

<b>VETERANS AFFAIRS CANADA</b>		
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM MANUAL</b>		
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**Background**

Amendments to the Auditor General Act in 1995 require that all federal government departments create Sustainable Development Strategies (SDSs) which address their respective economic, social and environmental goals. Veterans Affairs (VA) published its Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) in November, 1997. These strategies must be updated every three years. Veterans Affairs will publish its first updated version in the year 2000.

Veterans Affairs’ Sustainable Development Strategy requires that an Environmental Management System (EMS) be established “based on the ISO 14000 model”. This manual is VA’s attempt at documenting its Environmental Management System in accordance with those requirements, as set out in International Standards Organization (ISO) 14001 and 14004.

**Purpose**

This manual was developed to:

- provide guidance to employees, particularly those who have responsibility for the development, implementation and ongoing maintenance of Veterans Affairs’ Environmental Management System; and to
- comply with the requirements of the Veterans Affairs Sustainable Development Strategy and the federal government’s Greening Government Policy.

**Definition**

**Environmental Management System:** part of an organization’s overall management system that includes organizational structure, planning activities, responsibilities, practices, procedures, processes, and resources for developing, implementing, achieving, reviewing, and maintaining its environmental policy (ISO 14004).

**Responsibilities**

The Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services Branch, as Chief Environmental Officer (CEO) for the Portfolio, has overall responsibility and accountability for implementation of the EMS. Specific responsibilities are delineated in subsequent chapters.

**Scope**

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To meet the requirements of its Sustainable Development Strategy, Veterans Affairs has established a Portfolio-wide EMS to coordinate environmental management of its business operations. This manual describes what ISO 14001 refers to as the “core elements” which include: the overall management system; the operational components that may impact upon the environment; and the requirements for documenting and reporting activities aimed at managing the environmental aspects.

Within this wider context, the individual operations and facilities that make up the Veterans Affairs Portfolio are responsible for developing and maintaining their own systems and procedures to meet VA’s overall environmental policy, goals, objectives and targets. Progress will be monitored through a Portfolio-wide reporting system coordinated by the Environmental Management Office, Head Office, Charlottetown.

**Operations**

Veterans Affairs’ mandate is primarily the delivery of economic and health benefits and services to veterans, their dependants and qualified others. VA is also responsible for maintenance of veterans’ graveyards and certain memorial sites in Canada and abroad. With the exception of Ste. Anne’s Hospital, most of these operations are administrative in nature and do not represent major impacts on the environment. Components of these operations, however, which have significant or potential impacts on the environment such as procurement practices, waste management, use of energy, etc. are identified in Chapter 3, Environmental Aspects.

**Facilities**

Veterans Affairs is a non-custodian department with operations in a number of locations across Canada. With the exception of Ste. Anne’s Hospital in Montreal which is owned by the department, all facilities are occupied through lease arrangements with PWGSC. These include:

- Head Office, Charlottetown
- Minister’s Office, Ottawa; and
- Regional / District Offices in all provinces.

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Veterans Affairs has responsibility for a diminishing number of VLA properties in different parts of the country, and for maintenance of the following war memorial sites and cemeteries:

- Beaumont Hamel and Vimy Ridge war memorials in France;
- Fort Massey Veterans Cemetery, Halifax, Nova Scotia; and
- Veterans Cemetery, Esquimalt, British Columbia.

The above cemeteries are owned by Veterans Affairs. VA also owns plots in a number of other cemeteries across Canada. These plots are maintained by the cemetery owners through cost sharing agreements with Veterans Affairs.

**Responsibility for EMS Development and Maintenance**

As delegated by the Chief Environmental Officer, the Director, Information Access and Support Services (DIASS) is responsible for providing a leadership role in developing VA’s Environmental Management System (EMS), including development and maintenance of this manual. This responsibility has been delegated in part to the EMS Coordinator. In order for the EMS to be properly implemented and maintained, this manual must be continuously updated and available to relevant staff and other stakeholders. Continual progress and due diligence are the watchwords in working toward an effective Environmental Management System.

**Manual Approval**

The contents of this manual are approved by the Chief Environmental Officer, on the advice of the DIASS and other managers directly concerned with specific chapters.

**Distribution**

This manual will be promulgated electronically via the Veterans Affairs Acrobat Reader. A limited number of hard copy manuals will also be published and distributed to the Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services (ADM/CS) and the Director, Information, Access and Support Services. They may wish to distribute hard copies to other individuals. Individual chapters of this manual may be completed and issued at different times. The date of issue is indicated in the header of each chapter, as above.

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**Purpose**

Veterans Affairs’ Sustainable Development Strategy, first tabled in December 1997, contains the following policy statement:

*Veterans Affairs will integrate sustainable development concepts, principles and objectives with the Portfolio’s policies, programs, operations and decision making processes.*

Part of the policy requirements include: *the adoption of preventive environmental care as the foundation of sustainable development through the design and implementation of an Environmental Management System.*

**Senior Management Commitment**

Veterans Affairs’ environmental policy is further set out in a document signed by senior management in August 1998, entitled “Veterans Affairs Commitment to Environmental Stewardship” (Appendix A). This commitment document was widely promulgated throughout the Portfolio and states, in part, that Veterans Affairs will:

- contribute to the federal government’s goal of helping to shape a better future for all Canadians, characterized by environmental responsibility;
- establish partnership initiatives with provincial and municipal governments and private industry as steps towards this goal;
- implement environmental “best practices” established by Environment Canada in *A Guide to Green Government*; and
- strive for continuous improvement counting on and recognizing the support and initiatives of employees in adopting sound practices in their workplaces.

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**Purpose**

Clause 4.3.1 of ISO 14001 requires an organization to identify, evaluate and prioritize, in a systematic manner, the environmental issues (referred to as “aspects”) associated with its activities, products and services. This process must determine which of the identified aspects have significant environmental impacts. The establishment of objectives and targets is based on the significant aspects.

**Definitions**

**Environmental Aspects:** refers to an element of an organization’s activities, products or services that can interact with the environment.

**Environmental Impacts:** any change to the environment, whether adverse or beneficial, wholly or partially resulting from an organization’s activities, products or services.

