

EMS FOR AIM: ISO 14001 FOR A CROSS-CULTURAL ACADEMIC INSTITUTION

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ABSTRACT

The Philippine-based Asian Institute of Management (AIM) made history this year, as it became the world's first education institution awarded an ISO 14001 certificate. With the certificate, AIM is sending a strong message that ISO 14001 is by no means applicable only to industrial and manufacturing industries, but it is likewise feasible for those in the service sector.

What started out as a class activity by a group of MBM students in early 1997, on how total quality management principles be applied to improve AIM's environmental management system (EMS), became an all out EMS program two years later. Aside from the usual reasons such as reduce waste and promote waste disposal, and reduce operating costs, the dean at that time, Jess Gallegos aptly said that the "bottomline objective is to walk our talk of social responsibility as stated in AIM's mission statement." By December 1999, after a series of EMS appreciation seminar, the program was formally launched, an effort that would lead to ISO 14001 which was formally handed out on October 27, 2000.

Much of the credit, however, goes to Ms. Marie Garrovillas, director of the Facilities Management and Technical Services office, who almost single-handedly took care of the activities and preparations needed for the ISO. Components of the program include: (i) Energy Conservation; (ii) Water Conservation; (iii) Paper Reduction (e.g. reuse clean side for drafts); and (iv) Solid Waste (waste segregation).