



Environmental Management System

Case Study

Task

Read the scenario and take the following actions: -

The Company now has to decide on what actions to take next. You have been called in as an environmental consultant to advise them on whether they should proceed with implementing an environmental system that meets the requirements of the international Standard ISO14001 or just tighten up on their existing practices

Discuss as a team what recommendations you are going to make and appoint someone to role-play the Consultant to give verbal feedback on your decisions

Consider the following points: -

- Is the Company using its existing EMS effectively?
- What could be done to improve the efficiency of the Environmental Management system?

Scenario



Baxter's Bakery

The Company is a wholly owned Scottish Company that has been in existence since the early 1950's producing loaves of bread for Supermarket outlets.

It employs around a hundred staff, split 80/20 between operatives, managers and the Company's Directors

The equipment has been upgraded over the years, but is still not the latest on the market that is more energy efficient.

The single storey structure, though well maintained has largely remained unaltered since it was first built, with no room available on the site for further expansion

An environmental committee has been set up, which also doubles as the Health & Safety Committee, but they feel they get little support from the Company's Directors who see environmental issues as getting in the way of producing products.

The Financial Director has recently been complaining about the high cost of energy costs that have risen by 40% this year. Several other environmental issues that have come to light recently, namely, more demanding legislation, predominantly driven by EC Directives and the offer of a lucrative Contract from a chain of Supermarkets that has just been launched. A condition of the Contract would be that they adopt an environmental management system that meets the requirements of ISO14001.

The Financial Director has carried out some preliminary research and the costs of implementing and maintaining an EMS will be more than offset by the winning of the Contract

They also need to discuss the leasing of new premises, as the Contract would mean taking on new staff. This would cause major upheaval, as the new bakery would require to be set up in another town in England, transferring key staff while running the existing bakery in tandem.

10 Benefits of Having an Environmental Management System

- A system registered to an international Standard demonstrates that environmental issues are taken seriously and meets the requirements of best practice developed over time, written down and accepted by all businesses and agencies throughout the world
- In the event of a serious incident occurring it mitigates the risk. In the event of the Company being dragged before a judge the fine will be significantly less. The principle of “the polluter pays” will also be taken into account, therefore saving them money.
- Risk analysis studies will be conducted identifying sources where incidents could occur and putting in preventive measures
- It will prevent serious incidents happening in the first place by recognising high risks and putting in control measures to reduce them to a level that is acceptable or eliminate them altogether
- Staff morale will be raised, through recognition of their contribution towards a safer environment i.e. protecting the Flora and the Fauna within their work place.
- Less incidents, even minor ones will contribute to increased production as reports will not need to be completed, nor will time have to be taken up to clean them up – e.g. chemical spillages
- Making energy savings on electricity, water, fuel and gas will drastically reduce carbon footprints.
- Staff will be more aware of the legal requirements and have a feel good factor that they have contributed to a cleaner environment
- A complete system will look at all the issues in a controlled manner and consider how they impact on each other and find permanent solutions to prevent their recurrence, rather than “fire-fighting” them in a haphazard way as they occur, then dismissing them, the issues raise their heads again later with the work having to be repeated over and over again.
- The Company’s reputation will be greatly enhanced through public demonstration of their “duty of care” for the environment