Preface and acknowledgements

The project on which this book is based had a long gestation and benefited from the contribution of a number of people. The need to look more closely at the implementation of systematic OHS management (OHSM) within different national contexts was first raised at an international workshop held in Amsterdam in 1998. This resulted in a previous book (K. Frick et al. (2000), *Systematic Occupational Health and Safety Management: Perspectives on an International Development*, Oxford: Elsevier) documenting practices on managing the work environment and their supports and constraints across a range of countries. It was clear from this project that further work was needed to understand the regulatory contexts of systematic OHSM. Some of the present authors were thus subsequently involved in a new project funded by the Swedish SALTSA research fund analyzing the development and implementation of the EU framework Directive 89/391 (see D. Walters (ed.) (2002), *Regulating Health and Safety Management in the European Union*, Brussels: P.E.I. Peter Lang). Both these projects suggested that the role of labour inspectorates in implementing systematic OHSM was little understood and warranted closer attention.

This idea crystallized into a definitive project as a result of number of meetings with input from a range of international researchers, including a visit by Professor Per Langaa Jensen of the Danish Technical University to the University of New South Wales in the second half of 2002, and a meeting held in Brisbane subsequent to an international conference on challenges for OHS policy held at the Gold Coast in July 2003, sponsored by the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission, and organized in conjunction with the National Research Centre for Occupational Health and Safety Regulation. The aim was to pursue the project by initiating substantial research in a more selective range of countries using – as far as possible – the same framework, protocols and methods to explore the activities of labour inspectorates in relation to systematic OHSM. Funding for individual country research projects was obtained from national funding authorities, including the Australian Research Council. It also benefited from the funding of comparative projects that eventually contributed to this book. Most particularly we are indebted to the National Institute of Working Life in Sweden (NIWL), which had

previously also provided crucial support to the SALTSA project. We wish to place on record our appreciation of the significant contribution that NIWL made to both this project and its predecessors. In our view the subsequent abolition of NIWL was a tragic development and a decision entirely deserving of the international condemnation it received at the time.

In November 2005 a workshop on the project was held at the University Paris-13 (Bobigny), hosted by the Research Group on occupational cancer (GISCOP93). The meeting was to consider preliminary results from a number of studies and to better align the points of comparison and future research in terms of the project. Again there was an important Danish contribution to this from Dr Klaus Nielsen and Dr Annette Kamp from Roskilde University who were undertaking related activities in Denmark. In April 2007 Dr Nielsen and Dr Kamp organized a workshop at Roskilde University where further findings were discussed and the project refined. A key outcome of the Paris and more especially Roskilde meetings was the decision that the examination of systematic OHSM had to be placed within a framework that recognized and addressed the broader political economic setting, especially the substantial global changes in work organization such as the growth of more contingent or precarious forms of work. Since most researchers involved in the project already had familiarity with if not active involvement in researching the OHS and regulatory effects of these changes this decision did not entail a major redirection in existing research that formed part of the project. Getting the balance right in terms of the final outcome of the international project (namely this book) did, however, require careful consideration.

By September 2008 substantial parts of the book had been drafted, including most of the country case studies. Meetings held in Québec City (September 2008, with the support of the Chaire en gestion de la santé et de la sécurité du travail, Université Laval), at Cardiff University (March 2009) and in Santiago (January 2010) were used to refine the book structure. Professor Katherine Lippel (University of Ottawa) helped to facilitate some of these meetings and made an indirect but important contribution to the book. Support from the Business School of Auckland University of Technology (AUT) enabled David Walters to make a substantial contribution to the manuscript during November and December 2010 and we are grateful to Dr Felicity Lamm of AUT for her contribution to organizing Professor Walters' visit. Finally, in January 2011 a conference supported by the UK Institution of Safety and Health (IOSH) in honour of Professor Theo Nichols, enabled most of the authors to attend a meeting at Cardiff University to consider the final draft manuscript.

While acknowledging the help we received from all these sources, the responsibility for the content and views in the following pages and any inaccuracies and misrepresentations therein remain the authors. While the book is co-authored by the six of us, the first draft of each chapter was authored as follows. Chapter 1 was authored by David Walters; Chapter 2 by David Walters with Michael Quinlan and with contributions from each of the co-authors; Chapter 3 by David Walters and Richard Johnstone, with contributions from each of the co-authors; Chapters 4 and 5 by Richard Johnstone and Michael Quinlan; Chapters 6 and 7 by Kaj Frick; Chapters 8 and 9 by David Walters; Chapter 10 by Geneviève Baril-Gingras; Chapter 11 by Annie Thébaud-Mony; and the final two chapters by David Walters.