Business Management System

ISO 9001:2015 & 14001:2015 (Integrated)

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document is the Business Management Manual (the Manual) of Sota Solutions Ltd (Sota).

The Manual is the property of Sota and is a version-controlled document.

The purpose of the Manual is to provide an overview of Sota, the activities it carries out and the quality and environmental standards of operation it conforms to.

The document is not designed to act as a procedures manual, although it does carry information about where procedures are located, and the detailed information on documentation requirements for the procedures required by the respective standards.

This Manual is designed to meet the requirements of ISO9001:2015 & ISO 14001:2015, and any standard which adopts the Annex SL structure.

1.1 DOCUMENT CONTROL

The issue status is indicated by the version number in the header of this document. It identifies the issue status of this Manual.

When any part of the Manual is amended, a record is made in the Amendment Log detailed below.

The Manual is made available to Sota employees through the company SharePoint site, and when amendments are made, employees are notified via a company-wide announcement.

The Manual will also be made available to other Interested Parties on request. Please note that this Manual is only valid on day of printing.

Issue	Issue Date	Additions/Alterations	Initials
0.1	17/01/2018	Business Management Manual draft issue	BS
0.2	18/01/2018	Minor updates	TU
0.3	13/04/2018	Review & updates	BS
0.4	01/06/2018	Structural changes	BS
1.0	13/07/2018	Updated for publishing	BS
1.1	04/09/2018	Updates following Internal Audit & Governance Meeting	BS
1.2	03/01/2019	Updates following Management Review	BS
1.3	18/01/2018	Updates following External Audit	BS
1.4	02/04/2020	Update Policy doc for start of new year	BS
1.5	16/07/2020	Branding	BS
1.6	04/01/2021	Update Policy doc for start of new year	BS
1.7	08/03/2021	Minor revisions as a result of external audit	BS
1.8	03/01/2022	Annual review	BS
1.9	03/01/2023	Annual review	BS
1.10	03/01/2024	Annual review	KS
1.11	15/08/2024	Minor Updates	KS
1.12	03/01/2025	Annual Review	KS
1.13	28/07/2025	Minor Amendments	KS

1.2   PLAN-DO-CHECK-ACT Model for ISO 9001:2015& ISO 14001:2015

Sota adopts the Plan-Do-Check-Act methodology with respect to this management system.

The Plan Do Check Act (PDCA) cycle is the operating principle of ISO's management system standards. Its formal structure includes processes that regularly examine performance and ensure that the system continues to provide ongoing benefits.

The steps in the PDCA cycle are as follows:

PLAN - Establish the objectives and processes necessary to deliver results in accordance with the expected output (the target or goals). By establishing output expectations, the completeness and accuracy of the specification is also a part of the targeted improvement.

DO - Implement the plan, execute the process, and make the product. Collect data for charting and analysis in the following "CHECK" and "ACT" steps.

CHECK - Study the actual results (measured and collected in "DO" above) and compare against the expected results (targets or goals from the "PLAN") to ascertain any differences. Look for deviation in implementation from the plan and look for the appropriateness and completeness of the plan to enable the execution, i.e., "DO". Charting data can make this much easier to see trends over several PDCA cycles and in order to convert the collected data into information. Information is what you need for the next step "ACT".

ACT - Carry out corrective actions on significant differences between actual and planned results. Analyse the differences to determine their root causes. Determine where to apply changes that will include improvement of the process or product. When a pass through these four steps does not result in the need to improve, the scope to which PDCA is applied may be refined to plan and improve with more detail in the next iteration of the cycle, or attention needs to be placed in a different stage of the process
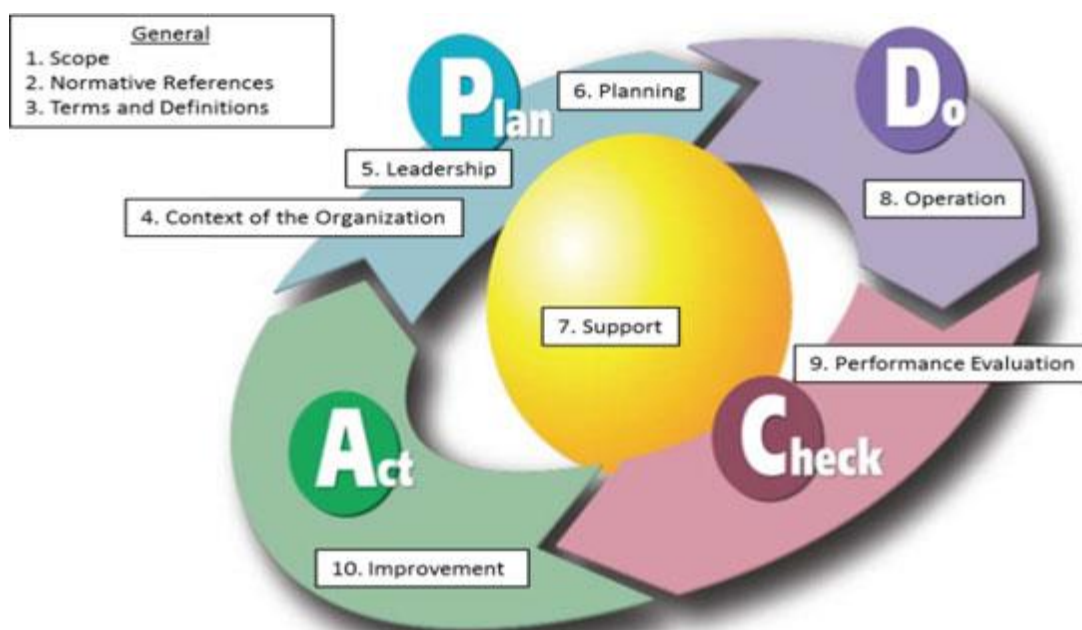
1.3 QUALITY & ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

It is the policy of Sota Solutions Limited (Sota) to maintain a quality system designed to meet the requirements of ISO9001:2015 & ISO14001:2015 (or any other standard in line with Annex SL structure) in pursuit of its primary objectives, the purpose and the context of the organisation.

