

# ACADEMY

AIRBUS CORPORATE ANSWER TO DISSEMINATE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

## Training, Awareness and Communication

ECO-EFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY - G5 - ISSUE 1



## Table of Contents

I. Introduction	3
II. The ISO 14001 Requirements	4
III. Initial Steps	6
IV. Communication and Training Formats	10
V. Glossary	13

# I. Introduction

Training, awareness, competence and communication on the face of it seem like a daunting prospect for any company to tackle. However, the most straightforward approach is to base training and communication needs on the environmental aspects and impacts derived from the environmental analysis carried out (where am I?) and on the environmental strategy of the organization (where do I want to go?). Once this has been determined, this knowledge and strategy can be turned into training and communication exercises:

- Communication plays an essential role in enabling companies to reach their goals. Provided goals are clearly defined, communication is a powerful tool to show the way forward
- To implement the actions that will move the company forward, specific skills or aptitudes may be required. Training is there to help fill the gap. One of the most valuable assets any company has is its employees, so adding value to them through training adds value to the company

When the ISO 14001 Standard mentions competence, training and awareness it is also talking about communication and experience, so this is also a consideration when defining training and communication programmes.

The environmental goals of any company will undoubtedly vary, depending on its size and the type of core business. But essentially, good levels of training, awareness, increasing competence and communication will bring about the culture changes required to succeed and deliver the environmental improvements.

***"Skill's management, for both expert and other employees has to be focused and adapted to the company's Environmental Aspects. This management is supported by the relevant functions and it is the key point of the E.M.S. continuous improvement".***



Karine RENARD  
Training, Awareness Manager



## II. The ISO 14001 Requirements



### ISO 14001 Standard and competence, training and awareness:

*The organization shall ensure that any person(s) performing tasks for it or on its behalf that have the potential to cause a significant environmental impact(s) identified by the organization is (are) competent on the basis of appropriate education, training or experience, and shall retain associated records.*

*The organization shall identify training needs associated with its environmental aspects and its environmental management system. It shall provide training or take other action to meet these needs, and shall retain associated records.*

*The organization shall establish, implement and maintain a procedure(s) to make employees aware of:*

- a) the importance of conformity with the environmental policy and procedures and with the requirements of the environmental management system,*
- b) the significant environmental aspects and related actual or potential impacts associated with their work, and the environmental benefits of improved personal performance,*
- c) their roles and responsibilities in achieving conformity with the requirements of the environmental management system, and*
- d) the potential consequences of departure from specified procedures*

(Source ISO 14001 International Standard V:2004).

What is really meant by “Competence”, “Training” and “Awareness”? They are all of course related, but can be looked at individually.

**Competence** is related to the activity that the employee carries out. Does the employee have the necessary knowledge to complete the activity in terms of its environmental impact and is the employee able to participate in the reduction of any impacts related to it?

**Training** is self-explanatory, it is basically a skills gap that needs to be improved through appropriate means and involvement and can be activity-specific or a more general overview of the environmental impact of the organization and how each employee can contribute to its reduction.

**Awareness** relates to how much the employee really knows about environmental impact, whether this concerns his/her activity or the organization as a whole, including what the organization's environmental policy is and where to find it. In addition to this, is the employee aware of the consequences of what might happen should he/she not be able to conduct his/her activity within environmental requirements, and of the impact on the company should this be the case?

It is very important to keep suitable training records, including evaluations. Any auditor will scrutinise these records to see who has participated in training programmes and ask individuals questions relating to the environmental impact of their activity to measure training effectiveness.

These records will not only come from training courses, but also local meetings, such as toolbox talks, communication exercises and any employee improvement ideas.



## ISO 14001 Standard and communications:

Organizations implementing ISO 14001 must define an environmental communication procedure. This procedure may be kept simple - take this exercise as an opportunity to map the current practice, clarify responsibilities and initiate possible improvements. The process must sound rational and efficient. This procedure may also be kept short - design it as a practical reference tool.

