



# FM Conway achieves social, business and financial benefits by taking an industry lead on road traffic safety with ISO 39001 certification

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**Dave Conway**  
Quality and Environmental Manager,  
FM Conway Ltd

### Customer objectives

- Improve road traffic safety standards throughout vehicle fleet
- Comply with recommendations suggested by Transport for London
- Practice high standards of corporate social responsibility
- Reduce insurance premiums

### Customer benefits

- Improved road safety
- Reduced risk of road traffic accidents
- £56,000 (10%) cut in insurance premium, after Stage One audit
- 60% decrease in insurance claims in first three months
- Boost to employee morale
- Increased competitiveness as industry leader in road traffic safety

## Customer background

Infrastructure services provider FM Conway was founded in 1961 by Francis Conway, who sold his car to buy a single lorry. Now under the ownership of his son, Michael Conway, the fast-growing company now employs 1000 staff, with a turnover exceeding £180m. Its high-profile projects include work for the Olympics development, national stadia, ports and the motorway network. The company operates a large fleet of vehicles, including 168 heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), which make 250,000 trips in and out of London annually.

## Why certification?

Already an advocate of management system standards, FM Conway is certified to ISO 9001 (Quality), ISO 14001 (Environment) and BS OHSAS 18001 (Health & Safety). In January 2014 it became only the third company in Europe to achieve certification to ISO 39001, which provides a framework to help organizations reduce the incidence and adverse effects of road traffic accidents.

"Road safety has always been embedded in our company culture, but a letter we received from Transport for London's Commissioner, Peter Hendy, in February 2013, increased our focus" explains Dave Conway, the company's Quality and Environmental Manager.

Analysis by TfL of the 16 cyclist fatalities in London in 2011 had shown that nine involved a HGV, seven of which were construction vehicles. The evidence suggested that construction vehicles were a particular problem, and so TfL commissioned the Transport Research Laboratory to investigate. The letter to FM Conway enclosed a copy of the report that followed, and sought a commitment to act on its associated recommendations. Second on the list of these was: "adherence to a nationally recognized standard on work-related safety (such as ISO 39001)", states Conway.

"London is our primary market and we need to be responsive to the needs of London as a geographic area," explains Conway. "We had

already been looking at the issue of cycle safety, and were pleased that we could react in a positive manner."

## Implementation

Already well acquainted with BSI's management system standards, FM Conway carried out its own internal Gap Analysis. "Road safety has always been of paramount importance, and many of the basic processes and procedures outlined were already in place from our other standards. It was very much an exercise of pulling things together and formalizing them," comments Conway. Already a Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) Silver certificate holder, the company worked towards Gold, alongside certification to ISO 39001. "FORS isn't a management system, but there is lots of overlap, so it made sense to target both at the same time," explains Conway

ISO 39001 was the first standard FM Conway had encountered that was presented under BSI's new Annex SL platform, a new management system format that helps streamline the creation of new standards, and makes implementing multiple standards within one organization easier. "It means we're up to speed for our upcoming ISO 9001 audit," says Conway. The second challenge was the different risk evaluation methodology required, since some risks associated with road safety are beyond the company's control. "We evaluated our ability to influence the risk against its seriousness," he states. "Something that was in our control, and where failure to improve could lead to serious consequences, would get a high score; something we couldn't influence would get a low score. This helped us concentrate on the aspects of road traffic safety that we could and should do something about," comments Conway.

BSI suggested that the standard should cover the grey fleet (company cars) too, which Conway had not previously considered. "It makes sense: a company car driver is just as capable of causing an accident as a lorry driver, so we cascaded it to a larger part of the workforce than we originally intended."

## Benefits

The benefits of a standard promoting road traffic safety could not be more compelling, says Conway. "You can't put a price on increased road safety. From a CSR viewpoint, ISO 39001 makes total sense, and I'd like to see any business interacting with the road traffic network take an interest in it."

But it also makes financial and business sense, he emphasizes. "Even before we were fully certified, our insurer reduced our premium by 10% (£56,000), saving us enough to cover the cost of certification and of maintaining it for the next seven years." It has made a difference on the road, too: "In the first three months of the management system being fully operational, we had 14 insurance claims (translating to 56 per annum). In the previous year we had 137 claims (equating to 34 over the quarter). That's a 60% drop – I couldn't believe it when I saw the figures," summarizes Conway.

Dave Conway has recently been invited to speak at the international conference of Accident Investigation Officers. "In terms of marketability it gives us a clear USP now," he says, "but five years down the line it may well be a requirement. Being one step ahead of our competitors certainly gives us an opportunity, and I'm already aware of contracts that we're being considered for partly because of the lead we've taken in road traffic safety."

Harder to measure but equally important, employee morale has also received a boost, asserts Conway. "We disseminated information as we worked towards certification, rather than turning on a big switch at the end. Our communications included a safer guidance booklet that, rather than laying down the law, offers good advice on safe, sound driving practice. Reaction has been hugely positive."

Conway urges businesses in all sectors to consider certification, not only in the haulage and construction industries. "The more companies adopt it, the more it will drive road safety everywhere. And it makes financial sense too."