It is the aim of Sota to:

➢ strive to satisfy the requirements of all of its customers, stakeholders and interested parties whenever possible, meeting and exceeding their expectations;

➢ comply with all compliance obligations, codes of practice and all other requirements applicable to our activities including the nature, scale and environmental impacts of its activities, products and services;

➢ the reduction of hazards, prevention of injury, ill health, protection of the environment, including prevention of pollution, sustainable resource use, climate change mitigation and adaptation, the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems and any other specific commitments which are relevant to the context of the organisation;

➢ provide all the resources of equipment, trained and competent staff and any other requirements to enable these objectives to be met;

➢ ensure that all employees are made aware of their individual obligations in respect of this quality & environmental policy;

➢ maintain a management system that will achieve these objectives and seek continual improvement in the effectiveness and performance of our management system based on "risk".

This quality & environmental policy provides a framework for setting, monitoring, reviewing and achieving our objectives, programmes and targets.

Customer service is an essential part of the quality & environmental process and to ensure this is fulfilled, all employees receive training to ensure awareness and understanding of quality and environment and its impact on customer service and of the products or service in which we provide.

To ensure the company maintains its awareness for continuous improvement, the quality and environmental system is regularly reviewed by the Management Board to ensure it remains appropriate and suitable to our business. The Quality and Environmental System is subject to both internal and external annual audits.

On Behalf of the Management Board
Ben Smoker
Sota Solutions Ltd

3rd January 2025

2. OVERVIEW OF THE ORGANISATION

Sota Solutions, incorporated on the 10th February 1989, is a specialist supplier of IT infrastructure solutions and managed services. Sota is the IT infrastructure service provider of choice for a broad spectrum of businesses and organisations. Sota's team of IT professionals design, implement and support end-to-end IT infrastructure, cloud and data centre solutions for businesses large and small. Sota own and manage specialist technical facilities, including two data centres, a regional 100Gbps-ready DWDM fibre-optic network and a disaster recovery centre.

2.1 SCOPE

The scope of the management system takes into account the internal and external factors, the needs of interested parties and any legal and regulatory requirements that are applicable to the organisation.

The scope covers all areas of activity: Management; Technical Services; Human Resources; Administration; Sales & Marketing; and Finance, but naturally is heavily focused on technical aspects due to the nature of work that the organisation carries out.

Services are provided to small, medium and large enterprises, public sector organisations, as well as other service providers across the UK, but primarily in the South East.

Sota offers the following branded services to its customers in the provision of IT Infrastructure solutions and managed services:

- SotaCLOUD compute on demand
- SotaPROTECT back-up, business continuity and cybersecurity services
- SotaCONNECT business connectivity
- SotaCLOUD COLO data centre services
- SotaVOICE hosted telephony
- SotaMANAGED hardware and software
- SotaSUPPORT technical support

The scope covers all products in terms of the provision of those services. However, any activity involving people, processes, tools and infrastructure not directly owned, managed or controlled by Sota are excluded.

3. QUALITY & ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

Sota aims to provide professional and ethical services to its clients. The Senior Management Team analyses customer feedback data, internal performance data, financial performance data and business performance data to ensure that Quality & Environmental Objectives are being met.

Sota have identified the following Quality and Environmental Objectives in accordance with SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed):

- Sota will endeavour to deliver its services to specification, on time and to the price quoted.
    - This is measured customer feedback and project closure feedback.

    Sota will conduct its business in an ethical and professional manner.
    - This is measured by customer feedback, both positive and negative.

- Sota will endeavour to satisfy its customer requirements and get things right first time. Should we make a mistake, we will acknowledge it and rectify the situation as quickly as possible.
    - This is measured by the number of non-conformances, complaints, corrective actions, and customer feedback.

- Sota will comply with all compliance obligations, codes of practice and all other requirements applicable to our activities including the nature, scale and environmental impacts of its activities, products and services.
    - This is measured by compliance reviews, targets & objectives & relevant key performance indicators.

- Sota will ensure that the reduction of hazards, prevention of injury, ill health, protection of the environment, including prevention of pollution, sustainable resource use, climate change mitigation and adaptation, the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems are measured and acted upon accordingly.
    - This is measured by monitoring and measuring the impact to the environment, which includes key performance indicators relevant to our organisation.

Whilst the above company objectives are "high-level", we have further analysed and categorised these into our Risk & Opportunities Matrix. In some cases, this may allow for specific objectives being set across different functions. This shows how we measure and set targets in meeting the "high level" objectives.

4. CONTEXT OF THE ORGANISATION

4.1 Understanding the organisation and its context

The context of the organisation is demonstrated within this Business Management System and all associated processes connected with the services / products offered.

Given the competitive market in which the company operates, the context will change over time. As such, this document will be reviewed on an annual basis and any significant changes incorporated.

Sota maintains a list of applicable legislation and regulations that the business are required to confirm to.

Applicable Legislation and Regulations Document

Legislation and Regulation Record

The record is reviewed through Internal Audits and Management Reviews.

4.2 Understanding the needs and expectation of interested parties

Interested parties are defined as "a person or organisation that can affect, be affected by or perceive themselves to be affected by a decision or activity". Environmental issues such as climate change are recognised as global concerns that may impact or influence the expectations of several interested parties.   As such, the organisation considers the implications of climate change, including regulatory, reputational, operational, and resilience-related aspects, when determining relevant needs and expectations.. The following are defined as interested parties that are relevant to the Management System:

Internal:
- Company Shareholders – The owners of the business appoint board members, provide direction and mandate growth objectives, they may also provide any capital required to support the business.
- Board of Directors – Top Management within the organisation, provide the strategic direction of the company to ensure that the business meets its objectives. They are the persons accountable for all internal or external escalated matters.
- Employees of the organisation – The employees of business are essential to the day-to-day operations. A reduced number of staffing could materially affect performance and service levels.

External:
- Key suppliers – Key suppliers can underpin Sota services and it is therefore of vital importance that they are of good financial standing and adhere to any applicable Sota policies and procedures.
- Customers – The business aims to increase its healthy customer base by developing relationships through effective account management, service reviews and administrative processes (orders, contracts, payment terms etc.)
- Regulatory bodies – Ensuring that the business meets the requirements of all applicable legislation and regulations or accreditations to continue to meet the required high standards.

