

GUIDANCE ON OUR CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Introduction

Certification of your Environmental Management System (EMS) is a way of providing assurance that you have implemented a system for the management of the environmental aspects of your organisation's activities, products and services.

EMS certification involves the assessment of your EMS to the requirements of ISO 14001. However, it does not imply achievement of specific levels of environmental performance of your activities, products and services.

The Certification International EMS certification process involves the following activities:

1. The Application

Firstly, we ask that you fully complete and submit to Certification International our Application form. It should be signed and dated by an authorised representative of your organisation. The form contains a specific section for EMS certification and it is important that all questions are answered as accurately as possible.

2. The Quotation

Upon receipt of your Application Form, we will review your request for certification and ensure you have provided sufficient information for Certification International to prepare a quotation, and that we have the capability to carry out the assessment in relation to the proposed scope of certification. Once we are satisfied, we will send you a quotation that will detail the number of Audit days involved and costs associated with the assessment of your EMS to the requirements of ISO 14001.

3. Client Acceptance

If you are happy with our quotation, you should sign and return to Certification International, the Client Acceptance Form. We will then plan the resource requirements (including a consideration of your organisations size, number and nature of the sites involved) to enable us to effectively select and appoint our Audit team.

We will notify you in advance of your assessment, the Auditors appointed to your organisation, which you will have the right to reject, if you should feel they are not suitable. Finally, we will raise our invoice for payment prior to the commencement of the assessment activity.

4. Assessment

Certification International certification assessment is in 2 stages.

Stage 1 Audit - This is conducted on-site, and CI will:-

- Review your documented Environmental Management System and undertake an overview of your implemented system to check that all the documentation required by the Standard is in place in a controlled manner.
- Discuss and confirm your intended Scope of Certification.
- Gain an understanding of your EMS in the context of your organisation's environmental aspects and associated impacts, policy and objectives. We will do this in order to assess the degree of implementation of your EMS and to identify any areas of your system which require attention prior to the Stage 2 Audit.
- Establish whether your EMS is based on the identification and evaluation of environmental effects and also whether the significant environmental aspects have been determined and continual improvement programmes are established and being put in place.
- Review the applicable Legislation/Regulations that you have identified to ensure it is complete and achieving legislative compliance.
- Assess the reliance which can be placed on your own Internal Audits.
- Confirm that your implementation programme(s) justifies proceeding with the Stage 2 Audit, and if yes, determine with you a date for your Stage 2 Audit.
- Prepare and agree with you the Stage 2 Audit programme based around the key significant effects and activities of your organisation, and establish Audit days required.
- Provide you with a report of our findings and any potential non-conformities found during the Audit.

Stage 2 Audit - This is conducted on-site, and CI will:-

- Discuss with you any potential non-conformities which may have been identified during the Stage 1 Audit.
- Assess your documented and implemented EMS and confirm that it complies with the requirements of the ISO 14001 Standard.
- Focus on your identification and evaluation of environmental effects, the consequent objective and targets you have set, your performance

monitoring, operational control, reporting and review against your objectives and targets to determine whether your EMS is achieving environmental performance improvement and regulatory compliance.

- Assess your working practices to confirm that you are complying with your own policies and procedures.
- Review your own Internal Audit and Management Review programmes to verify they are designed to ensure your EMS's effectiveness.
- Provide you with a report and Lead Auditor briefing before departure concerning the recommendations on the outcome of the assessment process. The decision whether to award certification will be based on the evidence gathered during the Stage 1 and Stage 2 Audits.

5. Surveillance and Re-Assessment

CI will carry out regular surveillance audits of your organisation to ensure ongoing compliance of your EMS. In a 3 year period, selective sampling of your EMS will be undertaken during audits so that the whole system is audited over that time.

Once every 3 years CI will extend or replace a Surveillance Audit to undertake a Re-Assessment Audit, following which you will receive an extension of your certification for a further 3 year period.