Two areas that need to be covered:

- Internal environmental communications. The procedure needs to describe how environmental communication is done within the company
- External environmental communications:
  - The organization must establish a system for receiving, documenting and responding to external parties when relevant. The ISO 14001 standard leaves it up to the organization to appreciate what is relevant to its activity
  - The organization must keep its environmental policy available to the outside world. However, the ISO 14001 standard leaves it up to the organization to communicate externally on its environmental aspects - whatever your choice, state it in the procedure

## III. Initial Steps

Communication and training need to be developed in parallel. When designing communication and training programmes, it is worth considering these golden rules:

### 1. Following a stepped approach in designing communication is the key to efficiency

- Define environmental communication objectives that are consistent with the company's overall communication and business objectives
- Define the audience(s) and its (their) needs. The first steps in identifying communication and training needs lies in the Environmental Analysis (separate guideline available). The analysis shows where the organization needs to improve its environmental aspects and impacts and may also show the levels of "Operational Control" associated with an activity
- Define the messages
- Identify the best channel(s) for delivering these messages

### 2. Don't re-invent the wheel: integrate environmental communication in the normal communication activities of the company

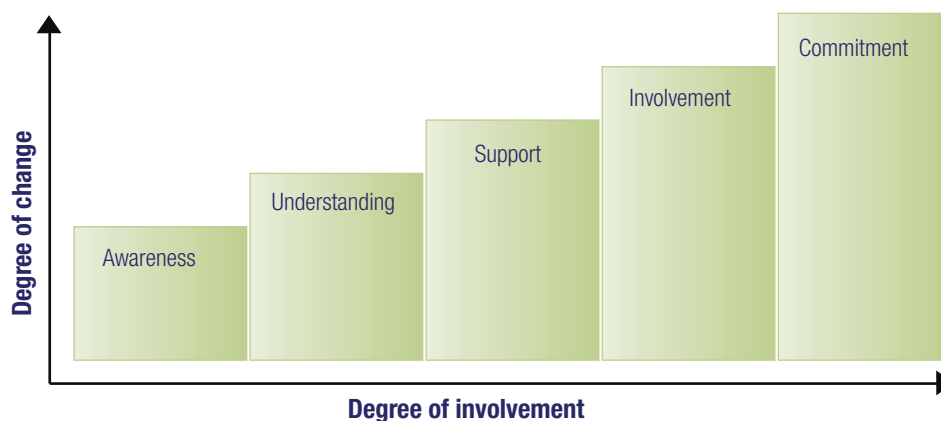
ISO 14001 is not a separate item in the organization, it is a new challenge for the organization, so it must be embedded in all areas of activity. This is key to ensuring that environmental concerns become rooted in the organization. Keeping environmental communication consistent with the more global communication activity is therefore necessary to make it "legitimate". Make sure environmental messages are continuously conveyed by the usual communication channels of the company, even in the case where you also decide to create new ones.

### 3. Think about the cultural specificities of your company

Each company has its own culture. It is important to think about the core values and beliefs within the organization to make the right communication decisions. Public opinion is becoming more and more aware of global environmental issues. However, employees within your organization may not be familiar with environmental issues as specifically related to the aeronautical industry and aspects of their daily business. As an environmental discourse may be quite new within your organization, think of the type of arguments that have been culturally understood, accepted and proved successful at orienting the business strategy of your company, getting the internal buy-in for new projects, etc.

#### 4. Lean towards progressive, continuous communication


Your employees certainly have a variety of backgrounds, ages, personal histories, job specialisations, etc. This contributes to explaining that not all of them will have the same level of knowledge on the environmental aspects of your business. This is basically not a problem, as ISO 14001 does not require everyone to be an environmental specialist, but does demand that they understand the consequences to the environment of their day-to-day activity and how to limit them. When defining your communication and training programmes, try to make sure everyone gets the same basic level of understanding and develop more precise messages for those who need it the most / who are most able to influence the environmental aspects of your, or indeed their, activity overall. It is important to keep in mind that regularly repeated communication, progressively going from basic awareness to more precise messages, is much more efficient at getting long-term commitment from people than overly ambitious, one-shot communication exercises. This principle can be clearly illustrated by the following communication ladder.



Beyond these golden rules, a series of questions should be considered when it comes to precisely defining the content of communication and training actions:

- What is the environmental policy of the organization, is it readily available?
- Does it have to comply with particular customer requests?
- Is it responding to employee suggestions?
- Are there any local environmental laws or licences that need to be considered?
- Are there any particular activities that the organization wants to improve?
- Does the organization have any subcontractors working on its behalf that pose an environmental risk that should be included in any training needs?





It is important to remember that training should focus on the needs of the organization. However, there are global environmental issues that the organization undoubtedly contributes to, which also need to be considered.

