



5. Case studies

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5.1 Developing an environmental management system – a metropolitan experience

North Sydney Council



Rationale

Council determined that an environmental management system (EMS) should be developed in order to provide a structured approach for managing organisational environmental risks and helping to achieve desired environmental outcomes. The EMS also aimed to:

- define tasks and responsibility for actions
- coordinate environmental management across council
- provide greater operational control
- increase compliance with legal requirements, and improve relations with regulators
- demonstrate due diligence
- enhance public image through encouraging external recognition of environmental commitment
- demonstrate leadership for other businesses within the local government area
- achieve cost savings
- provide a framework to identify areas for improvement in environmental performance.

Methodology

Council first piloted the EMS development process at the North Sydney Olympic Pool, and expanded the process by stages to include other business areas of council operations. The specific areas targeted across council operations were:

- engineering works
- parks and gardens
- street sweeping
- waste management
- bushland management
- environmental and building compliance.

The steps involved in establishing the corporate EMS included:

- undertaking an initial environmental review
- briefing management and councillors
- identifying relevant aspects and impacts through workshops run for council staff
- developing environmental management plans (EMPs) for each business area, including objectives and targets
- integrating existing programs or elements into these plans
- conducting annual training and awareness sessions
- developing and implementing a corporate environmental induction module
- developing operational control procedures incorporating environmental and occupational health and safety (OH&S) considerations
- developing an audit checklist and conducting regular audits
- undertaking management reviews
- regularly reporting to senior management and council's environmental committee.

Outcomes

Development of a training culture

When council ran its initial EMS training and awareness program in 2001, many people felt it needed to become an ongoing process, and council subsequently committed to running annual sessions for relevant staff. Council has developed a series of training modules for different areas, covering general environmental issues, aspects and impacts, legislation, due diligence, risk assessment, sustainability and EMPs.

Corporate environmental induction

Council has introduced an environmental module into its induction program as part of the EMS. Induction is provided to all new employees, and addresses legislative obligations, due diligence, ecologically sustainable development and council's systems and programs.

Risk assessment

The development of the EMS has improved the awareness and understanding of risk assessment, and in particular of the potential environmental impacts arising from activities and operations. The aspects and impacts workshops, in particular, enabled participants to clearly see these links and improve their skills in identifying risks associated with work practices.

Development of environmental management plans

The plans developed for the six business areas included in the EMS framework each have objectives, targets and an action plan. The action plans include operational safeguards and have incorporated actions from other existing programs in council. For example, the Olympic pool EMP includes actions from council's Greenhouse Action Plan.

Operational controls

Staff were involved in developing operational controls and work methods to meet ISO 14000 requirements and address identified areas of risk. Controls were developed for operations in the parks and gardens, pool, and engineering works depot areas. Operational staff are now working in accordance with the procedures. A waste contract management plan has been developed to ensure that the waste management contract is effectively managed to minimise environmental risk.

Integration of OH&S components

The process of integrating the EMS and OH&S systems continues as the opportunity arises. Integration has already occurred in the areas of operational controls, management system procedures, documentation and some training. Further integration is anticipated for risk management and training programs.

Lessons learnt

- consider having a full-time EMS coordinator
- establish and formalise the steering committee early in the process
- market the EMS to different stakeholders within council
- identify and appoint a director to be the champion of the EMS
- provide key personnel with formal EMS training early in the process.

5.2 Developing an integrated management system – a regional experience

Tamworth Regional Council



Rationale

Tamworth Regional Council (a body made up of the amalgamation of five local government bodies: Tamworth City, Barraba Shire (part), Manilla Shire, Parry Shire (part) and Nundle Shire) decided to integrate its environmental, OH&S and quality systems because:

- the existing National Safety Council (NSCA) 5 Star Safety System did not have full organisational support, and was therefore was not fulfilling council's needs for OH&S. This system was also inappropriate for the diversity and complexity of activities conducted by council
- council had identified that an integrated framework could meet the goals and performance measures for safety, quality and environmental management in its long-term *2020 Vision* document and annual management plans
- external statutory authorities were increasing pressure on council to lift its performance in capital works projects requiring quality, safety and environmental management plans
- council needed to meet its obligations under the new OH&S legislation
- council wished to be innovative and lead the region in the emerging trend of integrating management systems for quality, safety and the environment.

