



Environment Policy

Policy quality checked by:
Frano Lubura
General Manager / Quality Representative

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SSGC ENVIRONMENT

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Environment Practice

The company is wholly committed to implementing and demonstrating best environmental practice. Service delivery and procurement decisions have a direct impact on how well we can meet the objectives of our corporate environmental policy and we recognise that dealing with suppliers and contractors who are committed to sound environmental performance and improvement will help ensure these objectives are met.

In dealing with our customers and suppliers, we wish to work together to ensure that the services delivered support the environmental policy and, in turn, that all suppliers and contractors progressively improve their own environmental performance.

In order to ensure that service delivery remains consistent with the requirements of the company's environmental objectives, all key purchases are subject to an environmental assessment. These assessments will:

- assess the environmental impacts of the goods, works and services required
- assess the environmental performance of the suppliers and contractors
- assist in determining the type of goods, works and services to purchase
- assess the choice of suppliers and contractors

The company recognises that the supply of goods or services with low environmental impact as opposed to those with a potentially higher degree of risk, require different levels of scrutiny. We have therefore developed a process of assessing environmental risk by taking into account the impact of the whole life cycle of the resources involved, such as:

- Total Waste
- Water Use
- Resource Use
- Resource Intensity
- Air and Global Warming
- Ozone Depletion
- Hazardous Substances

This has enabled us to prioritise our purchases and develop three different levels of assessment.

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Author: *Antony Monaghan*



Environmental Assessments

Level One

Suppliers such as ourselves with low risk goods and services consisting mainly of service hours, reports and advice, may not undergo any formal assessment but will be expected to comply with basic principles of using recycled, double sided paper in their reports, recycling where possible, taking steps to minimise energy and water use, and to have a suitable environmental policy of their own.

Level Two

Suppliers of goods, works, and services which include other materials, transport or sub-contracting, will be required to participate in an assessment of the goods, works and services they supply and provide details of their own environmental performance.

Level Three

Suppliers of works or construction projects and other high risk goods will, in addition to level two, be required to provide a detailed statement of the impact of their activity on the land and its surroundings

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Environmental Performance

When the company is assessing its own and its suppliers environmental performance, it will look for:

- Compliance with Environmental Legislation
- An understanding of the impacts made by the business on the environment
- A philosophy that aims for continual environmental improvement.

The company encourages the use of suppliers and contractors with high risk goods and services who adopt environmental management systems such as ISO14001, EMAS or equivalent.

These systems will include:

- An environmental policy
- A Director responsible for the policy
- Environmental goals
- An action plan for achieving the goals
- Internal environmental training programmes
- A environmental review process
- Published environmental performance reports

The company will require suppliers and contractors to complete environmental declarations and will increasingly include environmental demands in its tenders. We are determined to work with companies that complement our environmental policy and we may reject companies that compromise our environmental objectives.

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The Benefits of Good Environmental Performance

1. Legislation

Environmental issues are increasingly more significant for individuals, companies and governments. Legislation is being introduced both from Europe and within the UK , for example the Landfill Tax {link}. This legislation will grow and companies that do not act positively now will find themselves having to make large investments to comply with new legislation in the future, whilst companies that have already dealt with the issues through good environmental practices introduced over time will have gained a competitive advantage.

2. Efficiency

Many environmental issues relate to waste and inefficiencies. The use of energy is a significant contributor to environmental damage. Companies that have assessed their environmental impacts have found that environmental improvements often lead to reduced costs (e.g. more efficient machinery and insulation of buildings leading to reduced energy bills).

3. Influencing Customer Demands

A third reason for adopting good environmental practices relates to the discussion amongst purchasers in companies and local authorities about how to include environmental demands in purchasing decisions following the Rio Conference of 1992. The Conference produced a policy document called 'Agenda 21' to which the UK Government is committed. This requires local authorities to work towards a sustainable society and in doing so, many are realising that they must consider the environmental impact of their purchases and should use their purchasing power to influence the market to adopt better environmental practices.

There are also good public relations benefits from being seen to be environmentally friendly, as has been demonstrated already by several major companies.

4. Investor Demands

The growth in the number of investors considering environmental issues in their investment decisions has led to a number of financial institutions looking at environment performance as an important indicator. Research has started into the use of environmental reports alongside the traditional financial statistics as a guide for investors.

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Commitment

In support of the company’s environmental policy the company makes a commitment to:

Develop a thorough environmental understanding of the goods, works and services supplied.

Maintain an environmental policy that concentrates on the areas of biggest concern. Lead by example and ensure that the company's own direct environmental impacts are addressed. Make the environment a business issue and nominate a Director of the company to take responsibility for it.

Ensure that your own suppliers and contractors comply with environmental legislation. Work closely with us to establish which goods, works and services are causing the biggest impact. Prioritise and make efforts to minimise the highest risks or change to alternatives, which do not have such an adverse impact on the environment.

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