Nevertheless, it is not absolutely necessary to train the organization's individuals on global issues, but it is important to relate those issues to the company's activities. For example, a reduction in energy use will in turn reduce the level of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere and therefore contribute towards reducing the so-called greenhouse effect.

In addition to this, there are many resources that employees can be directed to on the World Wide Web, explaining these issues. This means that the organization can concentrate its training time on its local issues.

The organization may want to combine its training to ensure that all its employees are aware of what might be going on elsewhere in the organization. This of course would be dependent on its size.

The organization may make any training delivered to coincide with poster campaigns and or supplement with pocket guides and or internal newsletter articles. Of course, any results of environmental campaigns should be supported with and followed up by appropriate communication to ensure that the employees' contribution is making a difference and that they can see how their actions contribute to overall environmental improvement.

Keeping it simple is also very important, as environmental issues can be very complex. Any training delivered should reflect the environmental aspects and impacts of the organization, as mentioned in the introduction: the closer the training subjects are to the employees and the organization, the more straightforward they will seem. Why run a training course on CO<sub>2</sub> and climate change when energy efficiency locally will add value to your organization, save your money and as an indirect consequence reduce the organization's contribution to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions?

One of the most important things to remember with any training packages delivered is that employees must feel they can have an influence on the outcome. All too often with global environmental issues, everyone hears about them through the media, but people often don't feel they are in a position to contribute in a positive way, either because the subject is too remote for them to respond to or because they feel that anything meaningful they might be able to do, however small, will end up having no effect or will not change anything.

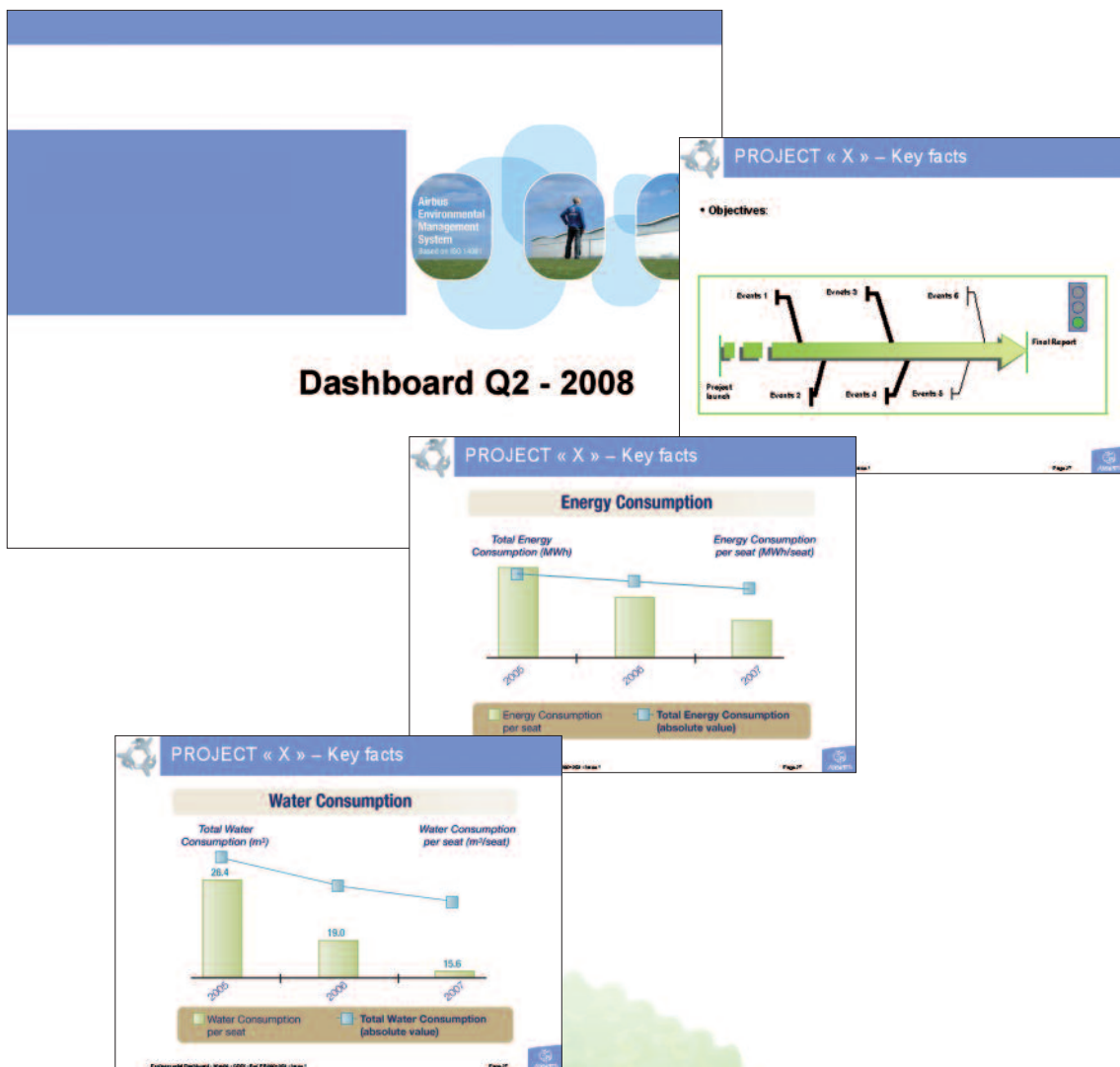
The organization's employees need to have a tangible reason to become involved in the environmental effort, together with everything else that the organization is trying to deliver, and to know whether what they are doing can be improved, so that they and their colleagues can be involved in the debate.

