



FAST-TRACK-14 MEETS A TESTING ANALYSIS

When your potential client base includes Blue Chips and you receive a French enquiry asking about your corporate ISO 14001 policy, it is time to put sound environmental management systems into place. Scientifics Limited thought so, finding the process much easier than expected on a six-months-long Fast-Track-14 (FT-14) supply chain programme. It plans for early external certification at two key UK sites before rolling FT-14 across eight others.

Contrary to what he was expecting, Scientifics' Business Accreditations Manager, Phil Raybould, found Fast-Track-14 (FT-14) on a client supply chain programme much easier than he had envisaged.

"It was straightforward," explains Raybould. "Before starting, I must say that I did not understand the concepts of aspects and impacts that are implicit in the ISO 14001 process. Everything became very clear during the FT-14 programme, with plenty of direct individual support and supporting material.



"The programme's opening Gap Analyser was extremely useful, if a bit of an eye-opener," he notes. "It certainly made you stop and consider things you had never thought about before!"

Scientifics is an independent testing, analysis and consultancy business passionate about using science to provide solutions, advice and data helping public, private and regulated sector customers comply with the legislation in their markets. Working from 10 UK sites, its work is split across onsite monitoring, consultancy and laboratory-based testing and analysis.

Prior to joining FT-14, the 350-person company already had a rudimentary environmental management system (EMS) in place. This was "mothballed" due to a lack of resources. However,

following successful completion of the six-month programme, Scientifics plans to roll out its new EMS developed at sites in Oldbury and Derby - where it aims for ISO 14001 certification during summer 2007 - to eight other group sites.

FT-14 is designed specifically for groups of companies, internal management teams, or community organisations, to put highly-bespoke and organisation-specific Environmental Management Systems (EMS) in place within just six months that conform to the international environmental ISO 14001 standard.

ISYS International, which developed the low-cost programme, is currently implementing it throughout the UK with partners such as Constructing Excellence in the case of the construction industry.

Supply chain companies participating in the FT-14 programme work together in peer-groups using a powerful web-based interactive resource - the ISO 14001 Toolkit - to access detailed step-by-step guidance, document templates and discussion forums.

Crucially, the online system also means that ISYS and the client partner can constantly monitor progress and identify where individual support is needed to maintain momentum.

Equally important, participating company managers can share their problems and ideas, leading to better solutions. Moreover, managers also meet physically. Once a month, they are supported in local, structured peer-group workshops with expert support from ISYS.

By focusing on identifying and controlling environmental risks, FT-14 assists companies to achieve legal and regulatory compliance, while demonstrating environmental commitment to their key stakeholders. Other benefits include improved resource efficiency, reduced pollution and lower waste treatment and disposal costs. Companies can also enhance their corporate image, creating a real competitive edge as sustainable demands rise.

Fast-Track-14 case-study - SCIENTIFICS LIMITED



Fast-Track-14



FT-14 also creates the framework to support other contemporary management systems, such as Quality (ISO 9001), Occupational Health & Safety (OHSAS 18001) and Investors in People (IIP).

Scientifics was invited by Birse Rail to join its FT-14 programme intended to strategically raise supply chain efficiency, spontaneous innovation and communication levels.

"We joined gladly because Birse Rail is a good customer," says Raybould. "They asked if we were considering ISO 14001, and, if not, would we like to begin moving towards the standard as Birse Rail will be obliged to make it a criterion for supply chain participation in the very near future. This gave us the small extra push we needed to get moving."

"In fact, many of our other clients are asking the same question, especially Blue Chip companies, which is one of our expansion areas. We have even had one enquiry from France specifying the standard as a condition of tender," he adds.

"Although as a testing laboratory, we don't have a large environmental impact, we do have to meet emissions regulations like everyone else. This and electricity use reduction are two of our focus areas.

"We have also become pro-active in recycling as a result of FT-14. We now recycle paper, batteries and toner cartridges. As part of our transport policy, we plan to move to more efficient vehicles when the time comes to change our fleet. Fuel is not a huge factor but we have found cost and efficiency gains."

The company has also put out a newsletter explaining its new approach clearly to staff, clients and stakeholders.

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