

IT COMPANY ACHIEVES SEAMLESS TRANSITION TO **ISO 14001:2015**

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"... highly user-friendly approach, being easy to work with and their understanding and care of our business and objectives."



L-R: John Walker, SGS United Kingdom Ltd ISO 14001 Auditor, presenting the ISO 14001:2015 certificate to Terry Wilkinson, Projects Manager.

SBL is a value-added IT reseller which was established in 1987 as an IT security specialist. It continues to focus on – and maintain an excellent reputation in – information security, offering a comprehensive software, hardware, services and training portfolio underpinned by an in-house professional services team. It is based in York and operates nationally.

SBL operates in a number of selected market sectors including central and local government, education, justice, defence and health. It works with customers both direct and via its partner community.

The company is committed to innovation and agility, embracing the dynamics of the changing market and correspondingly delivering solutions that work for its customers' prevailing and future needs as they grow and evolve. Accordingly, it has invested in sophisticated, purpose-built business processes.

WHY SBL SOUGHT ISO 14001 CERTIFICATION

When John Symonds, Integrated Management System Manager joined the business in 1995, he brought SGS United Kingdom Ltd on board to audit the business for various standards, having enjoyed an excellent relationship whilst with a previous business. Fast forwarding 20 years and certification to the 2015 version of environmental standard ISO 14001, John believed that a more comprehensive solution than upgrading this standard alone would be a more sensible option for SBL's needs. He also wanted to incorporate the information security management and health and safety standards (ISO 27001 and OHSAS 18001) into a single, integrated system. It was felt that doing so would improve company-wide performance, facilitate and simplify

legal compliance, and help to meet customer expectations. Specific to ISO 14001, it was clear that an increasing number of customers were demanding demonstrable, minimum standards of environmental management and sustainability.

In addition, the format – and therefore the requirements – of the three ISO standards was very similar, making understanding, buy-in and adherence to all three very simple for employees.

WHY SGS?

John recalls: *"Having used SGS at previous organisations, I chose to work with them again on the basis of their highly user-friendly approach, being easy to work with and – of equal importance – their understanding and care of our business and objectives."*

In support of the decision, he had spoken to other certifying bodies and been told that two – let alone three – independent systems could not be successfully incorporated into a single, integrated system.

IMPLEMENTING ISO 14001: THE PROCESS

SBL was already certified to the previous (2004) version of ISO 14001 (as was the case with the 2013 version of ISO 27001), so many of the requirements for certification to the updated standard were already in place. This led John to consider the possibility of identifying the differences between the old and new versions and simply updating the relevant clauses.

Instead, however, he decided to take a ground-up approach and use the implementation of the 2015 version as a means to review the entire system – incorporating the most successful elements of the previous system into the requirements of the new standard.

The whole process began in January 2016 and the final version completed in September, with certification being granted in January 2017.

With the support of SGS, SBL has been successful in integrating three independent systems into a single management system.

John recalls: “SGS was very easy to work with, including being very helpful in agreeing audit dates and times to suit us. Their support and guidance was very helpful ... they couldn't have done any more for us.”

HOW THE CERTIFICATION HAS BENEFITTED THE BUSINESS

With the support of SGS, SBL has been successful in integrating three independent systems into a single management system – reducing costs, providing a considerably enhanced level of compliance and increasing customer confidence. The workforce has embraced the system wholeheartedly owing to its ease of use and commonality across its various elements.

In conversations with customers and prospects, SBL highlights the fact that

its integrated system helps to enforce compliance, as a major failure in one element would impact on certification in the others. This is in contrast with traditional practice, where auditing and certification are independent within each system.

ISO 14001 IMPLEMENTATION

- Will help in identifying your environmental issues and resolve issues before they become critical, hence reducing the cost involved in corrective action.
- Will assist in ensuring you have identified and taken into account the requirements of all compliance obligations, in doing so promoting improvement and preventing non-compliance and the associated penalties.

As a standalone system, it will help your senior management to focus on their critical environmental issues, enabling an organisation-wide focus on what really matters.

If your organisation is already certified to ISO 9001:2015 or ISO 27001:2013, much of the work necessary for auditing and certification will already be in place.

For more information on ISO 14001, go to www.sgs.co.uk/iso14001.

FURTHER INFORMATION

SGS UNITED KINGDOM LTD

Tel: 0800 900094

Email: uk.nowisthetime@sgs.com

SOFTBOX LTD

Tel: 01347 812100

Email: website@softbox.co.uk

ABOUT SGS

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WHEN YOU NEED TO BE SURE

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