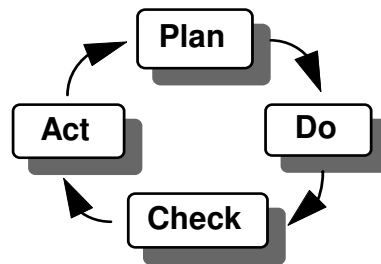


**Info Sheet 1**  
**Environmental Management Systems**  
**(EMS)**

## Management Systems - Background

An effective management system is built on Total Quality Management concepts. In order to improve environmental management within an organisation focus should be on not just **what** things happen but also on **the reason** they happen. Over time, this systematic identification and correction of system deficiencies leads to better environmental (and overall business) performance.

Management system models (including the ISO 14001 Standard) are constructed on the “Plan, Do, Check, Act” model introduced by Shewart and Deming. This model is based upon the concept of **continual improvement**.



**Plan**- how you intend to make changes in what you do.

**Do**- what you have planned in the previous step, possible on a trial basis if possible. Collect objective data for persons learning.

**Check**- part of good planning is to decide how you will check whether your plans are working. But then you need to make those checks and see whether you are achieving what you wanted to.

**Act**- on the outcomes of previous steps by taking appropriate action or standardising the improvement. This will close the loop and is the essential step for continual improvement.

**Continual improvement** is an integral part of ISO 14001 standard and is defined as the process of enhancing the management system to achieve improvements in overall performance in line with the organisation’s policy.



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## What is ISO 14001?

Environmental Management Systems provide a structured framework for delivering continual improvement in environmental performance. Environmental Management Systems are **voluntary** schemes, which provide the framework in which companies can adopt a systematic approach to managing the environmental effects of their business activities.

Companies can seek assessment and certification to the environmental management system standards such as ISO 14001 in order to publicly demonstrate their environmental commitment and excellence to their suppliers, customers, shareholders and investors and the general public at large.

BS EN ISO 14001 is a stand-alone, auditable environmental management system standard for certification. A general management framework approach is applied, and there are clear similarities with BS 8800, HSG65, ISO 9001 and OHSAS 18001 (the latter in part being based on ISO 14001 in any case).

## Does an EMS have to be externally certified?

An organisation can demonstrate its commitment to proactive environmental management to its stakeholders and other interested parties in two ways:

- An organisation can have its management system (e.g. ISO 14001) audited and registered by an independent 3rd party, i.e. certification body (such as BSI);
- an organisation can make a self-determination and self-declaration of conformance to a management system standard.

The benefits of EMS certification and cost vary significantly among organisations depending on the size of the Organisation and the number of facilities/divisions they choose to certify.

## BS8555

The phased Environmental Management System (EMS) implementation approach used by BS 8555 breaks down the process of installing a formal EMS into **five phase**. A sixth phase allows organisations to develop systems, with the possibility of seeking recognition against the internationally accepted EMS standard, **ISO 14001**, or registering under **EMAS**.



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After each phase of the scheme has been implemented, the organisation can either assess themselves through internal audits, allow major customers to assess them against the appropriate phase criteria or be assessed by a third party certification body (e.g. BSI) to ensure that the requirements of each phase have been met.

The six phases of the standard are:

1. Commitment and Establishing the Baseline.
2. Identifying and Ensuring Compliance with Legal, and other Requirements.
3. Developing Objectives, Targets and Programmes.
4. Implementation and Operation of the Environmental Management System.
5. Checking, Audit and Review.
6. Environmental Management System Acknowledgement.

At Phase 6, meeting all the achievement criteria from the previous Phases will place the organisation in a position to be assessed for certification to ISO 14001.

For further information on environmental management systems contact EHS Response at:

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