



Gold medal standard sustainability

How certification to BS ISO 20121 helped an Olympic venue to prove its sustainability credentials and reduce its utility costs by 15 per cent

Challenge

WPNSA (Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy) was already an impressive facility, but as part of its Sustainable Sourcing Code for the 2012 Games, the London Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games required its suppliers to implement a sustainability management system for its events that was compliant with BS ISO 20121.

Solution

Evolving from our *Specification for a sustainability management system for events*, BS 8901, BS ISO 20121 was developed to help events industry businesses operate more sustainably. It sets out requirements for a sustainable event management system to ensure a long-lasting, balanced approach to economic activity, environmental responsibility and social progress.

Organizations working with BS ISO 20121 must identify, understand and minimize the negative effects their activities have on the environment, society and the economy.

"WPNSA is a world-class facility that aims to operate in the very best way," says its CEO, John Tweed. "It was imperative to support LOCOG's ambition to deliver a sustainable Games. Early adoption of, originally BS 8901, and subsequently BS ISO 20121, put us in an excellent position to minimize any negative impacts relating to sustainability.

"Now that we meet the requirements of an internationally recognized standard, we believe that independent certification will help us attract more corporate functions and sailing regattas from those seeking to integrate sustainability into their supply chain."

BS ISO 20121 sets out a framework of management best practice and requires that organizations understand sustainability issues relevant to their event and create measures to control and minimize impacts. They must prepare a statement that describes what activities and functions will be managed within their sustainability management system.

WPNSA started by identifying stakeholders, so it could detail broader sustainability

issues relating to its business. Although it already had a firm commitment to the environment and consideration of socio-economic factors, many of its procedures were not documented. BS ISO 20121 also requires organizations to identify legal requirements that apply to their activities, products and services and to understand their potential implications.

Outcome

Working with BS ISO 20121 has enabled WPNSA to reduce its utility costs by 15 per cent, while photovoltaic cells generate about one-fifth of energy used by the facility. Having its sustainability credentials certified has also increased WPNSA's appeal as a conference venue. "Our vision is to set the benchmark for sustainability," states Tweed. "By implementing BS ISO 20121 we hope to host more sailing events post-2012 and attract many more organizations to our conference facilities."

To find out more about sustainable events please visit bsigroup.com/iso20121