One very important factor to be considered is that although sound environmental management can deliver significant cost savings, training should not be based on cost savings! Why? Because the message the employees get will end up being confused and they will think that the training is about saving money and not for the benefit of the environment. Although it's true to say that a well implemented EMS will deliver significant cost savings as a natural by-product, this is not what the training and communication exercises are about.



Although loosely related, it may well be of tremendous benefit to the organization to offer employees incentives to improve environmental impact. It makes sense, the person who knows the activity best is the one who carries it out. Employees are therefore in the best position to contribute to a reduction or to ideas on how to reduce the environmental impact related to their own activity or indeed the organization's activities. Examples of successful suggestions could be included in training programmes to illustrate any benefits that can be made.

The organization will also have to consider any subcontractors that contribute to the organizations operations. It is important to include any subcontractors to ensure that they are aware of the site's environmental goals and understand that they contribute to the organization's overall environmental risk.



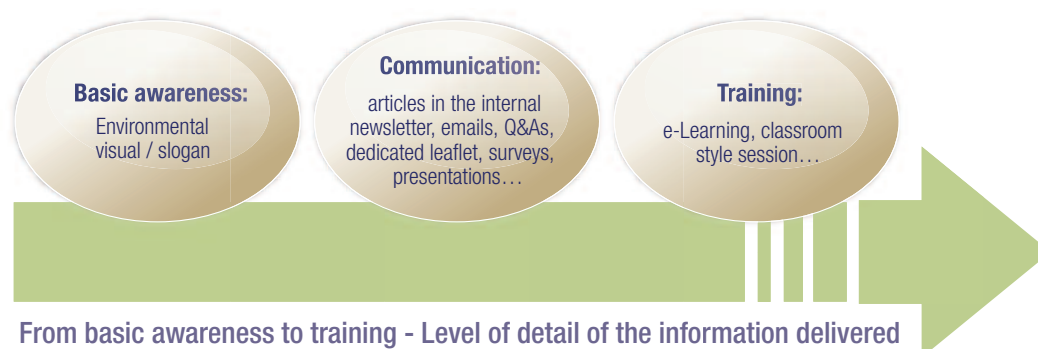
## IV. Communication and Training Formats

This section will look at possible internal communication and training formats that could be used to deliver the message the organization wants to get across. The method chosen is indeed the choice of the organization, but this may help the selection process as to what is most appropriate.

In general, there is no need to start with overly sophisticated internal environmental communication methods or a very wide portfolio of communication vehicles. The basic communication kit could include:

- An environmental visual / slogan that will catch people's attention and let them know ISO 14001 is about the environment
- A training support for a targeted audience

Between these two elements, it is up to the organization to decide, according to its specific needs, on what type of communications with an intermediary level of details are required.