**Significance Criteria:** must be established by the organization relative to its operations and the potential impact of the identified aspects. A generic list may include probability of occurrence; scale, severity and duration of impact; regulatory requirements; and financial implications, etc.

The identification of environmental aspects is an ongoing process that determines the past, current and potential impact of Veterans Affairs’ operations and activities on the environment. Environmental aspects are identified through:

- baseline surveys;
- consultation with outside specialists and VA personnel directly involved;
- regular monitoring and reporting;
- regulatory and other requirements (federal, provincial and municipal);
- internal audit reports; and
- annual risk assessments.

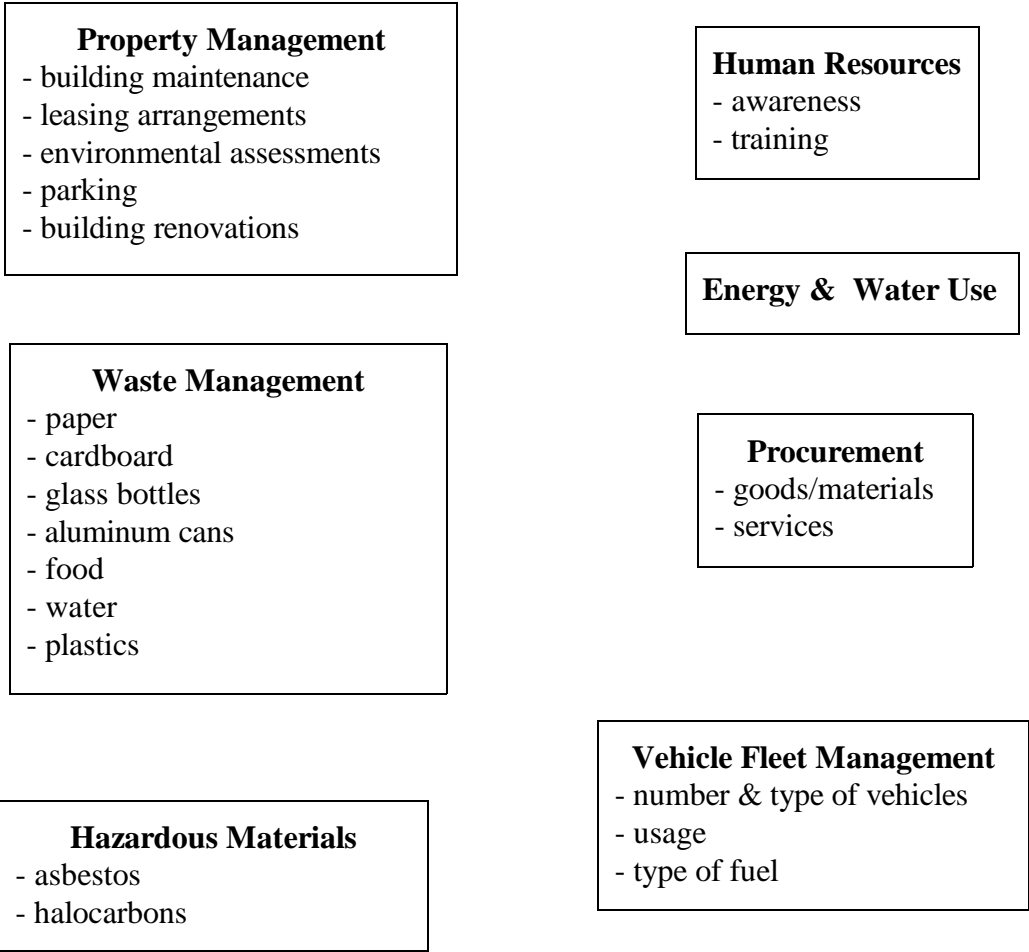
The first baseline survey of all VA facilities was conducted in 1997. Update reports are conducted annually. Documentation on these reports can be found in the EMS Coordinator’s file and in the subject file system, Records management.

**Responsibility**

The EMS Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that baseline data and update reports on these aspects are completed by all components of the Portfolio, when required.

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**Figure 3.1**  
**Significant Environmental Aspects in VA Operations**



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**Purpose**

Clause 4.3.2 of ISO 14001 requires that the organization have procedures to “identify and have access to” environmental legal requirements, corporate environmental policies and procedures, and other requirements.

**Definitions**

**Legal requirements** means all the legislative constraints imposed on an organization to control its environmental aspects and operations. These include federal, provincial and local laws and regulations, environmental permits, registrations, orders, and consent decrees.

**Other requirements** refers generally to internal corporate standards and external industry standards. Internal corporate standards can include corporate or divisional standards that go beyond the legal regulations.

**Figure 4.1** on the following page shows the process by which environmental legislation and regulations which may pertain to Veterans Affairs operations are received, reviewed for requirements and processed for implementation. In some instances, documents such as this may be initially received at a lower level, but the review and implementation process is essentially the same, depending on the scope, requirement, and the parties concerned.

**Table 4.2** shows the most pertinent environmental legislation and regulations that pertain to Veterans Affairs operations.

**Responsibilities**

The EMS Coordinator and SDS Coordinator are jointly responsible for ensuring that appropriate action is taken with respect to legal and other environmental requirements, as per Figure 4.1.

Regional Directors General (RDGs) and the Executive Director of Ste. Anne’s Hospital are responsible for provincial and local requirements in this regard.

PWGSC as facility owner/managers are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of many of these legal and other requirements such as local regulations, operating permits, etc.



