



investtrend

ISO 14001:2004 Environmental Management Standard

Protecting the Environment is Everybody's Responsibility!

ISO 14001:2004 is the world's most recognised environmental management certification standard.

Environmental Management is not, as the phrase could suggest, the management of the environment as such, but more the management of man's interaction with and impact upon the environment. In today's competitive market place, customers, the community, and regulatory bodies are increasingly demanding that organisations demonstrate a commitment to the environment, the prevention of pollution, and the promotion of environmental sustainability.

To meet these requirements, more organisations are choosing to have their environmental management systems certified to demonstrate their commitment to care of the environment.

Environmental management system certification, ISO 14001:2004, basically requires the organisation to monitor and manage its impact on the environment. By controlling risks and creating improvements, not only will the organisation be protecting the environment but will also bring bottom line benefits to the performance of the company.

There is also the added advantage that the standard requires the company to be aware of all the legislative requirements that are relevant to its operations and therefore the potential for legal non-compliances, and any subsequent court costs or fines, is likewise minimised.

We also view support for your environmental initiatives as an important part of our activities, and therefore we look, not simply for compliance with the standard, but also for issues to bring to your attention in terms of how your management systems and operations could perhaps be improved.

HOW IT WORKS

ISO 14001:2004 does not specify levels of environmental performance. If it specified levels of environmental performance, they would have to be specific to each business activity and this would require a specific EMS standard for each business. That is not the intention.

ISO has many other standards dealing with specific environmental issues. The intention of ISO 14001:2004 is to provide a **framework for a holistic, strategic approach** to the organisation's environmental policy, plans and actions.

ISO 14001:2004 gives the **generic requirements** for an environmental management system. The underlying philosophy is that whatever the organisation's activity, the requirements of an effective EMS are the same. This has the effect of establishing a **common reference** for communicating about environmental management issues between organisations and their customers, regulators, the public and other stakeholders.

Because ISO 14001:2004 does not lay down levels of environmental performance, the standard can be implemented by a **wide variety of organisations**, whatever their current level of environmental maturity. However, a **commitment to compliance** with applicable environmental legislation and regulations is required, along with a commitment to **continual improvement** – for which the EMS provides the framework.