



CERTIFICATION FOR BICYCLE MANUFACTURER FORMS BASIS OF COMPANY-WIDE QUALITY MANAGEMENT APPROACH

CASE STUDY

BE THE BENCHMARK



ABOUT THE COMPANY

In just five years, specialist children's bicycle manufacturer, Frog Bikes, has achieved an international presence and supplies its products to more than 500 outlets in the UK plus over 40 countries worldwide and growing. In April 2018, Frog Bikes was bestowed The Queen's Award for Enterprise (International Trade) – a major achievement that will further enhance the company's drive, ambition and commitment in providing quality lightweight children's bicycles to children on a global scale. The company's success is down to team dedication, and a commitment to the ISO quality management framework, explains Lea Caddick, Quality Manager for Frog Bikes.

Frog Bikes is a family-run business in the south of England, established by Jerry and Shelley Lawson in 2013. With an impressive list of partners, including USA Cycling and twice Olympic Gold Medallist, Joanna Rowsell, Frog Bikes seeks to inspire the next generation to give cycling a go. The company has also aligned with Team Sky – the UK's official cycling team – to produce a range of Team Sky branded bicycles for children.

The company's aim is to make cycling fun for children by creating light but strong aluminium bike frames that are easy to manoeuvre and offer an unparalleled level of performance. For example, a unique crank design, developed with the renowned Olympic Team GB bicycle engineer, Dimitris Katsanis, allows children to push down more directly when pedalling, which in turn converts more energy into motion. The company is continuously working on developments to improve bicycle design and function, and it is this determination and clear company focus that led to Quality Manager, Lea Caddick recommending the implementation of ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 management systems at its 120,000 sq. ft manufacturing and assembly facility in Pontypool, South Wales.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION INTRODUCING A QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Throughout a long career in manufacturing, Lea has worked with ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 standards and has witnessed first hand the positive impact that both a quality management system (QMS) and an environmental management system (EMS) can have on a busy working environment.

When Lea came to take the role of Quality Manager at Frog Bikes in 2016, it was clear to him that achieving certification to the 2015 versions of both ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 would ensure continual improvement and facilitate adoption of best practice thereon in.

"Thanks to my past experience working to both the ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 standards, I knew that having clear procedures and processes in place makes it easier to achieve a cohesive team approach."

With the capacity of over 200 bicycles coming off the production line daily, shipped throughout the country and also internationally, it is imperative that a stringent quality check is in place at every stage of the manufacturing life cycle.



BENEFITS OF ACHIEVING ISO 9001 AND ISO 14001 IN RECORD TIME

The process of being audited for certification can seem daunting, but with his past experience, Lea felt confident that Frog Bikes could achieve both ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 in less than a year. Lea had used the global certification company, SGS United Kingdom Ltd, in his previous roles and had no hesitation in contracting them again on his arrival at Frog Bikes.

Lea comments: "SGS had always been very informative and helpful and, while I was familiar with both standards, there were a few people in my team who were not. SGS' knowledge of the ISO 9001:2015 standard in particular was extremely helpful, and their straightforward approach made the whole process seamless.

"In fact, we achieved both certifications in just eight months, in October 2016. It was a busy few months, but now we are reaping the benefits."

By September 2018 all existing ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 certificates will no longer be valid. Transitioning to the 2015 version of the standard is therefore being strongly recommended to companies currently holding these certificates.

As a young company, Frog Bikes approached certification with fresh eyes, and Lea believes this is one of the reasons the company was able to achieve the certifications so quickly. Working with SGS – a leading, accredited certification body – ensured that both the QMS and EMS complemented the company's manufacturing processes, bringing measurable benefits across the whole business by following the requirements of ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015.

Communication is key and was something Lea focused on when introducing a QMS to Frog Bikes. Explaining the importance of a QMS to team members and imparting his knowledge led to increased staff and top management buy-in and commitment to achieving ongoing compliance.

MOVING FORWARD

Finally, a word of advice from Lea Caddick for companies considering implementing a QMS/EMS: "Use a certification body that will work in partnership with you to understand your business. SGS was there for us right from the start – we communicated regularly while we put the necessary procedures in place and educated our workforce."

But Lea is not for standing still. For 2018, his focus will be the imminent arrival of GDPR, continually improving the QMS/EMS currently in place, and exploring options around the ISO 27001 – the Information Security Management System standard.

He also has his sights set on the finals of UK's Best Factory award, to be held in June 2018. Having already won the Wales Best Factory (<£25m) award in October 2017 for demonstrating excellence and outstanding contribution to the manufacturing sector, Lea feels they are in a strong position to take the title.

Watch this space.

WHY SGS

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