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**Figure 4.1 Legal Documentation Process**

**Deputy Minister's Office**  
 Environmental legislation/regulations from Environment Canada or other departments recorded and forwarded to CEO

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**Chief Environmental Officer (ADM/CS)**  
 - documents reviewed for requirement  
 - brought forward and forwarded to the Director General, Corporate Services or to the Director, Information, Access and Support Services

b`

**DG Corporate Planning**  
 - documents reviewed for requirement  
 - forwarded for action

8

**D, IASS**  
 - docs reviewed for requirement  
 - forwarded for action

9

**SDS Coordinator**  
 - EMS Coordinator consulted, as required  
 - document actioned

**EMS Coordinator**  
 - SDS Coordinator consulted, as required  
 - document actioned

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**Table 4.2 - Federal Environmental Legislation**

<b>Acts &amp; Regulations</b>	<b>VA Facilities Concerned</b>	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA)</b>			
Sec. S.57 - Spills of a regulated substance	All	Particulars reported within 24 hrs	Person who first discovers spill
Sec. 54(1) - Federal Hazardous Waste Regulation	Ste. Anne's Hospital (mainly)	Annual Report to Environment Canada (EC)	
Sec. 54(1) -Registration of storage tank systems for petroleum products	Ste. Anne's Hospital & other free-standing facilities	Registration of all existing systems and within 60 days after new installations	PWGSC
Sec. 53 - Technical guidelines for the above mentioned storage tank systems		Conformance and up-grading	PWGSC
Halocarbon Regulations re: service records, training, permits, decommissioning	All	Reports to EC: - within 24 hrs. of any releases - within 14 days, as per Schedule 111	- facility manager - PWGSC
<b>Environmental Assessment Act</b> - Pt. 2, Toxic Substances - Pt. 4, Use of Lands, property	All	- Exercise due diligence - Compliance reviews	Director, IASS DG Finance
<b>Alternative Fuels Act</b>	All	- Implementation - Annual report to Treasury Board	DG Finance

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**Purpose**

Clause 4.3.3 of ISO 14001 requires that organizations have a systematic process to establish and maintain environmental objectives and targets in order to monitor and improve its environmental performance. The intent is to establish specific and measurable documented objectives and targets that address the most significant environmental aspects. VA policies and programs which contribute further to the overall achievement of these objectives and targets can be found in Chapter 6, Environmental Management Programs.

**Definitions**

**Objective:** an overall environmental goal, arising from the environmental policy that an organization sets itself to achieve, and which is quantified where practical.

**Target:** a detailed performance requirement, quantified where practical, applicable to the organization or part thereof, that arises from the environmental objectives that needs to be set and met in order to achieve those objectives.

**Environmental Performance Metrics (EPM):** the means by which performance towards the achievement of objectives and targets will be measured - e.g. tonnes of waste, dollars saved, etc.

**Overall Objectives**

- establish environmental accountability at the senior management level;
- implement environmental stewardship initiatives at all VA facilities, based on Environment Canada’s list of “Best Practices”;
- create a network of “Green Teams” and “Green Champions” to promote environmental stewardship throughout the Portfolio;
- encourage employees to integrate environmental stewardship practices in their day-to-day activities; and
- establish monitoring, reporting and auditing procedures to ensure that environmental stewardship practices are being implemented and maintained, as required.

**Responsibilities**

**The Director, Information, Access and Support Services**, through the EMS Coordinator and managers in the specific areas concerned, is responsible for ensuring that objectives and targets are established and that an action plan for their achievement is developed and implemented.

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## **WASTE MANAGEMENT**

### **Objective(s):**

- reduce the generation of non-hazardous waste throughout the Portfolio

### **Target(s):**

- baseline surveys completed by 1997/98;
- paper reduction strategy in place by 1997/98;
- incineration of classified waste eliminated by 99/00; and
- 15% reduction of waste (from 1997/98 baseline) by year 2000.

### **Environmental Performance Metrics:**

- tonnes of waste produced compared to 1997/98 baseline figures.

### **Strategy:**

- reduce waste through source reduction, reuse, recycling, education and promotion.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES / ACTIONS\* FOR ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS:**

### **Chief Environmental Officer, through the Director of IASS and Environmental Stewardship Committee:**

- educate staff on methods of waste reduction;
- initiate “no or low waste” practices;
- continuously promote Greening Government Best Practices;
- monitor waste generation;
- encourage the installation and use of photocopiers, printers with duplexing capability;
- establish programs and collection centres for recyclables such as paper, glass, plastics; and for disposal of hazardous items such as batteries; and
- set up “trading posts” for reusable office supplies and equipment.

\*These are not intended as being all inclusive, but rather as an indication of the kind of actions necessary to meet the objectives.

**Reference:** objective & targets, progress reports, etc. in EMS Coordinator’s file.

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**PROCUREMENT**

**Objective(s):**

- C implementation of VA’s green procurement policy; and
- C compliance with Treasury Board policy

**Target(s):**

- C standard packaging reduction clause by fall 1999;
- C Green procurement policy approved/in place by fall 1999;
- Green procurement of office supplies by 1999/2000;
- green expenditures target by 1999/2000; and
- 100% recycled paper procurement by 1999/2000.

**Environmental Performance Metrics:**

- level of integration of green procurement practices throughout the Portfolio; and
- green products/services agreements with suppliers.

**Strategy:**

- Phase in and continuously promote green procurement practices throughout the Portfolio.

**RESPONSIBILITIES / ACTIONS\* FOR ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS:**

**Director General Finance:**

- develop green procurement awareness campaign;
- provide appropriate training to procurement officers and others with procurement responsibilities; and
- monitor performance.

\*These are not meant to be all inclusive, but rather as an indication of the kind of actions necessary to meet the objectives.

**Reference:** Green Procurement Policy.

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**ENERGY USE**

**Objective(s):**

- reduce energy consumption in all VA owned/leased facilities.

**Target(s):**

- 15% reduction in energy use from 1997 levels by year 2000 in federally owned buildings where VA is a 20% or greater tenant; and
- installation and utilization of energy saving equipment and devices.

**Environmental Performance Metrics:**

- kilowatts of energy used, as monitored and reported by PWGSC; and
- energy cost savings.

**Strategy:**

- negotiate agreements with PWGSC and other landlords where Veterans Affairs is a tenant to implement energy saving devices and practices in all facilities.

**RESPONSIBILITIES / ACTIONS\* FOR ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS:**

**Director, IASS / Regional DPMS / Ste. Anne’s Hospital Administrator are responsible for implementing plans to:**

- identify areas for potential energy savings;
- follow Greening Government Best Practices re energy use; and
- promote energy savings practices with all employees.

\*These are not meant to be all inclusive, but rather as an indication of the kind of actions necessary to meet the objectives.

**Reference:** PWGSC monthly reports.

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**WATER USE**

**Objective(s):**

- reduce water usage in VA facilities.