- Contractors providing services to the organisation – Contractors to the business can provide outsourced services to our clients and therefore need to ensure that they too provide high levels of service to meet customer satisfaction.
- Landowners – Leases are in place for the three units on Kent Science Park, these provide security of tenure and define important aspects such as rent, service charge and any specific do's and don'ts.
- Neighbouring businesses – The business looks to maintain good relationships with its neighbours to ensure that the company's good reputation is kept in place.

4.3 Determining the scope of the business management system

The scope of the system covers all the core and supporting activities of the company. The activities and arrangements of all personnel including any sub-contractors also fall within the scope of the system.

4.4 Part 1 - Quality Management system and its processes

Sota is responsible for the planning and delivery of its services. We work closely with our partner suppliers and customers to satisfy mutual requirements. We have a flow chart of illustrate the interaction of our core business processes, as shown below:
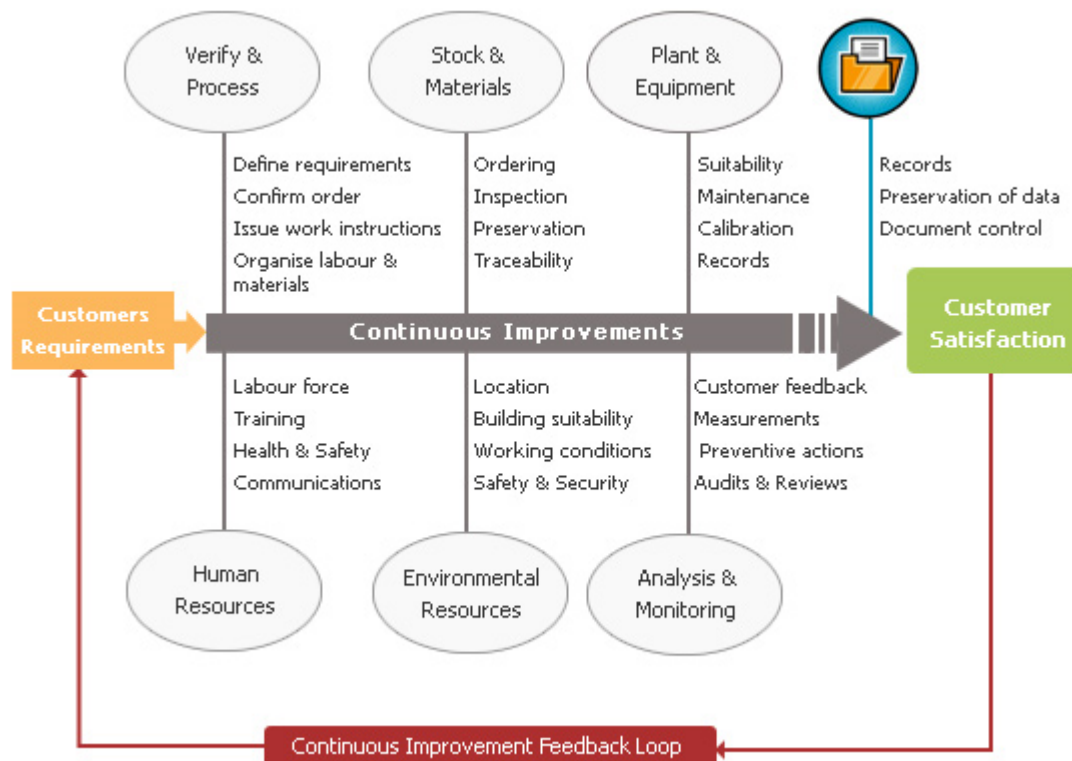
4.4   Part 2 - Environmental Management system and its processes

Sota is responsible for the planning and delivery of its services. We work closely with our partner suppliers and customers to satisfy mutual requirements. We have a flow chart to illustrate the interaction of our core business processes.

ISO 14001 Process Flow

5 LEADERSHIP

5.1 Leadership & Commitment

The Management Board is committed to the development and implementation of a Quality and Environmental Policy and the Quality and Environmental Ma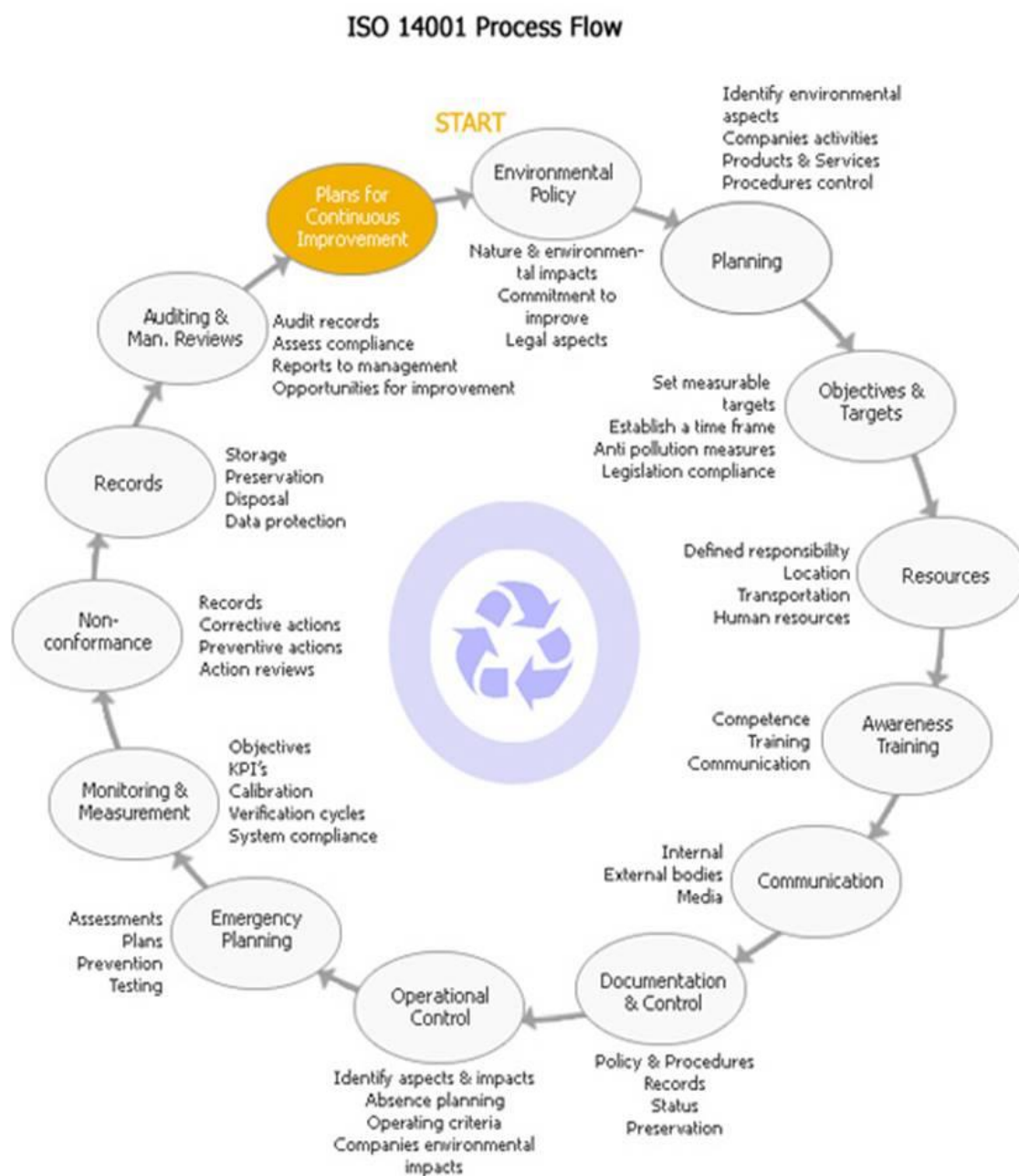nagement System which are both compatible with the strategic direction and the context of the organisation, the whole system is frequently reviewed to ensure conformance to the standard. Responsibility has been assigned to ensure that the QMS & EMS conforms to the requirements of the respective standard and the provision to report on performance to the Management Board has been defined.

