

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

There has been great concern for the environment today and everyone recognizes the need for environmental protection (Kinsella, 1994). Environmental credibility is also becoming a factor in national and international competitiveness. Implementation of the International Standard ISO 14001 and subsequent certification can facilitate progress towards increased competitiveness through measurement and innovation, leading to increased profit, more efficient processes, reduced costs and a more credible image (Kinsella, 1994; Goodman and Veritas, 1998).

This International Standard is applicable to any organization that wishes to implement, maintain and improve an environmental management system; assure itself of its conformance with its stated environmental policy; demonstrate such conformance to others; seek certification/registration of its environmental management system by an external organization; and make a self-determination and self-declaration of conformance with this International Standard.

1.2 Purpose and significance of the study

The main purpose of this research is to study the important features of implementing an Environmental Management System in compliance with the ISO 14001 and look into the factors and degree of implementation success of companies in Malaysia. It also highlights the management issues encountered during implementation of an Environmental Management System.

1.3 Scope of the study

This study shall focus only on companies in Malaysia and all results are based on analysis of the data gathered while conducting the research.

1.4 Limitations of the study

Environmental Management Systems and ISO 14001 are relatively new practice. Many organizations are quite reluctant to embark on it. For those who had been certified, they might not be willing to share the experience and data. The organizations surveyed may not provide the data in absolute terms but only an indicative figure.

1.5 Structure of the Report

This report contains five chapters. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the research project. Chapter 2 outlines the literature review on Environmental Management System and ISO 14000 standards. It contains many sub-chapters. In this chapter, various commonly adopted Environmental Management Systems and the development of the ISO 14000 series standards are discussed. It also highlights the benefits as well as challenges of an Environmental Management System implementation. This chapter also looks at how an Environmental Management System can be developed and implemented.

Chapter 3 explains how the research is being carried out, detailing the methodology, sampling procedures, data collection and data analysis method. Chapter 4 presents the research results and in-depth discussions on the research findings. Lastly, chapter 5 concludes the research project and gives recommendations following the research.

A list of bibliography and appendices are attached after the above-mentioned five chapters.