

remas

linking environmental
management and
performance

Issue 5 • 2004



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with help and support
of the LIFE programme

What is remas?

remas is an ambitious and far-reaching three-year European study into the benefits of environmental management systems (EMS) in the context of regulation. The €2million project is co-financed by the LIFE Environment Fund, the Environment Agency, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment and the Environmental Protection Agency (in Ireland).

By studying the performance of industrial sites and comparing those sites that have robust EMS, with those that have not, we will identify which factors are most valuable for the regulator. After all the data has been collated, measured and analysed, we will cascade our findings to key EU stakeholders. remas is committed to promoting the highest standards of environmental management practice and effective regulatory policy throughout Europe ... and, potentially, the world.



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Hello and welcome to Issue 5 of the remas newsletter. It seems hard to believe that it is almost eighteen months since we first launched this exciting and challenging project that is remas.

So, what progress have we made so far? We currently have over 150 sites throughout the UK and Ireland registered. We have the first set of data available and you can read about the initial findings in our feature "Analysing your data" on page 3.

On behalf of the remas team I would like to thank all the companies who have taken part so far – we couldn't have done it without you and your attention to detail and commitment to the 'cause' is much appreciated. Of course, it's still early days and we need more data to get precise and robust results, so we are now extending our sign-up to companies right across Europe. Log on to the remas website now and register to take part in this groundbreaking study.

We are now also reviewing the original criteria included within the questionnaire. These are the parts of the management system we think you need to place particular emphasis on to lead to improved environmental performance. We are speaking with the regulators, certifiers and assessors and representatives from industry to fine tune the criteria to make sure it is more accurate, workable and helps sites produce a more effective EMS for their company. We will then be looking for a further 25 companies to sign up to implement these changes within their EMS. To find out more about our work in this area or to register to take part see our article "We need your help" on page 3.

For many companies certification does not appear to guarantee legal compliance and improved environmental performance. To help, remas, the Environment Agency and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (IEMA) are producing a practitioner's guide, together with the following groups – Association of British Certification Bodies (ABCB), Independent International Organisation for Certification (IIOC), Entec (UK) Ltd, Rolls Royce and United Kingdom Accreditation Service. The guide will reference the criteria we have established under remas, explaining precisely what companies can expect to achieve. The practitioner's guide will be launched in the summer and will be supported through a training programme in the second phase of the project.

We hope you find the information contained within this newsletter useful and informative. If you have any comments or would like to contribute further to the debate, please email me at mcheesbrough@remas.info

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martyn Cheesbrough".

Martyn Cheesbrough
remas Project Manager



Meet the team

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**ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY**



iema
Institute of Environmental
Management & Assessment

Analysing your data

With over 150 sites now registered on the remas project, the team now has its first set of data available. We spoke to remas Policy Advisor, Jeremy Stephens, who has been analysing the data, for his first impressions.

Of the 150 sites throughout the UK and Ireland who have registered, between 60 and 70 have completed the questionnaire about their level of EMS engagement, 40 have gone on to compare their site's performance against European benchmarks and 30 companies have completed the final stage of the process and the data are now fully quality assured.

"The information we have gained on sites to date shows a good spread of industry sectors, but we want to encourage more to take part," commented Jeremy. remas is still actively looking for more businesses in Europe to join from sectors such as cement and lime, paper and pulp, glass, refineries, organic and inorganic chemicals, aluminium, food and drink, iron and steel, power generation and waste.

Whilst it is still too early to determine firm conclusions, Jeremy believes the data is already showing a good

spread of information and clear trends. "We are seeing a fair representation of EMS presence, from those companies who have no system to those who have a formal Environmental Management System in place. Our scoring systems are successfully reflecting that spread in terms of EMS presence and delivery."

The results to date have been encouraging, but as Jeremy indicates there is still more work to be done. "The information we have at this stage is revealing early trends, but it is also heightening the need to carry out further analysis to identify which specific aspects of EMS contribute to improved environmental performance."

remas has been busy developing the report back feature of their website and companies can now log on at www.remas.info and view their results on line. These results are confidential to the site taking part.

We need your help

remas, Europe's largest ever study into the effectiveness of environmental management systems (EMS), is calling on companies to help.

How can you help?

Taking part is simple. Companies with certified EMS and those with no EMS can take part. Completing an on-line questionnaire takes just a couple of hours to complete and covers data on your company's EMS and environmental performance.

Fine tuning ('the remas study criteria')

remas is currently taking a close look at the criteria used within the questionnaire to make sure it is accurate and workable. Input from the regulator, certifiers and verifiers and industry will allow remas to fine-tune the remas criteria.

