



By: Dave Frank

Achieving Excellence

CIMS-GB certification helps Aramark's Sports & Entertainment Division provide world-class experiences, environments and outcomes.

When it comes to delivering facility service, ARAMARK's Sports & Entertainment (S&E) Division focuses on one major goal every day: To provide world-class experiences, environments and outcomes for its clients and customers.

This is true in every facility and is a goal shared among all facility services staff, regardless of whether they are responsible for maintaining a convention center, cultural attraction, sports and entertainment venue, amphitheater, park and resort, racetrack or other attraction.

Ensuring that such a lofty goal is met at all locations and facility types requires a standard framework that defines quality service for the organization and its customer.

Further, success depends on making sure that the framework is capable of fostering effective and consistent results.

ARAMARK S&E found just such a framework in ISSA's Cleaning Industry Management Standard (CIMS) and CIMS-Green Building (CIMS-GB) program.

Taking On The CIMS-GB Challenge

CIMS-GB was first introduced to ARAMARK S&E leadership by Katy Severinsen, director of facility operations.

Severinsen recognized a need within the organization to standardize facility services operations and immediately saw a solution in CIMS-GB.

"Katy and I reviewed the CIMS pillars and steps together and talked through them," says Jack O'Brien, ARAMARK president of convention centers and S&E support services. "CIMS really resonated with me because it applies to facilities services as a business, not just sports and entertainment. It provides a standard platform to achieve excellence and recognition and allows for a consistent level of service across all locations."

Although O'Brien, Severinsen and ARAMARK S&E's two other regional facility directors were excited about the Standard and its benefits, they knew that ARAMARK S&E had never taken on a project as challenging as CIMS-GB certification.

"The process is very demanding and very time-consuming and I have to give the facility directors all the credit," O'Brien says.

"They spent time together and worked with the management team to work through the process. It was definitely a collaborative effort."

The three facility directors were used to working closely together, a fact that made the process much easier and allowed them to talk through each challenge.

Further, they worked with the onsite managers at each facility location, starting with Coors Field in Denver, which served as a pilot location.

Success depends on making sure that the framework is capable of fostering effective and consistent results.

"When going through the CIMS-GB criteria, we found that we already had a lot of the required processes in place," says John Graham, general manager of ARAMARK facility services at Coors Field. "The hard part was the process of documentation — getting all the forms and checklists signed off on and filed and recorded in an online tool."

The team also identified opportunities for improvement, which forced them to ask and answer the question "How can we do it better?"

Ultimately, by asking the hard questions and taking a new look at their processes, the organization was able to implement numerous improvements, most notably to their training program.

"We were doing a lot of on-the-job training and found we were lacking a more formalized training process," Severinsen says. "Now, we've created a standard training program for all locations using a classroom-style approach, which has resulted in increased worker confidence and a reduction in turnover." **CM**

Dave Frank is a 30-year industry veteran and the president of the American Institute for Cleaning Sciences (AICS). AICS is the registrar for ISSA's Cleaning Industry Management Standard (CIMS) certification program.



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Achieving Excellence: Part Two

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Finding Validation In Current Programs

One area where ARAMARK S&E was able to use Cleaning Industry Management Standard-Green Building (CIMS-GB) to really take their programs and processes to another level was in sustainability.

The CIMS-GB program also served to validate ARAMARK's longstanding commitment to environmental stewardship — a commitment shared across all areas of business.

The commitment, described in the organization's Green Thread program, is based on Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification guidelines and has proven to be an effective business operating system that drives continuous improvement.

Moreover, the program addresses all aspects of sustainability, including water and energy efficiency, green products and systems, indoor environmental quality, recycling and operational efficiency.

CIMS-GB helped assure the ARAMARK S&E team that the products and processes they were using through the Green Thread program also met the cleaning industry's leading standard.

This provided the organization with third-party validation of its own sustainability program — a great accomplishment to share with customers.

"It really was fortuitous because what we were doing was already aligned with the CIMS-GB program," says Jack O'Brien, ARAMARK president of convention centers and S&E support services. "We implemented the Green Thread program because sustainability is so important to our clients, our customers and the communities where we work and live, and we continue to see an overgrowing demand for sustainability across all our operations. CIMS-GB certification has further helped us show that we are fully committed to sustainability"

Since achieving CIMS-GB certification, ARAMARK S&E has met with potential clients at numerous facilities, and the designation has certainly been a positive factor.

For example, ARAMARK S&E met with representatives at the

Ottawa Convention Centre, a facility that is currently under construction and being built to meet LEED-New Construction (LEED-NC) standards.

O'Brien notes that being able to offer the convention center CIMS-GB-certified facility services was "the icing on the cake," given ARAMARK S&E's ability to immediately and directly help the convention center achieve the LEED-NC certification that they are working toward.

Sharing World-class Status With Customers

Ultimately, ARAMARK S&E has found that CIMS-GB provides third-party validation and works as a tool to quickly show current and potential customers that they are working with — or have the opportunity to work with — a quality, well-managed, sustainable operation.

The certification has become something facility customers look for and gives facility service organizations a competitive advantage.

However, O'Brien stresses CIMS-GB is not about making ARAMARK S&E look good; it's about making its customers and clients look good.

"CIMS-GB certification is incredible for our team, but it's really about our customers and clients," he says. "It allows us to be silent partners and make them look good. That's how we grow the business."

And, the benefits and market growth are likely to extend beyond ARAMARK's S&E division.

ARAMARK S&E's experiences have inspired a number of other ARAMARK divisions to take a look at CIMS-GB.

O'Brien certainly believes that the program would be valuable for all of ARAMARK's businesses, especially given that operational challenges in one facility often mirror those in another.

Ultimately, it is about standardizing processes through CIMS-GB to help managers overcome inefficiencies and enable them to focus on the organization's universal goal: To provide world-class experiences, environments and outcomes — and help clients and customers do the same. *CM*

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