

## **Environmental Management System Frequently Asked Questions for Supervisors**

### **1. What is GRC's environmental policy and what is its significance?**

Our environmental policy establishes top management commitment by setting the framework or direction for the entire environmental management system (EMS). This policy statement is posted at the main and west gates, in many building lobbies, and on the web at

<http://osat-ext.grc.nasa.gov/emo/pub/EMS/>

*"GRC operates in a manner that preserves and protects the environment through pollution prevention, the continual improvement of our operations, and complying with regulations."*

### **2. How does the work that you or your employees perform impact the environment?**

The work you and your employees perform can impact the environment in several ways including:

- Hazardous waste generation
- Spills and releases of hazardous materials or waste to water, land or air
- Personal injury
- Waste generation and adverse impacts on wetlands, habitat, and historic facilities associated with construction and modification of facilities and equipment

### **3. What are GRC's Center-Wide EMS objectives and targets?**

Visit website for current objectives and targets.

<http://osat-ext.grc.nasa.gov/emo/pub/EMS/>

### **4. How do you and your employees minimize environmental impacts?**

We minimize environmental impacts by understanding environmental best management practices and following BMS and EMS procedures. For example, we understand that using chemicals as part of our job may create hazardous waste and there is a potential for spills or releases of chemicals into the environment. These impacts are prevented or minimized by following safe handling procedures and ensuring the proper disposal of wastes. Other ways of reducing our impacts include identification of ways to eliminate or reduce the use of hazardous chemicals, which can lead to the generation of hazardous waste.

### **5. Who is the EMS Representative?**

Mike Blotzer is the EMS Representative and he can be reached at 3-8159.

### **6. What procedures do your employees follow to protect the environment?**

The Environmental Management System procedures are integrated into the Center's Business Management System and available through the on-line BMS document library. Procedures that apply to specific tasks are contained in the Environmental Programs Manual accessible through the "Corporate Focus/Policy & Procedures" link on the Center's Intranet home page at <http://www.grc.nasa.gov/WWW/WING/C-procedures.htm> (**This link is available to NASA Glenn personnel only**). You may also incorporate environmental procedures and requirements into your organization's Lower Level Procedures and Work

Instructions. Additional information is available by contacting Mike Blotzer at 3-8159, Priscilla Mobley at 3-8333, or Dan White at 3-3103.

**7. Do you know where to find documents, resources and other help in case you have questions about protecting the environment?**

The EMS Intranet site <http://osat-ext.grc.nasa.gov/emo/pub/EMS/> provides extensive information on the Center's EMS. Additional information is available by contacting Mike Blotzer at 3-8159, Dan White at 3-3103 or Priscilla Mobley at 3-8333.

**8. What training have you and your employees had to help you protect the environment?**

We have had general EMS awareness training, provided as part of the Center's Safety and Environmental Training. Refresher EMS awareness training is arranged by contacting Michael Blotzer at 3-8159. In addition, each supervisor completes a safety, health, and environmental training questionnaire that identifies specific environmental training requirements for jobs that involve priority impacts

**9. Can you think of any examples of continuous improvement and reduction of environmental impacts?**

Continuous improvements have included better employee training, better communication of ideas from and to employees, better reporting of environmental impacts within GRC, improved identification of environmental aspects, and progress toward meeting GRC's objectives and targets.

**10. How do you receive feedback from your employees about EMS performance?**

All employees are encouraged to suggest ways to improve environmental performance in conformance with EMS. A special program to demonstrate this is the Employee Awards Program. The BMS/EMS internal and external communication procedures also describe how employees can share EMS information.

**11. What is an EMS?**

An Environmental Management System (EMS) is policies, plans, programs, procedures, controls and other elements that are oriented toward minimizing an organization's impact to the environment. EMS supplements traditional environmental regulatory compliance programs and emphasizes a systems approach of continuous improvement.

**12. Do you know the overall GRC structure concerning EMS responsibilities?**

All organizations and individuals at GRC have EMS responsibilities. The Center Director has overall responsibility for the EMS through the Center's Environmental Pollution Control Board (EPCB). Mike Blotzer, Chief of EMO is the designated EMS Representative.

**13. Do you know what responsibility you have under the EMS?**

All managers and supervisors must:

- a. Provide resources to support EMS activities.
- b. Ensure staff with EMS responsibilities is trained, aware and competent.

**14. What have you done to make sure your employees have been trained, are aware of EMS and**

## **are competent in terms of reducing their impacts to the environment?**

There are many ways to do this, including:

- Highlight appropriate documents and other resources (EMS web site, etc.)
- Complete the training needs assessment questionnaire and ask EMO what training would be appropriate
- Require attendance at training
- Ask employees to identify environmental impacts in their work and ways to minimize them.
- Facilitate employee actions to reduce impacts.

### **15. Can you think of an example of how some element of EMS has been communicated to you?**

All employees have been through Occupational Safety, Health, and Environmental Requirements training that included instruction in the EMS. The EMS web site communicates considerable information. Banners, posters, bookmarks, LINK messages, brochures, newsletters and other forms of communication are now occurring at GRC.

### **16. Have you communicated any EMS or environmental issues or ideas to others at GRC?**

Individuals can submit ideas concerning pollution prevention, resource conservation and other environmental actions through the Employee Award Program. EMO also receives questions and comments from employees at GRC.

### **17. What type of EMS documentation do you have and how do you control that documentation?**

The most commonly used EMS document that all supervisors read is Chapter 1 of the Environmental Programs Manual website at <http://osat-ext.grc.nasa.gov/emo/pub/epm/epm1.pdf>, which describes GRC's Environmental Management System. Several other chapters in this manual also apply to some supervisor's organizations. These Chapters are controlled by the EMO who makes sure that only the current revisions are in circulation and removes obsolete versions promptly.

### **18. What type of operational controls have you implemented to minimize environmental impacts of your group?**

Supervisors and employees in their groups follow the appropriate Environmental Programs Manual chapters and GRC procedures. In addition, employees implement the use of any control equipment or processes that minimize environmental impacts.

### **19. What part do you play in GRC's Emergency Preparedness Plan?**

Supervisors and employees know where to find copies of appropriate documents including:

- Emergency Preparedness Plan <http://smo.grc.nasa.gov/epp/epp.asp> (**This link is available to NASA Glenn personnel only**)
- Environmental Programs Manual Chapter 20 - Emergency Planning and Community Right -to- Know <http://osat-ext.grc.nasa.gov/emo/pub/epm/epm20.pdf>
- [GRC-P3.10](#) - Safety, Environmental, Security and Emergency Preparedness Program (**This link is available to NASA Glenn personnel only**).

They also know to promptly report all spills and other emergencies and allocate resources for emergency response.

## 20. What is ISO 14001?

ISO 14001 is an international standard on Environmental Management System (EMS). NASA is implementing an ISO 14001-compliant EMS in response to Presidential Executive Order 13148, *Greening the Government through Excellence in Environmental Management*. The NASA EMS requirements are contained in [NPG 8553.1](#) (**This link is available to NASA personnel only**) with GRC's EMS detailed in the Center's Environmental Program Manual, Chapter 1, <http://osat-ext.grc.nasa.gov/emo/pub/epm/epm1.pdf>