



ISO 45001 Höganäs AB: Case Study

On-site & remote: A flexible approach to ISO 45001 and ISO 14001 certification



Höganäs

01. Customer

Höganäs AB – North American Höganäs ('NA Höganäs')

02. Background

Established in 1797, Höganäs is a global, market-leading manufacturer of iron and metal powders with an ambitious target of becoming the North American steel industry benchmark. The company serves over 3,000 customers across 75 countries with a 3,500-strong product line.

03. Result

Following extensive on-site and remote audits, NA Höganäs was certified against ISO 45001 (occupational health & safety) and ISO 14001 (environmental management). LRQA carried out the audits during a period of significant COVID-19 restrictions - this hybrid approach helped mitigate the risk while delivering the same outcomes and assurances for NA Höganäs' stakeholders.


Working closely with LRQA, NA Höganäs can ensure that their systems and processes meet the requirements of international health & safety and environmental standards. With the business pursuing significant growth objectives in North America, certification from LRQA to ISO 45001 and ISO 14001 has helped demonstrate a commitment to increasingly important safety and environmental considerations.

Here, we speak with David Johnson – EHS Manager at NA Höganäs – about the role that a hybrid on-site and remote approach to auditing played in helping NA Höganäs meet its business-critical certification plans during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Why ISO 45001?

“With 14 sites across the world producing a yearly capacity of 500,000 tons of metal powders, a ‘safety first’ approach has become a priority for all of our people, from senior management through to operational staff,” explained David Johnson of NA Höganäs.

“We must ensure people can remain healthy and safe in their work environment, and the ISO 45001 framework supported this by offering additional support to our existing safety program, bolstering our current, robust set of guidelines.

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“ISO 45001 has also encouraged us to introduce a detailed and structured risk assessment process. We identify potential incidents before they occur and complete detailed analysis of outcomes and corrective actions, giving our people and stakeholders more confidence in our processes.”

Maintaining world-leading environmental standards

NA Höganäs also successfully achieved re-certification to ISO 14001 – confirming that its environmental management system and processes were effective, well maintained and geared towards continual improvement.

“We’ve become a world leader in our sector due to our commitment to always aim for the highest standards. Our ISO 14001 certified environmental management system allows us to achieve just that while also providing complete transparency. We have a clear focus on reducing landfill waste at both a local and global level. Through ISO 14001, we can deliver this through our integrated management review process.”

The value of flexibility

COVID-19 meant that NA Höganäs’ plans for a full on-site audit had to shift to a hybrid approach that utilized LRQA’s remote audit capabilities.

“This was a daunting prospect for us as we had never experienced a remote audit before. However, LRQA’s auditors laid out a comprehensive plan of action that involved a thorough audit of our management systems. The program included the usual interviews, document sharing, and evidence gathering that you would expect from an on-site audit. This level of planning gave us confidence that our audits could continue despite the circumstances.”

The flexible audit approach afforded NA Höganäs several additional benefits over a wholly on-site audit.

 It was more flexible as dates could be arranged at short notice, and it reduced the number of travel days normally required. It also increased our access to LRQA’s technical experts located around the world and allowed for involvement from other stakeholders.’

Remote auditing – a ‘seamless’ process

LRQA offered alternative solutions to meet NA Höganäs’ needs when it was not possible for auditors to deliver an on-site service. LRQA’s Remote Audit capability enabled the critical certification activities to go ahead without waiting for restrictions to lift.

The sector-specific technical expertise of LRQA’s auditors delivered a positive experience and result. ISO 45001 and ISO 14001 certification highlights NA Höganäs’ health & safety and environmental management systems’ effectiveness.

It also shows how their systems, processes and core business objectives are strongly linked.

“While half of the audit was conducted virtually, the standard was as high as ever. LRQA – a company that has always impressed us with their professionalism and expertise - made the entire process feel seamless from start to finish, despite the exceptional circumstances faced by both parties at the time.”

Why choose LRQA?

We’re here to help negotiate a rapidly changing world, by working with you to manage and mitigate the risks you face. From compliance to data-driven supply chain transformation, it’s our job to help you shape the future, rather than letting it shape you. We do this by delivering:

Strategic vision

Our technical know-how, sector expertise and innovative, forward-thinking approach will help you meet the challenges of today – and become a safer, more secure, and sustainable organization tomorrow.

Technical expertise

Our people are sector experts. They bring with them a clear understanding of your specific challenges, standards and requirements – then deploy deep knowledge of certification, customized assurance, cybersecurity, inspection and training to help you meet them.

Global capability

Operating in more than 120 countries, recognized by over 50 accreditation bodies worldwide, and covering almost every sector, we can help you manage risk, drive improvement and build credibility with stakeholders around the globe.

Effective partnership

Every business is unique. That’s why our experts work with you, to fully understand your needs and goals, and work out how we can best support them.

Fresh perspective

We have led the way in shaping our industry and continue to take every opportunity to collaborate with clients and pioneer new ideas, services and innovation.

Get in touch

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