



HOT **TIPS**

**for implementing
an integrated
management
system**

OLLIE SHAW EXPLAINS HOW TO
COMBINE CERTIFICATION FOR
QUALITY (ISO 9001),
ENVIRONMENT (ISO 14001), AND
HEALTH AND SAFETY (OHSAS
18001) INTO ONE EASY-TO-USE
INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT
SYSTEM

Certification to one international management standard, at one time, can be demanding. Certification to two international management standards, at the same time, can be difficult. Certification to three international management standards, at any time, can be daunting... unless the approach is well planned.

Understanding, and participating in, a management system is almost a condition of employment nowadays. All staff need to know about the generic skills of process control, auditing, measuring performance, making mistakes, making corrections and making suggestions.

So why bother with integration? There are common core concepts running through the standards for quality, environment, and health and safety so there is some common ground. So one comprehensive 'process' can score three 'hits'. Embracing these concepts can lead to a more focused and more productive organisation.

Hot tip – one size fits all; so create common core processes that cover all three standards.

Case study: A professional service company wanted to establish how much overlap there is between the three standards. So, they got a copy of each standard and then played 'Spot the Difference' and 'Snap'!

There are three main reasons for combining these three standards into one Integrated Management System (IMS). Economy of scale – to avoid the duplication of effort (see Fig 1); ease of use – one simple arrangement that is used frequently and is more familiar than three disconnected systems used periodically; and finally, reduction of certification costs – ask your certification company for a reduction in time and money for assessment and surveillance.

WHY BOTHER WITH CERTIFICATION?

External certification is a well-established technique used by businesses. It gives buyers a degree of confidence with their suppliers. It also sends a signal to competitors, customers, authorities and other interested parties that the business is confident in its approach. Certification to multiple standards is increasingly becoming a condition of contract between supplier and customer. Equally, it is an endorsement for a well-run business.

The external drivers for certification are: formal recognition to an internationally accepted standard; customer, industry, competitive or regulatory pressure; and prestige. The internal drivers are staff motivation through achievement; staff working together towards a common goal; the intrinsic value in creating a better product, better environment or better working conditions.

To put a scale on the number of certifications in the UK see Table 1. Some of this is due to the age of the standard,

Quantity	Certification	Discipline
10,000s	ISO 9001	Quality
1,000s	ISO 14001	Environment
100s	OHSAS 18001	Health and Safety
10s	IMS	Integration

Table 1: The number of certifications being done in the UK

because there are more certificates for the older standards.

These three standards are almost universal in their appeal to businesses. The quality of the product is fundamental. Environmental management is applicable where natural resources are consumed and for the future. Health and safety is very much in the interest of employees.

IMS TIME LINE

Starting with no formal management systems and ending with successful certification for the three standards would take about one and a half years for any business based on a single site (see Fig 2). The key stages are as follows.

1. Form a team: choose team members from the staff for their personal skills and an interest in the topic. For example, select a decisive person for setting objectives, a calm person for dealing with complaints and a methodical person for auditing.

Hot tip – people naturally migrate towards a task that suits them.

Case Study: A fishing rod manufacturing company, with just 20 staff, allocated their 10 IMS tasks to staff working in pairs.

2. Review environmental aspects: look at the impact the business has on the environment in terms of land, water, air, noise, appearance and resource consumption. Consider every facet of the business – what the business does, how the product is used, the services consumed in making the product/providing the service and how the product is ultimately disposed. Remember to include a variety of operating conditions for the business – set-up, blow-up, shutdown, breakdown and normal running. Assess each aspect for interested parties and cost implications. Determine if each aspect is 'significant'. As a guide, if there's a law, it's likely to be significant. You should end up with a long list of 'aspects'. Cluster, or sort, these aspects by some similar feature, such as energy.

Hot tip – use a spreadsheet.

3. Conduct health and safety risk assessments: identify all the hazards in the workplace, who is affected by them, how often they are affected, how long they are affected, why they are affected and the control measures in place to reduce the affect.

