

## Environment Information Sheet 1

### Environmental Audits

#### Why Audit?

An audit is a useful tool that can be used to identify which particular aspects of an organisation's activities impact on the environment and to what extent. It is also an effective risk management tool that enables an organisation to check how well it complies with environmental legislation.

The benefit of an environmental audit is that where environmental harm or *risk of harm* is identified action can be taken to avoid or minimise the impacts. Likewise if non-compliance with environmental legislation is identified action can be taken to ensure operations meet legislative requirements.

Environment audits can also identify opportunities for improvement that result in cost savings.

#### Background

The Airports Act 1996 and the Airports (Environment Protection) Regulations 1997 require the Airport Lessee Company (ALC) to prepare an Airport Environment Strategy and, amongst other things, to;

- identify the sources of environmental impact associated with airport operations;
- specify the monitoring that will be carried out in connection with the identified environmental impacts; and
- specify the measures that will be carried out to prevent, control or reduce the environmental impacts associated with airport operations.

In order to address these matters the 2005 Airport Environment Strategy (AES) for each Sydney Metropolitan Airport specify that environmental audits will be conducted of all airport operations, including tenant operations.

The AES classify tenants into three (3) tiers according to the environmental risks inherent in their operations and activities.

The level of risk determines how frequently a tenant is audited and the personnel conducting the audit – Tenants deemed to have a high environmental risk are audited more frequently than others while the Airport Environment Officer (AEO) may not attend audits of tenants deemed have a low environmental risk.

#### Tier 1 tenants (High Risk)

- include aircraft parts manufacturers and all fuel storage companies.
- are audited annually by the SMA Environment Manager and the AEO

#### Tier 2 tenants (Moderate Risk)

- include tenants who store in excess of two hundred (200) litres of hazardous substances or dangerous goods, operate an aircraft repair / maintenance workshop, operate an aircraft spare parts or restoration centres or undertake aircraft respraying of operate a spray paint booth.
- are audited every two (2) years by the SMA Environment Manager and the AEO.

### Tier 3 tenants (Low risk)

- include administrative businesses, schools and retail outlets
- are audited every two (2) years by the SMA Environment Manager or the SMA Facility Manager.

## What do environmental audits address?

The environmental audits SMA conducts look at the following aspects of an organisation's operations;

- General Environmental Management arrangements within the organisation
- Chemicals, Hazardous Substances, Dangerous Goods Use, Storage and Disposal
- Stormwater Maintenance
- Soil and Groundwater Maintenance
- Parts Washing practices
- Solid Waste Management
- Liquid Waste Management
- Sewer Disposal practices
- Noise Management
- Aircraft Wash Down practices
- Air Quality Management
- Heritage Management

For more detail on why we address these issues and what we look for when we conduct the audit refer to the **Environment Audit Guide**.

## What information do you receive from the environment audit?

Following the Environmental Audit SMA prepares an Environmental Audit Report for all Tier 1 & 2 tenants. Tier 3 tenants receive a simple letter report.

The Tier 1 & 2 tenant reports specify the *issue* that was assessed and describes what was *observed* at the time of the audit.

In the event environmental harm or risk of harm is identified in the course of the audit, the report specifies the *matters* the operator is required to address in order to correct or mitigate the issue. Likewise, in the event opportunities for improvement that may benefit an organisation are identified the report will recommend actions the operator can implement to effect such improvements.

If the environmental risks identified in the course of the audit are significant SMA will arrange a follow-up inspection to confirm the matters the operator is required to address have been responded to in an appropriate and adequate manner.