The Senior Management Team will ensure that Sota employees are aware of the importance of meeting customer as well as statutory and regulatory requirements, and overall, to contribute to achieving Quality & Environmental Policy and Objectives which are aligned with the current business plan.

The Senior Management Team is responsible for implementing the Business Management System and ensuring the system is understood and complied with at all levels of the organisation.

5.1.1 Leadership and commitment for the Business Management System

- The company has a Designated Senior Management Representative who is responsible for the maintenance and review of the Business Management System.
- The ongoing activities of Sota are reviewed regularly and that any required corrective action is adequately implemented and reviewed to establish an effective preventative process.
- Measurement of our performance against our declared Objectives is undertaken.
- Resources needed for the BMS are available and employees have the necessary training, skills and equipment to effectively carry out their work.
- Internal audits are conducted regularly to review progress and assist in the improvement of processes and procedures.
- Objectives are reviewed and, if necessary amended, at regular review meetings and the performance communicated to all staff.
- The BMS is integrated into the organisations business processes.
- Communication covering the importance of the effective BMS and conformance to the BMS requirements is in place.
- Continual improvement is promoted.
- The contribution of persons involved in the effectiveness of the BMS is achieved by engaging, directing and supporting persons and other management roles within their area of responsibility.

5.1.2 Customer Focus (Quality)

- Customer requirements and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements are determined and met.
- The risks and opportunities that can affect conformity of products and services and the ability to enhance customer satisfaction are determined and addressed.
- The focus on consistently providing products and services that meet customer and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements is maintained.
- The focus on enhancing customer satisaction is maintained.

5.2 Quality / Environment Policy

The Policy of Sota is located within section 1.3 of this Manual – Quality/Environmental Policy.

5.3 Organisational roles, responsibilities and authorities

Sota has an organisation chart in place, employee contracts together with roles profiles to ensure that the appropriate personnel are in place to cover the whole context of the organisation and strategy of the business.

Management Board: Paul Cowham, Ben Smoker, Piers Roberts
Designated Senior Management Representative: Ben Smoker
Senior Leadership Team: Eliot Wood; Gavin G Anderson; Katie Wisniewski; Darren Latter.
Facilities & Compliance Manager: Kelly Sears

6 Planning for the Business Management System

6.1 Actions to address risk and opportunities

We have identified the risks and opportunities that are relevant to our Business Management system from an operational perspective. This also links to section 4.1 and 4.2 of this manual and also provides information on low-level objectives. This 'Context, Risk, Opportunities and Objectives' (CROO) document is separate to this manual. Within each of the areas the risks are identified together with a rating as to the importance of the risk. The associated consequence & mitigation of the risk is also noted together with any new opportunities that we have identified. Where applicable, we have identified measurable objectives, and these can be found within a separate tab in the 'CROO' document.

Context, Risk, Opportunities & Objectives

6.1.2 Environmental Aspects

Sota has conducted a review based on change (which includes planning of new developments), new or modified activities, products or services to identify and evaluate aspects, impacts and risk connected to its business operation. These include people, activities, buildings, services and the scope of the Business Management System.

The review of the environmental aspects is undertaken by Management Board at regular intervals to ensure they are valid.

Aspects & Impacts Register

6.1.3 Compliance obligations

Sota has determined compliance obligations which are connected to the operation of our business and is contained within the Aspects and Impacts register on a separate tab. The related document is reviewed by the Management Board at regular reviews.

aspects & Impacts Register/Compliance Obligations

6.1.4   Planning Action

Sota Solutions Ltd takes actions to address it significant environmental aspects, compliance obligations and risks and opportunities in the following documents:-

Aspects & Impacts Register
Aspects & Impacts Register/Compliance Obligations
Context, Risk, Opportunities & Objectives

6.2.1   Quality / Environmental Objectives and planning to achieve them

The Quality & Environmental Objectives (high level) and methods of achieving the objectives is located within section 3 of this Manual – Objectives.

The Management Board will determine environmental objectives & targets based on the identified significant aspects. This will be carried out initially and then repeated each year as part of our Management Review. Objectives & targets will be measurable where possible and will be consistent with our commitment to prevent pollution, our commitment to comply with compliance obligations as necessary and to ensure we achieve continuous improvement. When determining objectives & targets , considerations will include, technological options, financial, operational & business requirements together with the views of interested parties. On completion of determining the objectives & targets they will be recorded within our matrix and will then be used to develop the programme for implementing actions designed to ensure the individual targets are met and the overall objectives achieved. Objectives and methods of achieving the objectives is located within section 3 of this Manual – Objectives.

