

– CLANCY DOCWRA LTD

LRQA CASE STUDY

Introduction

“Recognizing that all three standards have risk management at their heart, we were able to approach ISO certification in a structured format and produce a fully integrated management system with certification from LRQA in less than four years.”

Ian Housley, Head of Audit and Compliance, Clancy Docwra Ltd

Clancy Docwra Ltd is a leading UK construction company operating in the utility, transportation, power and infrastructure sectors. Its major projects include laying pipelines and replacing water mains – often in demanding conditions – and quality, environmental and health and safety issues are always present.

Established in 1958, the company had a major reorganization in 2001, and decided that in order to grow the business it would need a Business Management System (BMS) that drew on best practice from throughout the organization.

Clancy Docwra developed their management system from the outset with a view to gaining certification to recognized standards: ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001. In deciding the way forward, the company recognized that risk management very much lay at the heart of each of these standards and that when used together they provided a valuable business tool. By approaching it in a structured format, the company was able to produce a fully integrated management system with certification from LRQA in less than four years.

The input of LRQA’s assessors remains a significant factor in helping Clancy Docwra achieve best practice results from its business management system; not least in taking its existing legislative-driven health and safety program and developing it into a more business-oriented system that produces fundamental benefits for the company as a whole.

Benefits

“The company has always been good at managing and reducing risk; it is a matter of putting it in a structured format. We now scrutinize sub-contractors better. We work with them to try to help improve their systems and procedures, so they give us a better service, which allows us to improve ours. This came about as a direct result of OHSAS 18001.”

Martin Cross, Health, Safety and Environmental Manager, Clancy Docwra



The benefits of OHSAS and the certification program which supports it include:

- Reducing Accidents and Improving Health

OHSAS certification is the driver behind a new system of 'near miss' accident reporting that will enable Clancy Docwra to identify the potential for a real incident and put procedures in place to prevent it. This is believed to be the first of its type in the country. The company's new systems are also helping to manage an ongoing Occupational Health Program which has an aim of screening site workers every two years for conditions such as hand arm vibration, noise induced hearing loss and possible work related skin conditions.

- Business Assurance

Working with high value, long term projects, it is vital that Clancy Docwra correctly estimates the true costs involved and produces realistic deadlines. Health and safety, environmental and quality issues may all impact on the progress of a project, and the systems introduced enable the company to make accurate forecasts and manage programs accordingly. Additionally, customers now expect more than just keen pricing in the equation. Quality, environmental and health and safety related issues are vital differentiators and give assurance that a contractor has considered the impact of their operations.

- Managing Risk

Health and safety has always been a concern in the construction industry and legislation has been in place for many years. Certification to OHSAS 18001 has enabled Clancy Docwra to improve the structure of its reporting systems in order to identify and manage possible risks to employees and equipment. The systems also enable the company to better scrutinize and manage its sub-contractors and encourage them to improve their own systems and procedures, to their mutual benefit.

- The Learning Journey

Clancy Docwra believes one of the greatest benefits of using certified management systems is what is learned during the process. OHSAS 18001 helped trigger a review to identify how the company could improve.

Managing Risk

"If we do not identify the issues, we will not get the cost right, and we are on a loser. Our BMS allows us to get these things right from the start, and that's of key benefit to the client."

Ian Housley, Head of Audit and Compliance, Clancy Docwra

In the construction industry, potential risks are everywhere – from corporate risks impacting on profits to passing traffic that endangers site workers.

Clancy Docwra believes it has always been good at managing and reducing risk, but since seeking certification to ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001 with LRQA, it has seen significant improvements in the way it does so.



These improvements go right to the heart of the business and its relationship with clients and sub-contractors – from the very early stages of looking at a project through to completion – and are seen as a major factor in the recent rapid growth of the company.

At the outset of a project, the systems within its integrated Business Management System (BMS) ensure that all potential risks are identified and notified to the client, enabling accurate decisions to be made on costings and deadlines. Ian Housley, Head of Audit and Compliance, explains: “If we do not identify the issues, whether environmental, quality or health and safety, the figures simply won’t stack up and we are on a loser. Our BMS allows us to get these things right from the start and that is also a benefit to the client.”

The format of its management systems has also allowed the company to improve the management of its many sub-contractors. “We now scrutinize sub-contractors better. If there is an incident, we have the structure and capability to make decisions on how we deal with that contractor. This has proved to be a great benefit both for ourselves and for the sub-contractors. We work with them to try to help improve their systems and procedures, so they give us a better service, which allows us to improve ours. This came about as a direct result of OHSAS 18001.”

Ian Housley believes another benefit of OHSAS certification is what is learned during the process. “OHSAS 18001 triggered a review to see how we could improve. Sooner or later we would have done this anyway, but the standard and its systems made us stand back and look at what we were doing and which areas needed attention. It is the journey that is important, not the certificate on the wall.”

The OHSAS system

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Ian Housley, Head of Audit and Compliance, Clancy Docwra.

When Clancy Docwra decided to create a Business Management System (BMS) in order to help it grow in a highly competitive market, it realized the requirements in ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001 would be essential.

The company’s management realized that ‘95 per cent’ of these standards are about managing risk, therefore the high degree of compatibility enabled a fully integrated system to be designed to be fully integrated and to be relevant to the company’s day-to-day operations.

