

# ISO 14001 Environmental Management System

## Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service

The Authority within the Merseyside boundary has statutory responsibility for fire fighting, the promotion of fire safety and numerous non-fire fighting activities including rescue from road traffic accidents, response to serious environmental disasters and to the growing threat of terrorism.



Bernie Sullivan, Workshops Supervisor, is pictured receiving the award from Mike Hall, Environmental Co-ordinator, on behalf of the staff.

### ISO 14001 success for Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service

An organisation like the Fire Service needs to be able to demonstrate sound business management and that includes concern for the environment.

For Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service implementation of ISO 14001 Environmental Management System (EMS) provided a solid framework for meeting environmental challenges.

There were many reasons for the Fire Service to address environmental concerns:

- Demonstration of responsible environmental management to customers and stakeholders
- Maintaining regulatory environmental compliance
- Reducing the amount of resources it requires
- Improving existing environmental management practices
- Increasing the knowledge, skills and abilities of staff ensuring their commitment to sound environmental management

Groundwork EBS' Environmental Manager, Mark Darwen, was asked to provide

assistance in helping the Fire Service to implement a comprehensive environmental management system, Mark said;

*"The problem for many organisations like the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service is that they don't know where to begin with environmental management. They either lack specialist knowledge about environmental issues and legislation or the thought of implementing environmental policies and procedures becomes a daunting and a resource intensive task"*

Mark continues, *"BS8555 is a new step by step framework that makes the process of achieving ISO 14001 simple and easy. It offers a new phased approach to developing an environmental management system in line with ISO 14001. For organisations like the Fire Service, this provides a much more manageable approach to implementing an EMS and the procedure is a lot less complex"*.

Mark worked with the Fire Service throughout the 5 levels of BS8555 providing practical on-site training, support, guidance and information on how to reduce costs through environmental improvements.

## How Merseyside Fire Service achieved ISO 14001.

With commitment from top management, an agreement to incorporate the EMS responsibilities into the roles of many staff and with full time responsibility for implementing the environmental system, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service ensured they had an appropriate structure in place to operate the system. Using Groundwork EBS services, the following actions took place...

A detailed assessment was carried out at all departments located within the HQ and Safety Training Centre. This review identified the negative and positive impacts the Fire Service had on the environment and enabled Mark to identify where new environmental practices could be integrated into current procedures.

Following the review a detailed action plan was produced for the full length of the programme.

Current initiatives and improvements included;

- The appointment of a full time Environmental Co-ordinator
- Review of the Environmental Policy and individual Transport, Waste and Energy and Water Policies were drafted
- MACC2 scheme commitment (Co2 reduction)
- Various schemes and a major waste minimisation programme initiated to include the recycling of waste oil, batteries, tyres and anti-freeze
- Development of Green Procurement Policy for suppliers and contractors
- A Green HQ travel plan was introduced
- Fixing CRT exhausts to appliances, which have dramatically reduced particulate and Nox emissions.
- Double glazing and boiler replacement programme for the buildings
- Awareness training programme of all staff

Merseyside Fire Service was awarded ISO 14001 accreditation in October 2004. Mike Hall, the Environmental Co-ordinator for Merseyside Fire & Rescue said:



Councilor Steve Foulkes from The Metropolitan Borough of Wirral presenting the runner up prize for the Groundwork Merseyside Environmental Innovation & Technology Award to Dave Martin in February 2004

*"We are delighted to have been awarded ISO accreditation; it is a fantastic endorsement of all the positive action done by the staff throughout the organisation. We now have an externally certified environment management system that provides real environmental improvements and economic benefits".*

### Benefits from ISO implementation:

- The Workshop staff of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service have won two prestigious awards for their innovation and commitment to environmental protection earlier this Year
- Improved performance, efficiency and monitoring
- Identification and compliance with current and new legislation
- Operating costs reduced as a result of best practice principles though the reduction of waste, energy, materials and distribution costs
- Improved corporate image among regulators, customers and the public
- Enhanced competitive advantage
- Inspired employees and owners to make active contributions to managing environmental impacts
- Framework for continuous improvement of environmental performance
- Development of the environmental policy

Environmental Management for the Fire Service now plays a large part of the organisation's business strategy. Through the implementation of environmental innovation, the Fire service has created economic opportunities with real tangible benefits.