Claire Draper is Professional Standards Manager for The Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (IEMA). She has been meeting with certifiers and verifiers working throughout Europe. Claire acknowledges that consensus on the remas criteria is unlikely. "I anticipate that some people will consider some points of much greater importance than others and we will be addressing this," she explains. There will be an emphasis on ensuring a wide number of views have been considered to ensure the selected criteria are robust.

The Environment Agency's Lindsay Knuckey is considering the view of the regulator. She recently discussed this with IMPEL (the European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law) representatives in Prague. "Members will have the opportunity to comment and we will seek final agreement at the IMPEL Plenary in June," says Lindsay.

Once the remas criteria have been agreed, the remas project team will be looking for 25 companies to implement this best practice within their EMS.

What's in it for you?

You will receive a free and confidential report benchmarking your company against other European companies in your sector. This will give you an excellent opportunity to drive further improvements in your EMS. Taking part will also raise your environmental profile and help you to shape the future development of EMS policy across Europe.

If you are interested in being part of this groundbreaking project, please register on www.remas.info or contact admin@remas.info on +44 (0) 117 914 2989 for more information.

Making a stand for remas

Raising awareness of the remas project and encouraging companies to participate was the order of the day for the remas team when they attended the recent et 2004 event.



During the three days of the UK's premier environmental technology and management services exhibition at Birmingham's NEC, the Environment Agency and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (IEMA) manned exhibition stands and led a series of seminars and presentations aimed at raising the profile of effective environmental management and performance.

Martyn Cheesbrough, the Environment Agency's Project Manager for the remas project, was one of the guest speakers, leading an IEMA seminar on Environmental Management Systems (EMS) and performance improvement.

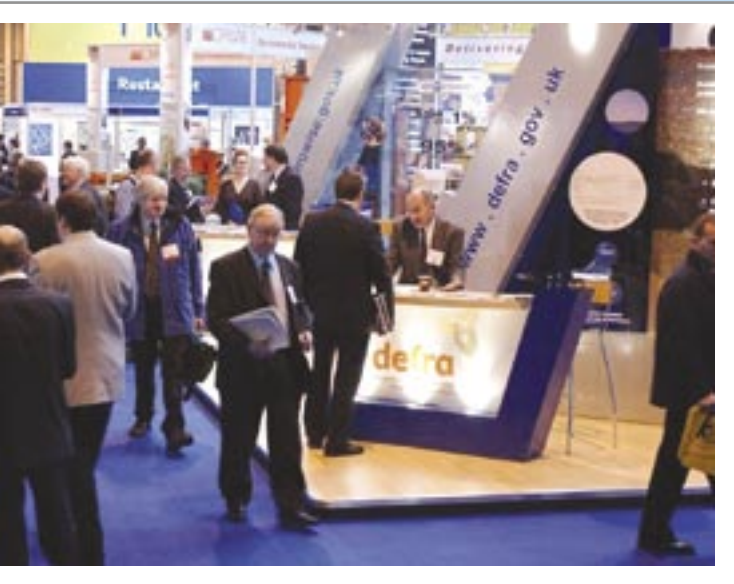


"Having a continued presence at such a high profile UK environmental event such as this was very important to us," said Martyn. "With attendees from all sectors of the environmental arena, including industry, education, certification and regulation, we had an ideal platform from which to gain interest and encourage participation in our work."

The relationship between (EMS) and improving environmental performance was clearly a topic of considerable interest judging by the 200 or so people who packed into the theatre to hear the presentation. The major interest came primarily from industry, making up over 50% of the audience, with just a handful of attendees from certification and education.



et2004



Despite the fact that the project is half way through its three year lifespan, less than 5% of the audience had heard of remas. Martyn Cheesbrough remained unphased by this response.

“The main purpose of our presence was to raise awareness of remas and encourage more companies to take part. There is very little point in preaching to the converted,” said Martyn.

Current research indicates that the implementation of EMS does not necessarily lead to better environmental performance or regulatory compliance. Martyn explained. “Up until now research suggests that any company can put a certificate on the wall, but wouldn't it be good if we could have a badge that everyone truly believed could deliver real results.”

remas aims to gather data designed specifically to measure the link between EMS engagement and environmental performance. With over 150 sites already signed up to the project, early indications are that there is a good spread of information and clear trends emerging. But as Martyn stressed there is a great deal of work still to be done and he encouraged the audience at et 2004 to stand up and be counted in this major innovative project.

“Anyone who takes part will be a valid and contributing partner. If we can achieve our goals across Europe we will start to lead the world in effective environmental management.”

