

CO-OPERATING FOR SUSTAINABLE SUCCESS

An invitation from major contractor Laing O'Rourke to join a Fast-Track-14 (FT-14) programme taking construction suppliers to environmental compliance in six months was the start of a lifelong improvement journey for West Anglia Insulation Ltd.



Founded in 1979, West Anglia Insulation Ltd has diversified from thermal insulation to passive fire protection, drylining, and heating and electrical systems. Today, the Suffolk-based firm employs more than 100 staff nationwide and has been a Laing O'Rourke (LOR) supplier for several years.

As such, it readily joined an LOR championed Fast-Track-14 (FT-14) peer-group programme, designed to prepare companies for ISO 14001 environmental compliance in six months, while concurrently raising efficiency and adding co-ordination, creativity and close communication to the contractor's construction supply chain.

"We had an environmental policy before this that was a basic document driven mainly by the fact that we were asked for it by clients," explains HSE Advisor, Nick Game. "LOR was clearly keen that we participate to make a powerful contribution to its own environmental goals. It has worked well. A major advantage of FT-14 is that - through the process of creating our own tailored environmental



management system (EMS) for ISO 14001 - our company and staff have become much more environmentally aware".

"When we began, we had many parts of a system that needed to be reworked and put in place. In addition, I didn't understand environmental legislation, or risk assessment. So it was a big learning curve and hard work for the first three months. However, at that point, we could see clearly that we were putting together a very sound and practical EMS," says Nick.

Systematically efficient and effective

FT-14 provides expert information and detailed step-by-step EMS implementation guidance via a highly-interactive online portal, supported by seven, half-day workshops, where groups of suppliers meet to share experiences and best practice, discuss problem-solving approaches and receive individual advice.

In so doing, the programme offers companies a streamlined route to ISO 14001 environmental compliance by methodically bridging information barriers that often hold back many hard-working companies. This allows them to focus very sharply on resolving the real effects of their operations on the environment and stakeholders. More importantly still, systematically paring down inefficiencies removes negative pressures from profit margins, cuts waste and allows companies to confidently control risks associated with new commercial opportunities, especially in turbulent and competitive markets.

Sharing ideas and solutions

"One of the advantages of FT-14 was plenty of support from ISYS International as facilitator and, because of the group workshop system, other participants. People who were interested in particular parts helped me to put our system together, as I helped them.

Fire! Prevention is a specialty for West Anglia Insulation in the build environment.

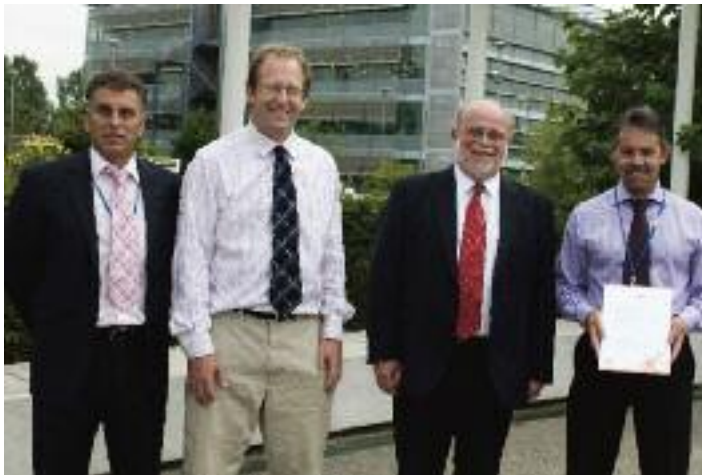


WEST ANGLIAN INSULATION LTD

"I now understand environmental legislation and risk assessment, plus the importance of how we purchase materials," explains Nick.

Another key priority is to develop a procurement plan and win supplier support, he adds.

"In fact, this is something we've already started with Hilti, which is one of our largest clients. We are working closely with them on packaging waste and the re-cycling of empty sealant tubes. They already have ISO 14001 in place. We explained our environmental objectives and they are happy to become involved."



Nick Game (right) and Business Manager, Soccorso Gullucci (left), receive West Anglia Insulation's FT-14 successful completion certificate from Laing O'Rourke Construction South Director, Chris Scutt (centre right) and Environment Leader Eddy Taylor.

One of West Anglia's objectives is to find substitutes for hazardous material. "Progressively reducing waste to landfill is also important and we believe that at least 70% is amenable to recycling. Cardboard, plastic and paper waste are targets. Fire protection materials come in plastic containers, and this is an example where Hilti are looking to recycle. Heat, light, electricity and carbon cuts are high on its agenda too. We are definitely making efficiency gains from waste reduction and saving, while also cutting natural resource use.

"Developing an environmental management system (EMS) specific to the business has been very rewarding," adds Nick.

Matching environmental aims

The relationship with LOR is important. "We work at the technical edge with LOR on packaging and recycling and aim to tie our own waste reduction targets in with LOR's waste management plans. The same applies to our carbon dioxide reduction targets. We are also saving energy - heat, light and electricity - at local offices."

West Anglia will apply for ISO 14001 Certification when its new system is well bedded in.

Once early objectives are in place, the company intends to benchmark its performance.

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ISYS | ORCHESTRA
FAST-TRACK-14

International

ISYS International Ltd

The Heath, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 4QX, United Kingdom

t 0844 873 2005 f 0844 873 2006 e info@isys-int.com w www.isys-int.com

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