Hot tip – list the legislation pertinent to each aspect and risk, as this is essential later on. →

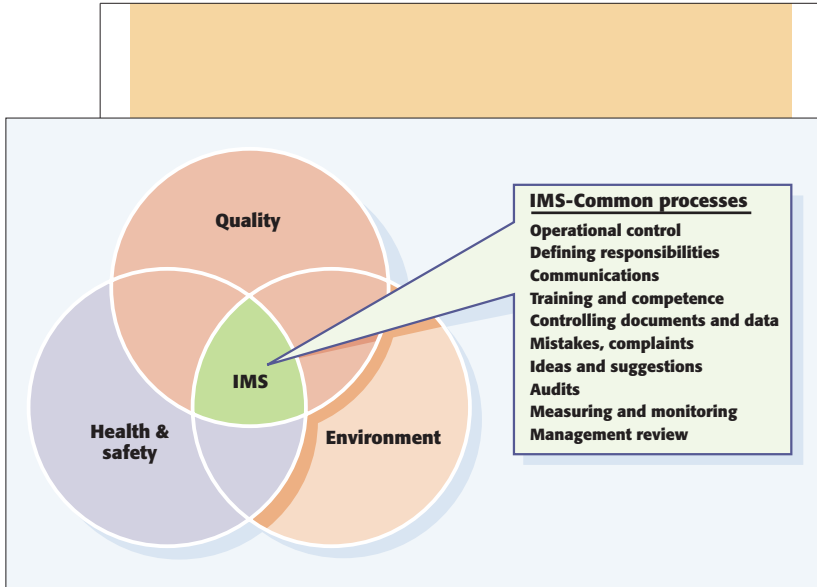


Fig 1: The economy of scale possible with an IMS

Case study: A packaging manufacturing company clustered together generic hazards, that is, hazards for machinery, power tools, manual tools and manual handling, to avoid repetition.

4. Set objectives: set environmental, health and safety objectives based on the review and the risk assessments. Quality objectives can be more general to the business. Performance towards objectives needs to be measured, so choose them carefully. It's a bit like threading food onto a kebab skewer, the first item is the objective, then the policy, then a manual, and so on (see Fig 3). Objectives are dynamic and will need updating in the future.

Hot tip – set objectives that can be measured.

Case study: An insurance broker set three quality objectives – on time, on specification and on profit delivery of their service.

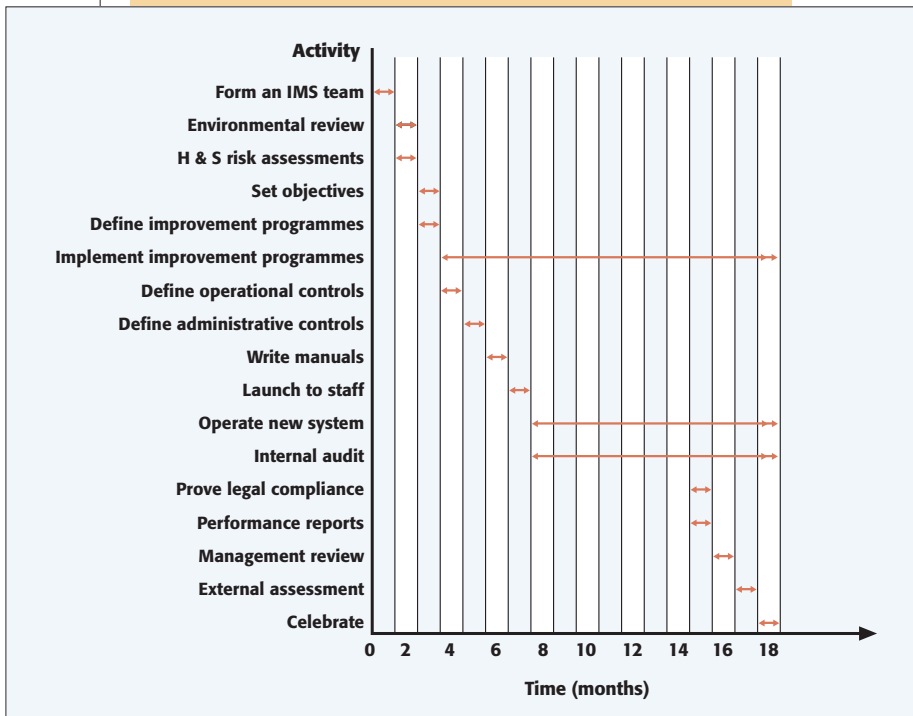


Fig 2: Project plan for implementing an IMS

5. Define improvement programmes: this covers both environment and health and safety and is to be based on the environmental review and the risk assessments. Use SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Resourced, Time-limit), include a budget, include measure of performance, allocate responsibilities and a timescale.

Hot tip – improvement programmes often take a long time to deliver, so start them early.

Case study: An engineering company set environmental improvement programme objectives to save energy and to segregate, and then sell, their scrap.

Case study: A consultancy firm set their health and safety improvement programme objectives to improve posture and to improve driving skill.

6. Define the operational controls: there are three generic business processes – prospecting for contracts, operations and administration. The way a business prospects and operates is unique and is a source of competitive advantage. Prospecting is matching customer's needs against the ability to supply which may involve a sub-process called product design or product development. Operations is how the business produces a product. In the quality standard the phrase product realisation is used and is unfamiliar term for many businesses, meaning production. For product read product or service.

