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Environmental management systems – Phased implementation – Guide

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Summary of pages

This document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, pages i to ii, pages 1 to 54, an inside back cover and a back cover.

Foreword

Publishing information

This British Standard is published by BSI Standards Limited, under licence from The British Standards Institution, and came into effect on 31 December 2016. It was prepared by Subcommittee SES/1/1, *Environmental management systems*, under the authority of Technical Committee SES/1, *Environmental management*. A list of organizations represented on these committees can be obtained on request to their secretary.

Supersession

This British Standard supersedes BS 8555:2003, which is withdrawn.

Information about this document

This is a full revision of the standard, and introduces the following principal changes:

- phases and stages updated to reflect changes in BS EN ISO 14001:2015; and
- removal of phase 6 and associated guidance.

Relationship with other publications

This British Standard is related to BS EN ISO 14001, but is not equivalent in technical content.

Use of this document

As a guide, this British Standard takes the form of guidance and recommendations. It should not be quoted as if it were a specification or a code of practice and claims of compliance cannot be made to it.

Presentational conventions

The guidance in this standard is presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Any recommendations are expressed in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is “should”.

Commentary, explanation and general informative material is presented in smaller italic type, and does not constitute a normative element.

Contractual and legal considerations

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

0 Introduction

0.1 General

This British Standard provides guidance for organizations on the phased development, implementation, maintenance and improvement of an environmental management system (EMS).

0.2 Benefits of an EMS

Many organizations have some form of environmental management as part of their overall business management process. However, many face challenges when implementing a formal EMS. These challenges are often around limited resources (financial and/or human) and difficulty in implementing all the requirements of standards or schemes such as BS EN ISO 14001 or the eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS)¹⁾.

The benefits of implementing a structured EMS include:

- a) meeting compliance obligations;
- b) improved financial performance;
- c) being able to proactively monitor and measure environmental performance;
- d) improved internal and external communication;
- e) understanding and managing risks and opportunities within supply and value chains;
- f) adapting to and mitigating change (e.g. climate and economic);
- g) meeting the needs and expectations of relevant interested parties;
- h) enhancing co-operation with interested parties;
- i) integration of performance evaluation techniques (e.g. as set out in BS EN ISO 14031); and
- j) co-ordination of environmental management with other management disciplines and systems (e.g. energy, quality, health and safety and/or food assurance).

0.3 Advantages of a phased approach

This British Standard is applicable to any organization, regardless of the business activity undertaken, size, complexity or level of maturity. However, organizations with limited resources and/or organizations new to environmental management might find the approach particularly useful. The flexibility offered by a phased approach can be helpful in driving positive culture change within an organization and in motivating top management to see the business value of improved environmental performance.

The phased approach allows organizations to:

- a) choose the pace of implementation of their EMS;
- b) decide which phase they want to reach and by when;
- c) develop an EMS to match the size, complexity and risks of their business;
- d) identify and maximize the areas of greatest potential return on investment;

¹⁾ EMAS is a trademark owned by the European Commission and is an example of a suitable scheme available commercially. This information is given for the convenience of users of this standard and does not constitute an endorsement by BSI of these schemes.

- e) ensure progress and self-declare or seek voluntary recognition at specified points during development and implementation of the EMS; and
- f) meet the requirements of BS EN ISO 14001 when all phases have been successfully implemented.

0.4 Structure of this British Standard

There are five phases (see Figure 1) with a number of step-by-step stages within each phase. At the end of each phase and prior to embarking on the next, organizations might consider undertaking an internal audit to satisfy themselves that the stages are complete, and that the associated guidance has been considered and, where appropriate, implemented. Each stage sets out:

- a) an introduction to explain why it is required;
- b) achievement criteria and the evidence needed to ensure the criteria have been met;
- c) how the stage should be carried out and suggested inputs; and
- d) expected example outputs.

An integral part of completing each stage is the generation and, where appropriate, documentation, of evidence needed to ensure meeting achievement criteria and delivering expected outputs. Internal (and external) audit criteria are based on identifying and evaluating this evidence.

1 Scope

This British Standard provides guidance for all organizations, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), on the phased development, implementation, maintenance and improvement of an EMS. It also includes guidance on the:

- a) integration and use of environmental performance evaluation (EPE) techniques during the implementation process; and
- b) co-ordination of such an EMS with other management systems, where appropriate.

The guidance in this British Standard is applicable to any organization, regardless of the nature of the business activity undertaken, location, or level of maturity.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this British Standard, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1 audit

systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which audit criteria are fulfilled