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The Integrated Management System guides us towards continuous improvement

Integrated Management System

Aqualia has been developing an Integrated Management System that has been extended and implemented in the various countries where it operates. How does having this system impact the company's prevention and continuous improvement objectives in Portugal?

In Portugal, we have had this Management System since 2011 and are already at a mature level of implementation. The first impact was the alignment of all our processes with those of Spain. Thanks to this, the information from contracts and our activity can reach the decision-making core more quickly.

The system also helps in developing procedures in various areas such as waste, environmental risks, relationships with suppliers, customers, etc. Within the system, we determine indicators to measure our status at any given time and thus identify and correct possible deviations.

Similarly, the Management System helps detect trends in the health and safety of our employees, better manage the supply chain, and strengthen our regulatory compliance. In this regard, training sessions are being launched to disseminate the Code of Ethics among all company personnel and more specific ones on the anti-corruption policy and conflicts of interest.

Within the continuous improvement objective, since the System is focused on perfecting the service we provide to customers, we analyse complaints and derive measures to reinforce specific aspects. Additionally, we set annual objectives, which in 2024 have focused on improving network performance to prevent water losses, increasing customers with electronic billing, and renewing meters.

ISO 14001

What does the implementation of the ISO 14001 standard mean for managing environmental risks?

The implementation of the ISO 14001 standard is a very important milestone, as it allows us to identify environmental risks in each service. Once identified, we evaluate them and determine which are significant for our activity. For these, we propose actions to mitigate or minimise them.

By analysing the risks, we can also implement procedures to follow in case a particular risk materialises, whether it is one derived from our activity or one that could affect it. In this sense, communication is key to disseminating these procedures to all employees so they know what to do and who to contact initially. The same applies to our suppliers, with whom we share what their actions should be if a situation arises that could affect our activity.



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On the other hand, given the serious problem of water scarcity, improving environmental management helps us reduce network losses and increase the quality of wastewater returning to the natural environment. Also, in the environmental field, our waste procedure is very important: employees must know how to manage the impact of the waste they generate and choose suppliers that meet these criteria.

Advances in Environmental Management

Could you share an example of a measure implemented in 2024 to improve environmental management in Portugal?

In 2024, we took the first very positive steps towards digital transition. We are implementing all Aqualia applications, asset management, geographic information systems, everything necessary to reduce our paper consumption. Besides its positive environmental impact, digital tools facilitate better service control and ensure that information from the field reaches the back office and service managers much sooner.

Also, in the past year, we started a pilot test —still limited— of purchasing electric vehicles to continue advancing our energy efficiency and carbon footprint reduction goals.

Management System Committee

Among your responsibilities is also coordinating the Management System Committee in Portugal. What does this coordination involve, and what is the role of this committee?

My main function is to analyse Aqualia's activity in all its areas every six months. In the Management System Committee meetings, we aim to provide a global view of the company's objectives and indicators in all areas: contracts, customers, works, training, prevention, regulatory compliance, etc.

Another focus of these meetings is evaluating the data collected during that period, analysing the improvements made to correct possible deviations, and identifying areas for improvement and best practices within the company. This also helps us establish the next steps for Aqualia in Portugal, the roadmap that will guide us all in the following six months.

And of course, among my most important responsibilities is also monitoring in Portugal the indicators and objectives of the action lines of Aqualia's Strategic Sustainability Plan (ASSP 2024-2026) as a guide for our contribution to positive impact on people and the environment.