Hot tip – write work instructions that cover all three disciplines in one document

Case Study: A chemical company wrote work instructions for their forklift truck drivers covering all three disciplines –

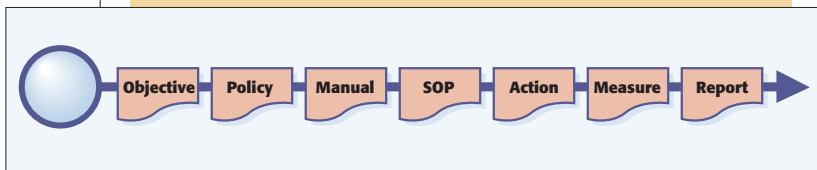


Fig 3: The ISO kebab (SOP = Standard Operating Procedure)

“ Brief the staff on the recently-set objectives, the structure of the IMS, where documents can be found and the staff's contribution to product quality, protection of the environment and the safety of themselves and others ”

checking the paperwork (quality), checking the load (health and safety) and being ready if the load spilt (environment).

Hot tip – drawing your processes as flowcharts is fairly easy and readily available using Microsoft's PowerPoint.

7. Define administrative controls: these supporting administration processes are fairly standard across lots of businesses. They cover common areas such as auditing, communications, document control, environmental review, management review, measuring and monitoring performance, non-conformances and corrective action, preventive action, records, responsibilities defined, risk assessments and training.

Hot tip – call your procedures/process description by their names, not by a number, as they are easier to remember.

Case Study: A paint supplier works on the principle of "You're never more than two clicks away from a document". They set up a short cut from every computer's desktop to an 'index'. From this index there were links to every document.

Hot tip – the Performance Measuring and Monitoring Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) can simply be a list of metrics or key performance indicators for the business.

8. Write the manuals: simply write down how the business deals with the requirements of the standards. If the business has not considered, or never had cause to deal with, a requirement, then you may have to think about your answer. For example, the business may never have considered how it cares for a customer's property, such as information and trademarks.

Hot tip – mimic the numbering system used in the standards – it makes the assessor's job easier.

Case study: A packaging manufacturer chose one manual to be 'dominant'. When there was duplication between standards, the 'minor' manuals referred to the dominant one.

9. Launch to staff: the new world starts here. Brief the staff on the recently-set objectives, the structure of the IMS, where documents can be found and the staff's contribution to product quality, protection of the environment and the safety of themselves and others.

Hot tip – include private individual development on your personal training record (reading this article also counts!)

Case study: A manufacturing company kept an attendance list and a copy of material used for every presentation and training event, as proof for the assessor.

10. Operate the IMS system: the business needs to generate proof that the IMS is being followed. Records and behaviour are good evidence. A minimum of three months records are required and six months are better.

Hot tip – lots of records probably already exist.

11. Audit the IMS system: This is the internal check to establish if the business is meeting the requirements of the standards.

Hot tip – when auditing, look for convergence between three

things: what happens in practice, what the procedures say and the requirements of the standard.

Case study: A software company added 'margin notes' to process descriptions to make auditing easier. The notes identified the appropriate paragraphs in the standard.

12. Legal compliance: Write a report that describes how the business complies with the laws that apply to it.

Hot tip – link this report to the legislation identified in the risk assessments and the environmental review.

13. Performance reports: Write a report that describes the progress made against each of the metrics identified in the procedure called 'Measuring and Monitoring Performance'.

Hot tip – use this report as a submission for the management review meeting.

14. Management review: this is an internal meeting to confirm that the IMS is working for the business.

Hot tip – make sure the phrase "We can confirm the continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the IMS" appears in the management review minutes... as long as it is true!

Case study: An enamel supplier holds their management review on the eve of assessment/re-assessment as a final in-house check.

15. Assessment: This is often spread over several stages. Different assessors call the different stages by different names, which often causes confusion. An assessment is a commercial deal and the assessor wants your business year-on-year, so your position is often stronger than you may think. Conditional passes (a pass on condition of writing a plan of corrective actions) are the norm.

Hot tip – to practice for an assessment, turn every requirement in each standard into a question and then answer it, e.g. "Records of a management review shall be maintained" becomes "What records are there from the management review?"

16. Celebrate!

Hot tip – have some champagne ready on ice.

There are clear financial and business advantages by combining quality, environment, health and safety into one management system. Less clear are the intangible benefits of staff motivation through achievement, working together towards a common goal and the intrinsic value in creating a better product, better environment or better working conditions. ■

Ollie Shaw has 10 years' experience as a consultant and has pioneered a successful approach to integrated management systems



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