Methodology

The council's integrated management system (IMS) was inspired by RTA specifications related to works on state and national highways through the single invitation contract. The system developed to meet these requirements was adapted for council's operational areas as follows:

Initiation

- obtaining senior management approval to develop and implement the IMS
- adapting the RTA system for in-house use
- dedicating a team of three staff, each having a specific expertise in quality, safety or environmental management, to coordinate the development and implementation of the system

Program development

- networking with other councils to learn from their examples
- training the project coordinators in the use of IMS
- identifying the scope of the project and developing a program to meet this

Implementation

- staging program implementation, initially focusing on the technical services operational areas as these offered the greatest diversity, risk and exposure
- focusing on OH&S aspects of the system to meet council's legal requirements
- collating existing documentation and establishing working groups to document work procedures

Consultation, program review and documentation

- consulting work teams to identify activities and develop standard risk assessments, safe work method statements and standard work procedures
- developing the IMS manual in accordance with elements of ISO 9001: 2000 Quality Systems, ISO 14001: 2004 *Environmental systems* and AS 4801:2001 *Occupational health and safety management*
- conducting an external audit/gap analysis to identify system deficiencies

System roll-out

- extending the implementation of the IMS to other directorates of council
- holding IMS induction training sessions for managers, supervisors and staff as the system was expanded throughout the organisation.

Outcomes

Qualifying for WorkCover's premium discount scheme

Meeting the benchmarks set in the WorkCover premium discount scheme has significantly reduced council's premium for workers compensation insurance. Better management of injured workers and the application of safer work practices have also contributed to lower claims costs.

Change in organisational culture

There is evidence of people embracing the IMS with a greater awareness of quality, OH&S and environmental issues.

Successful defences against litigation

In the litigious society that we now live in, councils are often a target. The records that are maintained though the IMS have been used successfully in defence of council in some litigation.

Positive relationship with WorkCover

A positive working relationship has developed between council and local WorkCover inspectors because of the safety initiatives and processes introduced through the IMS.

Reduction of waste

Environmental programs promoting the recycling of waste materials have diverted significant quantities of waste from landfill.

Increased networking within the region

There is excellent work being done by other organisations in the region, and sharing of that knowledge/work can save significant time and resources.

Conformance to legislation

Increasingly, we are seeing legislation imposed on our operations, and having a management system in place makes it much easier to demonstrate compliance.

Lessons learnt

- make a start and use continuous improvement to develop the system
- keep it simple – if the system or documentation is too complex people will not use them
- identify the right people to develop, drive and audit the system – fulltime resources are required
- identify whether the system is being applied to the entire organisation or only certain directorates/activities, as this will be a factor in deciding where the staff driving the system should sit in the structure
- combine standard risk assessments, safe work method statements and standard work practices into a single document linked to other plans and strategies
- risk assessment methodology can help to prioritise decision making but the methodology needs to be identified from the start
- commitment to IMS principles should part of position profiles or role descriptions for all staff at supervisor level and above.

5.3 Environmental awareness and induction programs

Blue Mountains City Council



Rationale

Council's 25-year strategic plan required Operations Branch to improve resource recovery and waste avoidance by closely examining work procedures and encouraging a culture of innovation instead of conformity. Management and staff also needed to develop improved relationships, aiming to create a more democratic approach to change which would in turn produce better results in line with community expectations. Council recognised that outdoor staff needed encouragement and to be provided with the educational support to understand relevant Acts, recognise problems and implement solutions.

