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ISO14001:2004 — up for revision

OTHER NEWS

- *You now need to make a declaration on waste documentation that your company is following the waste hierarchy, as well as putting your Standard Industry Code (SIC) on all waste transfer notes — is your documentation and waste contractor up to speed?*
- *The Environment Agency is the first enforcement body to use the new civil sanctions against an organisation for packaging waste offences this summer. The company have offered £21,000 which will be used to drive environmental improvements in local communities.*

It will be at least 2014 before the new version of ISO14001, the environmental management system standard, is released for use, but we thought you might like to know that the process is underway.

The first version was released in 1996, and was groundbreaking as an international standard. The 2004 revision was more a change in emphasis than a major overhaul, giving evaluation of legal and other compliance its own clause and renaming other clauses although the requirements themselves didn't fundamentally change.

The different structure and additional requirements grow out of a new high-level structure under consideration for all ISO management systems standards. In our training we already note that there are a number of clauses in common for



ISO14001, OHSAS 18001, ISO50001 and ISO9001. For example, document control is common to all standards as are management review, audit and competency evaluation. We already suggest that organisations with ISO9001, the quality management standard, use the systems they have in place rather than run parallel systems. This cuts the cost and management time.

The proposed new format will formalise this whilst still allowing issues specific to a topic to be included. One of the suggestions made is that this common structure should lead to a better embedding of environmental considerations into an organisation's operations.

The suggestions I have seen for improving the standard fall into a number of categories:

- Aligning environmental performance with strategic considerations;
- Improving clarity and better guidance within the standard (e.g. management of legal compliance aligning the standard more fully with the wider picture of sustainability);
- Management of the environmental impact of the supply chain;
- Identification and consultation with stakeholders.

It seems clear that the standard must remain accessible and practical for SMEs and an improvement in clarity and guidance would certainly contribute to this. Finally the use of maturity matrices rather than management programmes is suggested as a way to make improvements more sustainable and less dependant on one enthusiastic person.

It is early days yet but some of the suggestions being made bear thinking about and maybe even incorporating into current systems as a way of getting a little ahead of the game. If you would like to talk about how you could improve your current system give Ecus a call on **0114 266 9292** or email us at alison.fanshawe@ecusltd.co.uk.

ISO14001 TRAINING

- IEMA-approved EMS Implementation course (3 days)
- IEMA-approved EMS Internal Auditor course (3 days)
- ISO14001 in a day (1 day)
- Transition to 16001/50001 (1 day)
- We run scheduled courses from our offices or in-house training

alison.fanshawe@ecusltd.co.uk

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