



Navigating ISO Accreditation: NEW Balance's EHS Journey

Rebecca May, Barbour EHS

In the demanding and ever-changing world of Environment, Health, and Safety (EHS) compliance, balancing day-to-day operations with the rigorous requirements of ISO accreditation is no mean feat.

Recently, Teresa Dier from Barbour EHS sat down with Matt Egeland, Senior EHS Manager at New Balance, to discuss the company's journey and commitment to its ISO certifications, implementing best practices internationally, and the invaluable lessons learned.

About New Balance

New Balance, headquartered in Boston, MA, has the following purpose: "Independent since 1906, we empower people through sport and craftsmanship to create positive change in communities around the world."

New Balance employs 10,000 associates around the globe, and in 2024 reported worldwide sales of \$7.8 billion. New Balance owns five athletic footwear factories in New England and one in Flimby, U.K. New Balance MADE U.S. footwear contains a domestic value of 70% or more and makes up a limited portion of New Balance's U.S. sales.

To learn more about New Balance, please visit www.newbalance.com; for the latest press information, visit <https://newbalance.newsmarket.com>



Why pursue ISO accreditation?

New Balance holds four key ISO certifications for different areas of the business in the UK:

- **ISO 9001:2015** - Quality management systems
- **ISO 45001:2018** - Occupational health and safety management systems
- **ISO 14001:2015** - Environmental management systems
- **ISO 50001:2018** - Energy management systems

Matt shared how the journey for New Balance began with a gap analysis in 2015, and while they already had strong processes in place, they recognised areas for improvement.

"We made a three-year plan to get everything ready and align our management systems with ISO standards," Matt explained. "This involved a lot of training, implementing procedures, and upgrading from an Excel-based system to a web-based platform. The goal was to elevate our existing practices and maintain a culture where safety is everyone's number one priority." Matt had previously taken a business through ISO standards, so he knew what to expect and that it would be achievable for New Balance. He explained that the motivation to align with ISO standards was driven not just by compliance, but also by a commitment to continuous improvement. This drive stemmed from both operational needs and leadership vision.





“

The goal was to elevate our existing practices and maintain a culture where safety is everyone's number one priority.

”

The challenges of implementation

Achieving ISO accreditation while managing day-to-day EHS responsibilities presented its challenges. Matt emphasised that an integrated management system was key to their success. By streamlining processes, New Balance could pursue ISO 45001 and ISO 14001 certifications simultaneously.

“Our integrated system allowed us to have one cohesive framework,” he said. “For example, monitoring and measurement requirements are similar across standards, whether it's tracking accidents, near misses, safety observations or environmental impacts. This approach made it easier to address multiple standards at once.”



“

This approach made it easier to address multiple standards at once.

”

They also needed to carefully consider which ISO standards would be most practical for the different types of sites they operate. For example, New Balance's UK retail operations were incorporated into the ISO 50001 energy standard as they could realistically influence practical ways to improve energy use, such as efficient processes and store opening times.

In contrast, incorporating health and safety compliance under ISO 45001 presented unique challenges due to the diverse locations, structures, personnel, and operations of the stores.

Innovating and managing international compliance

As New Balance expanded its operations internationally, compliance with diverse legal and legislative frameworks became complex. Matt explained that when they began to expand into Europe, they started looking for a single source of information that would help them quickly understand different international regulatory landscapes and requirements.

“We were looking for a system that could provide not only UK compliance information that we could base our company standards on, but also international compliance information,” Matt shared. “Barbour's platform gave us access to legislation and legal requirements across Europe, which is very difficult to get. You can search Google for hours, but you don't get consistent information, and you don't actually know if what you've found is correct. We have now saved ourselves those countless hours of research, and Barbour EHS's tools allowed us to build a robust legal register tailored to our needs.”





“ We have now saved ourselves those countless hours of research. ”

During their first day on the Barbour platform, they took advantage of the ability to centralise and simplify complex compliance data. “In just one day, the amount of information we got out of it was amazing, especially from the legal compliance side. We created a document that outlined legal requirements for each country we operate in. It was a game changer. It helped us to become compliant across Europe.”

They also found that they could streamline the task of keeping up to date with changing EHS requirements. What once took days of manual work was reduced to a quick weekly review over what he and his colleague call their “five-minute cup of coffee.”

By having a centralised place to access up-to-date and summarised information, Matt has empowered the area managers in each country to manage their compliance responsibilities for themselves, and they simply check in with him as they go. “Everything’s there for you – they don’t have to go into every single piece of legislation to see what applies to us. It’s good for helping them to evaluate the legal requirements, and it gives them autonomy and a heads up.”

Lessons learned and looking ahead

When asked about lessons learned, Matt highlighted the importance of proactive planning and robust systems.

“The ISO journey taught us that preparation is everything. We’ve also seen the value of having strong partnerships, like the one we’ve developed with Barbour, to navigate evolving compliance needs. We’ve had some great comments from ISO auditors. They can see that we’re evaluating our compliance continually.”

Today, New Balance continues to uphold its ISO certifications while sharing best practices across its global network. “Our commitment to safety and sustainability is stronger than ever. With the right tools and a dedicated team, we’ve not only met the standards, but integrated them into the core of our operations.” These certifications underscore New Balance’s commitment to excellence, and they also reflect the team’s dedication and strategy in achieving them. As their journey continues, New Balance serves as a powerful example of how determination, innovation, and collaboration can drive lasting success in the world of EHS.

“

We’ve had some great comments from ISO auditors. They can see that we’re evaluating our compliance continually.

”