Methodology

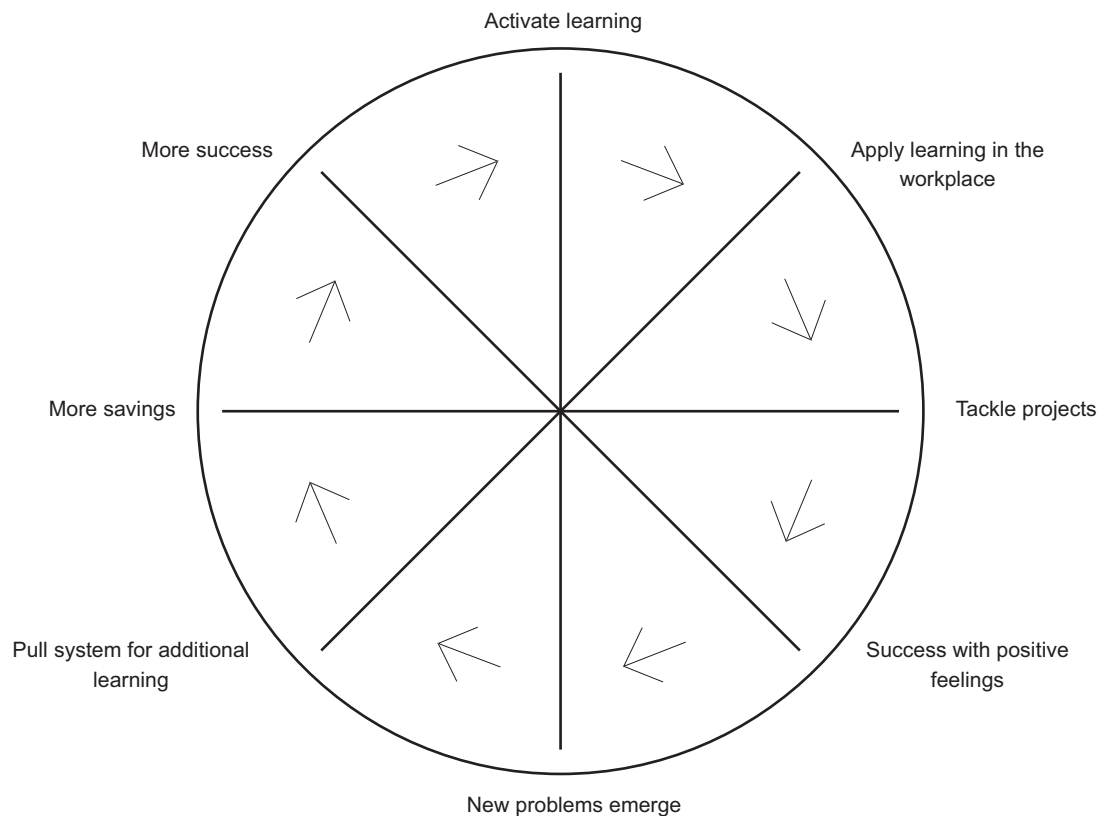


Figure 5.1 Methodology adopted for environmental awareness and induction programs in Blue Mountains City Council

The methodology adopted is shown in figure 5.1. The first step was to equip staff with the necessary skills through further education. Their new skills base could then be applied to devise solutions to everyday problems they encountered. Staff ideas for solutions were considered and then money made available to put selected solutions in place. This boosted staff morale by providing a greater sense of ownership and an increasing feeling of self-worth. Teething problems were dealt with by keeping the system flexible enough to overcome difficulty.

Tapping the existing employee resource base allowed for further education and helped overcome problems. New recycling strategies resulted in real savings while eliminating the need for outside consultants. Overall, employees, council and the community gained benefits from having greater motivation participation, awareness and experience.

The project involved a team of personnel from council's Blue Mountains City Services Group (CSG), Civil Operations Branch. CSG is council's preferred internal service provider for civil construction and maintenance and has 130 outdoor staff. The first step of the plan was to enrol two groups of 12 employees in a civil engineering course at Wentworth Falls TAFE, which included looking specifically at recycling and reusing construction waste.

An immediate problem was that few outdoor staff had the basic literacy and computer skills to complete the online TAFE courses. A higher level of education was also needed to understand the requirements of relevant environmental legislation, or to question current management practices and come up with solutions.

To overcome this problem, employees were offered the opportunity to improve basic computer and literacy skills by first attending a course funded by Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL). The registered training organisation was the Western Sydney Institute of TAFE through its Wentworth Falls Campus, which provided the enterprise-orientated training to employees. Ongoing skills gap programs, including numeracy, word processing and use of technologies, were provided by TAFE to ensure candidates were motivated and coached to the required level to complete their studies.

Blue Mountains City Council supported and contributed financially to the project by having team leaders and senior managers coordinate the program that linked enterprise goals to professional development competencies. This included the purchasing of kiosk computer stations, enabling staff access to council facilities including computers and libraries, and integrating college studies with Council work.

The council gave employees four hours study leave one day each week and they contributed an equal amount of their own time. All finished with high-level passes, the majority with distinctions and credits, a result exceeding all expectations. The TAFE course was completed in 18 months with the students awarded a supervisor's ticket in civil engineering.

Some staff are considering progressing to a Diploma in Civil Engineering. The council believes it will always have a use for the more skilled employees, many of whom now express greater satisfaction with their career potential.

Outcomes

Workplace culture transformed

Council has accelerated cultural change by providing an environment where staff can attain skills required for professional and personal development, including uses and potential for new and emerging technology. This skill is now a transferable asset and a key element in competitive tendering which is also part of the council's business plan. In order for the Civil Operations Branch to be a preferred provider of its services to council it needs to be competitive. This program has greatly helped in giving them the skills and attitude to do this.

Blue Mountains outdoor staff often have to work in all weather conditions, requiring considerable personal commitment and superior team involvement. After the commencement of this initial program, staff turnover is the lowest it has ever been and the benefits of having a valued, skilled and motivated workforce are clear.