**Target(s):**

- 15% reduction in consumption of water from 1997 levels by year 2000, in federally owned buildings where VAC is a 20% or greater tenant.

**Environmental Performance Metrics:**

- cubic metres / litres of water used; and
- number of water saving devices installed.

**Strategy:**

- negotiate agreements with PWGSC and other landlords where VAC is a tenant to implement water saving devices and practices in all facilities.

**RESPONSIBILITIES / ACTIONS\* FOR ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS:**

**Director, IASS / Regional DPMS / Ste. Anne’s Hospital Administrator are responsible for implementing plans to:**

- identify areas for water savings;
- follow Greening Government Best Practices re water usage; and
- promote water savings practices with all employees.

\*These are not meant to be all inclusive, but rather as an indication of the kind of actions necessary to meet the objectives.

**Reference:** PWGSC reports.

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## **PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

### **Objective(s):**

- working partnerships with facility owners to reduce environmental impacts;
- maintenance of veterans cemeteries, plots and war memorials for which VA has responsibility in a manner that meets or exceeds environmental standards; and
- compliance with CEAA, CEPA and other federal, provincial and municipal legislative and regulatory requirements.

### **Target(s):**

- agreements with landlords / property owners: 50% of facilities by 1998/99;
- 100% of facilities by 1999/2000;
- for veterans cemeteries, plots and war memorials; and
- environmental assessments completed, as / when required.

### **Environmental Performance Metrics:**

- documented property management agreements; and
- schedule / record of environmental assessments.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES / ACTIONS\* FOR ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS:**

**Director, IASS / DG Finance / DG Commemoration / Ste. Anne's Hospital Administrator are responsible for ensuring that:**

- procedures to minimize environmental impacts are in place at all facilities;
- cemeteries / plots / memorials for which Veterans Affairs has responsibility are properly maintained; and
- environmental assessments are completed when required.

\*These are not meant to be all inclusive, but rather as an indication of the kind of actions necessary to meet the objectives.

**Reference:** Property management file / Ste. Anne's Hospital file, EMS Coordinator's file; Commemoration files.



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**HUMAN RESOURCES**

**Objective(s):**

- employee awareness of, appreciation for, and full participation in environmental stewardship practices.

**Target(s):**

- job descriptions reviewed and appropriate environmental responsibilities included by 1998/99; and
- employee awareness and incentive programs established by 1998.

**Environmental Performance Metrics:**

- level of employee awareness and participation in environmental stewardship practices, as measured in annual surveys

**Strategy:**

- establish cooperative agreements with Human Resources Development, Communications and Information Technology Divisions to ensure that programs and systems are established that integrate and facilitate employee awareness and participation in environmental stewardship.

**RESPONSIBILITIES / ACTIONS\* FOR ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS:**

**Director, IASS / DG Human Resources / EMS Coordinator:**

- promote participation through awareness campaigns and employee incentives;
- provide appropriate training to employees re: Best Practices; and
- circulate regular updates on environmental stewardship initiatives to all employees

\*These are not meant to be all inclusive, but rather as an indication of the kind of actions necessary to meet the objectives.

**Reference:** Annual EMS surveys.

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**VEHICLE FLEET MANAGEMENT**

**Objective(s):**

- meet letter and spirit of the Alternative Fuels Act & Regulations; and
- compliance with TB Motor Vehicle Policy.

**Target(s):**

- fleet management policy approved by 1997/98; and
- three alternative fuels conversion projects completed by 99/00.

**Environmental Performance Metrics:**

- number of vehicles converted to alternative fuels against 1997 baselines figures; and
- number of vehicles in fleet.

**Strategies:**

- establish Departmental policy on fleet management and promote Greening Government Best Practices; and
- Motor Vehicle Fleets throughout the Portfolio.

**RESPONSIBILITIES / ACTIONS\* FOR ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS:**

**DG Finance / RDG's / Exec. Dir., Ste. Anne's Hospital Administrator:**

- rationalize requirement for, and use of VAC owned/leased vehicles;
- follow Greening Government Motor Vehicle Fleet Best Practices; and
- monitor use of vehicles and related expenditures.

\*These are not meant to be all inclusive, but rather as an indication of the kind of actions necessary to meet the objectives.

**Reference:** Fleet Management Policy, Financial Management Manual (FMM) and Q-tools.

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## **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

### **Objective(s):**

- eliminate, or minimize potential impact of, hazardous materials such as asbestos, halocarbons; and
- control disposal of hazardous waste (biomedical waste, Ste. Anne's Hospital).

### **Target(s):**

- removal of asbestos, where feasible, from all VA facilities by 2004; and
- removal of halocarbons, where feasible, from all VA facilities by 2002.

### **Environmental Performance Metrics:**

- asbestos-free buildings, as certified by PWGSC and / or facility owners / managers;
- halocarbon-free facilities, as certified by PWGSC and / or facility owners / managers; and
- amount diverted from non-toxic waste stream.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES / ACTIONS\* FOR ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS:**

### **Director, IASS / RDG'S / Ste. Anne's Hospital Administrator:**

- arrange with PWGSC to complete building assessments and establish plans for the removal of asbestos and halocarbons; and
- ensure that regulatory requirements are complied with re: the above and biomedical waste.

\*These are not meant to be all inclusive, but rather as an indication of the kind of actions necessary to meet the objectives.

**Reference:** Property Management - EMS Coordinator's files / Ste. Anne's Hospital environmental management plans / PWGSC records.

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**Purpose**

Clause 4.3.4 of ISO 14001 requires that the organization have programs in place specifying the actions it will take to achieve the objectives and targets that were set. This chapter outlines VA’s management programs and policies which further contribute to meeting the environmental policy requirements, goals, objectives and targets described in other chapters of this manual.

