

WHAT ISO 14001 IS?

The standard – ISO 14001 – was finally published in 1996. The pioneering work of BSI in developing the BSI 7750 standard has enabled ISO to use it as a model and has made a significant contribution to the development of the international standard ISO 14001. It is also designed to be compatible with the European Union criteria for an environmental management system under the Eco Management and Audit Scheme (ENAS).

ISO 14001 is designed to enable each individual business to create and monitor an environmental management system, which suits their own particular activity. Application of an Environmental Management system to ISO 14001 will show practical business results in terms of increased efficiency and reduced costs as well as environmental benefits.

ISO 14001 is a practical business tool.

What ISO 14001 is not ...

ISO 14001 does not set out environmental performance guidelines. Recognizing that every business is different, the impact it has on the environment and the amount by which each organization can improve performance will vary. But every business can achieve something, and compliance to environmental performance is critical to business success in many organizations.

ISO 14001 provides a standard framework for management activities that allow you to access what you can realistically set out to achieve and how this can be measured and tested over time. You can improve your business results and minimise your environmental impact with the aid of ISO 14001.

What ISO 14001 can do for your business?

- ❖ Improved operational efficiency and cost reduction in areas such as energy consumption and waste minimization.
- ❖ Effective cost-benefit analysis for environmental compliance beyond legal requirements.
- ❖ Cost-effective consistency in your approach to pollution prevention or reduction.
- ❖ Credible environmental claims can be made in a competitive marketplace, maximizing business opportunities.
- ❖ Demonstration to regulators, customers, consumers and the financial community of your systematic control and management of environmental effects.
- ❖ Manages your legal liability by demonstrating best management practice.
- ❖ Offers independent third-party endorsement of your claims through initial compliance and continuing assessment.
- ❖ ISO 14001 integrates with existing quality management systems that comply with BS EN ISO 9000. (formally BS 5750)

HOW TO REGISTER TO ISO 14001.

Essentially, the standard requires that you have a management system that establishes your environmental affects and demonstrates:

- ❖ How it meets or exceeds legal requirements
- ❖ How it is monitored
- ❖ What your objectives and targets are
- ❖ How the attainment of these is measured

A Preparatory Review. A detailed ‘snapshot’ of your current environmental impact and performance.

An Environmental Policy that includes a ‘commitment to continual improvement ‘ and which must be made public.

Clearly Defined Responsibility for your personnel, including training and communication.

Up-To-Date Records of relevant legislation relating to your activities.

A ‘Register of Significant Effects’. Examination of the direct and indirect environmental impacts of your organization, and a record of the significant ones.

An Environmental Management Manual. This records your policy, objectives and targets, the responsibility for achieving them and the method of communication of the objectives throughout your organization.

Records of your progress towards meeting your objectives.

Regular Internal Management Audits to confirm that your programme is working satisfactorily and whether the objectives may be appropriate in the light of progress made.

BENEFITS

The decision to go ahead with ISO 14001 is more than a desire to be environmentally responsible. While it could help make environmentally sound decisions and protect the environment as a result, it is also a sound commercial investment. These benefits include:

1. Cost savings and reduced consumption and waste through conservation and recycling.
2. Cost savings from anticipating future legislation and regulations and installing necessary environmental controls.
3. Cost savings in insurance premiums due to the lower risk involved.
4. A marketing advantage by demonstrating environmental friendliness.
5. Improved motivation of staff.
6. Improved relationships with staff, suppliers, customers and authorities.
7. Ease of conversion from ISO 14001 certification to registration under the EC Eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS).

PREPARATION

The first step towards developing an EMS is to carry out an initial review of the Company's activities, products and services. This is conducted with the help of all staff who, after explanatory discussions, will be invited to complete an environmental questionnaire. This provides information which maybe previously undocumented and even unknown by some of the staff. It may reveal some very minor pollution incidents but perhaps more satisfying find that some staff have already taken it upon themselves to minimise the impact of their activities on the environment.

An investigation into the legal and regulatory requirements relevant to the Company's operation will be carried out by HB & Associates.

The final and most extensive part of the review is an evaluation and recording of significant environmental effects. This entails a thorough investigation into the identification of the major products and processes used and an investigation into their impact upon the environment.

From the information collected during the review it will be apparent where improvements are needed and can be made. The Company will set objectives and targets to make these improvements and target dates for when this will be done.

ISO 14001 INFORMATION SHEET

A GREEN AGENDA?

ISO 14001 IS A VOLUNTARY STANDARD, WHICH SETS OUT SYSTEMS TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH A QUALITY MANAGEMENT APPROACH.

A GENERIC STANDARD THAT IS APPLICABLE TO ALL TYPES OF ORGANISATION.

ISO 14001 SPECIFIES REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (EMS).

IT PROVIDES THE REQUIREMENTS AGAINST WHICH CERTIFICATION CAN BE PERFORMED.

IT IS A DOCUMENTED SYSTEM WITH SUPPORTING PROCEDURES DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE CONTINUING IMPROVEMENTS IN ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE.

IT IS BOTH A STAND-ALONE SYSTEM AND ONE, WHICH CAN BE INTEGRATED WITH AN ISO 9000 QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

LIST OF DOCUMENTATION

Preparatory Environmental Review
Environmental Manual
Environmental Policy
Register of Legislation
Register of Effects
Objectives and Targets
Work Instructions
Emergency Plans

BENEFITS

Cost Savings
Marketing Initiative
Investment Planning
Employee Relations
Public and Community Relations
Compliance ahead of future legislation

ISO 14001 INTRODUCTION

Most industry was taken by surprise at the rapid and very effective lobby for environmental protection that occurred in the 1980's. It converted Mrs. Thatcher who declared the environment as the greatest challenge of the 21st century. Suddenly it became clear that environmental performance was a criteria by which a business and its products were going to be judged. All kinds of claims were made by industries to try and show that their business was environmentally responsible, many of them rather more than "economical with the truth". There was an urgent need for standards against which environmental performance could be judged.

The structure of ISO 14001 has many similarities with that of ISO 9000, the Quality Management Standard. In fact it is considered part of the same family. It sets out the specification for an Environmental Management System (EMS). It provides the means of enabling an organisation to reduce and control the impact of its activities on the environment. As with 'Quality' and 'Health and safety', the most effective path to improvement is to incorporate control into the management of the organisation making it part of the day-to-day decision-making process.

DOCUMENTATION

A company must establish its own Environmental Policy taking into consideration the effect it is having on the environment. This will be written up between the Company and the Consultant.

The existence of the Quality Management System (complying with ISO 9000) would provide a basis for controlling the Environmental Manual. Some aspects are common to both, such as purchasing, document control, training, non-conformances, preventive and corrective actions, records and system auditing. Where possible, existing systems will be used and extended or modified to incorporate the EMS.

Eventually, it will be possible to bring all the preparatory work together and write the Environmental Manual.

INSTALLATION

After documenting and introducing the system there follows a period of operational maintenance and review. This enables the Company to assess the attainment or otherwise of the targets and objectives, which have been set, and, in some cases, modify them and seek additional improvements. During this time more knowledge of their activities will be gained and recorded within the system.

CERTIFICATION

When the system has been operating satisfactorily for some time a choice of Certification Body will be made. This is undertaken in a manner similar to that of ISI 9000 assessment. Firstly, a critical appraisal is made of the Environmental Manual and its supporting records. Secondly, an on-site assessment is conducted to determine the Company's adherence to the procedures, their progress in meeting their targets and objectives and the extent of environmental awareness and knowledge exhibited by their staff.