Changes to practice

Some of the changed practices introduced as a result of staff participation include:

- establishing recycling depots, allowing the collection and processing of construction waste such as asphalt, sandstone, topsoil, bricks and concrete for reuse in council projects
- construction of roads in environmentally sensitive areas using new low-impact road design principles
- eradicating traditional paperwork by switching to use of handheld computers for documenting work
- purchasing 'dry ice' cleaning technology that replaces use of toxic chemicals in graffiti removal and cleaning of plant and equipment.

Lessons learnt

- begin the reform process early
- councils should lead the way towards a sustainable society, and should do so with a strong community base
- councils should take time to listen to the concerns of local residents and develop solutions
- considerable investment in staff education might be needed before benefits will show in a creative, flexible and motivated workforce
- empowering local staff to carry out many of the reforms is an effective strategy.

5.4 The development of safe operational procedures

Rockdale City Council

Rationale

This project aimed to integrate OH&S with environmental requirements under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (POEO Act) in safe operational procedures (SOPs). The purpose of the SOPs is to ensure that works are carried out:

- effectively to achieve maximum productivity and quality
- to a standard that ensures the safety of the staff and residents within the work area
- to meet legal requirements for minimising the impact on the environment
- to meet council's policies and commitments.



Methodology

Senior management directed that the procedures be developed to meet legislative requirements and improve work performance by having standard documentation across teams. To develop the procedures:

- operational staff detailed activities and tasks undertaken as part of their work responsibilities
- relevant information was collected and written into the procedure under the following headings for each task:
 - name of task
 - step-by-step guide to [name of task]
 - OH&S risks involved with this task
 - what safety controls are needed?
 - what personal protective equipment (PPE) is to be worn?
 - what qualifications are needed to carry out this task?
 - what personal responsibilities are associated with this task?
 - what training is required?
 - what codes of practice/legislation are associated with this task?
 - what equipment is required?
 - what maintenance does the equipment require?
 - what potential environmental impacts are associated with this task?
 - what controls are used to minimise this impact?
 - are any licences required for this task, and if so, who is the licensing body?
 - which council department is responsible for this task?
 - what review mechanisms for this SOP are in place?
 - distribution date
 - last review date/versions
 - electronic documentation location
 - document version
- draft copies of the procedures were completed and issued to all operational staff for review and comment. This process was carried out over several months with amended drafts being issued as required
- final drafts were reviewed by the environmental officer (to ensure that all of the environmental risks were identified) and the OH&S committee (to ensure safety risks were identified) before being formally adopted by the organisation.

Outcomes

This approach identified champions within the organisation, focused in the areas of OH&S and environmental awareness, and ensured direct ownership of SOPs by involving staff in their preparation. It also allowed:

- training needs to be identified
- legal requirements to be met
- knowledge to be shared.

Lessons learnt

- don't rush into the process – developing all SOPs at once will consume time and resources
- get it right the first time – know what you are after and plan the outcome
- consider the needs of the operational staff as well as management to make the system diplomatic rather than autocratic
- be systematic in your approach – any changes to the process may confuse the staff that have been assisting
- make the whole process as transparent as possible to remove negative perceptions of the program
- develop a computer-based, rather than a paper-based, SOP system.

5.5 Risk assessment, an integrated management system and council operations

Port Stephens Council



Rationale

After drafting an integrated management system (IMS), Port Stephens Council found it still needed processes for:

- 'plugging in' the specific requirements of quality, safety and environmental systems
- gauging the effects of these requirements on each element of a procedure
- bringing these and other nominated requirements to a single point so that one comprehensive production plan could be developed
- ensuring that integration took place without compromising the requirements of any system or regulation.

Methodology

After preliminary investigations, council staff decided to consider the risk management process not in terms of its traditional role in safety but as a simple process that:

- brings together identified elements of safety, quality and environmental systems
- assesses these elements against set criteria
- produces actions as needed.

The benefit was that each element could be assessed against all the criteria, in terms of safety, quality and environmental systems that might affect it, while treatments could be produced to satisfy a number these systems at once with only slight adjustment. This helped to overcome the problem inherent in traditional three-element systems, which have requirements that are close enough to be frustrating to workers but different enough to warrant individual responses by auditors.

Council adopted a process based on AS/NZS 4360:1999, with the steps outlined below.

Identify the output, process or input

The first step was to define each procedure or element in terms of outputs, process and inputs.

