, size, form of ownership, etc.

The benefits of this process are obvious, and consist, at the very least, in eliminating the shortcomings and consequences of insufficient interconnection of the subsystems of the management system listed in this text.

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## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENTS

The process of continuous improvement is one of the mandatory requirements of all international standards for management systems, but *it should not be the only and exclusive reason for its existence.*

The need to improve transportation and other services provided by the transportation organization, processes and systems stems from the constant changes in the internal and external environment of the organization. All changes, regardless of the source (external or



internal) require an effective response from the organization. The most effective strategic response of the organization is the development and existence of a *culture* of continuous improvement of the organization's performance, services, processes and systems, including a high level of *awareness* of members at all levels about improvements as the most effective means of responding to the challenges of a very demanding and dynamic market. Therefore, the process of continuous improvement is one of the significant "pillars" of achieving sustainable success and business continuity.

The process of continuous improvement should be lead in two directions:

- improving the technical and technological performance of services, processes and systems,
- Improving organizational performance at all levels of the organization.

The first direction ensures the achievement and maintenance of performance and quality of services, processes and systems in accordance with the needs, requirements and expectations of users and other relevant stakeholders, and the second achieves and maintains a high degree of organizational resistance to business environment. Both directions of action must be harmonized, and the common goal and outcome should be sustainable and continuous business of the organization.

The role of top management, but also of all other levels of management, in the implementation of this process is a key factor in achieving the expected results of the process, and is reflected in the following:

- development of awareness of employees in the organization about the need and importance of continuous improvement,
- development and maintenance of a culture of continuous improvement,
- motivating and stimulating employees to actively participate in the processes of continuous improvement,
- planning and monitoring the implementation of the process of continuous improvement,
- monitoring and measuring the effects of the process of continuous improvement and defining the necessary measures.

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## APPLICATION OF INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS FOR MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN A TRANSPORT ORGANIZATION

It is desirable and very useful, but not mandatory, that *every organization* that wants to achieve sustainable success and business continuity, harmonizes its business with the requirements of international standards for management systems, but also other relevant standards in accordance with the characteristics of the organiza-

tion, its products / services, processes and systems, as well as the needs, requirements and expectations of users and all other relevant stakeholders. This, of course, also applies to transport organizations!

International standards for management systems provide the organization with very useful guidance and significant assistance in solving problems related to the management of the organization as a whole as well as the processes and systems within it. Given that they are based on the achievements, experiences and good practice of successful world organizations, as well as the application of appropriate achievements of modern science in this field, standards for management systems are an unavoidable factor that can positively affect the organization and achieve sustainable success and business continuity. This has been recognized in a large number of organizations, as evidenced by the large number of organizations that have been applying these standards for many years, both in the world and in our country.

Guidelines for achieving *sustainable success* are given by the international standard ISO 9004: 2018 [6].

This standard defines the term "*quality of an organization*" as "*the degree to which the inherent characteristics of an organization meet the needs of its customers and other relevant stakeholders in order to achieve sustainable success.*" This definition is derived from the definition of "quality" (product / service) and, in contrast, indicates the achievement of *the organization's ability to focus on anticipating, meeting and overcoming (exceeding) the needs, requirements and expectations of users and other relevant stakeholders. and, thus, increases their satisfaction and confidence in the overall capabilities of the organization.* In that way, the organization becomes capable of achieving *sustainable success*, ie. "*success over a period of time*" [1]. It is desirable that this time period be as *long as possible!*

The application of this standard implies the application of all principles of quality management defined by the international standard ISO 9000: 2015 [1], especially the principles of "*customer focus*" and "*relationship management*", which indicates the essence of achieving *organizational quality: make the organization capable to fully meet needs, requirements and the expectations of all relevant stakeholders. The quality of products / services is only one aspect of the overall quality of the organization.* Other, no less important, aspects are:

- the ability of the transport organization to meet the needs, requirements and expectations of relevant stakeholders that, more or less, directly or indirectly related to the quality of the organization's services, such as, for example, environmental protection, safety and health at work, protection data and information, food safety, risk management, energy efficiency, etc.,
- resilience of the organization, ie. its ability to respond effectively and efficiently to the negative

influences of the factors of its business environment,

- the ability of the organization to monitor changes in its business environment and respond adequately to them.

From the above, a logical conclusion follows that, in order to achieve sustainable success by applying the ISO 9004: 2018 standard, it is necessary to substantially apply other, relevant, international standards for management systems, primarily ISO 9001. One of the standards whose application can have a very significant impact on sustainable success is an international standard *ISO 22301: 2019 security and resilience - Business continuity management systems - Requirements* [2].

As can be seen from the title, the standard [2] defines the requirements for the establishment, operation, maintenance and improvement of the management system of business continuity of the organization. Guidelines for the application of this standard are given by the international standard *ISO 22313: 2020* [4].

The need for consistent application of these standards arises from the existence of various risks and dangers to the business of the organization in the environment of the organization.

The structure of the ISO 22301: 2019 standard is harmonized with the requirements of the Annex SL document and, thus, with the structure of other international standards for management systems. The essence of the approach defined by the requirements of this standard consists of the following:

- mandatory effective analysis and understanding of the context of the organization, as well as monitoring changes in it,
- leading role of the top management of the organization, as well as all other levels of management and relevant functions in the organization,
- planning, based on identified risks, and implementation of operational procedures to provide the organization's response to possible or manifested negative impacts of business environment factors, which may include:
  - organizing the organization's business in conditions of disturbances,
  - planning and providing resources,
  - defining and providing the necessary competencies for the functioning of the business continuity management system (BCMS)
  - development of employee awareness at all levels in the role and importance of BCMS,
  - development and functioning of an efficient information system, including alerting,
  - planning of evacuation procedures for people and property,
  - organizing the life and work of people (members of the organization and others) at the

locations to which they were evacuated, including health care, security, supply of food, electricity, etc.,

- exercising procedures and learning from experiences,
- planning and implementation of measures for recovery of the organization after the cessation of the factors that caused the disruption of the business of organization,
- use of opportunities arising from the positive influences of business environment factors,
- monitoring the effectiveness and efficiency of the business continuity management system,
- planning and implementation of measures to improve the performance of SMKP, as well as other systems related to it,

The requirements of this standard primarily relate to disruptions and business interruptions of the organization resulting from the action of factors with catastrophic consequences such as natural disasters, earthquakes, floods, etc. However, they can, in a certain way, be applied to all other factors that can cause disruption and interruption of the organization's operations, such as social, economic and political changes, market changes, demographic changes, pandemics, etc.

## CONCLUSION

A transport organization that wants to survive in the long term on the modern market of transport (and other) services must consider the application of certain procedures that enable it to achieve sustainable success and business continuity.

In this paper, in the basic outlines, presents a comprehensive approach to the issues of achieving business continuity and sustainable success of the transport organization. Also presented are some of the procedures whose consistent application the transport organization can ensure meeting the needs, requirements and expectations of users of its services and all other relevant stakeholders and, thus, a stable market position and survival in a changing and demanding environment.

The application of the described approach and the procedures it implies is, except in transport, possible in all other organizations, regardless of their activity, size, structure and other characteristics. In doing so, it is necessary to take into account the specifics that arise from the activities, structure and other characteristics of a particular organization. The benefits of their application can be significant, and the results achieved will depend on several factors, with the leading role of top management being decisive.

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## LITERATURE

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