



Olympic venue reduced utility costs by 15% due to better waste management and utilisation of energy

"Independent certification to ISO 20121 demonstrates that we lead by example by operating our venue to a best practice framework and embed sustainability in all we do."

John Tweed

Chief Executive,
Weymouth and Portland
National Sailing Academy

Customer needs

- Respond to the Sustainable Sourcing Code for the 2012 Games as defined by London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG)
- Promote WPNSA as a sustainable conference facility and attract more business and corporate functions
- Consider the ecological impact of the organization and conduct business with uncompromised integrity
- Consistently operate in line with the well established 'One Planet Living' principles of sustainable development.

Customer benefits

- Estimated cost savings of approximately 15% through better waste management and electricity optimisation
- Licence to trade: achieved status as procurement partner for the 2012 Olympic Games, fully compliant with the demands of LOCOG
- Enhanced reputation and International recognition as a sustainable business
- Reduced risk of legal breaches, futureproofing the facility.

Customer background

Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy (WPNSA) is acclaimed as one of the best sailing venues in the world and was selected to host London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic sailing events. The venue also provides an excellent conference facility, world class training facilities for athletes, as well as boat hoist and storage facilities.

"WPNSA is operating a world class facility which endeavours to operate in the very best way possible," says John Tweed CEO of WPNSA. "Our venue demonstrates a clear commitment to sustainability through a robust management system. Now that we meet the requirements of an internationally recognised standard, we believe that this independent certification will help us attract more corporate functions and sailing regattas from those seeking to integrate sustainability into their supply chain."

Why certification

As part of its Sustainable Sourcing Code for the 2012 Games, the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) expected all suppliers and licensees which supply products and services to the events sector to be taking steps to implement a management system for event sustainability, namely ISO 20121.

"We wanted to set a best practice example to the recreational boating community which hosts hundreds of events during the year," says Dan Reading, Sustainability Officer at The Green Blue, the joint environmental initiative for the Royal Yachting Association and the British Marine Federation.

John Tweed Chief Executive of WPNSA added, "as WPNSA was a London 2012 venue, it was imperative to support LOCOG's ambition of delivering a sustainable Games. We believe that early adoption of originally BS 8901, and subsequently ISO 20121 put us in an excellent position to minimize and control any negative impacts relating to sustainability which occurred during the time of the Games."

Implementation

ISO 20121 establishes a framework of management best practice and requires organizations to understand the sustainability issues relevant to their event or events and to put in place measures to control and minimize these impacts.

The standard requires organizations to define the scope and prepare a statement that describes what activities and functions will be managed within the sustainability management system. WPNSA started by identifying its key stakeholders in order to establish the broader sustainability issues relating to its business. The organization already had a strong commitment to the environment and consideration of socioeconomic factors, however many of its procedures were not documented.

"With a new standard we didn't really know what to expect," admits Dan Reading, Sustainability Officer. "I wouldn't say it was easier than anticipated, but spending time defining the scope of registration was vital to understanding the boundaries. With a venue that utilises the ocean for events this was a decision that took some time!"

ISO 20121 also requires an organization to identify any legal requirements which are applicable to its activities, products and services and understand how these apply to the business. "Composing a register of sustainability legislation was a challenge, but essential as it summarises our obligations for compliance and is an integral part of meeting the requirements of the standard," continues Reading.

Benefits of working with BSI

WPNSA has experienced a number of tangible commercial benefits from certification including:

Cost savings: WPNSA has achieved a reduction of approximately 15% due to better waste management and electricity. Improved measurement of resources used has led to a better understanding of utilities usage which drives cost savings.

Market access: it is anticipated that ISO 20121 certification will attract more business for WPNSA as a conference facility. The conference market will now consider WPNSA based on sustainability credentials as well as its facilities and location.

Compliance benefits: the certification process has helped reduced the risk of legal breaches, and has helped future-proof the facility.

Stakeholder confidence: attaining certification to ISO 20121 has improved WPNSA's reputation with its stakeholders who were given the opportunity to voice their concerns about the impacts the events were having on them. Two-way communication has allowed for better partnership working – to date the Academy, working with local charity the Chesil Trust, has helped facilitate over 9000 children to sail for £5 and continues to generate additional revenues of over £11.7 million per year to the local economy.

Process improvements: the sustainability management system has embedded a culture of continual improvement within the organization and has also resulted in a more efficient operation and new ways of thinking.

"Our vision is to set the benchmark for sustainability. By implementing ISO 20121 we hope to be able to host more international sailing events post 2012 and attract more organizations to use our conference facilities," states John Tweed.

ISO 20121 – Event sustainability management systems – has evolved from BS 8901, the British Standard that underpins the delivery of the London 2012 strategy – a strategy that goes beyond being 'green' to ensure an enduring and balanced approach to economic activity, environmental responsibility and social progress.

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