The overall goal is to instill a corporate environmental culture throughout the Portfolio whereby sustainable development principles and environmental stewardship practices are integrated into all policy, planning and operations; in dealings with other levels of government and the private sector; and in the work ethic of Veterans Affairs employees. In conjunction with the provisions described in other chapters, this goal will be accomplished through:

- involvement in joint environmental initiatives and sharing best practices with other departments and levels of governments and the private sector;
- working partnerships with Human Resources Division (HRD), Information Technology Services (ITS) and Communications Division;
- membership and active involvement in federal government interdepartmental environmental committees;
- involvement in local environmental committees involving provincial, municipal, as well as non-government organizations and private sector groups, when practical;
- incorporating environmental considerations into all VA policies, directives, agreements, guidelines and procedures, as applicable;
- establishing an environmental network within Veterans Affairs with representation from all branches, divisions and regions; and
- promoting VA’s environmental policy, senior management’s commitment and environmental updates regularly throughout the Portfolio.

Table 6.1 on the following page outlines environmental management programs and policies in place to implement the above objectives. An asterisk\* indicates that the policy / program applies primarily to Head Office Charlottetown facilities. Regional and District offices, Ste. Anne’s Hospital and the Minister’s Office in Ottawa have developed their own programs and procedures which compliment those of Head Office, Charlottetown, to meet the stated targets and objectives for the Portfolio as a whole.

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**Table 6.1 - Environmental Management Programs and Policies**

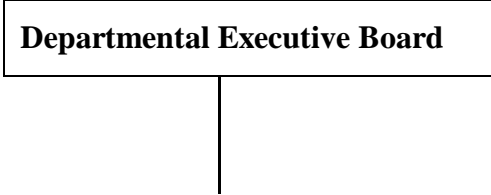
<b>Program / Policy</b>	<b>Overall Objectives</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>EMS Action Plan</b> - Portfolio - wide strategy	- broad range planning and implementation	EMS Coordinator's file
<b>Team Approach</b> - through Environmental Stewardship Committee; Green Teams; and Green Champions	- employee awareness and participation - greater sense of responsibility and accountability	- Terms of Reference (Appendix B ) - ESC minutes
<b>Agreements with PWGSC</b> and other building owners where VA is not the sole occupant re: energy and water reduction	- install metering and consumption reduction devices & procedures - blend costs with rent	Occupancy agreements
<b>Parking Policy*</b> - encourages car pooling and alternate means of transportation	- energy reduction - efficient use of space - improved air quality	Parking Policy, VA Administrative Management Manual
<b>Paper Reduction Plan</b> - discourages use of paper media and storage - encourages maximum use of electronic media	- waste reduction - energy reduction - space reduction - more efficient use of resources	EMS Coordinator's file
<b>Air Quality in VAC Facilities</b> - promotes scent free buildings	- less air pollution - healthier working environment	Scent Free policy Statement
<b>Employee Incentive Plan</b>	- employee involvement	IASS Communication

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**Purpose**

Clause 4.1 of ISO 14001 requires that the organization align its organizational structure to support effective environmental management by establishing clear documented roles, responsibilities, and authorities. Management must provide adequate resources and appoint a management representative to oversee the EMS and report on EMS performance. These roles and responsibilities are also included in the Sustainable Development Strategy and, to a limited extent, in work descriptions.

**Figure 7.1- EMS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**



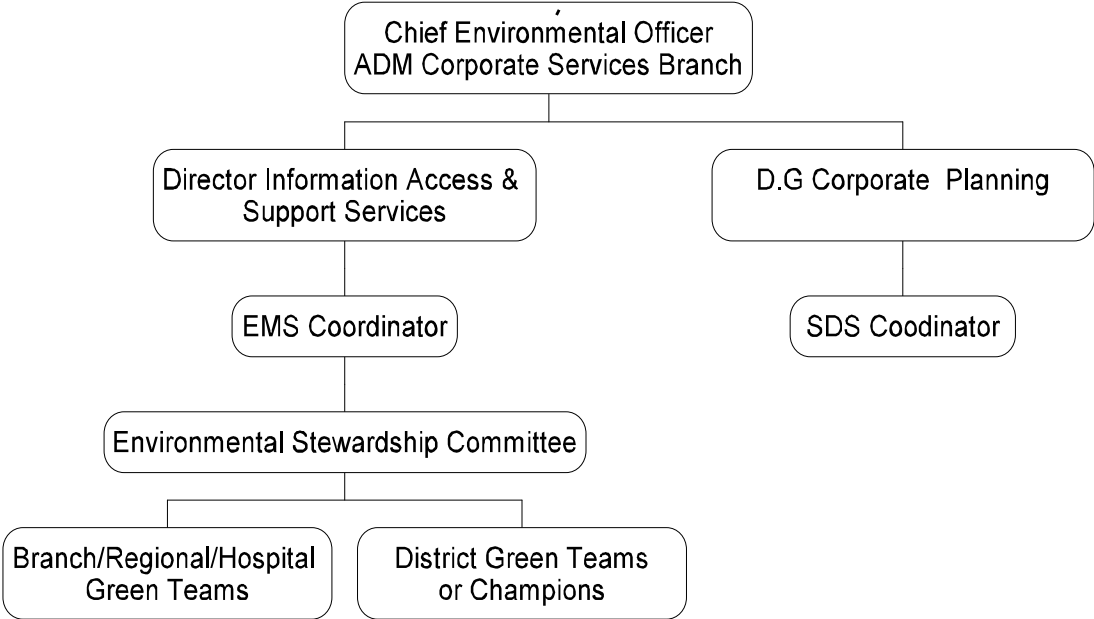
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**Departmental Executive Board (DEB)**

The Departmental Executive Board consists of senior management representatives from both the Veterans Services and Corporate Services branches of the Department. In addition to its other responsibilities, DEB is responsible for:

- allocating financial and other resources to meet VA’s environmental policy requirements;
- reviewing periodic status reports and the annual report on VA’s environmental program;
- providing guidance and direction on specific issues and concerns; and
- approving and forwarding annual performance report to the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development.

**Chief Environmental Officer (CEO)**



This role was assumed by the Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services Branch. The CEO is

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accountable for the overall performance of VA’s environmental program. Responsibilities include:

- providing leadership in the development and ongoing maintenance of an effective environmental program;
- ensuring that appropriate financial systems and procedures are in place to trace and report environmental expenditures;
- ensuring that periodic audits are conducted to verify compliance with environmental laws and regulations and to assess the environmental program performance;
- reviewing periodic status and progress reports; and
- submitting the annual report to DEB for final approval.

