



ISO 41001 certification of Ministry of Defence Servicepunt



Facility Management to the next level

Some organisations are inherently bound to be more demanding than others with respect to their internal functioning. An organisation like the Ministry of Defence, in any country, must ensure flawless operations at its core because the security of the entire community depends on it.

ISO 41001 is the latest international standard for Facility Management (FM). Published in 2018, it is a framework for complex FM organisations that need to keep on top of the ever-changing trends in how people work within the workplace.

The Dutch Ministry of Defence, one of the largest employers in the Netherlands with a total workforce of over 67,000 employees, has been working since 2014 on a one-stop shop for all support. That is when Servicepunt was devised as a new FM organisation that integrates people, locations, and processes at the various military sites in the Netherlands within the Defence complex environment. Its main goal is improving the quality of life of the

people the Ministry serves and works with, and helping the different units to become more productive and focus only on protecting the collective freedom.

Enabling a one-stop shop in a large and complex organisation like Defence, requires a high degree of standardisation and harmonisation of processes. That is why Servicepunt set up and implemented a FM system in accordance with the ISO 41001:2018 standard and by early 2022 requested BSI to carry out an audit based on it.

It was the first ISO 41001 audit ever in continental Europe and the first ISO 41001 audit ever at a government institution worldwide. The certification that came with it not only improved communication and transparency within Servicepunt and the Ministry, but empowered the winning mind-set of giving professionals on location as much freedom as possible, learning from mistakes and adjusting the practices accordingly.

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Servicepunt

A vast and complex organisation with a vision

With 44 locations such as airfields, naval ports, barracks, headquarters, logistics centers, etc., spread throughout the Netherlands, the Ministry of Defence is one of the largest employers in the Netherlands. "Actually, it is many organisations in one, with all kinds of mutual dependencies" explains Ian Van der Pool, Head of Corporate Office, and Deputy Director of Servicepunt.

It is precisely this complexity and interdependency that can generate, if not managed organically, obstacles or otherwise friction points in accessing information and services, both within the organisation and for its customers.

"That's why we formulated an ambition: – explains Laurens Jobse, Commander of the Facility Logistics and Security Brigadier General Division - we want to make sure that every Defence employee has a single point of contact for support, in the broadest sense. This gradually came to be called the 'Servicepunt' programme."

"Servicepunt is a pure facility management organisation" explains Van der Pool who was involved in the creation of the ISO 41001 standard as a subject matter expert. "It serves both internal customers from all different Defence components and external customers". Since each individual location has a different primary process and therefore a different client organisation, it was necessary to lay the foundation for the underlying, local facility management systems (FMS) at a central level. This allows the military units on location to fully focus on their mission: protect what is dear to us.

On December 1st 2022, Servicepunt officially launched as a support hub. Leon Hendrikx was asked to take the lead as Director. "If you are going to set up a central organisation, you have to have a facility management system that each of those 44 locations can work with, despite all the differences between the locations since a naval unit has a different support demand than an air force unit. The question was whether the direction we chose was the right one, so before we started with Servicepunt, we had BSI, a specialised independent party in the field of ISO certification, look at it".



"What makes Servicepunt so special is that it is an organisation that is visible in 44 locations in the Netherlands."

Leon Hendrikx
Director, Servicepunt



Turning the complexity of our organisation into our strength with ISO 41001

Facility Management is the organisational function that integrates people, locations, and processes within the built environment, intending to improve people's quality of life and the productivity of the core tasks. It affects the health and well-being of all those who come in contact with an organisation and covers a wide range of areas including occupancy costs, use of space, maintenance, security, cleanliness, environmental sustainability and more.

Drawing on international best practice ISO 41001, Facility management – Management systems – Requirements with guidance for use, has been published in 2018 to help FM teams achieve optimum efficiency serving the needs and demands of the various stakeholders with effective, safe and sustainable business processes. It also helps organisations seeking to outsource FM, as it acts as a guarantee against suppliers who can demonstrate compliance with the standard, regarding their approach and processes.

As the new Servicepunt organisation's operations had to be able to meet the very highest standards, Van der Pool approached BSI in early 2022 to initiate a pre-audit phase for ISO 41001 certification. "Due to the complexity of the organisation, with many processes and procedures, the audit was challenging," says Rob Wollrabe, an experienced Lead Auditor at BSI for the ISO 41001 standard involved in the certification process. The audit started in April 2022. "In the first phase of this process, we conducted a pre-audit to determine how much progress had been made towards

implementing the ISO 41001:2018 standard – explains Wollrabe - Servicepunt immediately followed up effectively and decisively on the points of attention from the pre-audit".

