



Holcim Lebanon

Standards for risk reduction and market acceptance

Holcim Lebanon S.A.L. (HL) was incorporated in Lebanon in 1929 as a subsidiary of the Switzerland-based Holcim Ltd., one of the largest cement producers in the world. The company produces and markets grey and white cement and other related concrete construction products. It focuses on offering high-quality products and enhancing its image to customers as an environmentally responsible organization. HL is the leading cement producer in Lebanon.

Company name: Holcim Lebanon S.A.L.

Country: Lebanon

Industry: Construction and construction materials

No. of employees: Around 300

Revenues/profits:

Average 2002-2010:
USD 131.7 million/USD 48.2 million

Main products/services:

Wide portfolio of cement products

Main use of standards:

Manufacturing of cement

Most important standards used:

- ISO 9001:2008, *Quality management systems*
- ISO 14001:2004, *Environmental management systems*
- NL 53:1999, *Cements – Portland cement types* (Lebanese national standard)
- European standards (EN) on cement composition and testing
- Some ASTM standards on cement



Economic benefits generated by standards: USD 1.1 million annually (for the period 2001–2011), which represent 0.84% of the annual revenues and 2.3% of the EBIT.

Key qualitative benefits: Standards helped Holcim nurture a culture of environmental and social responsibility, which drives to responsible production in its industry in Lebanon.

What were the major benefits for Holcim Lebanon of using standards?

Using standards allowed Holcim Lebanon to:

- Ensure consistent levels of quality, performance and environmental impact for the various companies belonging to the Holcim Group
- Promote the acceptance of products with a lower clinker factor on the Lebanese market. Reducing the amount of clinker lowers production costs and improves environmental performance (through decreased CO₂ emissions during the production process). Holcim Lebanon mastered the technology for producing cement with a lower clinker factor and was able to profit from increased market acceptance of these types of cement

How did standards lead to these benefits?

National and international technical and management standards are integrated into an extensive company-internal system of procedures, methods and requirements that are mandatory for all companies of the Holcim Group. Their implementation supports the overall performance of the Group.

Lebanese standard NL 53 played a key role in driving market acceptance for cement with a lower clinker factor rather than the traditional Portland cement that dominated the Lebanese market until the late 1990s and beyond. The chief contribution of this standard, derived from European standard EN 197, was to assure market players of the performance and reliability of these types of cement.

For Holcim Lebanon, it mitigated the risk of introducing this cement onto the Lebanese market and helped convince customers of its fitness for purpose.