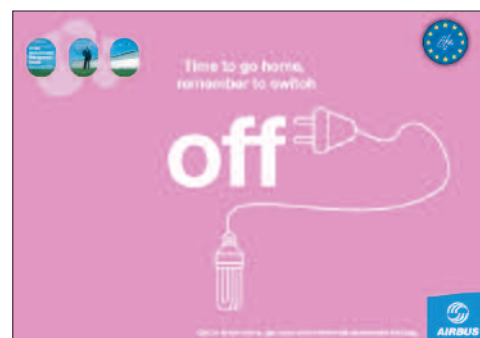
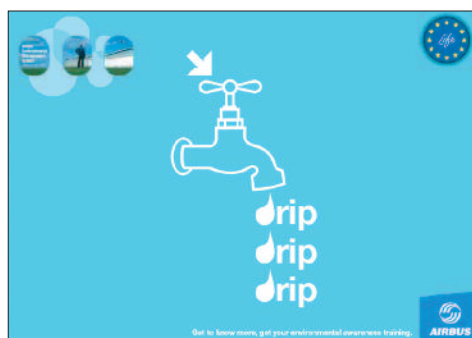
### Case study: Airbus internal communication actions in support of ISO 14001 deployment

Due to the size of its activity (55,000 employees by the end of 2005, 16 manufacturing sites, comprehensive aircraft family, wide customer support network...) and the variety of employee backgrounds and needs, Airbus has had to develop a wide portfolio of internal environmental communications. Whilst not wholly transferable to SMEs, this experience supports the case that the format of ISO 14001 related communications can be most efficient when it is customised to key audiences.

Airbus has in general carried out:

- General awareness actions targeting all employees and including:

Imagery (ISO 14001 awareness posters, key visuals (logo), give-aways - folders, lanyards, etc. - kakemonos), internal publications (articles in the corporate newspaper, internal presentation on the Environment cascaded to all departments), intranet (specific channel on environment and regular breaking news on the intranet homepage)



- Tailored communication including:

Events (ISO 14001 Road-shows targeting a population of employees more directly involved), specialised publications (example: bulletins on new regulatory developments in the field of the environment), environment Pocket guides. The principle of these pocket guides was to get a consistent ISO 14001 message across to all Airbus employees, while making it as concrete as possible by customising part of the document. Pocket guides have been realised for each Airbus site to provide information on specific local environmental aspects and to foster appropriate environmental behaviour. Pocket guides have also been produced for each key Airbus function (Engineering, Procurement, Customer Support, Customer Affairs, General edition for support functions). In order to give everyone the same global picture, the front of the pocket guides was common to all issues and included a definition of the Airbus ISO 14001 approach and a view of the aircraft life-cycle. However, the back was customised for each function and included a definition of the key environmental challenges of the function, the environmental golden rules specific to the function and the names of local ISO 14001 contacts.





#### - Training

An extensive training programme has been developed to raise environmental awareness among Airbus employees, through both traditional classroom-based sessions and supporting online material (“e-Learning”). This includes general training, which is available in English, French, German and Spanish, as well as versions adapted to the specific needs of individual sites. This tool is now being developed to address individual functions and products in more detail. The population targeted is all Airbus employees.

More specific training has been developed, such as training for ISO 14001 internal auditors.

### **Embedding environmental training in overall training activity**

Emergency situations (from the environmental analysis) could be combined with Health & Safety requirements for the organization. For example, if there was a spillage on site, it would be appropriate to inform everyone to use the same process for evacuation and to assemble everyone at a central point, as is the case for a fire alarm activation, or in response to any other emergency. This will require awareness on what everyone should do, so would need to be integrated in the Health and Safety training modules.

If a particular activity on site already has worked instructions on how to complete it, such as quality instructions, any environmental instructions could also be added, to be embedded as part of the day-to-day process. This again would require the operators to be aware of these requirements, but training on this could be conducted as part of localised meetings.

In terms of overall environmental training, a key element to consider is the size of the audience within the organization and how the message will be delivered. This could be done through classroom sessions or indeed via a simple Power Point presentation that individuals who have access to a computer network could download and read.

In terms of recording, an email could be sent to the training administrator who could collate the records of who has taken the course.

The only downside with this approach is that it is very two-dimensional. It limits the ability of trainees to discuss points that may be raised or not understood correctly as a result of taking the course on-line. It may be appropriate to build in a forum that could be used to exchange questions and answers.



## V. Glossary

**EMS** - Environmental Management System

**Environmental aspect** - an element of an organization's activities, products or services that can interact with the environment.

**Environmental impact** - any change to the environment, whether adverse or beneficial, wholly or partially resulting from an organization's activities, products or services.

**ISO 14001** - International Organization of Standardization environmental management standard.

**Operational Control** - steps implemented to reduce/control an environmental impact.





This document aims to provide guidance to help implementing Environmental Management System.

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