6.2.2   Planning actions to achieve environmental objectives

Management Board regulary review environmental objectives, which are contained within our objectives policy together with our aspects & impacts register. Please see section 3 and section 6.1.2 of this Business Management system.

6.3   Planning of Changes (Quality)

The Senior Management Team of Sota identify any potential changes, this is then delegated to a responsible person.

He or she will conduct a "research background" to determine the feasibility of the changes with regards to:

- Purpose of the change

- Any potential consequences
- Integration of the quality management system
- The availability of resources
- The allocation or reallocation of responsibilities and authorities
- Technical Skills
- Timescales
- Risks
- Impact

Sota also has a robust techncial change control proceedure forming part of the company's information security controls.

Change Control Procedure

7   Support

7.1   Resources

7.1.1   General
Sota determines and provides the resources needed for the establishment, implementation, maintenance and continual improvement of the business management system.

We ensure that the below elements are taken into account when completing an evaluation:

- The capabilities of, and constraints on, existing internal resources;
- What needs to be obtain from external providers.

A link to the company organisation chart can be found here: Organisation Chart

7.1.2   People (Quality)
Operation and context of the organisation is taken into account when we determine the relevant persons necessary for the effective operation of the quality management system.

7.1.3   Infrastructure (Quality)
All of our administration is conducted at our Head Office. This includes:

- Management of financial matters.
- Handling of client orders.
- Personnel records.

In terms of equipment used to deliver our product / service, asset registers and maintenance records are kept for the following:

- Office Space (4,000 sq ft).
- Technical Space (10,000 sq ft).
- Utilities.
- Hardware & Software.
- Plant equipment.

7.1.4   Environment for the operation of processes (Quality)

The Sota environment consists of a 4,000 square foot office area over two floors, and two data centres (combined 10,000 square foot). Maintenance contracts are in place for a variety of systems and equipment such as fire suppression systems, fire extinguishers, air conditioning units, intruder systems and access control. Maintenance schedules are documented and can be evidenced. The office space has in the region of 45 people whom all have undergone DSE evaluation and appropriate equipment is in place to alleviate any restraints on the employee. There are no psychological factors to take into consideration / we monitor our employees through appraisals, performance reviews and informal line manager meetings for their wellbeing which includes stress. Cleanliness is consistently at a good standard with sub-contracted cleaners attending weekly. The ergonomic layout is good minimising any impacts to the environment.

The company operates a Secure Desk Policy to ensure that data is kept secure, cleanliness is observed in an often customer facing environment and impacts to the environment are considered.

Secure Desk Policy

7.1.5 Monitoring and measuring resources (Quality)

We ensure that all relevant equipment and personnel are monitored and measured to ensure that equipment and personnel are effective for the services / products we offer.

Equipment: We ensure that all equipment is serviced, maintained and where applicable calibrated to statutory and regulatory requirements (see documented evidence within our maintenance, service and calibration records).

Personnel: We ensure that all personnel are monitored on a regular basis through appraisals and competency tests. We maintain a monitoring / training matrix as evidence.

7.1.6 Organisation Knowledge (Quality)

We ensure that Role Profiles for each role within the business are produced which include knowledge / competency requirements for each individual role. Specific tests and awareness training are implemented to ensure that persons are knowledgeable with the specific elements of the role. This could include telephone interviews, technical interviews, build tests, internal training or vocational certificates.

7.2 Competence

All employees are required to have the training and skills needed to meet their job requirements. All employees are monitored on an ongoing basis to identify any training and development needs. Competences and training needs are identified / satisfied by using:

- Pre-employment checks.
- Role Profiles which set out the competences required.
- Contracts of employment which set out contractual and legal requirements.
- Induction checklists to ensure / check understanding.
- Appraisal reviews to monitor performance.
- Development plans to set objectives.
- Technical competency tests.
- Training / competency matrix.

7.3 Awareness

We ensure that all employees are aware of all policies and their required contribution to the effectiveness of the Business Management System through:

- Company-wide announcements.
- SharePoint site.

- Shared Network Drive.
- Knowledgebase system.
- Awareness Training.
- Induction.
- Role Profiles.

7.4   Communication

For internal staff the company SharePoint site, Shared Network Drive, and Knowledgebase system are the primary sources of information, and these are updated regularly to ensure that all information is correct. These are all accessible to all staff.

For external persons, the company internet is a source of information and is updated regularly to ensure that information on products and services are up-to-date. Marketing activities are also conducted to promote the services offered by the organisation, including where available service brochures / welcome packs.

7.5   Documented Information
7.5.1   General
Sota demonstrates documented compliance to ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015 (or any other standard in line with Annex SL Structure) through this Business Management System Manual (which includes processes & procedures) on an electronic system which is available on the company SharePoint site and Shared Network Drive to all employees. All information is read only and only accessible via the Senior Management Team for amendment in a development area.

7.5.2   Creating and updating
The creation of documentation to support the Business Management System is primarily the responsibility of the Designated Management Board Representative.

Identification will be sought by a document number, date and author. To aid the approval and suitability of documents, the Managing Director of Sota authorises the release and delegates any training required to the Senior Management Team.

7.5.3   Control of documented information
All documentation is controlled by version and date and is listed on a "Master Document List".

Sota is also ISO 27001 (Information Security) accredited and is externally audited to ensure that it conforms to the standard. Procedures are in place to avoid the loss of confidentiality, improper use or loss of integrity.

Control of Documentation Procedure

Control of documents can be seen on the Master Document List and encompasses the following elements:

- Distribution, Access, Retrieval and use
- Storage and preservation, including preservation of legibility
- Control of changes (e.g. version control)
- Retention and disposition

Documents can be retrieved by authorised personnel from the storage locations specified and / or from folders on the network. Customer records are identified by customer name.

On or after the retention period stated, the relevant records will be reviewed by Management Board and will either remain in-situ, be archived or destroyed.

If records are to be destroyed, they will be disposed of in a controlled manner; sensitive hard copies will be shredded and soft copies will be deleted from the system. If records are to be archived, they will be identified and stored appropriately.

