

Specification for

Environmental management systems

UDC 658 : 574 : 614.7 : 628.5

Committees responsible for this British Standard

The preparation of this British Standard was entrusted by the Environmental Management Standards Policy Committee (ESS/-) to Technical Committee ESS/1, upon which the following bodies were represented:

Association of British Certification Bodies
 Association of County Councils
 Association of Environmental Consultants
 BEAMA Ltd.
 British Coal Corporation
 British Gas plc
 British Iron and Steel Producers' Association
 British Paper and Board Industry Federation
 British Plastics Federation
 British Railways Board
 Chemical Industries Association
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 Consumer Policy Committee of BSI
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 Health and Safety Executive
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 London Chief Environmental Health Officers' Association
 Loss Prevention Council
 METCOM
 National Accreditation Council of Certification Bodies
 National House-building Council
 Power Generation Contractors' Association (PGCA (BEAMA Ltd.))
 Royal Society of Chemistry
 Society of Chemical Industry
 Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders Limited
 Trades Union Congress
 United Kingdom Petroleum Industry Association Ltd.
 Water Services Association of England and Wales

This British Standard, having been prepared under the direction of the Environmental Management Standards Policy Committee, was published under the authority of the Standards Board and comes into effect on 15 January 1994

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First published March 1992
 Second edition January 1994

The following BSI references relate to the work on this standard:
 Committee reference ESS/1
 Draft for comment 93/400220 DC

ISBN 0 580 22829 0

Amendments issued since publication

Amd. No.	Date	Text affected

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Foreword

This British Standard has been prepared under the direction of the Environmental Management Standards Policy Committee in response to increasing concerns about environmental protection and environmental performance. It is a specification for an environmental management system for ensuring and demonstrating compliance with stated environmental policies and objectives. It also provides guidance on the specification and its implementation within the overall management system of an organization. This British Standard supersedes BS 7750 : 1992, which is withdrawn.

The standard is designed to enable any organization to establish an effective management system, as a foundation for both sound environmental performance and participation in 'environmental auditing' schemes.

This standard is not primarily intended to address, and does not include requirements for aspects of, occupational health and safety management; however, neither does it seek to prevent an organization from incorporating such issues into its environmental management system.

The management system elements specified in this standard do not need to be established independently of existing management system elements. In some cases it will be possible to comply with the requirements by adapting existing management system components.

This standard shares common management system principles with BS 5750 (EN 29000, ISO 9000), the European and internationally recognized quality systems standard, and organizations may elect to use an existing management system developed in conformity with BS 5750 as a basis for environmental management. To achieve equivalence with the requirements of this standard by such means could require the use of a suitable sector application guide. Established procedures for the assessment of compliance with BS 5750 should also be capable of extension to deal with the assessment of compliance with this standard, provided that the common assessment team encompasses the appropriate level of environmental expertise and detailed knowledge of this standard.

This standard has been produced with the express intention that its requirements should be compatible with those of the environmental management system specified in the European Community's Eco-Management and Audit (EMA) Regulation [1]. If it is recognized as such by the Commission of the European Communities, any industrial site certified as complying with the standard by a certification body whose accreditation is recognized in the Member State where the site is located will be considered to have met the corresponding requirements of the EC scheme. In order to be eligible for registration to the scheme, such sites would then have only to fulfil any additional requirements which that scheme imposes, principally that in Article 5 of the Regulation, which requires publication of an independently verified environmental statement.

Users of this standard should be aware that it is envisaged that an accreditation system for bodies intending to certify to it will be put in place during 1994.

It should be noted that this standard does not establish absolute requirements for environmental performance, beyond compliance with applicable legislation and regulations, and a commitment to continual improvement. Thus, two organizations carrying out similar activities but having different environmental performance may both comply with its requirements. It should also be noted, however, that it does require the organization's environmental policy and objectives to be made publicly available.

Guidance on environmental effects and/or performance for particular sectors may be given in complementary documents, e.g. sector application guides. These would be produced to explain the requirements in certain situations. It is recognized that in certain industrial sectors use of this standard may be delayed until agreed sector application guides are available. Such sector application guides will be particularly relevant to industrial sectors having:

- complex environmental effects;
- large numbers of constituent companies;
- widely differing, but loosely related, operations and disciplines;
- temporary and/or off-site activities;
- substantial use of subcontracting.

The standard has been the subject of a pilot implementation programme involving nearly 500 participants, including some 230 implementing organizations, whose contribution to its development is acknowledged.

Compliance with a British Standard does not of itself confer immunity from legal obligations.

Specification

Introduction

Organizations of all kinds are increasingly concerned to achieve and demonstrate sound environmental performance. They do so in the context of increasingly stringent legislation, the development of economic and other measures to foster environmental protection, and a general growth of concern about environmental matters.