Identify each hazard associated with those elements

A practical way to identify hazards is to review existing reports such as reviews of environmental factors and environmental impact studies, collecting all relevant environmental aspects. These are then grouped under headings so that operations personnel can quickly check their areas for potential risks – the book *The memory jogger plus* (M Brassard, Goal QPC Inc, 1989) was useful in this process. Risks are reviewed regularly and new groups added as required.

Determine the potential level of risk created by the hazards.

The level of risk is assessed using a simplified table of likelihood against impact.

Develop treatments that remove or reduce the level of risk

The best guide is a treatment hierarchy, which emphasises anticipating risks early in the process rather than treating the consequences. Having these treatments provided another very powerful tool within the system to define different responses by various levels of management in the organisation.

Reassess the level of risk to ensure it is adequately handled

To demonstrate that the treatment proposed will actually work, reassess the risk with the treatment in place. This is both logical and diligent.

Frequency: nominate the trigger for the treatment where necessary

It is important to tell people *when* to do something, such as when staff should uncover 'flagman' signs or conduct a site induction.

Nominate an officer responsible for ensuring the treatment is enacted

The responsibility for carrying out the treatment should be part of the duty statement for a position and the person in the position should be trained in the procedure.

Lessons learnt

- nominate a site champion to work with the system coordinator, support the works coordinators and supervisors, and to develop, document, implement and audit site procedures
- adopt a risk management approach to ensure proactive environmental management
- develop internal experts or consultants to support the field officers and conduct audits for their particular specialty
- review job instructions (position descriptions) to take into account the risk management process.

5.6 Internal environmental audits

Hurstville City Council



Rationale

Council implemented its environmental training and audit program in order to fulfil legal and community obligations and take all reasonable steps to prevent or minimise potential environmental damage from its own operational activities. The methodology used and outcomes achieved are outlined below.

Methodology

Establishment of an audit steering committee

Council commenced the process of developing the internal environmental audit program (IEAP) by establishing an audit steering committee comprising eight staff drawn from each major operational area (i.e. parks and gardens, road construction and maintenance, and depot). The managers of technical services and works were responsible for identifying these 'leaders' from amongst the operational teams.

Development of audit protocol and checklist

The first meeting of the committee aimed to develop the audit protocol. A brainstorming session, facilitated by a consultant and the environmental sustainability coordinator, determined the following aspects of the protocol:

- objectives for the audit program
- composition of audit team
- audit frequency and timing
- method for identifying audit sites
- ways to recognise good practice
- process for addressing poor practice
- reporting requirements.

The meeting also reviewed the audit checklist, which was designed to be used on-site in assessing environmental management practices and the potential for pollution.

Follow-up review

A follow-up meeting of the committee reviewed the audit protocol and checklist, and made further changes. At this meeting the first two operational staff to be involved in the first three rounds of audits were determined. The purpose of having 'fixed term' staff on the audit working party was to develop auditing skills among as broad a range of operational personnel as possible.

Briefing session to executive

Council's executive team (general manager and directors) were briefed at the outset of the process and gave in-principle support. However, a subsequent restructure led to the establishment of a new executive team, requiring a further briefing to gain their support for the program and to rotate operational staff into the auditing process.

Meeting with operational managers

All of the relevant operational managers were informed about the development of the

IEAP through memos and telephone conversations. However, it was important for a meeting to be convened in order to explain the audit protocol, present the audit checklist and to gain feedback. The meeting also encouraged the operational managers to support and own the program.

Notification to staff and contractors

A leaflet attached to payslips informed all operational staff about the IEAP. It explained that:

- a council audit team would be visiting job sites at any time to make sure that all proper environmental protection systems were in place
- this would take place about every eight weeks
- five job sites would be visited each time.

The leaflet was signed by the general manager and director of service delivery (who is responsible for overseeing operational staff) in order to signify formal endorsement of the program. Letters were also sent to council's regular contractors because the audit steering committee decided contractor job sites should also be audited.

Promotion of program

Promotion of the IEAP was an important element of the overall project. To promote the program internally, articles were included in *NewsBrief*, an official newsletter from the general manager to all staff.

A further article was placed in the *Hurstville Comment* community newsletter to inform the public about council's efforts to improve environmental management across its operations. The newsletter was distributed at the same time as an environmental review of industrial premises operating in the area, highlighting that council was endeavouring to lead by example.

Furthermore, once the program had commenced the general manager formally acknowledged the achievements of the first round of environmental audits and the efforts of the two operational staff involved in carrying them out. This took place at a breakfast barbecue for all operational staff.

