



Case Study From ECOPROFIT to EMAS



Background

Heuberger eloxal is an Austrian company specialised in **EL**ectrolytic **OX**idation of **AL**uminium (Eloxal). The company is concentrated on niche areas in the surface treatment of aluminium, magnesium and titanium, as well as in other branches, such as architecture, mechanical engineering, automobile, and aviation & space technology.

In 1996, Heuberger eloxal implemented ECOPROFIT in order to take environmental issues into account in the overall management of the company.

Reasons for EMAS Registration

The main reason for Heuberger eloxal to step-up from ECOPROFIT to EMAS in 1999 was the additional legal certainty that EMAS would provide.

The Implementation Process

The environment team that was responsible for the implementation process consisted of five people from different departments within the company. The overall process took approximately one year, which was longer than what had been expected. It is estimated that about 40-50 percent of EMAS requirements were already covered by the company's ECOPROFIT certification.

The main difficulties to be overcome in order to step-up to EMAS were:

- 1) Reporting had to be restructured (input-output-analysis)
- 2) Employees had to be more involved in and informed about the scheme
- 3) Legal records had to be reorganised

The necessary changes in order to comply with EMAS requirements needed a certain amount of rethinking within the company but were feasible to make.

Benefits of an EMAS Registration

The main benefit of the EMAS registration to Heuberger eloxal is the added legal certainty that the scheme provides. Furthermore, it facilitates the cooperation with local authorities and shortens certain administrative processes. Additional potential cost-saving measures were identified and processes were described in more detail, which is beneficial to the overall management of the company. Finally, the EMAS registration has increased the visibility of Heuberger eloxal and information exchange with other local companies has increased.

Advice for other Organisations

ECOPROFIT is considered to be an important step towards an EMAS registration. Heuberger eloxal believes that if it had not implemented ECOPROFIT first, it may not have reached a successful EMAS registration at a later stage.

Other organisations that would like to register under EMAS on top of ECOPROFIT are advised to cooperate with external consultants to facilitate the scheme's implementation. These external consultants should be experts in the relevant legal system. Technical expertise is also important but might be covered with in-house experts.



The Heuberger eloxal environment team 1999