The starting point, says Van der Pool, was to see what could be tied together at the central level: "We started with the central organisation. At each location, the service manager is responsible for implementing the standard and adjusting his business system accordingly. Whereas with the ISO 9001 standard you mainly focus on whether your products and services meet the predetermined agreements, with FM and ISO 41001 it is about knowing your client and knowing what his business case is. You must be able to demonstrably add value and not just be reactive. So, we went from a reactive-operational to a proactive-strategic level. That is why we connect the management systems of the 44 locations. We want to connect the tactical-operational level to the strategic level."

Hendrikx dispels the myth of certification as something that is an annoying obligation: "By obtaining certification, we allow experts to examine our organisation from a fresh perspective, as part of our goal to become a learning organisation. With 44 locations, we strive to learn from each other and recognise that making mistakes is an essential part of the learning process. Certification helps us identify areas where we can improve and continue to grow as an organisation".

"In the certification audit - explains Wollrabe - the organisation demonstrated that it has implemented a facility management system in line with the requirements of the standard. The audit, therefore, resulted in a positive recommendation for certification".

Customer-oriented efficiency with a proactive strategic approach

With Servicepunt and the new certification, Defence has now set up a smarter Facility Management workflow, with a focus on continuous improvement. "In times full of challenges such as the war in Ukraine, pandemics, climate change, the energy transition, refugee crisis - says Van der Pool - an FM organisation needs to learn to support the primary process proactively or even predictively. Well now, this is possible!"

"By implementing a facility management system under ISO 41001, the Ministry of Defence has now better streamlined the processes between the various departments and gained more detailed overview as a result" assures Wollrabe.

One of the many benefits of the new way of working is the positive attitude of employees towards the more transparent and efficient management. "We also receive positive reactions from suppliers - adds Van der Pool - We aim to broaden the guidelines and inspire all on-site staff and suppliers to be more innovative. This involves taking risks and challenging the limits of regulations. This is a novel perspective in an organisation that tends to avoid risks".

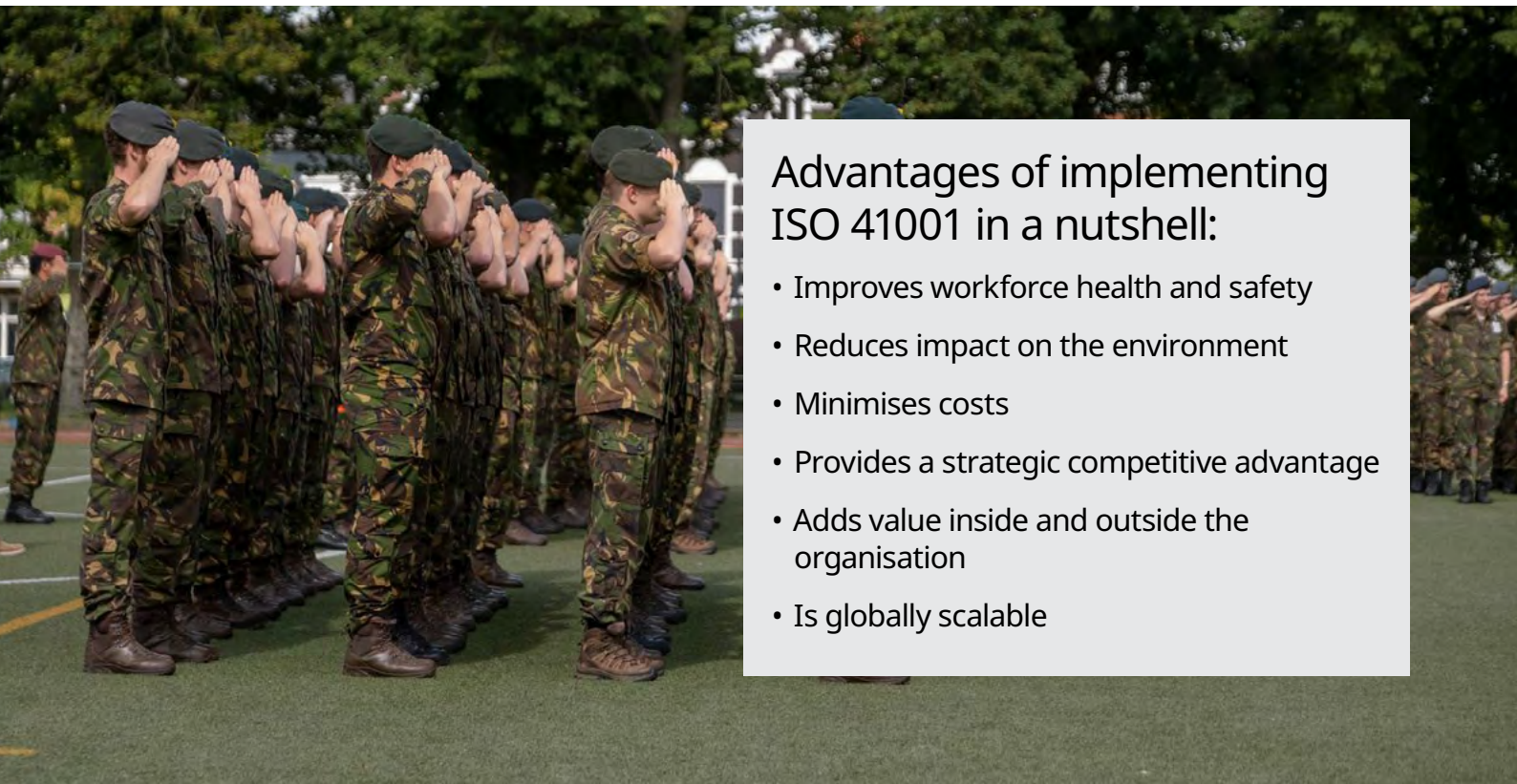
Ralf Veltman, Enterprise Sales & Partnership Manager at BSI: "We have been working with