8   Operation

8.1   Operational planning and control

Sota has determined the requirements and controls implemented for all processes detailed in section 4.4. Any planned changes are controlled through section 6.3 (Planning for Changes)

We have processes in place to ensure that we mitigate any adverse effects within the products or services we provide.
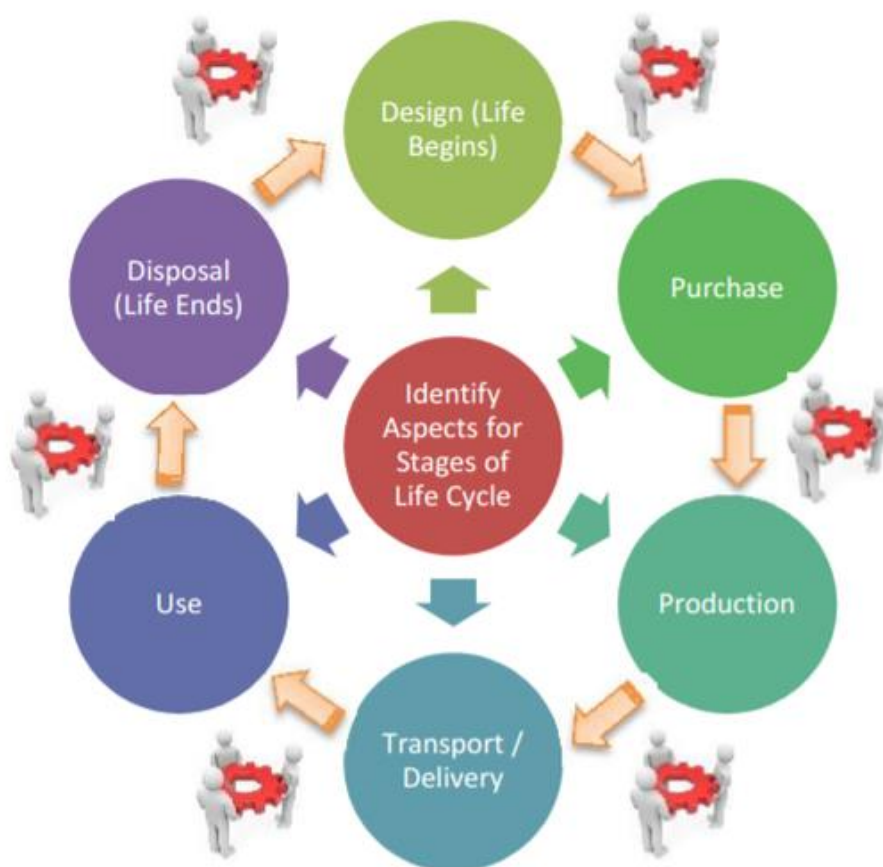
This process can differ widely depending on the product / service being sold.

8.2   Determination of requirements for products and services (Quality)

8.2.1   Customer Communication

Capability, facility and service information is supplied to customers via web site, brochures, email and through direct sales / personal contact.

Communications such as enquiries, quotes, orders and amendment details are appropriately stored and identified by customer and reference number.

Customer feedback is proactively sought via direct contact and satisfaction monitoring.

Complaints are documented and recorded.

Customer Satisfaction
Customer Complaints
Customer Complaints Summary

8.2.2   Determination of requirements related to products and services (Quality)

Sota ensures that applicable statutory and regulatory requirements are met which can be evidenced within section 4.1 of this document.
Should we issue any legal documentation (i.e. calibration document – traced back to national standards) in connection with the products / services offered then this is forwarded to the clients at the closure of the contract. All documentation is filed within the client file for archive purposes.

All quotes issued to customers are stored within the company record within Sota's CRM software, which is linked to live stock levels within Sota's Accounting software. Once a quote is accepted this is progressed within the Accounting software through sales order processing.

8.2.3   Review of requirements related to products and services (Quality)

Sota has processes in place to ensure that client details are collected through Account Application Forms and Customer Requirement Forms (CRF's) / Contracts. This to ensure that all details and requirements are correct and any additional information is collected.

New Customer Account Set-up

Any statutory and regulatory requirements applicable to the service / products offered may also be documented at contract stage.

The contract will have a specific term and may be reviewed at the end of this term through renewal validating the client's requirements. Service specific Terms & Conditions are issued which details the applicable terms, service level agreements, notice periods etc.

Any change required either through client requirements or product / service design will be fully documented through the "Planning of changes" within section 6.3 of this document.

8.2   Emergency preparedness and response (Environment)

Sota have established, implemented and maintained processes to prepare for emergency situations and to respond if they occur. The below are aspects of performing the organisations functions in an emergency:

- Maintain plans for preventing the emergency
- Maintain plans for reducing, controlling or mitigating its effects and;
- Maintain plan for taking other action in connection with the emergency

Business Continuity Plan

Additionally, Sota is required to dovetail into emergency plans of the management of Kent Science Park.

Kent Science Park Emergency Plan

8.3   Design and development of products and services (Quality)

Sota has detailed processes for the design and development of products / services.

Further detail on Sota's branded services can be found below:

SotaCLOUD compute on demand
SotaCLOUD is a benchmark for externally hosted IT platforms for business, providing all of the technical and cost benefits of a cloud infrastructure which is secure, resilient, and professionally managed. Security and resilience is engineered in at every level, and the main technical components, including the compute and storage platform, the data centre hosting environment and the core network, are all owned, managed and supported by Sota. SotaCLOUD challenges the new generation of global service providers, such as Microsoft and Amazon, by providing an open and customer-facing service which is more in scale with its users, as well as highly competitive. SotaCLOUD is hosted in our data centres, which means that data is geographically accountable, and support is always locally accessible and personalised.

SotaPROTECT back-up, business continuity and cybersecurity
SotaPROTECT is a comprehensive suite of products and services designed to safeguard client data and systems across every layer of IT infrastructure.
 Our offerings include fully managed Backup as a Service (BaaS) and Disaster Recovery as a Service (DRaaS), ensuring enterprise-grade availability and fast recovery of critical workloads. These services support business continuity during unexpected events and provide peace of mind that your data is always secure and recoverable.

The SotaPROTECT Suite takes a layered approach to security, delivering managed Next Generation Antivirus, Multi-Factor Authentication, Web and Mail Filtering, and User Security Awareness Training to help establish a strong and proactive security posture.

In addition, our Cyber Security Services extend your protection with features such as Managed Vulnerability Scanning and Patching, Managed Detection and Response (MDR), Cloud and Endpoint Security Posture Management, External Attack Surface Management, and Cybersecurity Accreditation Services.

