ISO 14001 OPERATIONAL CONTROL (4.4.6)

In order to be in conformance with this provision of ISO 14001 an organization must be able to answer the overall question: "How do you insure that the operations are controlled properly?". The purpose of this section of the standard is to insure that the organization has established an operational plan that addresses and supports the previously developed list of Significant Environmental Aspects. First, the organization must identify the operations and activities that are directly associated with the Significant Environmental Aspects. Second, the organization must develop procedures and operational criteria, including maintenance, that address the specific operations and activities associated with the Significant Environmental Aspects. Third, the organization must communicate the procedures and operational criteria to suppliers of products and services that might interact with the established Significant Environmental Aspects.

The first two requirements have previously been evaluated during the interrelated phase of developing the Environmental Policy statement, the Significant Environmental Aspects, and the Environmental Objectives and Targets. This section of the standard reinforces the need for documented procedures for those programs directly related to the attainment of the Environmental Targets. The third point addresses the issue of "control and influence". This section of the standard addresses the need to communicate relevant portions of the organization's environmental management system to suppliers and contractors if their products, services and activities have the potential to interact with the organization's Significant Environmental Aspects.

Questions That Need To Be Answered:

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

1. Has the organization identified its operations that are associated with its Significant Environmental Aspects?
2. Has the organization developed procedures and operational criteria, including maintenance, that address those operations?
3. Does the organization communicate relevant portions of its environmental management system to suppliers and contractors who have the potential to interact with its Significant Environmental Aspects?