News Releases

Celebrating a decade of collaboration between Mitsubishi Electric Europe and DNV

What factors create a successful collaboration between an organisation and its certification body? Whatever they are, clearly Mitsubishi Electric Europe BV and DNV have them. The right approach, expertise and chemistry have combined to create a relationship that's now celebrating its tenth anniversary.

It all began in 2011. At that point Mitsubishi Electric Europe BV (a part of the Mitsubishi Electric Group) decided to seek a single certification body partner. The Mitsubishi Electric Group itself is a century-old global leader in the manufacture and sale of a very wide range of electrical and electronic products and systems. Its European operation comprises branches and sales offices in 21 countries, employing more than 3,000 people.

The Mitsubishi Electric Group has put sustainability at the core of its mission throughout its long history. In the 21st century, the company has doubled down on its commitment by setting long-term environmental and sustainability targets first in its Environmental Vision 21 and now in its Environmental Sustainability Vision 2050. To help reach these goals, the group has been investing in certification to ISO 14001, the world's most-recognised tool for environmental performance improvement, across its global operations.

However, by 2011, as Mihai Scumpieru, Mitsubishi Electric's European Group Corporate Environmental Manager explains, each individual country held its own ISO 14001 certification and the company was using a handful of different certification bodies. "It was inefficient," reflects Mihai, "and in particular didn't give us good corporate visibility from a risk management perspective." Mitsubishi Electric Europe therefore went looking for a single certification body that could provide a more integrated and streamlined solution.

Choosing DNV

Having made the decision to seek a single certification body partner, Mitsubishi Electric Europe's first conversation was with DNV. This was partly because the Group was already using its Asian partner certification body, JACO, in Japan and was happy with them; partly because of DNV's strong reputation in Europe; and partly because working with JACO's European partner set up the possibility of one day creating a global certification.

DNV was also able to propose an innovative structure for the integrated certification called an "umbrella" certification. This means a single, unified certification across all sites in the scope. The benefit of that, explains Michael Howell, DNV's Principal Lead Auditor on the Mitsubishi Electric Europe account, is that it enables sample auditing across sites, which optimizes the time and costs of achieving certification.

Mitsubishi Electric Europe was also attracted to DNV's risk-based approach to auditing. This encourages organisations to identify their most pressing strategic risks and focus audits in those areas. Mitsubishi Electric Europe immediately spotted that this was a uniquely effective and efficient way to maximise the impact and benefit of its certification. As Mihai says, "We saw this as super-innovative at that time and very useful for what we wanted to achieve."

Consequently, since 2011, Mitsubishi Electric Europe has held one ISO 14001 certification covering its operations in Portugal, Spain, Italy, UK, Poland and Germany. In 2020, it added Sweden and Norway. In 2022, it plans to add France. Since some countries have more than one location, as of February 2021, the certification covers a total of 19 locations employing more than 1,300 people.

Decade-long collaboration

Mitsubishi Electric Europe and DNV are now celebrating a decade-long partnership that has endured largely because Mitsubishi Electric Europe recognizes the great value of its multi-site, single certification. Mihai explains that this has streamlined the audit programme; standardised forms and formats; and made information dissemination much more efficient: all of which is saving time and cost.

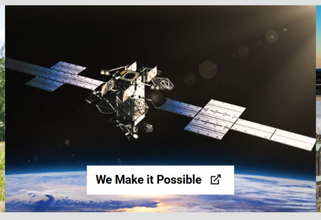
He adds that the quality of DNV's audits, especially from Michael Howell, is another reason Mitsubishi Electric Europe has stayed with DNV, plus DNV has fielded a consistent team of auditors operating in each of Mitsubishi Electric Europe's branches across the different countries. Mihai says: "Over the years we've really appreciated the continuity and having someone who knows the industry so well. Michael always sees the overall picture, focuses on risk, and brings us industry best practice. He always keeps the level high for us." Michael has also helped Mitsubishi Electric Europe develop an internal management dashboard that ensures senior management can quickly grasp what's happening with the EMS.

Leading the way

For its part, DNV applauds Mitsubishi Electric Europe's team, which has consistently led the way on driving environmental improvements across its business branches. In addition, trend analysis has enabled a joint review and identification of focus areas for each audit and, more recently, included the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which DNV has reported on at a local and corporate level. "Over the ten year relationship," notes Michael, "Mitsubishi Electric Europe has engaged in fully establishing an integrated Environmental Management System, assuring the same key processes are deployed across the various country branches. This has demonstrated their wholehearted commitment to achieving meaningful environmental impact improvements, and made our job easier."

Going forward the plan is to extend the certification still further to maximise the advantages that a single, integrated, "umbrella" certification can bring in terms of very good visibility, improved risk control and significant cost savings. Mitsubishi Electric Europe and DNV are already looking forward to the next ten years.

Related Links



© Mitsubishi Electric Corporation