Many organizations have undertaken environmental 'reviews' or 'audits' to assess their environmental performance. On their own, however, reviews and audits cannot provide an organization with the assurance that its performance not only meets, but will continue to meet, legislative and policy requirements. To be effective, they need to be conducted within a structured management system, integrated with overall management activity and addressing significant environmental effects.

This British Standard specifies the elements of such an environmental management system, intended to apply to all types and sizes of organization. The basis of the approach is shown in flow chart form in figure 1. It should be noted that many of the stages may be addressed concurrently or revisited at any time. The success of the system depends on commitment from all levels, especially from the highest levels of management. A system of this kind enables an organization to establish, and assess the effectiveness of, procedures to set an environmental policy and objectives, achieve compliance with them, and demonstrate such compliance to others. The standard is also intended to support certification schemes.

NOTE. Elements within the box shown in double lines in figure 1 are part of the specification and are therefore assessable elements in a system.

In addition to specifying the requirements for an environmental management system, the standard also provides guidance, in annex A, on implementation and assessment. For ease of use, the principal subclauses of the specification and guide have related numbers; thus, for example, 4.5 and A.5 both deal with environmental objectives and targets, and 4.10 and A.10 both deal with environmental management audits.

NOTE. The preparatory review is included in the guide (see A.1.2), but is not part of the specification, because it is not an assessable element of an established system. However, it is likely to be valuable to any organization without a formal environmental management system in place which wishes to apply this standard, because it will help ensure that subsequent efforts are optimally effective.

Environmental management audits and environmental management reviews are inherent, but separate, parts of the system. Audits assess both the effectiveness of the environmental management system and the achievement of the environmental objectives. Reviews check the continuing relevance of the environmental policy, update the evaluation of environmental effects, and check the efficacy of audits and follow-up actions.

This British Standard is compatible with BS 5750, as they take parallel approaches to achieving and demonstrating compliance with specified requirements. Annex B explains the links between them. It is expected that organizations operating to BS 5750 will readily be able to extend their management systems in accordance with this standard, but operation to BS 5750 is not a prerequisite for operation to this standard.

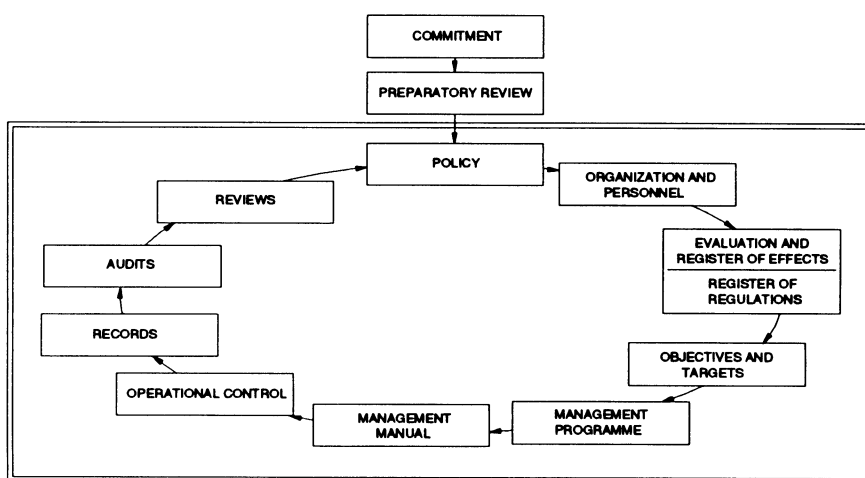


Figure 1. Schematic diagram of the stages in the implementation of an environmental management system

1 Scope

This British Standard specifies requirements for the development, implementation and maintenance of environmental management systems aimed at ensuring compliance with stated environmental policy and objectives. The standard does not itself state specific environmental performance criteria, but requires organizations to formulate policies and objectives taking into account information about significant environmental effects.

The standard is applicable to any organization that wishes to:

- a) assure itself of its compliance with a stated environmental policy; and
- b) demonstrate such compliance to others.

All the elements specified in the standard are intended to be incorporated into any environmental management system, but the extent of the application of any one element will depend on such factors as the environmental policy of the organization, the nature of its activities and the conditions in which it operates.

2 Informative references

This British Standard refers to other publications that provide information or guidance. Editions of these publications current at the time of issue of this standard are listed on the inside back cover, but reference should be made to the latest editions.

3 Definitions

For the purposes of this British Standard the following definitions apply.