the Ministry of Defence for 10 years on other ISO standards, including for environmental management. Many organisations are required by customers or suppliers to meet certain standards and apply for certification.

The Ministry of Defence has chosen to purchase this service from us because they know that it will make them better and more efficient. It creates awareness within the organisation."


Certification ensures that communication and transparency within the organisation improves, says Hendrikx: "If you let BSI in as a certifying party and have everything checked, they will also look at how you have accessed your information. All 44 locations must be at the same information level. We chose to hold periodic meetings with all stakeholders at each location and that is what we are now doing as a Servicepunt; we organise meetings across the sites to communicate better and learn more from each other. BSI has also indicated that this is the way to keep everyone engaged in the objective of providing maximum support to our customers so that they can focus more on their primary process".

"The big change is that the fragmentation of entry points to get support has been reduced to one entry point that can be accessed via a click on the computer or smartphone - adds Jobse - Our facility management was not always customer-oriented, but the process and execution have now improved significantly."



Advantages of implementing ISO 41001 in a nutshell:

- Improves workforce health and safety
- Reduces impact on the environment
- Minimises costs
- Provides a strategic competitive advantage
- Adds value inside and outside the organisation
- Is globally scalable



“The desired organisational culture is that our people matter. If they experience obstacles, we are there to remove them as much as possible and ensure they can do their job properly. That requires a different mind-set.”

Leon Hendrikx, Director, Servicepunt

A culture change

More than the implementation of a new standard, the ISO 41001 certification is also a driver of culture change. “It is a matter of looking very differently at your organisation and your people; how do we work together and add value to the client? – says Van der Pool - The knowledge is already deep in the organisation, but how do you unlock it? Knowledge exchange is therefore a distinct part of the new structure.”

Within Servicepunt, Van der Pool is now responsible for executing and maintaining the management system based on the standard that will, eventually, be implemented at all locations. “But the starting point here is that we are not going to require them to get certified – it should be clear that it helps them. Every employee must know why we do this and what their role and contribution are. We are now entering a continuous improvement process, where we have an annual audit and

get re-certified every three years. During the annual audits, we focus on the key points and zoom in on a few components. We are confident that there will be more applications for ISO 41001 certification. This standard is a capstone for larger companies to create an overview, control different locations and streamline FM operations.”

The audits will lead to the desired new insights, Van der Pool emphasises: “Not only the organisation, but also the standard can be improved and extended to other versions. It is about ultimately improving the quality of facilities services. If you understand the field and you implement this standard, it will almost immediately lead to enormous benefits, with corrective maintenance that you can prevent and processes that no longer go wrong. Fantastic, right?”

Why BSI?

As the secretariat of the ISO committee for facility management standards, we've been at the forefront of ISO 41001 throughout its development. That's why we're best placed to help you understand the standard.