

Earning together program

Companywide effort helps 16 Boeing sites secure important environmental certification

By Junu Kim

All it took for Mike Dwyer to realize that Boeing employees in St. Louis were extremely engaged with the site's efforts to earn its ISO 14001 certification, an internationally recognized environmental standard, was a feedback page on an internal Web site.

A St. Louis-specific site with information about ISO 14001 offered employees the chance to send comments to the team running the certification effort. Dwyer, the director of Environment, Health and Safety in St. Louis, knew from past experience that although employees cared about the environment, they showed varying levels of engagement. Yet after this site went live last June, the volume of comments and environmental suggestions it received made Dwyer realize that St. Louis employees were significantly engaged with certification efforts. The feedback included ideas on recycling opportunities, energy usage and greener ways of transport and commuting.

"Before the feedback mechanism was up, people hadn't expressed themselves as openly or as often as they did afterward," Dwyer said. "We have many skilled people here who are passionate about the ideas they believe in, like taking care of the environment. When they see the chance to express themselves, they'll do so."

St. Louis was one of 16 Boeing production facilities in 2008 to earn its ISO 14001 certification, a standard for organizations wanting to implement or improve an environmental management system (EMS)—a set of processes, systems and practices an organization uses to reduce its environmental impact and to operate more effectively. The certification of these Boeing sites marks a major milestone in Boeing's continuing effort to improve its environmental performance. Yet it's an achievement that required the coordinated efforts of many people at these sites—and demonstrates how the collective, integrated efforts of an engaged population across Boeing's major business units and several nations can create a broad benefit.

"Getting all of our major manufacturing sites ISO 14001 certified by the end of 2008 was one of our primary environmental focus areas," said Aileen Yankowski, Compliance and Services director for EHS. "Employees throughout the company showed tremendous environ-



mental commitment in helping us meet this challenging goal.”

ISO 14001 doesn't prescribe performance targets such as cutting greenhouse gas emissions by a certain percentage. Instead, it strengthens an organization's ability to set its own specific environmental objectives and targets, and to monitor and continually improve its environmental performance.

Why undergo certification? Among the reasons: Earning it represents third-party validation of Boeing's environmental management system. “We've maintained that we had a comprehensive and responsible environmental management program. An ISO certification program proves it to others,” said Tom Deem, director, EHS and Chemical Process Management in the Fabrication organization of Commercial Airplanes.

For Boeing, the certification drive also brought the company together. The effort, introduced in July 2007, was tackled as an enterprisewide activity, instead of something to be done separately by business units. “We had an aggressive plan to expand ISO 14001 certification to all our major manufacturing sites by the end of 2008, and we saw more opportunities for alignment and integration in doing this,” said Michael Hoff, the current enterprise ISO 14001 program manager at EHS Compliance and Services in Renton, Wash.

After the July 2007 kickoff, the enterprisewide team defined action items, created subteams and conducted regular coordination meetings to ensure integration. Among the deliverables that emerged: Standardized templates and tools that sites could use to prepare for certification audits. These common tools were “very, very helpful,” said Kris Stutko, an environmental engineer/scientist in St. Louis who worked with the IDS sites that earned their ISO 14001 certification last year. “Whenever a new site came on board, we provided these templates and guidance. They help people pick up on what needs to be done much more easily.”

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for Environment, Health and Safety

To support each facility's quest for certification, team members worked with sites to help them undertake the 43 actions needed to achieve certification. This support included tasks such as:

- Helping sites form and train their implementation teams and conduct an important Aspect/Impact analysis, which identifies all of a site's major impacts upon the environment. Although conducting this analysis can be difficult, it lets facilities prioritize environmental activities and helps site employees focus on the high-ranking activities. “I've seen other companies write their environmental management system without doing an Aspect/Impact analysis, and they'll build their EMS around the wrong things,” said Lee Kuhre, senior environmental manager for Commercial Airplanes' Fabrication organization.

- Helping sites effectively use common tools, templates and resources. As part of making the certification drive an all-Boeing effort, the team developed and honed tools such as common awareness training, common communications templates and a single database to report significant environmental effects and the site's plans and targets to reduce the impact. Team members also worked with sites to help their people properly use these tools.

- Conducting readiness reviews (mock audits by Boeing employees at the facilities to be certified). To ensure readiness for the actual audit, “we tried to be twice as aggressive as DNV [the third-party auditor] would be, to prepare sites for the worst,” Kuhre said.

These collective actions helped Boeing facilities in the United States—along with Bankstown and Fishermans Bend, Australia, and Winnipeg, Canada—earn their certification before the goal of the end of 2008.

Lee Kuhre (left), senior environmental manager for Commercial Airplanes' Fabrication organization, and Ron Simmons, manager, Frederickson (Wash.) Site Services, visit the cooling tower that supports composite operations at the Composite Manufacturing Center at Frederickson. This location was one of 16 Boeing sites that earned its ISO 14001 environmental certification last year.

MARIAN LOCKHART/BOEING



“This was a huge effort and a terrific example of why functional management is so important,” said Mary Armstrong, Environment, Health and Safety vice president. “Ensuring we were common and aligned across the whole company was key to meeting our aggressive commitment.”

The teams’ efforts also drew praise from the team of experienced auditors, with over 80 positive noteworthy items and no major nonconformances.

“DNV auditors recognized many areas of environmental excellence at Boeing, from employee involvement programs to recycling efforts, in one of the most aggressive ISO 14001 certification efforts we’ve seen,” said Sidney Vianna, DNV’s director of Aviation, Space & Defense Services. “Congratulations to Boeing on this significant accomplishment, and we look forward to our ongoing partnership in continual environmental improvement.”

Yet the certifications don’t mark the end of this activity. Not only are additional Boeing facilities working toward earning their certifications this year, but the certified locations must do what’s needed to maintain theirs. Among the team’s next set of to-dos: better integrating environmental management systems into the business, and maintaining the engagement of employees. “We’ve generated a lot of grass-roots excitement,” Hoff said.

Indeed, leaders of the certification effort said the endeavor would not have been as successful if it wasn’t for the enthusiasm and dedication of Boeing employees at the certified sites.

“This effort has been very successful at Boeing thanks to the efforts of many people,” Kuhre said. “It’s clear to me that Boeing employees are going to keep the environment high on the agenda.” ■

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Standard bearers

These Boeing facilities received their ISO 14001 certification in 2008. They join Everett, Wash., Portland, Ore., and Exmouth, Australia, as ISO 14001-certified sites (see Page 20 of the March 2008 *Boeing Frontiers*).

U.S. LOCATIONS

Alabama: Huntsville

Arizona: Mesa

California: El Segundo, Long Beach, Seal Beach, Sylmar, Taft, Torrance

Florida: Kennedy Space Center

Missouri: St. Louis, St. Charles

Pennsylvania: Philadelphia

Texas: San Antonio

Utah: Salt Lake City

Washington: Auburn, Frederickson, Kent, Renton and North Boeing Field Developmental Center and Military Flight Center (Seattle/Tukwila), Boeing Electronics Center and Triton Towers (Renton)

INTERNATIONAL LOCATIONS

Australia: Bankstown, Fishermans Bend

Canada: Winnipeg

PHOTO: Kris Stutko, an environmental engineer/scientist in St. Louis who supported multiple Integrated Defense Systems locations in the ISO 14001 certification effort, said that having common tools helped new sites get up to speed quickly. RON BOOKOUT/BOEING