

ISO 14001 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME (S) (4.3.4)

In order to be in conformance with this provision of ISO 14001 an organization must be able to demonstrate four specific points. First, it must demonstrate that it has established management programs for achieving the Environmental Objectives and Targets. Second, it must demonstrate that it has assigned responsibility at each appropriate level of the organization in order to achieve the Environmental Objectives and Targets. Third, the organization must specify the time frames and the mechanisms needed to achieve the Environmental Objectives and Targets. Fourth, under the principle of continual improvement, the organization must modify its environmental management program for "changed" conditions if they occur.

In general a program designed to achieve the desired endpoint must support every objective and subsequent target. Responsibility for management and leadership must also be assigned where it is necessary and appropriate to complete the task. Timeframes should be clearly outlined within the management program. If additional technology, equipment, staffing, etc. are needed to accomplish the tasks, then these "mechanisms" must be supplied. Continual improvement is referenced within this section of ISO 14001 in order to reinforce its importance within the standard.

Questions That Need To Be Answered

The following questions will need to be answered in order to determine whether the Environmental Management Programs Section meets the intent of ISO 14001:

1. Has the organization established programs for meeting its environmental objectives and targets?
2. Has responsibility been assigned at all appropriate levels of the organization?
3. Has a schedule(s) been established to meet all of the targets?
4. Have the appropriate "mechanisms" been supplied?
5. Is the environmental management program followed within the organization?
6. Utilizing the principle of continual improvement does the organization modify as necessary its environmental management programs?