**Director General, Corporate Planning Division (DG CPD)**

- monitors the development, implementation and progress of the EMS to ensure that it conforms with SDS objectives.

**Director, Information, Access and Support Services (Director, IASS)**

The Chief Environmental Officer has delegated responsibility for the development, implementation and ongoing maintenance of the EMS program to the Director, IASS.



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**Director, IASS** responsibilities include:

- providing leadership in EMS development and implementation;
- obtaining and allocating corporate resources to meet those requirements; and
- providing support and guidance to the EMS Coordinator and the Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC).

**SDS Coordinator**

In conjunction with responsibility for developing and updating VA’s Sustainable Development Strategy, the SDS Coordinator is responsible for:

- liaising with the EMS Manager / Coordinator to ensure that the EMS is developed and maintained in accordance with SDS environmental objectives and targets; and
- reviewing and providing input, when indicated, on EMS status reports and the annual report.

**EMS Coordinator**

The EMS Coordinator is charged with responsibility for development of the EMS and the day-to-day operation of environmental programs. Responsibilities include:

- planning and budgeting;
- chairing the Environmental Stewardship Committee;
- coordinating development and delivery of EMS training and awareness;
- coordinating functions and events such as workshops and environmental awareness week;
- attending meetings and corresponding with federal government and interdepartmental organizations on EMS matters; and
- seeking partnerships with other stakeholders and outside organizations.

**Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC)**

The ESC consists of representatives from various components of the Veterans Affairs Portfolio. Its primary role is to facilitate the development and ongoing maintenance of VA’s environmental program by providing a forum for discussion and to generate ideas for improvements to the EMS. The ESC meets periodically via teleconference or videoconference. In addition, the ESC endeavors to meet with all representatives annually in a two or three day workshop at different locations across the country. **See Appendix B, ESC’s Terms of Reference.**

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**Green Teams**

Green teams were established throughout the Portfolio to ensure that VA’s environmental program is fully implemented and properly maintained at all levels. The Green team’s composition and activities are usually coordinated by the ESC representative for their respective organization. Responsibilities include:

- ensuring the implementation of best practices in their respective areas of work;
- monitoring the progress, status and ongoing maintenance of the environmental program;
- reporting on the above to their ESC representative; and
- sharing information on any new initiatives and/or apparent deficiencies in the system.

**Green Champions**

Green champions are individuals who are not formally part of a Green Team, but who have demonstrated an interest and commitment to environmental stewardship concerns through their initiatives and sharing of ideas.

**VA Employees**

All employees are responsible for integrating environmental best practices into their job duties and general work practices. Employees are also encouraged to identify and report, through their Green Team member or champion, any environmental aspects where improvements may be achieved.

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### Purpose

Clause 4.4.2 of ISO 14001 requires that organizations have in place EMS awareness training; job-specific training; and regulatory required training.

**Table 8.1 - Training Needs Matrix**

Type	Intended For	Responsibility	Delivery Method
ISO 14001 & 14004	employees responsible for EMS planning, implementation and maintenance	- CEO - Dir. IASS - EMS / SDS Coordinator	- seminars - outside consultant
EMS awareness: - of system - best practices - responsibilities	all employees	- CEO - EMS Coordinator - ESC, Green Teams, Green Champions	- on-site instruction - regular bulletins - displays; posters - posted on Acroread - Environment Week / Earth Day, etc.
Job-specific	employees whose work could have an impact on the environment	Operations managers, Green Teams, Green Champions	- informal, on-the-job
Regulatory	- employees involved in operations which have specific legal or regulatory requirements - construction contractors	- PWGSC - building owners - Facilities managers	- classroom or seminar

Since Veterans Affairs is mainly a non-custodial department, training in the context of ISO requirements is primarily concentrated on EMS awareness and competence. Job specific and regulatory training are more pertinent to the responsibilities of PWGSC and Ste. Anne's Hospital relative to the identified requirements and is therefore addressed by those organizations as custodial managers. The goal of EMS awareness is to ensure that employees:

- are aware that the organization has an environmental policy and is committed to the prevention of pollution, continual improvement, and is compliant with applicable environmental laws and regulations;
- are aware that the organization has identified certain environmental aspects as targets for improvement; and
- understand the goals and principles of the EMS and the ways in which their job activities can impact the environment, and the achievement of established objectives and targets.

EMS awareness training in Veterans Affairs is outlined in Table 8.2

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**Table 8.2 - Delivery of EMS Training and Awareness**

<b>Method</b>	<b>Place/Timing</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Audience</b>
Environment Canada two-day workshop	Halifax, N.S. Fall, 1996	ISO 14001 & 14004	Director, IASS, EMS Coordinator, other members of the ESC
ESC workshops, facilitated by environmental management consultant	1996, 1997- 1998 at different locations	- ISO 14001 & 14004 - best practices - target setting - issues review	ESC members, including reps from all regions
Federal Committee on EMS forums	Ottawa; held three or four times a year since 1996	ISO 14001 & 14004, regulatory, issue related	ESC Coordinator or representative
Management presentations	DEB meetings	SDS / EMS status / issues	Senior management
ESC regular meetings	teleconference or video conference quarterly	- review of issues - introduction of new info or procedures	ESC members
Environment Week	All VA locations	environmental stewardship, general	All employees
Employee Incentive program	Ongoing, throughout the Portfolio	recognition and awards for greening initiatives	All employees
(See Ch. 9, Communication, for other methods of delivery)			

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**Purpose**

This chapter outlines the type and method of communications for conveying information about EMS matters, both internally and externally, as required by clause 4.4.3. of ISO 14001. VA’s corporate communication plan is contained in the Sustainable Development Strategy.

**Internal Communications** are intended to ensure that employees are:

- made aware of the environmental policy and related procedures necessary to conduct their work;
- informed about the overall performance of the EMS; and
- provided with the opportunity and mechanism to express concerns about environmental issues.

**External Communications** involves communications to and from external parties such as other government departments / agencies, regulatory bodies, suppliers, etc. regarding environmental matters.

