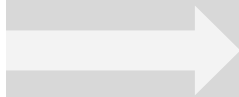


ISO 14001 Overview and Guidance

This guidance document provides an overview of the **ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management Systems** standard.





Introduction

The **ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems** standard details requirements for Environmental management systems (EMS) and the aim of this standard is to help organisations to formally identify and review the impact their activities could potentially have on the environment and to develop procedures and mechanisms to control and reduce any potential environmental impact.

The current version of the standard, ISO 14001:2015, is structured following Annex SL and therefore the clauses are very similar to the structure of ISO 9001:2015 and other Annex SL standards. The standard requires a clearly defined organisational structure with roles and responsibilities defined with the involvement and commitment from top management. Other requirements of this standard are that documented information is controlled, risks and opportunities are considered and that actions to address risks and opportunities are identified and managed.

Environmental Management

One of the key requirements of this standard is **emergency preparedness and response** and it is therefore important to ensure that effective resources and checks are in place to ensure the organisation meets all fire safety requirements and can respond effectively to any environmental incidents such as a spillage and to prevent pollution.

A formal review of **environmental aspects and impacts** is also required and can help with overall awareness of actual and potential impact on the environment from operations and also ensures that consideration is given to the processes and controls in place to respond to incidents and mitigate any impact on the environment.

When determining environmental aspects and impacts it is necessary to determine whether the impact could lead to an emergency situation or a significant impact on the environment and if there is any legislation covering the impact to determine the overall significance of the environmental impact. With all environmental impacts identified there is then the requirement to establish whether the impact is controlled or influenced and what controls are in place / should be in place.

When considering environmental aspects and impacts it is also necessary to demonstrate that have taken a **life-cycle perspective**. The purpose of a life cycle perspective is to consider how environmental performance could be improved by considering if there are improvements that could be made beyond those directly relating to operational activities such as improvements

that could be made by other interested parties such as suppliers or customers and whether these interested parties could be influenced to achieve improvement. The life cycle perspective involves consideration from the very start (upstream) such as how raw materials required are extracted or energy generated right through to (downstream) the final end of life disposal.

ISO14001:2015 Audit

During an audit – the auditor(s) will be looking for objective evidence that each clause in the standard has been met and complied with.

As well as reviewing all the relevant clauses there are various other things you can prepare and have in place prior to the audit;

- Completed and up-to-date management review including setting / reviewing environmental objectives
- Completed internal audit(s) covering environmental management
- Evidence of waste management and associated records (complying with any mandatory record retention requirements)
- Check waste facilities being used correctly and waste streams segregated as required
- Environmental aspects and impacts assessment documentation
- Evidence of consideration of life-cycle perspective
- Evidence of compliance with applicable regulations including an up-to-date legal register
- Evidence of source of updates for environmental legislation / evidence of updates
- Evidence of roles relating to environmental management clearly identified
- Evidence of staff environmental awareness and emergency response training
- Evidence of monitoring, inspection and maintenance of emergency equipment
- Evidence of planning for potential emergency situations

Further information about the ISO 14001 audit process and guidance for preparing for a certification audit is available at the following pages;

- [**ISO 14001 Certification Guidance**](#)
- [**ISO Certification Guidance**](#)