Outcomes

The audits have identified a number of minor and more serious issues, including significant pollution of stormwater drains. Apart from the need to improve environmental practices on-site, the audits have also identified that operational staff may not have the basic equipment necessary to effectively minimise potential environmental pollution at their job site.

In relation to capacity building, the audits have provided the operational staff with a good opportunity to develop skills in conducting audits and in identifying and communicating solutions to environmental issues observed on-site.

The audits have provided an opportunity to reinforce environmental messages covered in training programs and have allowed operational staff to raise any concerns they have in this area. The program has also raised the awareness of senior management regarding the importance of taking a proactive approach to improving corporate environmental performance.

After each audit, an audit summary report is prepared which includes a review of the audits undertaken and makes recommendations to address any issues identified. The

executive requires a report on the audit program every four months which provides a degree of accountability and helps ensure that the responsible managers act on audit recommendations.

Lessons learnt

- get support from both the executive and operational management by communicating the expected benefits of the program
- select staff for the audit steering committee to gain ownership, participation and acceptance at all levels
- regularly update all relevant managers, staff and councillors to keep them informed about progress
- be prepared to overcome obstacles in developing and implementing an effective program
- the issue of where to charge operational staff time for audits may arise – Hurstville Council decided to charge this to the job site being audited
- remember to acknowledge the good practices being implemented by work crews by promoting them through staff newsletters, articles in the local newspaper, vouchers etc.

5.7 Responding to pollution spills and orphan hazardous waste incidents

Marrickville City Council



Rationale

It is important to realise from the outset that a pollution spill and orphan hazardous waste (PS&OHW) response requires a coordinated, resourced and multidisciplinary approach encompassing both operational and regulatory components.

Council is responsible or partly responsible for the regulatory response to incidents occurring on council-owned land. Council is then responsible for conducting the legal investigation into the incident. Council is not the appropriate regulatory authority (ARA) where an incident occurs on land that is owned by:

- state government authorities, such as State Rail or the Roads and Traffic Authority
- on premises where an environment protection licence is held by that particular business.

Every council will need to assess its level of preparedness and the resources it needs to deal with PS&OHW incidents. Some councils may have little need for such a response while others such as Marrickville require a moderate level of preparedness and resources. On average, Marrickville Council has an incident approximately every six weeks.

Following an incident, hazardous materials are usually left on-site after they have been rendered safe for council to dispose of. This raises two distinct questions:

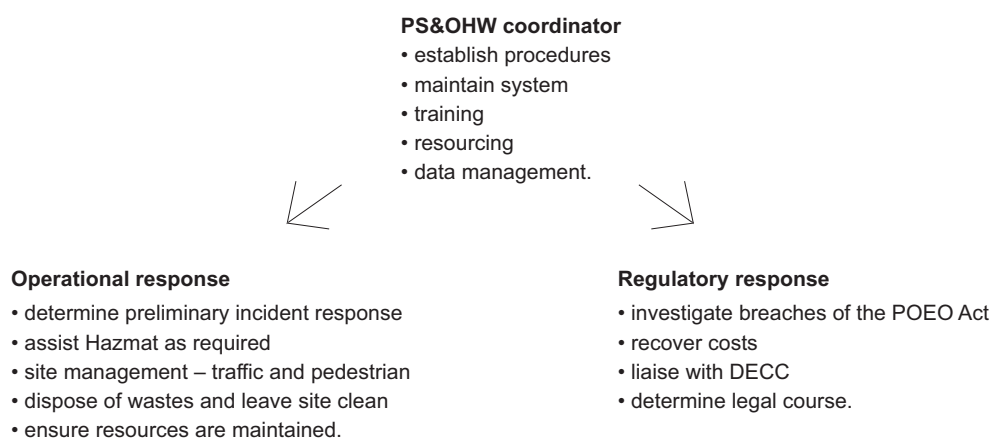
- What is the operational response for disposal?
- How can council recover its costs for the disposal?

Having procedures in place allows incidents to be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Methodology

Marrickville Council has a program coordinator to develop the program and have an ongoing role in maintaining the system (figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2 Diagram showing PS&OHW role and incident response process



The coordinator role

The PS&OHW coordinator role should maintain the system. It is very important that this role should:

- be formally appointed
- not be onerous
- once established, take minimal time to administer.

The PS&OHW coordinator should oversee or manage staff training, such as:

- sending staff to seminars
- participating in other council initiatives
- ensuring that the training officer has included incident training on the corporate training schedule
- providing on-the-spot training for new staff during incidents.

However, it should not be necessary for the PS&OHW coordinator to attend each incident.

