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Report to the Utility Services Committee
from Alastair McCarthy, Asset and Quality Manager, Strategy and Asset Group

Progress Towards Implementation of an Environmental Management System for The Water Group

1. Purpose

To update the Committee with the progress being made towards establishing an Environmental Management System, to be certified under the provisions of ISO 14001, and to gain endorsement of the proposed policy, objectives and targets.

2. Background

Facing the Future (1999 - 2007) contains a commitment that:

All water supply activities will be undertaken in an environmentally sympathetic manner according to the principles of the Resource Management Act 1991.

Section 4.5 (bullet point 2) of the Detailed Operating Plan states that:

All water supply operations will be managed according to a documented environmental management system.

The Improvement Programme of the Wholesale Asset Management Plan contains in clause 8.3 a commitment to develop an Environmental Management System by 31 December 1999.

Although not explicitly stated in any of the above, the concept under development is that the Environmental Management System should be formally certified under the provisions of ISO 14001.

Report No. 98.492 to the Utility Services Committee, approved at the December 1998 meeting, mentioned the development of an environmental management system complying with ISO 14001 in a list of risk reduction measures then under development.

ISO 14001 is an international standard similar in concept and application to the ISO 9000 quality assurance standards. The Water Group already holds ISO 9002 accreditation for wholesale water treatment and delivery. ISO 14001 includes detailed provisions for establishing:

- A policy
- Objectives and targets
- A procedure for identifying environmental impacts and their significance
- Management programmes
- Operating procedures
- Training
- Internal and external auditing
- Environmental reporting

The benefit of gaining certification under ISO 14001 is that the system is self-contained and rigorous, and can be demonstrated to be so. Regular external audits ensure that the system is fully complied with.

3. Progress to Date

3.1 Policy

A draft policy has been written. A copy is appended as Attachment 1.

ISO 14001 requires that any policy should be defined and documented *within the context of the environmental policy of any broader corporate body of which it is a part, and with the endorsement of that body, if there is one.*

The Wellington Regional Council has an environment policy. The Water Group Environmental Policy has been written in the context of the Wellington Regional Council policy. Following acceptance of The Water Group policy by the Committee, formal endorsement from the Interdivisional Environment Management Group (a group set up to manage the implementation of environment management systems throughout the Council) will be sought.

3.2 Objectives and Targets

A series of draft objectives and targets have been formulated. A copy is appended as Attachment 2. The objectives expand on various aspects of the policy and reflect the environmental aspects and impacts of The Water Group's activities.

The targets are detailed statements of specific outcomes to be achieved. They address specific environmental impacts and contribute toward the achievement of the stated objectives.

3.3 **Identification of Aspects and Impacts**

A formal procedure has been developed to identify the environmental aspects and impacts of The Water Group's activities.

The procedure has been applied to the Group's activities and the most significant impacts identified.

Abstraction of water from surface and underground sources and the potential damage from chemical spills or misuse are significant impacts. Other impacts include noise, energy use and waste disposal.

3.4 **Management Programmes**

In the ISO 14001 context, management programmes are detailed plans prepared to address specific impacts or targets. For example, management plans will be prepared to address targets 1.2.3 and 4.2.1.

3.5 **Operating Procedures**

A number of operating procedures have been prepared for aspects such as consent monitoring and chemical handling. Where practicable, they incorporate quality and health and safety aspects, as well as environmental requirements.

4. **Work Required Prior to Certification**

A number of matters still need to be addressed before a certification audit can be carried out.

4.1 **Training**

Water Group staff will be given training in environmental awareness. Where appropriate, training will be given about the potential environment impacts of activities undertaken by particular staff.

4.2 **Auditing**

Selected staff members will be trained to carry out internal audits. Some internal audits must be carried out before the external certification audit.

4.3 **Management Review**

Our advice is that a management review should be undertaken prior to the certification audit. The standard calls for management reviews to ensure the continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the Environmental

Management System.

5. **External Audit**

An application for a certification audit has been lodged with BVQI, the international audit company that audits our ISO 9002 quality system. Our target is for this audit to be completed by 31 March 2000.

6. **Cost of Data**

Costs incurred to date in establishing the Environmental management System are \$101,000, spilt roughly evenly between consultants' and staff time. The certification audit is expected to cost approximately \$6,000.

7. **Recommendation**

That the report be received and the information noted.

Report prepared by:

Approved for submission:

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Attachments : 2