

A wooden boat on a river, likely in Southeast Asia. A person in a white shirt and patterned shorts stands at the bow. A person wearing a traditional conical hat and a light-colored shirt is seated in the middle, holding a rope. Another person, also wearing a conical hat and a white shirt, is seated at the stern, holding a net. The boat is filled with various items, including several red plastic bowls containing small fish or produce, a green plastic basin, and a large quantity of fresh produce like bananas and other fruits. The water is blue and shows a white wake from the boat's movement.

# ISO 14001 4.4.3 COMMUNICATION



# Lesson Learning Goals

At the end of this lesson you should be able to:

- Define and explain the process of communication
- Demonstrate effective communication
- Name at least five elements of ISO 14001 in which communication plays an important role
- List at least three methods for conveying information about the EMS within an organization

# More Lesson Learning Goals

At the end of this lesson you should be able to:

- Describe the requirements of ISO 14001 regarding communications from external interested parties
- List at least three ways an organization can inform external interested parties about their EMS

# What is Communication?

A two-way process to exchange information, ideas, opinions so as to achieve mutual understanding

Involves:

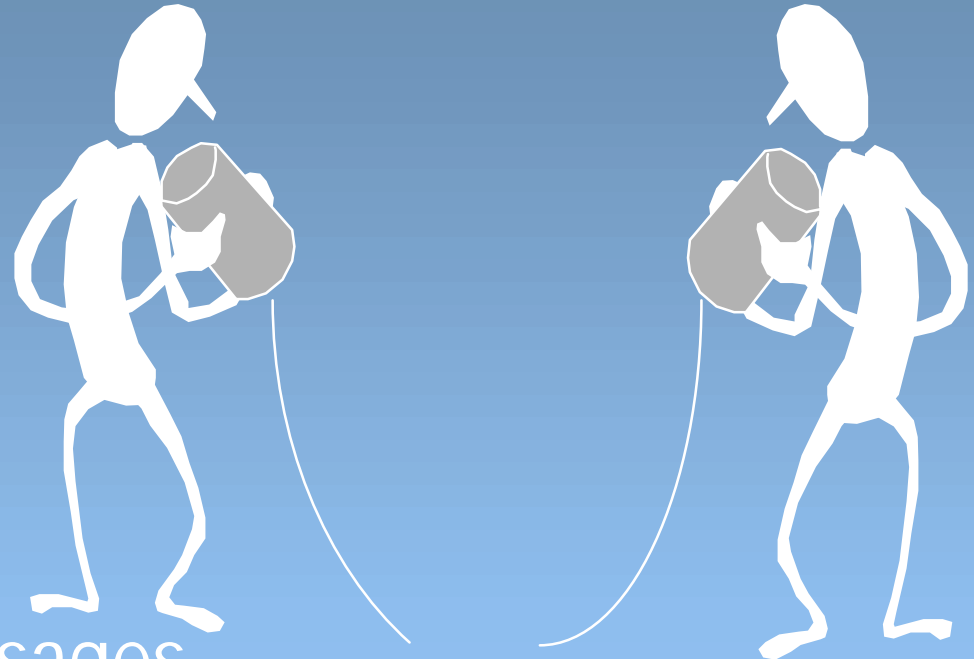
1. Message from Sender → Receiver
2. Paraphrase from Receiver → Sender
3. Clarification from Sender → Receiver
4. Rephrasing by Receiver → Sender
5. Confirmation from Sender → Receiver

# Why Communication is Vital

- Effective communication is an essential foundation of a strong EMS
- Information is power - employees need to be empowered to fulfil their responsibilities
- Missing knowledge and information are weak links in an EMS

# These are **Not** Forms of Communication

- Memoranda
- Posted notices
- E-mails
- Written instructions
- Speeches, lectures
- Telephone voice messages
- Anything that does not include feedback and clarification from the receiver



# ISO 14001

## Communication says:

With regard to its environmental aspects and environmental management system, the organization shall establish and maintain procedures for internal communication between the various levels and functions of the organization

# What does this Mean?

- Effective communications inside the organization are essential to an EMS
- There must be a continuous flow of communication on the EMS between various levels of responsibility, and between different departments or functions in the organization



