



walraven



Walraven UK Ltd Sector: Construction manufacturing

How BSI certification to two key global standards proves Walraven's commitment to quality and health and safety

The challenge

Construction products manufacturer Walraven UK Ltd is focused on exceeding customer expectations and achieving total customer satisfaction by supplying high quality products and services. It wanted to maintain a quality management system that would continually challenge and improve its internal processes, while also adding an additional level of quality assurance for the companies it supplies. Walraven is equally serious about the wellbeing of its people. Having initially improved its health and safety performance by achieving certification to the occupational health and safety standard BS OHSAS 18001, it was keen to remain at the forefront of its sector in this field. Its aim was to create an inclusive culture of awareness throughout the company, where health and safety would be promoted and appreciated by all employees.

The solution

BSI certification to the iconic global standard ISO 9001:2015 ensures the effective application of a quality management system, and its continual improvement. It provides transparency for customers, demonstrating Walraven's ability to provide them with high quality products and services consistently, while also ensuring compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

The new international health and safety standard ISO 45001 sets out all the requirements for Walraven to create a robust, up to date health and safety management system, placing firm emphasis on the elimination, reduction and mitigation of health and safety risks through proactive leadership, risk-based thinking and company-wide cultural change.

The benefit

BSI certification to ISO 9001:2015 has provided a structure for Walraven to manage its business effectively, make continual improvements, and enhance its customers' satisfaction. It is "the bedrock of the company". BSI certification to ISO 45001 has created a comprehensive health and safety management framework, enabling Walraven to build best practice, with risk awareness an integral part of the company's culture, promoted and appreciated by an engaged workforce.

"It's known that BSI assessors are very thorough and quite tough – so meeting their requirements is not just a 'tick in the box' exercise. That's positive, because certification by BSI really means something, both to us and to our customers."

Katherine Humphries
Finance Manager | Walraven

Company background

Walraven manufactures and supplies a wide range of electrical and mechanical fixings, fire protection systems and sanitary systems. Many of its innovative products are designed to reduce installation time for installers. Typically, they are part of total system solutions used in large construction developments, as well as in offshore, shipbuilding, industrial and infrastructure projects. The company also offers services such as free technical support, design, prefabrication and onsite assistance.

With over 1,000 employees, the Walraven Group is based in the Netherlands and has production facilities and sales offices throughout Europe, and also in America, the Middle East and the Far East. In the UK, it employs 60 staff at Banbury in Oxfordshire, and has a turnover of approximately £9m

Proving quality

Walraven is focused on meeting customer expectations and delivering customer satisfaction by maintaining high quality standards for its products and services. To demonstrate this commitment, many of its products have national and European certificates and approvals. The company has also held the world's most established quality framework, ISO 9001, for many years, and was keen to transition to the latest version of this iconic standard when it was published in 2015.

The solution: ISO 9001:2015

Katherine Humphries, Walraven's Finance Manager, explains that BSI certification to ISO 9001:2015 provides transparency for customers. "It demonstrates our ability to provide them with high quality products and services consistently, while also meeting statutory and regulatory requirements," she says. "In many cases, it's essential to get onto 'preferred supplier' lists."

The standard enhances quality and customer satisfaction through the effective application of systems and processes and their continual improvement. Humphries says it has become "the bedrock of the company". She continues. "Everyone here understands it and every system we use is built on top of it. It provides a structure for us to manage our business effectively, as well as meet our customers' requirements."

Neil Young, Walraven's Compliance Manager, agrees: "We all work to the same processes and have access to the same information, which makes it very easy for people to pick up new tasks," he says. "ISO 9001 completely supports what we do."

Serious about health and safety

In March 2017, after a workplace accident had prompted Walraven to overhaul its safety procedures, it achieved BSI certification to the occupational health and safety standard BS OHSAS 18001. "Fortunately, the incident wasn't serious, but it made us realize we could make improvements," says Humphries. In March 2019, Walraven went a step further by migrating from BS OHSAS 18001 to its successor, the new international health and safety standard ISO 45001.

The solution: ISO 45001

ISO 45001 sets out all the requirements for the company to create a robust, up to date health and safety management system, placing

emphasis on the elimination, reduction and mitigation of health and safety risks through proactive leadership and risk-based thinking. The standard provides a fundamental framework around which Walraven has built best practice.

A key benefit is that it follows a high level structure (HLS), featuring terms, definitions, headings and text common to other management system standards – allowing the company to integrate it easily with ISO 9001:2015.

Humphries explains that ISO 45001 emphasizes health and safety awareness as part of the company's culture, with Walraven ensuring leadership from its senior managers, as well as employee engagement and consultation. "The requirements are covered in our meetings and in employee newsletters, for example, to ensure we communicate effectively to all involved," she says.

She continues, "It took a little time for people to adapt to changes – such as how 'near miss' incidents should be reported and recorded – but they have totally bought into the new approach. They feel more engaged, empowered and looked after. It's early days, but we're confident we'll see improving trends in terms of safety incidents and sickness absence."

Why BSI?

Walraven chose BSI as its certification partner because of its excellent longstanding reputation, and because of the expertise and accessibility of BSI's experts: "We have a very good relationship, and BSI has been great in helping us interpret the requirements of the standards for our business," says Humphries.

She continues, "It's known that BSI assessors are quite tough so meeting their requirements is not just a 'tick in the box' exercise. We have to provide evidence that we're doing what we say we are. That's positive, because certification by BSI really means something, both to us and to our customers."

What next?

Both ISO 9001 and ISO 45001 require twice-yearly audit and a commitment to continuing improvement, "which we're constantly striving for," says Humphries. Walraven is also currently building an environmental management system, with the objective of achieving BSI certification.

Tracey Williams, Walraven's General Manager, sums up: "As a manufacturer, you must be able to prove to your customers that not only are you a responsible, reliable partner with robust systems in place across the business to ensure quality of goods and services, but that you also demonstrate that commercially you are a sustainable, committed, forward-thinking partner. Our BSI certifications to ISO standards are key instruments in achieving all these goals and more. They help us win and maintain business, but moreover propel us to the next stage to remain a key partner for our current and prospective customers for the years to come."