

Managing Environmental Risks through the Application of ISO 14001: Environmental Management System Standards

Schwarz, Steffi, SAI Global Limited, East Perth, Australia

While Environmental Management is applicable across all sectors of industry and Government, it is of particular importance for the petroleum industry, as the environmental risk faced could have particularly severe consequences. ISO 14001 specifies the requirements for an Environmental Management System, providing a framework for an organisation to identify and manage the environmental impact of its activities, products and services, and to improve its environmental performance continually.

Environmental Management Systems enable organisations to improve environmental, social and economic performance, thereby contributing to global sustainability. Businesses are provided with an opportunity to benchmark against emerging trends in regulatory, community, stakeholder and trade requirements.

The benefits of Certified Environmental Management Systems include:

- Improved environmental risk management
- Enhanced public image,
- Enhanced community acceptance,
- Enhanced environmental stewardship,
- Improved sustainable decision-making, and
- Lower insurance costs.

Examples as to how Environmental Management Systems enable organisations to improve performance and mitigate risks will be given. The revised international standards on Environmental Management Systems (ISO 14001:2004) are illustrated. This paper further discusses sustainability reporting and verification of sustainability reports.