



SAMPLE PAGES

The ISO 14000 Challenge

**Environmental Management
A Guide for Managers**

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About the Video Program

The concern for our environment is rapidly rising. Organisations are under mounting pressure to control the environmental impact of their activities. An environmental management system is a practical way to enhance a company's performance and ensure the organisation is effectively managing its environmental risks.

The video ***The ISO 14000 Challenge*** describes the key elements of environmental management by showing how three very different organisations have introduced and implemented an Environmental Management System into their operations. The managers and staff talk first hand how the principles of ISO 14001 applied in their business situations, the challenges they had to meet and the rewards that resulted.

The case studies show how Bonlac Foods, a major producer and exporter of dairy products, and Macmahon Contractors, a leader in rural and remote area mining have introduced an effective Environmental Management System and achieved certification to ISO 14001. It also shows how Woollahra Council, a high profile Sydney council, is tackling environmental management for its community.

This booklet is a summary of the key points covered by the case study organisations in the video program.

Key Questions

Before watching this video program it may be useful to ask yourself and your colleagues the following questions.

- Is your environmental performance up to the standards expected by your customers, shareholders and the community?
- Are you sure that your organisation is complying with the latest environmental laws and regulations?
- Does your organisation have all of the permits and licenses it needs to conduct its business?
- Are there procedures in place to handle incidents that impact on the environment?
- Which activities in your area have a significant impact on the environment?
- What are the levels of energy use, waste and discharges resulting from your operations?

Introduction

Organisations around the world are striving to meet their environmental responsibilities. ISO 14001 links an organisation's activities to its environmental responsibilities.

1. Nearly every **business activity** in nearly every organisation has some **impact on the environment**.
2. **Management systems** are implemented to control **business activities**.
3. **Standards** are used by organisations to provide a framework for **management systems**.
4. **ISO 14001** is the international **standard** for environmental management systems. It is the tool that many organisations around the world are using to control their environmental performance.

Organisations operate in very complex business conditions. Environmental laws and regulations are continually changing and becoming increasingly demanding. To remain profitable and to stay in business, organisations often have to cope with seemingly ambiguous demands.

Gaining ISO14001 certification can provide companies with:

- a comprehensive strategy for meeting legal requirements and assist its Officers to demonstrate due diligence,
- a marketing edge,
- an improved relationship with the community which benefits sales and operations,
- benefits in yield and quality.

ISO14000 is the international series of standards and guidelines for environmental management.

Developed by industry, the standard ISO14001 provides a framework for a management system. ISO 14001 is not a product standard. It is a standard which covers the process of producing a product or providing a source. It has many similar elements to the quality standards covered in ISO 9000.

ISO 14001 is an international recognition of an organisation's commitment to improving its environmental performance.

The ISO 14000 Challenge

ASPECTS AND IMPACTS

The building blocks of an environmental management system is an understanding of aspects and impacts.

Implementing ISO 14001 begins with identifying **how** an organisation's business activities impact on the environment.

Many organisations believe they are already aware of the significant aspects and impacts of their operations. The process of implementing ISO 14001 may uncover significant impacts not previously identified and allows for a consistent approach to analysis.

Generally this analysis is done department by department or centre by centre.

It is best if it is a team approach that involves the employees who do the activity. An employee's familiarity with a task is essential for both the identification of the environmental impacts of business activities and the determination or implementation of control measures.

An aspect is any element of an organisation's activities, products or services that can interact with the environment.

An impact is the change caused to the environment.

Impacts may occur during normal and abnormal operating conditions, such as accidents and emergencies.

Aspects can often be isolated by analysing the inputs and outputs of an activity.

Case Study Examples

At North Parkes Mine, some of the activities include: drilling, blasting, dust containment and refuelling.

At Bonlac Foods Stanhope factory, the activities in the milk separator and receival department include skim milk and cream separation.

At Woollahra Council, one of the activities is management of storm water run-off.

At Bonlac Foods this type of analysis of activities identified waste milk discharge as an output during flushing. Milk is flushed through the separator every 15 minutes to clean it. This discharge or flushing is an aspect because the waste milk interacts with the environment. The impact occurs when milk flows out with waste water. Its high nutrient load can cause algal bloom and contribute to an offensive odour.

So, in this example, flushing is an **aspect** and algal bloom and odour are **impacts**.

In the Bonlac Foods garage, there are a number of activities required to service vehicles. Each of these activities is an aspect of servicing a vehicle. One of the **aspects** is changing the oil. If there is no recycling of the oil, the impact is the pollution of the soil if the oil is dumped.

During construction on a building site there can be waste water run-off. In the Woollahra area if the run-off is not contained then there is the **impact** of pollution of the Woollahra foreshore.