SotaCONNECT business connectivity

SotaCONNECT managed network services utilise our own independent network, as well as the services of national and international carriers, to create technically robust and cost-effective connectivity solutions for business. The services are based on the latest generation of copper and fibre-based Ethernet technology as well as cost-effective DSL and FTTC Internet access, with customer premises equipment managed, monitored and supported by the Sota technical team.

SotaCLOUD COLO data centre services

Sota's high-performance data centres are conveniently located within a secure location in south-east England. Flexible co-location rackspace is available either as full height cabinets, or as cost-effective half and quarter-sized enclosures, individually combination-locked for extra security. Optimised power usage efficiency translates into lower power charges and generous power allowances. SotaCLOUD COLO customers benefit from convenient, unrestricted access 24x7, as well as professional 'remote hands' delivered by the Sota technical team on-site. Resilient, multi-path Internet access is standard and private carrier-neutral connectivity is fully supported.   SotaCLOUD COLO can be used as an outsource solution to reduce operating costs by eliminating the need for expensive and inflexible in-house computer rooms and data centres. Whether a business, public sector operator or service provider, SotaCLOUD COLO provides a high quality, scalable, and reliable hosting environment for IT resources.

SotaVOICE hosted telephony

SotaVOICE is a cloud-hosted telephony service which provides all of the standard features of a business telephone system without the high costs associated with purchasing and maintaining a traditional PBX. SotaVOICE calls are carried via customers own network infrastructure either directly to other IP handsets or to an external gateway where calls are seamlessly routed via multiple carriers to the public switched telephone network. SIP technology within the SotaVOICE platform provides standard functionality which was previously unavailable with legacy systems. SotaVOICE is cost-effective and simple to deploy, and as the platform is hosted within our own data centres and managed by the Sota technical team, quality and service levels are extremely high.

SotaMANAGED hardware and software

The benefits of providing new generation IT infrastructures as a service, with controlled recurring costs over a pre-defined contract term, are well-established. It simplifies the management of budgets, smooths cash flow, and formalises life-cycle management, ensuring that technology refresh is automatically incorporated into your business plan without the need to justify unscheduled spikes in

capital expenditure.   SotaMANAGED extends this concept to IT components which are often outside the scope of recurring services, but which also require on-going service and support, as well as life-cycle management. SotaMANAGED combines the supply of rental hardware, and subscription-based software, with management, monitoring and support provided by Sota engineers. By incorporating hardware components, such as servers, desktops, firewalls, and switches, into the recurring cost schedule, as well as Microsoft software subscriptions, the true cost of IT becomes transparent and more manageable.

SotaSUPPORT technical support

Every business and organisation needs a reliable IT infrastructure, but in the real world of technology there is always scope for unscheduled problems. The impact of an IT problem can vary from major business interruption to a frustrated individual unable to work. Whatever the scope and impact, end-users expect problems to be professionally managed and quickly resolved. This is best achieved via the professional framework of a managed Service Desk. SotaCOVER support agreements provide cost-effective and flexible access to Sota's experienced team of qualified engineers for unscheduled problem resolution and incident management. Smaller organisations benefit from access to professional Service Desk resources which cannot be justified in house, and larger organisations benefit from the reduced costs and increased efficiency of an outsourced Service Desk. SotaCOVER can be applied across an entire IT estate, or to specific technical components on a modular basis, including servers, desktops and communications equipment.

Sota has detailed standard build documentation for its products and services which are documented in Knowledgebase and available to engineers, along with checklists. More generically the processes for the design and development of products / services can be found below:

Design and Development Planning

Sota's branded services have been established for a number of years and as such require minimum development, other than a cycle of infrastructure refresh. The introduction of new hardware or software is required to go through Change Control as detailed in section 6.3. Customer requirements are gathered as part of the planning phase and can be obtained through quotations, technical conversations, project kick-off meetings and site visits.

Design and Development Inputs

Sota manages and supports its own infrastructure and as such certain services do not have inputs from external sources. Some branded services have underlying products that are utilised as part of delivering the service. All suppliers are vetted and supplier services are closes monitored to ensure that service level agreements are met. Any new inputs would need to go through proof of concept and require sign off from the Management Board, identifying the benefits, risks and commercials.

Design and Development Controls

The controls that Sota employs to ensure that its products and services are provided as prescribed and as quoted are as follows: internal technical reviews; internal commercial sign-off; customer

quotation sign-off; customer CRF sign-off; customer user acceptance testing; signed delivery notes; signed jobsheets; project closure feedback.

Design and Development Outputs
The applied controls should result in Sota delivering services to its customers that meets their expectation, to the specification and budget. Following implementation the services is handed over to support (HOTS), and Sota have documented procedures for this which can be evidenced.

Design and Development Changes
Any changes are required to go through robust change control procedures. As a result of the controlled lifecycle of Sota providing its services, changes / queries tend to minor in detail however they are fully looked into and promptly resolved in close liaison with the customer.

8.4   Control of externally provided products and services (Quality)
8.4.1   General
Sota ensures that externally provided processes, products and services conform to specified requirements and also reviewed as part of Sota CROO Document.

8.4.2   Type and extent of control of external provision (Quality)
Sota have controls in place to ensure that external provisions are approved before using the service or product. This is done via the Supplier Questionnaire and appropriate checks.

Supplier Questionnaire
Supplier Management Record

The Supplier Management Record is reviewed at the Quarterly Information Security Governance Meeting (or sooner as required) to consider any potential risks.

8.4.3   Information for external provision (Quality)
Communication of any applicable requirements which are deemed appropriate and are provided through the contract review with the provider. (i.e. T&C's, contract, performance, competence etc.).

Documentation is stored within the supplier record.

8.5   Production and service provision (Quality)
8.5.1   Control of production and service provision

Ensures that controls are in place for conditions for production and service provision, including delivery and post-delivery activities.

8.5.2   Identification and traceability (Quality)

When products are received they checked to ensure that they are good working order. Equipment (where applicable) is tracked by serial numbers and recorded on asset registers.

Asset Management Procedure

8.5.3   Property belonging to customers or external providers (Quality)

Customer equipment is stored safely and in the most part contained in racks that have unique codes. Sota's commitment to ISO 27001 demonstrates this, although customer owned or managed equipment falls outside of that particular certification.