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**Table 9.1 - EMS Communications Requirements**

<b>Type/Method</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing</b>
<b>Internal</b>		
New employee / student orientation	Human Resources Division	when hired
Awareness notices, posters	ESC, Regional & Hospital Green Teams	periodic
Carillon, VA newsletter	ESC, Communications Directorate	monthly
Electronic (Acrobat reader)	ESC, ITS	regularly
Employee incentives/awards	Human Resources Division	ongoing
Annual reports	Corporate Planning Division	Spring and Fall
(see also Ch. 8, Training & Awareness)		
<b>External</b>		
legislation, regulations, policy, codes of practice	(see Ch. 4, Legal and other requirements)	ongoing
contracts, agreements, letters of understanding, etc.	DG Finance (through Procurement chiefs)	ongoing

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### Purpose

A good document control system is one of the most important elements of an environmental management system in meeting the requirements of ISO 14001, clause 4.4.5. The intent is to ensure that all documents critical to the proper functioning of an EMS are identified, complete, current, available when required, and that out-of-date documents are replaced.

### Definitions

**Documents**, in the context of ISO 14001, include written information that is, or could be, critical to effective environmental management. For this purpose, “documents” can be considered as prescriptive in nature - i.e. describing what will be done, responsibility, and how it is to be carried out. Examples are policy statements, procedures, permits, regulations, plans, etc.

**Records** are descriptive in nature, indicating the outcome or result of an activity. Examples include baseline data, minutes of meetings, reports, completed inspection forms, audit records, etc.

**Table 10.1**  
**EMS Document / Records Control Matrix**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Media</b>		<b>Location</b>	<b>Review Cycle</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
	<b>Pape r</b>	<b>elect- ronic</b>			
<b>Policy/Planning</b>					
Scope statement	<b>T</b>	<b>T</b>	- EMS Coordinator files - G drive, Intranet	annual	EMS Coordinator
Environmental Policy	<b>T</b>	<b>T</b>	- EMS & SDS files - G drive, Intranet	annual	EMS Coordinator/ SDS Coordinator
Aspect Identification	<b>T</b>		- EMS Coordinator files	annual	EMS Coordinator
Legal & Other Requirements	<b>T</b>		- EMS Coordinator files	annual	EMS Coordinator

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Subject	Media		Location	Review Cycle	Responsibility
	Paper	electronic			
Org. Chart & Responsibilities	T	T	- EMS Coordinator files - G drive, Intranet	annual	EMS Coordinator
Training	T		- EMS Coordinator files	annual	EMS Coordinator
Communication	T		- EMS Coordinator files	annual	EMS Coordinator
<b>Documents and Records</b>					
Document / Records Control Matrix	T	T	- EMS Coordinator files - G drive, Intranet	annual	EMS Coordinator
Document/file Maintenance	T	T	- EMS Coordinator files	ongoing	EMS Coordinator
EMS Manual	T	T	- Acrobat Reader - Hard copy distribution list	annual	EMS Coordinator
<b>Objectives &amp; Targets</b>					
Waste Management	T	T	- EMS Coordinator files	annual	EMS Coordinator
Procurement	T	T	- Finance/Procurement	annual	DG Finance
Energy Use	T	T	- EMS Coordinator files - PWGSC	annual	EMS Coordinator
Water Use	T	T	- EMS Coordinator files - PWGSC	annual	EMS Coordinator
Property Management	T	T	- EMS Coordinator files - PWGSC	annual	EMS Coordinator
Human Resources	T	T	- EMS Coordinator files	annual	EMS Coordinator



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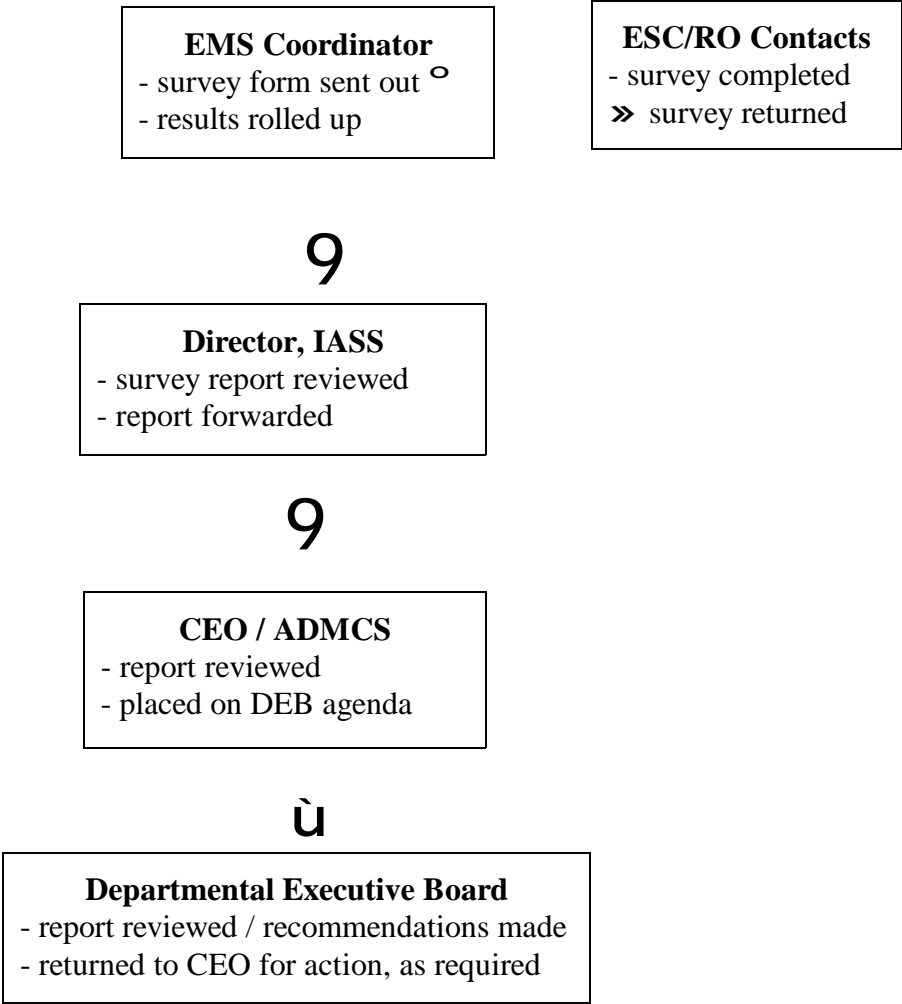
Subject	Media		Location	Review Cycle	Responsibility
	Paper	electronic			
Fleet Management	T	T	- EMS Coordinator files - Finance/Procurement	annual	DG Finance
Hazardous Material	T	T	- EMS Coordinator files - PWGSC/Ste. Anne's Hospital	annual	PWGSC & Ste. Anne's Hospital
<b>Compliance</b>					
Audit					
Monitoring					
Mgmt. Review					