# The Purpose of Communication in ISO 14001

- Demonstrate management commitment to the environment; motivate employees
- Address concerns about environmental aspects
- Raise awareness of environmental policy, objectives, targets, and EMS
- Increase understanding of internal and external interested parties about the EMS and environmental performance

# Internal Communication Requirements

- Environmental policy
- Legal and other requirements
- Significant environmental aspects, impacts
- Objectives and targets
- Changes to activities, projects, products, and services that affect environmental management programmes
- Roles and responsibilities in the EMS

# More Topics for Internal Communication

- Training and awareness requirements
- Operating and document control procedures
- Emergency preparedness and response
- Results of monitoring and measurement
- Environmental incidents
- Non-compliance with laws and regulations
- Non-conformance with the EMS

# More Topics for Internal Communication (Cont'd)

- Corrective and preventive actions
- Effectiveness of the EMS
- Results of environmental audits

# Management Should be Informed About

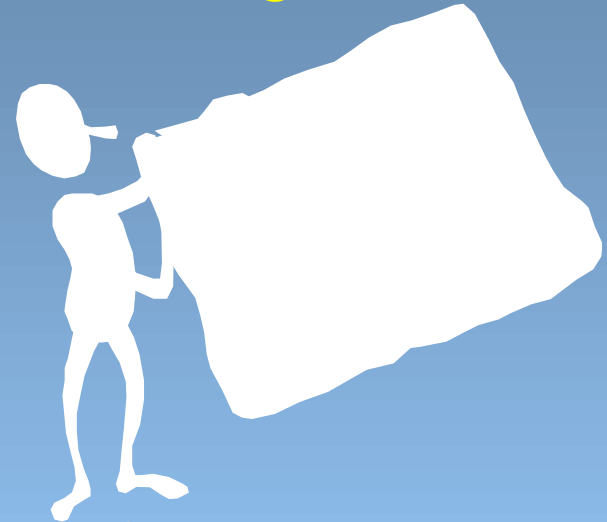
- Emergencies and incidents
- Upsets in process conditions that may affect environmental performance
- Communications from interested parties
- Reports to and from government
- Employee concerns and questions about environmental items
- Results of environmental audits

# Management Should be Informed About (Cont'd)

- Non-conformances in the EMS
- Other issues requiring their attention

# Ways to Disseminate Information Internally

- Notice boards
- In pay packet
- Company newspaper, bulletins, memos
- Management, supervisor meetings
- Crew meetings
- Intranet, e-mail messages



# ISO 14001 Communication also says:

With regard to its environmental aspects and environmental management system, the organization shall establish and maintain procedures for receiving, documenting, and responding to relevant communication from external interested parties

The organization shall consider processes for external communication on its significant environmental aspects, and record its decision



# Communication with External Interested Parties

- Organization must be open to receiving, documenting (keep records on file), and responding to enquiries, complaints, concerns, opinions of external interested parties
- Who will do this? Responsibility must be defined

# Communication with External Interested Parties (Cont'd)

- An organization can choose whether or not to reveal to external interested parties its significant environmental aspects
- This decision must be recorded

# It's a Free Choice, but.....

- An organization is not obliged to try to please all interested parties, or to tell everything

**BUT**

- Organizations are not islands operating independently from the rest of society

# Who are Interested Parties ?

- Government and local community officials
- Fishers, farmers, loggers, foresters
- Tourism representatives, recreation interests, property and land owners
- Business associations
- Environmental NGOs
- Universities, colleges, schools
- Community associations

# Who are Interested Parties ? (Cont'd)

- Indigenous people
- News media - television, newspapers, radio

# What to Communicate Externally

- Environmental policy, significant environmental aspects and impacts, objectives and targets
- Environmental performance relative to regulatory requirements
- Emergency preparedness and response plans for local communities
- New pollution control installations
- Contact personnel for enquiries, complaints

# Ways to Disseminate Information Externally

- Organization's annual environmental report
- Reports to government
- Organization's newsletter
- Industry association bulletins
- News media - articles, interviews, website
- Advertisements
- Open days, visitor tours, community meetings

# Concluding Thoughts

Important points to remember are:

- Communication is a two-way cyclic process that results in mutual understanding
- One-directional 'communication' is merely sending information
- Effective internal communication is a cornerstone of an EMS
- ISO 14001 encourages, but does not force, communication of environmental aspects to external interested parties
- Organization's must receive and respond to concerns of external interested parties