8.5.4   Preservation (Quality)

Sota follows best practice processes in terms of the preservation of customer information and equipment. Again, this is evidenced by Sota's commitment to ISO: 270001.

Information Security Policy

Sota is fully GDPR compliant and can evidence as such with its relevant policies, procedure and records.

Data Protection Policy

8.5.5   Post-delivery activities (Quality)

Sota ensures that equipment is covered by applicable warranty and handles this process in the scenario of a fault.

Managed equipment is repaired or replaced in lines with terms & conditions of the service.

With respect to project implementations Sota ensures user acceptance testing has been completed and ensures that customers sign off project completion. Remedial works are conducted and required and agreed.

8.6   Release of products and services (Quality)

Sota ensures that the appropriate documentation is provided to the client on release of the product / service and this is also retained for traceability. Examples of which are delivery notes and job-sheets.

8.7   Control of nonconforming process outputs, products and services (Quality)

Internal audits, Management Reviews, Complaints, Feedback from employees are used to identify non-conformances and any actual or potential shortfalls in quality standards or internal processes/ procedures, suggest improvements and track any actions to ensure improvements have taken place, or potential problems are avoided.

These areas are reviewed within the agenda for the Management Review meetings and typically cover the action taken to control and correct any non-conformances noting any consequences of the action

taken and themes which may be evident. In terms of continual improvement, we also review the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of our Business Management System.

Sota has various processes and procedures in place to ensure that preventative action against nonconformities can be introduced, documented and seen through to completion in order to address the initial problem. The complex nature of the clients we work with demands that we have flexible, but effective, processes and procedures in place.

However, Sota also uses internal and external audits and risk assessments to continuously improve its service delivery, financial, HR and operational functions.

Steps
- The Management Representative raises a CPA and records on the Corrective Action Record.
- If any person discovers a shortfall, or potential shortfall in the written processes/procedures or a problem in the practical application of them, the details must be documented. The relevant person who is responsible for the action is informed. Action required as a result of Customer Feedback, Customer Complaint, Information Security incident or Management Review is also logged and tracked.
- Each entry in the CPA record to include:
    a. Sequential numbering
    b. Category of issue
    c. Person/Date recorded
    d. Overview of the issue, problem or concern
    e. Person responsible
    f. Action taken
    g. Date completed
    h. Initialled when complete

For products the following actions must are also followed:-
- Segregation, containment, return or suspension of provision of products

The Senior Management Representative is responsible for checking the "non-conforming products or services form" and ensuring that people with allocated responsibilities are aware of them and actions are progressing from the relevant CPA.

9   Performance Evaluation

9.1   Monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation

Monitoring is based on Risk and is linked to the CROO Document.

9.1.1   General

Sota has deemed the following elements (9.1.2, 9.2 & 9.3) for monitoring, measuring, analysis & evaluation to ensure the quality performance and the effectiveness of the business management system.

9.1.2   Evaluation of compliance (Environmental)

Ensures that compliance is reviewed regularly to ensure the business is meeting compliance obligations. This can be seen in section 4.1 of this business management system.

9.1.2   Customer Satisfaction (Quality)

Sota collates data on customer satisfaction through various means. This includes customer contact, emails and customer satisfaction survey.

The customer satisfaction survey is sent to clients through a link when support tickets are closed. The collated information is analysed and evaluated at the Management review meetings as it is a reportable requirement.

[Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire](#)

Certain actions mmight be taken as a result of lower scores such as:

- Investigation
- Additional employee training
- Performance improvement plans
- Customer Service Review
- Customer Health Check

9.1.3   Analysis and Evaluation (Quality)

Results of feedback which includes customer satisfaction questionnaire, internal audits, conformity of products & service, planning, suppliers, risk & opportunities matrix is evaluated through the management review meeting and actioned as applicable should any non-conforming areas be present.

9.2   Internal Audit

An internal audit schedule is prepared on an annual basis year and covers the requirements of any ISO standards in which Sota wish to be certified. Internal audits are carried out through "risk or claused based" auditing.

Appropriate personnel are allocated to complete the internal audits and must record appropriate evidence for completeness. All audits completed must be authorised by Management Board as complete once any non-conforming areas have been dealt with (without any undue delay). Internal audit documentation must be kept and filed appropriately.

Internal Audit Schedule
Internal Audit Report

9.3   Management Review

Management reviews take place on an annual basis. The attendees present are the Senior Management Team, with representation from the Management Board and any other appropriate persons of the business.

All inputs / outputs are full documented in minutes in line with the requirements of the specific ISO standard in which Sota wish to be certified. Any actions arising from the meeting must be completed without any undue delay and appropriate evidence filed with the Management review documentation.

Management Review Record
Management Review Agenda

10   Improvement

10.1   General

Sota ensures that improvement processes are completed and actioned as necessary. Analysis methods include various elements which include:-

- Customer Satisfaction Analysis and Evaluation.
- Internal Audits.
- Planning changes to the Quality Management System, Products & Services.
- 3rd party assessments for certification purposes.
- Results of non-conforming products.
- CROO Document.

10.2   Nonconformity and corrective action

Should a nonconformity occur, including those arising from complaints, internal audits & external 3rd party assessment, the Senior Management Team will assign the required resources to ensure that corrective action including root cause analysis is completed and implemented to avoid any further occurrences. This is then analysed and should the risk to the business pose to be "high" then this is then entered onto the "CROO Document (see Clause 6.1)" to assist in mitigating the risk to the business.

Should any non-conformances occur then the non-conformance report must be completed to ensure that a full analysis of the problem is resolved. Should any changes to the Business Management System, Products or Services be required then the "Planning changes" document shall also be completed.

The Management Action Log must be completed, as this then forms part of the Management Review meeting.

[Corrrective and Preventative Action Form](#)

[Corrective Action Record](#)

10.3   Continual Improvement

Continual Improvement will be ongoing through various elements of the Business Management System which is encompassed within this document. The list below is not exhaustive:-

- CROO Document – Evaluated at several stages (clause 5.1, 6.1)
- Quality Policy / Objectives
- Planning of Changes
- Competency Matrix
- Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Supplier Questionnaire
- Supplier Management
- Internal Audits
- 3rd Party External Audits
- Management Review