

### **4.3.2 Environmental Management Systems to Promote Compliance and Environmental Performance**

#### **Project Summary**

The CEC will sponsor a workshop focused on the hands-on experience of small and medium-size business owners and managers in implementing environmental management systems (EMS). This project will be a coordinated effort of the Enforcement Working Group of the Law and Policy Program and the North American Pollution Prevention Partnership (NAP3) and will draw upon existing public and private efforts in this area. The project responds to Council's recognition that public-private partnership, which includes governments at the national, state/provincial and local levels, is the best way to promote the widespread adoption of pollution prevention and the use of environmental management systems. It also furthers work resulting from the Council direction to the Enforcement Working Group in 1997 "to explore (1) the relationship between the ISO 14000 series and other voluntary environmental management systems (EMSs) to government programs to enforce, verify, and promote compliance with environmental laws and regulations, and (2) opportunities to exchange information and develop cooperative positions regarding the role and effect of EMSs on compliance and other environmental performance."

#### **Goals and Objectives**

The goal of this project is to evaluate the use of EMSs by the private sector as a means of achieving public policy goals of improving environmental performance and compliance in both regulated and non-regulated areas.

The objectives include:

- support to the cooperative evaluation of the effectiveness of environmental management systems in enhancing pollution prevention and overall environmental performance and compliance, including the exploration of pilot projects; and
- follow-up to the issuance of the guidance document *Improving Environmental Performance and Compliance: 10 Elements of Effective Environmental Management Systems*.

#### **Expected Results**

The project will publish workshop proceedings that will include a discussion of the "best practices" identified by the workshop participants.

#### **Rationale**

This project area was initiated in response to the expanding interest in implementation of various EMSs. Private voluntary standards or initiatives, such as the ISO 14000 series and Responsible Care, promote the implementation of EMSs. At the same time, governments are experimenting with the use of EMSs in voluntary compliance and enforcement programs, such as various voluntary pilot programs in the United States, and the inclusion of requirements for EMSs in court orders that resolve enforcement matters in Canada. However, substantial work is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of different EMS models in achieving the goals of improved environmental compliance and environmental performance, and in sharing information and ideas about the potential role of EMSs in government policies and programs designed to enforce environmental requirements or promote improved compliance and performance. The project is also intended to support national initiatives for pilot studies of EMS use by industry or government operations, to assess the relative value of such systems as compliance triggers, and to exchange information on the results of these experiences.

#### **Progress to Date**

The CEC has supported a joint initiative for a regional policy on environmental management systems (EMSs) and compliance, reflected in Council Resolution 97-05 on "Future Cooperation regarding Environmental Management Systems and Compliance" and the related report to Council from the EWG in 1998. In 1999, a public forum involving participants from industry, government and nongovernmental groups was held in Washington, DC, to explore core EMS elements needed to promote compliance and environmental performance in both regulated and nonregulated areas. Proceedings of this meeting were published and distributed in 2000. In 2000, in cooperation

with JPAC, the EWG members also successfully collaborated to produce a guidance document, entitled *Improving Environmental Performance and Compliance: 10 Elements of Effective Environmental Management Systems*. This document was endorsed by Council Resolution 00-05. In 2002, the countries prepared a report to Council on the guidance document's implementation.

**Actions 2003**

*Overview*

<b>2003</b>	<b>Estimated Resources Required (C\$)</b>
<b>Action 1: Form an organizing committee which will include representatives or designees of the Trilateral Group on Pollution Prevention in North America and the Enforcement Working Group. The organizing committee will develop a conference agenda, an invitation list, a list of available technical assistance in the three countries, and a framework for identifying and drawing on regional experiences and lessons learned in the implementation of environmental management systems in small and medium-size businesses.</b>	<b>5,000</b>
<b>Action 2: Sponsor a conference on environmental management systems in small and medium-size business.</b>	<b>50,000</b>
<b>Action 3: Publish and disseminate workshop proceedings</b>	<b>15,000</b>
<b>Total Resources Required</b>	<b>70,000</b>

**Public Participation**

Business and industry groups, academia and nongovernmental groups will be invited to participate in the workshop.

**Expected Partners and/or Participants**

The organizing committee will work with the pollution prevention round tables, various government agencies and departments, industry and trade groups and the public in evaluating the use of EMSs by the private sector as a means of achieving public policy goals of improving environmental performance and compliance in both regulated and non-regulated areas.

**Linkages to other CEC Projects**

This project is a continuation of work begun in 1997 and builds on the project results of previous years.