

PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY OPERATIONS AND DEVELOPMENTS

Having developed and documented its own ISO 14001-compatible Environmental Management System (EMS) in just six months to meet its increasing environmental awareness, as well as that of existing and potential clients, Northcroft is becoming conscious of the impact its activities have on the environment at large. Participation in the Fast-Track-14 EMS programme, which actively emphasises risk, energy, carbon and waste control, is shaping its response to demanding environmental legislation and commercial pressures.

Northcroft provides specialist consultancy services, within the UK, Europe and globally, to construction clients. It seeks to reduce client's risks during the construction process and the achievement of value for money.

"Many of the organisations with whom we work do not have an environmental policy of their own," says consultant, David Isaac. "Many are unaware of the requirements for environmental management."

Northcroft opted to join Cheshire-based ISYS International's Fast-Track-14 (FT-14) programme, which prepares companies for ISO 14001 in just six months. At the heart of FT-14 is a detailed, ISO Toolkit, electronic implementation guide, supported by regular peer-group review workshops.



"FT-14 raised many long-term design and development issues. The life cycle of construction projects will require greater attention to the long-term environmental impact of developments," says Isaac. "The Government is likely to require businesses to adopt environmentally-friendly practices at an increasing rate, particularly if fears of global warming become more prevalent. Further legislation enforcing environmental compliance is almost certain."

"FT-14 met our needs," adds Isaac. "It provided the answers in a short time span; what we had to do; exactly how to do it, but inevitably it requires commitment and effort! "

ISYS International's ISO Toolkit is designed to guide company implementation managers round barriers, offering a lead in building and operating their own customised EMS in-house.

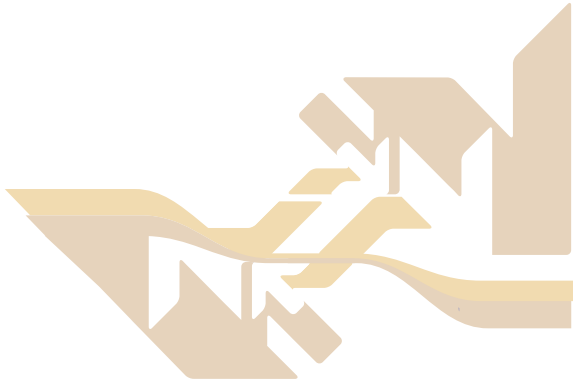
"The Toolkit was informative and user-friendly," he explains. "The Gap Analyser enabled us to identify our risks and how to resolve them."

FT-14 is divided into three implementation phases. Phase Three enabled Northcroft to link the EMS into its approved quality management system.

"We want to regulate the environmental impact of all our offices. FT-14 made us think far beyond that, asking questions and being made aware of the knock-on effect. It raised the issue of car-use versus public transport – and what was our policy – something we had not really considered before. It is early days, but the trend is there. Already we have started to identify our carbon emissions, with a view to reducing energy consumption wherever possible."

An important part of the FT-14 programme is its regular peer-group workshops. "They were very important to the whole process - well organised, structured and run," says Isaac. "In practice, workshops were there to exchange information. Each company taking part in the group had a different understanding, which was helpful to share. Feedback from group members - and ISYS' expert feedback - was extremely useful."

"Yes, Northcroft hopes it will be seen as giving a lead on environmental issues, and will increasingly seek to influence others during the design and construction processes. However, already, more companies are going down this route. Environmental issues will become increasingly important to the consulting field. Environmental risk assessments will become the norm. Inevitably,



environmental management will change over the years, altering the present ethos that suggests it is important to adopt environmental practices simply because everyone else is doing so. If companies, such as ours, do not operate freely in an environmentally-friendly manner, the Government will undoubtedly introduce further legislation, forcing environmental compliance, but not necessarily in the most economic manner from a business standpoint.”



ISYS

ISYS International Ltd, Meridian House, Road One,
Winsford, Cheshire CW7 3QG

t:- **0870 777 1130**

f:- **0870 706 1731**

e:- **enquiries@isys-int.com**

w:- **www.isys-int.com**