



How Kitemark® certification opened up export markets for a leading British flood defence manufacturing company

Customer needs

- Demonstrate to the market that products are certified to a trusted quality mark and adhere to strong quality principles
- Win new business in the local authority sector and via the Environment Agency framework
- Gain certification and approval for the use of a recognised quality mark to facilitate the sale of products overseas

Customer benefits

- Reduction in annual costs of 25% across the business
- Ability to enter local authority and Environment Agency tenders, resulting in selection for the Environment Agency's 4 year framework for the installation of property level flood protection

“The Kitemark is widely recognised within our industry and certification is a crucial element when it comes to tendering for local authority and Environment Agency contracts. Kitemark certification gives our clients the peace of mind they require when selecting a flood defence company to protect their property.”

Sarah Vaughan,
Managing Director



Customer background

UK Flood Barriers is a leading British flood defence manufacturing company which specialises in the comprehensive supply of 'intelligent' flood defence products. Under the Flood Angel brand the company supplies product solutions for the protection of doorways and apertures, brick defence, sewage defence and a range of associated products – sealants, silicones and post flood restoration products. The company also undertakes site surveys to advise on suitable flood protection.

UK Flood Barriers is the only company in the UK to have gained Kitemark certification for four products and to have a privately owned testing facility. In addition to Kitemark, the company has held certification to the quality management system, ISO 9001 since 2009.

Why certification

"Our vision is to grow into the world's leading provider of flood defence solutions by focusing on innovation and new product development," says Sarah Vaughan, Managing Director. "Certification of our products and management systems plays a hugely important role in achieving new business as it gives our customers confidence in our business and our products a stamp of credibility."

Those products which have gained the Kitemark licence include the Flood Angel® Flood Defender™ for patio and standard doors, the Flood Angel Airbrick and Airbrick Cover. Kitemark certification has proved a highly influential tool to help UK Flood Barriers win new business particularly in the local authority sector and via the Environment Agency framework.

Implementation

Performance specifications for four types of product have been developed: building aperture products for installation as barriers across apertures such as doors and air bricks; temporary products, for use away from buildings, but which may be sealed against structures or buildings at section ends; building skirt systems, intended for the temporary sealing of the above ground external faces of buildings and properties; and demountable products; for use away from buildings, but may be sealed against structures or buildings at section ends.

Products are tested in a purpose designed test rig and are then subjected to a product type test to ensure product quality.

We found BSI to be very professional, and their in-depth knowledge of the PAS was invaluable. During the testing process we learned a lot about standards, as well as other possibilities for future testing. The approach was very 'can-do', which enabled us to work together to find solutions for future testing requirements."

UK Flood Barriers made sure that the whole organisation was involved in the project. Not only were the staff instrumental in assisting the assessment and certification of the products to PAS 1188, but they were involved on a day to day basis in implementing and maintaining the quality management system standard, ISO 9001.

Benefits of working with BSI

"BSI has a very strong, global reputation as a quality provider of recognised industry marks. It was this, coupled with the professionalism and can-do approach, that led us to choose BSI as our certification

body," states Vaughan. "The PAS 1188 published by BSI is the principal mark of quality that is recognised within the flood defence sector."

Part of UK Flood Barriers' longer term strategy is to export products overseas via a network of strategic partners. As the Kitemark is widely recognised within the industry, this overcomes barriers to trade and has facilitated access in particular to local authority and Environment Agency tenders where certification is a vital element to the success of these bids.

"We are big fans of the Kitemark, and have a good working relationship with a number of directors and managers within BSI," notes Vaughan. "Choosing flood protection products is an area where, until recently, there has been little readily available guidance. We are therefore keen to work with BSI to develop PAS 1188 further, in order to encourage additional standards to be written for other products in our sector, such as non return valves."

"A number of our competitors also have the Kitemark, however we have more products certified than most, and we intend getting Kitemark for further products during 2011. This will underline our commitment to quality and innovation. The benefits of having a Kitemark are immeasurable; we can now fully comply with industry standards in our sector. ISO 9001 drove our company, at a very early stage to introduce and maintain quality standards in our processes and policies. This has set the blueprint for our administrative processes going forward, and will be invaluable as we grow."

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