3.1 continual improvement

Year-on-year enhancement of overall environmental performance, not necessarily in all areas of activity, resulting from continuous efforts to improve in line with environmental policy. This enhancement will, where appropriate, be achieved by measures such as:

- a) developments in products, services, processes and facilities;
- b) enhanced product quality, operational efficiency and resource utilization;
- c) the application of measures, with a view to reducing adverse environmental effects to levels not exceeding those corresponding to economically viable application of best available technology (see A.5).

3.2 environment

The surroundings and conditions in which an organization operates, including living systems (human and other) therein. As the environmental effects (see 3.3) of the organization may reach all parts of the world, the environment in this context extends from within the workplace to the global system.

3.3 environmental effect

Any direct or indirect impingement of the activities, products and services of the organization upon the environment, whether adverse or beneficial.

3.4 environmental effects evaluation

A documented evaluation of the environmental significance of the effects of the organization's activities, products and services (existing and planned).

3.5 environmental effects register

A list of the significant environmental effects, known or suspected, of the activities, products and services of the organization.

3.6 environmental management

Those aspects of the overall management function (including planning) that develop, implement and maintain the environmental policy.

3.7 environmental management audit

A systematic evaluation to determine whether or not the environmental management system and the environmental performance it achieves conform to planned arrangements, and whether or not the system is implemented effectively, and is suitable to fulfil the organization's environmental policy and objectives.

3.8 environmental management manual

The documentation describing the overall system, and making reference to the procedures for implementing the organization's environmental management programme.

3.9 environmental management programme

A description of the means of achieving environmental objectives and targets.

3.10 environmental management review

The formal evaluation by management of the status and adequacy of the organization's environmental policy, systems and procedures in relation to environmental issues, regulations and changing circumstances.

3.11 environmental management system

The organizational structure, responsibilities, practices, procedures, processes and resources for implementing environmental management.

3.12 environmental objectives

The broad goals, arising from the environmental policy and effects evaluation, that an organization sets itself to achieve, and which are quantified wherever practicable.

3.13 environmental policy

A public statement of the intentions and principles of action of the organization regarding its environmental effects, giving rise to its objectives and targets.

3.14 environmental targets

Detailed performance requirements, quantified wherever practicable, applicable to the organization or parts thereof, that arise from the environmental objectives and that need to be set and met in order to achieve those objectives.

3.15 interested parties

Those with an interest in the environmental effects of an organization's activities, products and services. They include those exercising statutory environmental control over the organization, local residents, the organization's workforce, investors, and insurers, customers and consumers, environmental interest groups and the general public.

3.16 organization

Any organized body or establishment, for example, a business, company, government department, charity or society. For bodies or establishments with more than one site, a single site may be defined as an organization.

3.17 verification activities

All inspection, test and monitoring work related to environmental management.

4 Environmental management system requirements**4.1 Environmental management system**

The organization shall establish and maintain an environmental management system as a means of ensuring that the effects of the activities, products and services of the organization conform to its environmental policy and associated objectives and targets. This shall include:

- a) the preparation of documented system procedures and instructions in accordance with the requirements of this standard;
- b) the effective implementation of the system procedures and instructions.

In implementing the environmental management system, the organization shall take account of any pertinent code of practice to which it subscribes.

4.2 Environmental policy

The organization's management shall define and document its environmental policy, within the context of the environmental policy of any broader corporate body of which it is a part and with the endorsement of that body (see 3.16). The management shall ensure that this policy:

- a) is relevant to its activities, products and services, and their environmental effects;
- b) is communicated, implemented and maintained at all levels in the organization;
- c) is made publicly available;
- d) includes a commitment to continual improvement of environmental performance;
- e) provides for the setting and publication of environmental objectives;
- f) states which of the organization's activities are covered by the particular environmental management system;
- g) indicates how the environmental objectives will be made publicly available.

4.3 Organization and personnel**4.3.1 Responsibility, authority and resources**

The organization shall define and document the responsibility, authority and interrelations of key personnel who manage, perform and verify activities having a significant effect, actual or potential, on the environment, including those who need the organizational freedom and authority to:

- a) provide sufficient resources and personnel for implementation;
- b) initiate action to ensure compliance with environmental policy;
- c) identify and record any environmental problems;
- d) initiate, recommend or provide solutions to those problems through designated channels;
- e) verify the implementation of such solutions;
- f) control further activities until any environmental deficiency or unsatisfactory condition has been corrected;
- g) act in emergency situations.

4.3.2 Verification resources and personnel

The organization shall identify in-house verification requirements and procedures, provide adequate resources and assign competent personnel for verification activities (see also 4.3.4).

4.3.3 Management representative

The organization shall appoint a management representative who, irrespective of other responsibilities, shall have defined authority and responsibility for ensuring that the requirements of this standard are implemented and maintained.