The team response

The PS&OHW coordinator needs to be multiskilled, preferably being authorised under the POEO Act. The coordinator needs to be fully conversant with all the legal tools available to them under the Act. As well, the coordinator needs to have good liaison skills with the council's business units and outdoors sections.

Almost every incident will be different and will require a specific response. The PS&OHW coordinator should recognise that the clean-up supervisor is competent and requires no assistance or direction at an incident. There is little crossover on an incident site between the POEO regulatory staff and clean-up supervisor, each having their specific tasks to do. However, having partially skilled staff on hand for the incident is an ongoing problem for the supervisor to manage.

Regulatory staff need to be fully conversant with the POEO Act and the tools available, including:

- how to give a verbal clean-up direction
- how to issue a clean-up notice
- how to collect evidence that will satisfy a prosecution
- how to use a cost-recovery notice
- how to use notices requiring information and records
- how to access Environmental Trust funds
- how to issue pollution fines.

Regulatory staff who can effectively and competently deal with incidents will be a great asset to their organisation.

Training

Adequate resourcing is important for operational and regulatory responses to PS&OHW incidents. Marrickville Council has a pollution trailer which can be quickly taken to incidents and it contains all the resources required to effectively assist with various aspects of an incident, such as traffic control equipment.

Regulatory staff need to have the legal tools that can assist them on site, including:

- an incident guide listing important ancillary phone numbers such as the Hazmat coordinator, Sydney Water (for sewer overflows) etc.
- a clean-up order book whereby on-the-spot orders can be issued.

Finally the PS&OHW coordinator should also manage the follow-up work and assist with final incident problems. For instance, the coordinator should follow through and see that cost-recovery notices are paid, and should log incident details to a spreadsheet for reporting.

Outcomes

The model that has evolved at Marrickville Council provides a balanced program. The coordinator ensures resourcing and maintenance of the program or support where needed, but this role should not be onerous, once established.

A training package was developed to meet the need for annual training of both operational and regulatory staff. Adequate training and resources are essential before staff are exposed to an incident that may place their safety at risk.

Lessons learnt

- responding to pollution spills and orphan hazardous waste (PS&OHW) requires a multidisciplinary approach with both operational and regulatory components
- the program coordinator role is useful for both developing the program and having an ongoing role in maintaining the system
- develop and implement a procedure and program as soon as possible to ensure an effective response
- train staff with your knowledge and skills in the beginning, and work out issues and problems with them as you go.

5.8 Towards ISO 14001 certification

Bankstown City Council

Rationale

Reasons for implementing a management system

The rationale for the implementation of the Quest management system at Bankstown City Council was initially driven by a major organisational restructure which resulted in the creation of the Civic Services Group (CSG).

The management system was developed to assist CSG in consistently delivering high quality, cost-effective and efficient services.

The pursuit of certification for our quality, environmental and safety management systems was seen as an effective mechanism by which to plan, measure and improve our services. Triple ISO certification of CSG (our quality, environmental and safety management systems are all certified by SAI Global) has also offered a viable framework for growth and improvement.

Reasons for certification

Along with demonstrating that CSG is a quality service provider, certification was also considered to provide the following benefits:

- increased marketing capacity – increased availability or access to new market opportunities such as other councils, other government organisations, etc.
- integration of management systems, certification and surveillance processes
- improved forward planning, better efficiency, an improved work culture and increased external revenue without cutting services provided by council or increasing rates
- ability to provide due diligence and comply with all relevant environmental legislation and requirements.

Figure 5.3 illustrates a model showing how the EMS meets the needs of legislation and environmental due diligence associated with service delivery and activities.

Methodology

It is recommended that the following steps be considered when designing an EMS for certification:

- identify a certification body as a partner that will understand your business and be able to mentor you through the process
- secure senior management support and involvement in the process
- conduct a gap analysis of the system you have in place now and what you need to do to bridge the gaps
- undertake a pre-certification audit. The certifying body will see whether you are ready for certification and what you might need to rectify any problems to comply with the standard
- undergo the certification audit (the major audit in which your system, procedures, actions etc. are thoroughly assessed against the requirements of the relevant standard and environmental legislation)
- undertake a surveillance audit, which ensures you are doing the things you say you will, that you are addressing any issues identified at certification and are continuing to comply with legislation and the standard