IEMA Annual Conference 2004

The Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (IEMA) annual conference is one of the key events in the environmental calendar. Aimed at people working within the areas of environmental management and assessment who want to develop their skills and knowledge, the conference provides an ideal opportunity to network with others in a focused yet informal environment.

The event will be held on the 19th and 20th May at Stoke Rochford Hall, Grantham, Lincolnshire. Delegates can attend presentations and workshops on a wide selection of key environmental subjects.

Topics to be covered over the two days include:

- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
- Trends in CSR and Environmental Management
- Science of Climate Change and Scenarios for the Future
- Experienced View of Tackling Climate Change
- Environmental Regulation and its links to Environmental Protection
- Experiences in Securing Environmental Compliance
- Water Management & Biodiversity
- Catchment Planning & Environmental Impact Assessment

For more information or to book a place at the conference, visit www.iema.net

Reaping the benefits of Europe's largest environmental study

Environmental management is a major issue for many businesses and as new environmental laws are enforced, more and more companies will need to make sure they operate within the new legislation. But just how valuable are environmental management systems (EMS) and do they actually help improve environmental performance? The remas project, Europe's largest ever study into environmental management systems aims to answer this very question. 18 months since the project was launched we ask what benefits does remas bring to the environmental arena?

Prior to the launch of the remas project in November 2002, there was no comprehensive study to conclusively link EMS to increased environmental performance.

remas Project Manager Martyn Cheesbrough says: "We believe environmental management systems can offer many benefits to companies and other interested groups, but we are unable to prove their real value until we get a full picture of the various elements involved. This is precisely what remas is designed to do."

As well as proving links with environmental performance, remas looks in detail at the parts that make up the EMS. By doing this it helps companies identify the most important elements to implement, which, in turn, helps them invest more effectively. By studying the performance of industrial sites and comparing those sites that have robust environmental management systems with those that don't, the

project also identifies which factors are most valuable for the regulator.

Whether companies already have an EMS or not, the remas project provides free expert advice and guidance to help businesses operate successfully within the new laws.

To take part businesses simply have to complete an on-line questionnaire that looks at how their EMS delivers. Feedback can also identify 'gaps' in their current EMS that can help decide on improvements.

Danny Lawrence is Environment Manager with Lafarge Cement UK. He said: "remas should have the benefit of establishing if EMS are efficient in bringing environmental performance improvement (in my opinion the most important factor) and regulatory compliance. As a believer in EMS that does bring improvements, then I believe it will help to improve the environment in the long run by encouraging more companies to take part."



“ Well managed, properly implemented, robust environmental management systems are the way ahead. I wholeheartedly support the remas project in its bid to gather information aimed at helping inform the highest standards of environmental management practice and regulatory policy in England and Wales as well as across Europe. ”

Elliot Morley, Minister of State for the Environment



“ Eine Erhöhung des Bekanntheitsgrades ist notwendig, wozu remas einen wichtigen Beitrag leisten kann. ”

Rolf Linnenkamp, Ministerium für Umwelt, Raumordnung, Landwirtschaft, des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen

“ Raising awareness about EMAS is essential and I believe remas has a significant contribution to make in doing this. ”

Rolf Linnenkamp, German Ministry

“ Environmental Management Systems can really help a company deliver social and environmental benefits, and they can also help with the ‘bottom line’ – good environmental practice can lead to significant cost savings. The remas project will help develop this approach. ”

Campbell Gemmell, CEO, Scottish Environment Protection Agency



Benefits in brief

- Fact-based benchmarking, assessing the values of EMS
- Identifies those elements of an EMS which most effectively protect the environment and why
- Aims to demonstrate the effectiveness of EMS as a reliable tool that regulators and policy makers can have confidence in
- Helps reduce the burden of implementing new laws by identifying the appropriate effective management control techniques
- Offers free expert help, advice and guidance on the robust elements of an EMS to assist businesses to operate successfully within the new laws
- Helping companies improve their environmental performance using a robust EMS assists effective investment and greater community trust

remas en resumé

- La plus grande étude européenne à ce jour sur l'efficacité des Systèmes de Management Environnementaux
- Quelles sont les SME qui marchent et pourquoi?
- Pour mettre votre entreprise à la norme plus facilement
- Les résultats de cette étude seront mis à l'essai sur 25 sites pilotes
- Améliorez votre performance environnementale = soyez plus performant!

“Environmental awareness is something total. One cannot live for half the day concerned with the environment and the other half ignoring or destroying it.”

Suryo Prawiroatmodja, Indonesian environmental educator

“We do not have a freehold on the earth, only a full repairing lease.”

Margaret Thatcher, 1988

“We need a new environmental consciousness on a global basis. To do this, we need to educate people.”

Mikhail Gorbachev

