



Swaziland Railway successfully transitions from ISO 9001:2008 to ISO 9001:2015

In March 2012 after a strategic decision to obtain ISO 9001 certification as a means of demonstrating her commitment to fulfilling the organisation's promises to its customers, Swaziland Railway was successful in gaining her certification by TUV **Rheinland** to this international standard following a three (3) year journey which commenced in 2009. Since gaining her certification, Swaziland Railway has maintained her commitment to customer satisfaction through the continual improvement of her business operating system to meet the ever changing customer needs in a dynamic business environment.

ISO 9001 is the world's most popular quality management standard which has recently been updated in 2015 to make sure it reflects the needs of modern-day business. ISO 9001 is an excellent framework to help manage our business effectively so that we can be operationally resilient, build long-term success, and ensure customer satisfaction.

Following the release in September 2015 of the latest version of the standard, our Certification Body (TUV **Rheinland**) gave the organisation up to March 2018 to transition from the 2008 version or else Swaziland Railway was to lose her certification. As an organisation, we couldn't wait that long to make that transition and that is why in a Management Review meeting held in October 2016, a decision was taken to act fast and identify the gaps that needed closing to ensure we gain certification to the latest revision of the standard ahead of our competitors. It is pleasing to announce that in February 2017 a TUV **Rheinland** Team of Auditors visited Swaziland Railway following our request to be audited against the new version and to no surprise recommended to the Certification Body that we been issued certification to the latest (2015) version of ISO 9001.

ISO 9001:2015 is the new business improvement tool that has helped in driving continual improvement and deliver results in our organization. It has helped Swaziland railway to stand out, gain a competitive edge, and grow. To us, ISO 9001:2015 is more than a quality management system, it's a complete business operational tool designed to improve performance. The standard uses a process approach to ensure customer satisfaction and places quality right at the heart of our organization, complementing business strategy and helping enhance performance over time. It has provided us with a framework which has helped us to focus on ensuring we anticipate our business environment and customer needs and its flexibility and agility has really added value to us as an organisation.

Our SHEQ Manager Mr Mavela Wilson Vilane shares some views on how we have succeeded in this journey to being a world class organisation.

- Top management commitment is key to making this a success:
- Always keep staff informed of what's going on, create a team and assign a champion in all departments, as this increases motivation.
- Develop and communicate a well communicated plan of activities and timescales. Think about how different departments work together to avoid silos.

- Make sure the organization works as a team for the benefit of customers and the organization.
- Review systems, policies, procedures and processes you have in place, you may already do much of what's in the standard, and make it work for your business.
- Speak to your customers and suppliers. They may be able to suggest improvements and give feedback on your service.
- Think about how you do things and how that standard reflects on how you do it, rather than the other way around.
- And finally, when you gain certification **celebrate** your achievement and use your Certification Body's assurance mark on your documentation, website and promotional material.

As a follow-up, Swaziland Railway will implement all improvement opportunities through conducting internal audits while continuously creating awareness to our employees on the importance of meeting customer requirements in line with our quality policy and objectives.

Special thanks goes to Swaziland Railway Management, TUV, Team SHEQ and the entire organisation for living up to the standard.