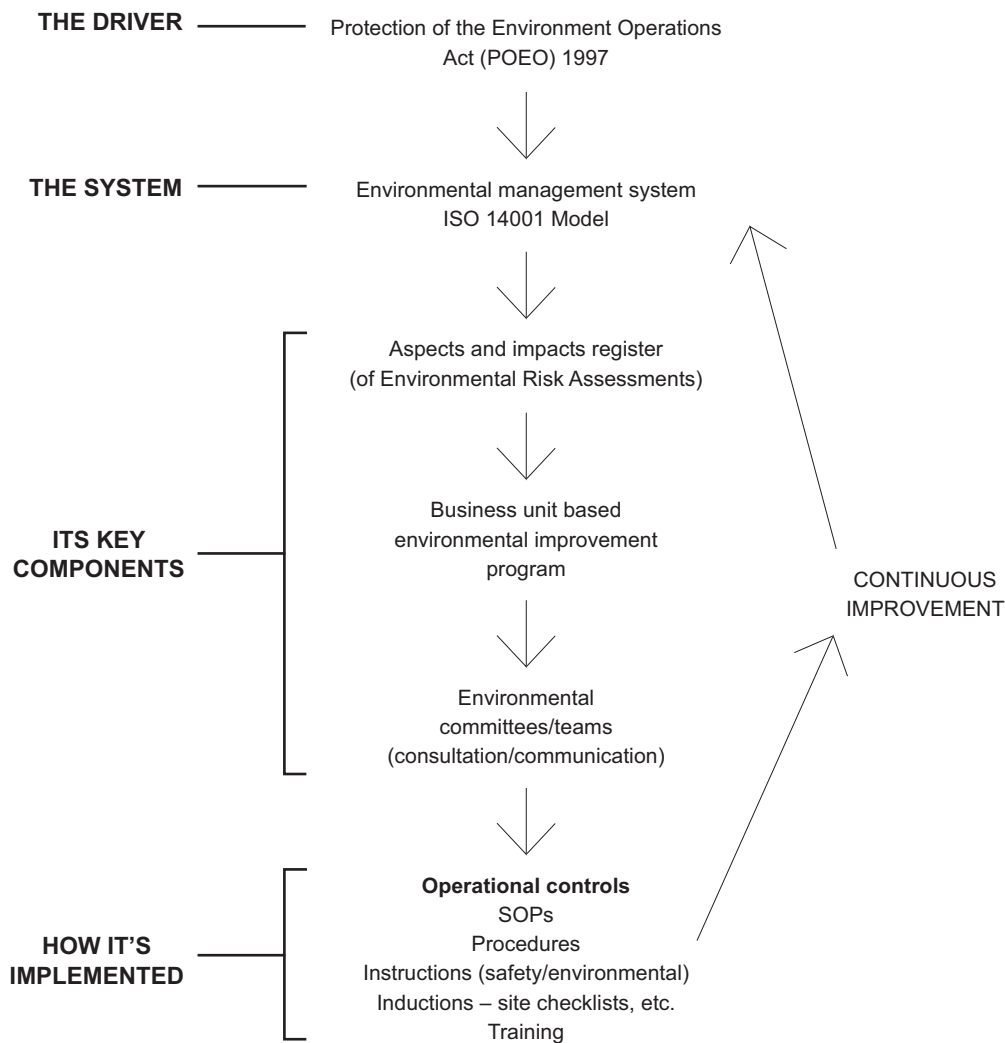


Figure 5.3 Relationship of EMS to other programs and controls

- depending on how long it takes to develop and bed down a system, schedule future surveillance audits periodically (every 3, 6 or 12 months).

Effective project management is the key to the success of the above process:

- tracking progress towards certification
- identifying and monitoring the required resources
- incorporating all the planning, design and resource requirements into the relevant action/business plans.

The setting and monitoring of timeframes and milestones is critical so that you can monitor your progress and adopt further opportunities to improve your system. It is important to raise the awareness of management about EMS – provide managers with information and examples so that they see their EMS as another business tool and not as a process that sits outside of their business plan/activities. This will help to improve the integration of the EMS into existing business practices and adoption of the EMS.

Outcomes

Staff are now much more aware of how their work practices can impact on the environment, and what they can do to eliminate or minimise any environmental impacts. Environmental committees, which run in conjunction with OH&S committees, have become a valuable forum for discussions and information exchange between management and staff about environmental issues and their work. Staff now come to management with new initiatives and push to follow up on ideas for improved environmental performance.

Lessons learnt

- closely integrate environmental issues and strategies with occupational health and safety right from the start
- define measuring tools and systems for environmental performance more precisely at the outset to demonstrate to management and staff what improvements have been made
- keep abreast of what colleagues, other councils, and other organisations are doing, including non-local government organisations
- understand that it is an ongoing process and that systems need to evolve constantly to suit the needs of a changing business and regulatory environment.