

Why ISO26000 worked for me in the Exploration and Mining Industry

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Background

- After over 48 years experience, 46 with exploration and mining companies, and two years with my own company, work has focused on consulting for exploration and mining companies (the extractives sector).
- Some of the time, this included preparing annual reports for interested and affected parties, and also preparing reports on social performance and sustainability.
- GRI and ISO26000:2010 were the two guidance documents used most often. GRI is not user-friendly.

Why ISO26000

- ISO26000 provides guidance on social responsibility.
- ISO26000 is particularly appealing because it fits all sizes and types of entities including for profit, not for profit, public, private, government, and academic ones.
- It is not a standard: it is a guidance document.
- There is no cost to reporting on its requirements, other than the purchase price of the ISO26000 document.
- Currently there is no certification to ISO26000 in Canada.
- It is easily tailored to the needs of individual entities.
- If a section is not applicable, merely state why and move on to the next section.

Seven Core Subject Areas

1. The organization and organizational governance
2. Human rights
3. Labour practices
4. The environment
5. Fair operating practices
6. Consumer issues
7. Community involvement and development

Working with ISO26000

- There is no need to employ a “social specialist”.
- A person of average intelligence can read and understand the requirements.
- The reporting requirements draw on the types of information that most entities are already recording for other purposes.
- There are no separate sections to deal with specific industry sectors (unlike GRI).
- Some effort is required to collate the information and to write up a narrative text to introduce and explain the data presented.

Working with ISO26000 (2)

- Reports can be as short as 15-20 pages and as long as required.
- Management and Boards appreciate the clear and simple format within ISO26000.
- Interested and affected parties appreciate the clear format that addresses their concerns and issues and provides a venue for answers to be provided.
- Areas of specific interest can be easily flagged for readers.
- ISO26000 is subject to periodic review and update, so it is not a static document.

Benefits

- Aids more informed decision making
- Provides improved understanding of society expectations
- Improves organization's management practices
- Helps enhance reputation and public trust
- Helps generate innovation
- Improves competitiveness, including access to finance and preferred partner status
- Enhances employee loyalty, participation and morale
- Improve safety and health for all workers, regardless of gender
- Aids ability to recruit, motivate and retain employees
- Achieves savings thru' better productivity, resource efficiency, lower energy and water consumption, decreased waste and recovery of valuable by-products
- Improves reliability and fairness of transactions through responsible political involvement fair competition and absence of corruption
- Prevents or reduces potential conflicts with consumers about products and services
- Supports the organization's social licence to operate.

Hurdles

- Often it is necessary to read the guidance document several times to fully understand what it says, even though it is written in plain language.
- One of the key basic assumptions is that the entity is legally compliant and that it reports honestly. If an entity cannot commit to this, then ISO26000 is not the right tool.

Perspectives

- ISO26000 provided a relatively simple and easily applicable tool.
- It enabled and facilitated preparation of “One Report.”*
- There were no hidden obstacles or difficulties in applying ISO26000.
- * Eccles, R.B. & Kruz, M.P. 2010. One Report: Integrating Reporting for a Sustainable Strategy. Wiley, 235p. ISBN978-0-470-58751-5.

Thank you.