World Environment Day

Environmental management system certification

By Lalith Somaweera

A world concerned about the environmental problems and as a result each and every country is taking various actions to protect the environment. In this respect, Governments are now listening more to the advice of environmentalists and increasingly enacting legislations aiming at protecting the environment from the negative impacts of activities.

It is becoming accepted that every organisation affects the environment in some way, for example, through emissions to air or water, solid waste, inefficient energy or resource use, or packaging. Problems will obviously be greater in countries and industries with less awareness and experience with environmental management, and lower management and technical capacity. There is a great deal that companies in developing countries can do to understand and improve their environmental efficiency, and there are frequently many options for improving environmental performance without expensive investment in high technology solutions.

The International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) formed a Strategic Advisory Group for the Environment (SAGE) in 1992 to work on international standards on Environmental Management. SAGE recommended the establishment of Technical Committee (TC) 207 to develop international standards on Environmental Management Systems. Technical Committee 207 was set up in 1993 by the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) in 1993, for the stated purpose. As a result of that in the year 1996, the ISO 14000 series of international standards on Environmental Management Systems has been introduced to the business community in the world by ISO.

The ISO 14000 series of Standards comprises of the following:

ISO 14011: 1996 - Guidelines for Environmental Auditing General Principles
ISO 14001: 1996 - Application of ISO 14001 to environmental management systems.
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SLIS: Environmental Management System Certification

SLIS developed its own certification scheme to ensure the assessment of the documented system in conformity with the ISO 14001 standard. SLIS is the only certification body in Sri Lanka that is accredited by the Sri Lanka Accreditation Council (SLAC) and the International Accreditation of Management Systems (IAMS).

Some Benefits of Certification

- Accreditation: SLIS is accredited by SLAC and IAMS, which ensures that the certification process is conducted in accordance with international standards.
- Market竞争力: A certified company can gain a competitive edge in the market, as customers prefer to do business with companies that have demonstrated their commitment to environmental sustainability.
- Cost savings: Companies can reduce costs by implementing environmental management systems, which can lead to cost savings in the long run.
- Improved reputation: A company that is certified for environmental management can improve its reputation and build trust with stakeholders.

SLIS provides a wide range of services, including initial and periodic assessments, training, and ongoing support.

Future Activities

SLIS is committed to promoting environmental sustainability through its certification services. The organisation is working towards expanding its services to cover additional sectors, including manufacturing, service industries, and government agencies.

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**FACILITATING LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

A company can gain more potential business partners by offering environmental management systems certification, which helps them to access new markets and increase their competitiveness. The Envirocare System Certification of the Sri Lanka Standards Institution (SLIS) is recognized by leading international bodies, such as the International Accreditation of Management Systems (IAMS) and the American Society for Quality (ASQ).

**PUBLIC RELATIONS**

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