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**Purpose**

Clause 4.5.1 of ISO 14001 requires that procedures be established to monitor and measure an organization’s operations and activities which can have significant environmental impacts. The intent is to track environmental performance, assess implementation and effectiveness of operational controls, evaluate achievement of environmental objectives, and to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. EMS Monitoring is done: **a)** on an ongoing basis by members of the ESC, Green Teams and Green Champions; **b)** through periodic internal audits; and **c)** by annual progress report surveys (Figure 11.1 and procedure)

**Figure 11.1**  
**EMS Annual Survey**



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## **Annual Progress Report Procedure**

### **EMS Coordinator**

- sends EMS survey questionnaires to ESC and Green Team contacts

### **ESC / Green Team Contacts**

- complete survey and returns them to EMS Coordinator

### **EMS Coordinator**

- consults with respondents, as necessary, for further input / clarification;
- prepares roll-up of annual progress report;
- forwards roll-up report to Director, IASS; and
- initiates appropriate action, as indicated from Director, IASS and Senior management.

### **Director, Information Access and Support Services (Director, IASS)**

- reviews report and discusses with EMS Coordinator, as necessary;
- amends or annotates report, as indicated; and
- forwards report to Chief Environmental Officer.

### **Chief Environmental Officer (CEO)**

- reviews report and consults with Director, IASS, as required;
- approves and/or makes recommendations;
- tables report at DEB meeting;
- initiates necessary action, as directed; and
- sends final report to DEB.

### **Departmental Executive Board (DEB)**

- reviews report and makes recommendations, as indicated; and
- advises CEO.

### **Note:**

In addition to this annual survey which includes all VAC facilities, Ste. Anne's Hospital also prepares a separate and more comprehensive report which takes into account its unique environmental aspects. This report is submitted to the CEO (ADM / CS) through the ESC chairperson and the Director, IASS.

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**Purpose**

Clause 4.4.7 of ISO 14001 requires that procedures be established to address the following:

- identifying potential accidents and emergency situations;
- preventing and mitigating the environmental impacts that might result from such events; and
- responding to accidents and emergency situations when they occur.

With regard to the first two points above, these factors are considered during ongoing observances of Green Team and Green Champions and others, including Security Services and PWGSC within the context of their day-to-day responsibilities. In addition, these issues are also taken into account in baseline surveys and annual progress reports.

**Potential Emergency Situations**

The type of incidents and emergency situations that could occur is determined by site-specific equipment and facilities as well as geographic setting. Such situations might include the following:

- fires;
- chemical or waste spills;
- process equipment breakdown;
- failure of a pollution control device;
- mishandling of certain chemicals; and
- uncommon natural events such as floods, earthquakes, wind storms, heavy snow or ice.

Most of the above are included in the Veterans Affairs Portfolio annual risk assessment. Each facility within the Portfolio has its own emergency preparedness plan. Because of its unique circumstances relative to other organizations in the Portfolio, Ste. Anne’s Hospital is a special case in this regard and therefore has long established comprehensive emergency preparedness plans and procedures.

Procedures for the above and other types of incidents and emergencies are covered in each facility’s fire and emergency plans. These are generally the responsibility of Security Services, with input from standing committees such as Health and Safety and others concerned.

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**Purpose**

In accordance with the requirements of clause 4.5.2, ISO 14001, procedures must be in place for identifying non-conformances, mitigating any impacts caused, and implementing corrective and preventive action.

**Non-conformance** can be described as anything that does not adhere to prescribed standards or procedures. Examples of non-conformances include:

- absence of required procedures;
- inadequate procedures;
- established procedures not implemented;
- regulatory non-compliance;
- inadequate training;
- failure to meet objectives and targets; and
- insufficient or inadequate documentation to evaluate EMS performance.

**Procedure**

Non-conformance issues may be identified through regular monitoring by Green Team members, annual progress surveys, day-to-day operational activities, and by internal or compliance audits. Non-conformances must be fully documented and recorded from initial identification through to corrective and preventive actions taken. Senior management should be made aware of any major non-conformances, along with the corrective and preventives actions taken. Documented procedures should also be developed / modified and communicated to those responsible to ensure that the non-conformance does not reoccur.

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**Purpose**

Clause 4.5.4 of ISO 14001 requires that the organization have in place programs and procedures for auditing the EMS. An EMS audit has two goals:

- 1) to determine if the EMS conforms to planned arrangements; and
- 2) to establish if the EMS is understood and is being properly implemented and maintained.

Audits should be conducted on a periodic basis and the results presented to management for evaluation. EMS audits need not necessarily be an audit of the entire system carried out at one time, however, VA’s Internal Audit Division schedule includes periodic audits of the EMS. Copies of internal audit reports are available at the Environmental Management Services Office, Head Office Charlottetown. The EMS is also subject to audit by the Office of the Auditor General (OAG). Reports of audits conducted by the OAG are also available.

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**Purpose**

As required by clause 4.6 of ISO 14001, this chapter illustrates the process by which the EMS is periodically reviewed by senior management. Such reviews are an essential component of an EMS to ensure: due diligence, ongoing improvement, accountability, and to demonstrate management’s continuing commitment. Management review considers the adequacy and effectiveness of the EMS components to meet environmental goals and fulfill its policy requirements. Senior management in this context includes the Chief Environmental Officer (ADM, Corporate Services Branch) and the Departmental Executive Board (DEB). The latter organization is comprised of Directors General from the different divisions of the Corporate Services and Veterans Services Branches (including Regional Offices) of the Department.

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**Figure 15.1**  
**Management Review Process**