“With a rapidly growing business we needed the quality, environmental and health and safety management systems to help the business, not just be there for the sake of it,” says Ian Housley. “We had to make sure our systems met the requirements of the business, not the other way around. We did not go for certifications just to have them on the wall: we got them for very sound business reasons.”

The key to the company's BMS is its process-led approach which covers all areas of the business from bid management through to contract close-out. Each process describes individual activities and the outputs produced. Job roles are allocated to each of the activities, and give clear roles and responsibilities. Standard procedures and forms are attached to each activity to ensure standardization of information.

This fully integrated, electronic system is operated via intranet at the company's headquarters in Harefield, Middlesex, at regional offices, and on individual laptops carried on-site. It covers all areas including business development, bid management, audit and compliance, health and safety, and wages, so anything that may be needed can be accessed, and forms and reference documents such as tender bids and contract close-outs can be printed off remotely.

"The way the system was designed, we cannot operate as a company without it," says Ian Housley. "If you want to do something, there is a process that you have to follow. It has been deliberately designed so that everything supports the BMS which was itself designed around the needs of the business and best practice."

The BMS is constantly being updated and improved, and the results are clear. "We are a lot more efficient in the way that we do things. There is a lot more clarity. We have a central person we can go to with an out-of-date document. Each department, certainly with Health and Safety, is responsible for keeping documentation up-to-date, and we review issues such as changes in legislation, put them in the correct format within the BMS and issue it electronically.

"Since we introduced this system, the company has grown its business in a short space of time. The BMS has certainly helped us to get where we are today."

Managing Data

"We have an obligation to help sub-contractors. We work with them to try to help improve their systems and procedures, so they give us a better service, which allows us to improve ours. This came about as a direct result of OHSAS 18001."

Martin Cross, Health, Safety and Environmental Manager, Clancy Docwra.

The achievement of OHSAS 18001 has spurred Clancy Docwra to take a fresh look at the way it manages Health and Safety data, and is the driver behind a new system of 'near miss' accident reporting that will enable the company to identify the potential for a real incident and put procedures in place to prevent it. This is in its infancy, but is believed would be the first of its kind in the country.

Improvements in data analysis will also improve supply chain management by helping the company to monitor sub-contractors and make them aware of issues such as the latest legislation that affects them.

Martin Cross, Group Health, Safety and Environmental Manager, says: "We have accepted that we have an obligation to help sub-contractors, and better analysis of our own data will contribute to this, helping us to get value out of the system."



“Better use of data will also help us with incidents involving plant and equipment. If there is a design fault, we can produce a report for the manufacturer and work with them to help correct it. By comparing information like this, and by talking to trade bodies, we can really help to improve things.”

The company’s Health and Safety data systems are also helping to manage an ongoing Occupational Health Program which will screen all site workers every two years for conditions such as hand arm vibration, noise induced hearing loss and possible work related skin conditions. By identifying individuals at risk and referring them, where necessary, to occupational health physicians the company can reduce cases of industrial disease which costs industry and society billions of pounds a year.

LRQA Certification

“Our LRQA 18001 assessor has pointed out areas where we could improve, because while legislative drivers make you do the right thing, OHSAS helps you to do it.”

Ian Housley, Head of Audit and Compliance, Clancy Docwra.

Since 2001, LRQA has helped Clancy Docwra to achieve certification to ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001, and now provides combined surveillance visits which eliminates duplication, minimizes disruption and importantly enables the Clancy management team to see the LRQA assessors in one visit so saving their time.

Ian Housley says; “Our first combined visit worked very well with LRQA, and that is the way we will go in the future. Overall, the service we have had from LRQA has been good. We have had a number of different auditors over the years and they have all helped to move our system forward.

“In health and safety, our LRQA 18001 assessor has pointed out areas where we could improve, because while legislative drivers make you do the right thing, OHSAS gives you the framework to deliver a high level of compliance. We previously had health and safety systems in place, but without doubt all of these have improved as a result of the certification process.

“It has definitely made us sharper: we look at things differently,” says Ian Housley. “It helps us that the auditor comes in and can go anywhere and see anything, because it makes us focus on what needs to be done. It is a good driver. That is the way we want it.”

Martin Cross, Group Health, Safety and Environmental Manager says: “We are now at a stage where very little is raised during a surveillance visit, because our systems are so well established. There will always be areas to look at, but I think we are identifying things better. We know a lot more about this business as a result of going through these processes.”

Clancy Docwra

Clancy Docwra is well established as one of the leading national construction companies in the UK, operating principally in the utility, transportation, power and infrastructure sectors.

Founded in 1958 by Michael Clancy to undertake groundworks, drainage and roadworks in and around London, the company has expanded into tunneling and associated works, and has a significant presence in water, gas, electricity, rail, highways, new build and refurbishment.

Still family-owned, Clancy Docwra employs almost 2,000 people throughout the UK and operates a fully integrated Business Management System (BMS) that covers the whole company. As part of the implementation of this BMS, the company achieved ISO 9001:2000 in 2003, followed by ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001, all with certification from LRQA.

The business management system and certifications have helped the company to grow rapidly since a major reorganization in 2001, and the company's year-on-year improvements in health and safety have been recognized with 10 British Safety Council Awards.

The Clancy Group

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