

environmental management systems

JULY 2005

The concept of environment in business is now a well accepted paradigm. Currently there is a broad spectrum of environmental management across business, ranging from environmental management born out of regulatory requirements, through to various voluntary environmental management initiatives. The management of an organisation's environmental impact is achieved through the implementation of an environmental management system, or 'EMS'.

The following sections introduce, in simple terms, the key components of an EMS, the likely time and resource commitments, and the prospective benefits associated with implementation.

What is an EMS?

An EMS is a system, which serves to identify and document environmental issues within an organisation's operation, and subsequently implement strategies to manage these issues, and provide better environment outcomes. As with other quality management systems, an EMS benefits from a continual improvement management review cycle, thus resulting in sustained environmental development.

The experience of tda environmental consulting (tda), across a range of industries, has shown that an EMS can provide the following benefits to an organisation:

- **Cost Savings** – Identifying areas of resource inefficiency, excess consumption of resources, and generation of unnecessary waste, allowing for substantial savings, with the adoption of improved business management systems and best practice.
- **Compliance and Requirements** – By managing the environmental outcomes of an organisation's operations, regulatory imperatives can be met, and environmental risk assurance and diligence are demonstrated. In many cases, an EMS can help meet the requirements of customers, tendering for your service.
- **Value Adding** – An EMS can provide a point of difference with competitors and enhance client confidence, and therefore result in the generation of additional clients and markets, in addition to an improved corporate image. The adoption of an EMS has also been shown to have value in improving employee morale, enhancing job satisfaction, motivation and ultimately productivity.

Why tda?

tda has a range of experience in the design, implementation and assessment of EMS. tda worked closely with the Australian Film industry in their attempts to provide low impact and environmentally sustainable solutions to a range of filming situations. tda recently designed and implemented a tailored environmental management system for the offices of Gadens Lawyers Sydney, enabling Gadens to become leaders in corporate environmental responsibility within the legal industry. As part of our service package, our staff are accredited to audit an EMS under the international standard, ISO 14001.

Our specialty is providing tailored environmental management solutions.

With an extensive background in environmental and resource management disciplines and a demonstrable track record, tda is confident in our ability to provide innovative and relevant services to enhance the environmental image of all of our clients.

How does it roll out?

In installing an EMS into a new organisation, tda would normally complete a series of discrete work stages. By breaking down the installation of an EMS into these distinct stages, there is an opportunity to review progress at the completion of each stage and ensure implementation is on course and consistent with projected resource and financial commitments. Any deviations can be factored into the development of a revised system.

In the first instance, the most important component of an EMS is organisational commitment. For an effective EMS to be developed and achieved, there is a need to gain commitment from all levels of the organisation.

Staff and stakeholder consultation is undertaken at all stages during the establishment of an EMS. This is necessary to ensure that all staff are involved in, and committed to the system. Furthermore, this provides an opportunity for staff to develop 'ownership' of the system, and their organisation's environmental performance. Communication is normally undertaken through an organisation's intranet, or web page, and therefore educates staff, before being marketed to clients and consumers.

With tda, the pathway for implementation of an EMS involves the following work stages:

- i. **Environmental Impact Review** – The identification and documentation of the actual and potential environmental impacts of an organisation's operations. This component is used as means of identifying cost saving areas, resource management bottlenecks and immediate efficiency opportunities.
- ii. **Environmental Policy** – A statement of what an organisation intends to achieve from an EMS. It ensures all environmental activities are consistent with the organisation's objectives.
- iii. **Environmental Management Plan** – The methods and procedures which an organisation will use to meet its objectives and targets in regards to the environmental policy. This plan may include long and short term goals and objectives.
- iv. **Continual Improvement** – The review of progress towards those targets and objectives set by a company to manage their environmental performance. The procedures set in place to meet these objectives are reviewed to identify areas for improvement, and if required more appropriate systems can be introduced.

Implementing an EMS via the above pathway allows savings to be made almost immediately, from resource and system efficiency and waste reduction. Marketing an EMS, as part of enhancing an organisation's corporate image, can begin once the environmental policy has been developed. Once the environmental management plan is established, the EMS operates in accord with pre-existing business systems, and is absorbed as part of the organisation's day-to-day operations. With management review the EMS is able to improve, and maintain continual market differentiation and at the same time further improve environmental outcomes.



For further information on the EMS service and how this may benefit your organisation please contact us.

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