

# CIMS-GB: The One-stop Standard



By: Jim Peduto

*ISSA's expanded Standard is the first of its kind, offering certification under green building and management principles.*

ISSA officially launched Cleaning Industry Management Standard-Green Building (CIMS-GB) in October and, in just the first round, more than 12 organizations earned certification.

These newly certified organizations got in line to be among the first cleaning organizations to earn the CIMS-GB designation for one significant reason: CIMS-GB is like no other industry green standard available today.

CIMS-GB is a clear, more simplified standard that reaches far beyond green cleaning products.

The Standard is a certification for organizations as a whole, providing them with not only key points toward Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance (LEED-EBOM), but also the essential principles for running a well-managed, customer-focused organization.

So when organization leaders ask me, "How do other industry standards compare to CIMS-GB?"

My answer is simple: "They don't."

## **Answering Some Questions About CIMS-GB**

**Does CIMS-GB certify management best practices? Yes.**

While CIMS-GB obviously has a major green building component, it includes five additional principles focused on management best practices: Quality Systems; Service Delivery; Human Resources; Health, Safety and Environmental Stewardship; and Management Commitment.

There are no other green standards or certifications that currently exist for the cleaning industry that cover these six principles — the five listed above, plus green building — besides CIMS-GB.

Organizations can walk away with CIMS-GB certification having confidence that they will be serving their customers with a sustainable cleaning service in a quality, best-in-class manner.

**Does CIMS-GB parallel LEED-EBOM? Yes.**

Unlike other industry green standards that tend to stand alone or are independent from other standards, CIMS-GB is largely based on the sustainable cleaning requirements found in LEED-EBOM.

This alignment with LEED-EBOM gives CIMS-GB-certified organizations a headstart toward LEED certification.

**Is CIMS-GB prescriptive, requiring the use of specific procedures and techniques? No.**

While other standards narrowly define which products and procedures organizations must use, CIMS-GB does not.

Instead, organizations are given plenty of latitude in their purchasing, procedures and training decisions.

This way, each organization can make choices that are suited best for them.

**Does CIMS-GB include costly training requirements? No.**

Some industry standards require a specific number of training hours per person, per year, resulting in high operations costs.

That type of approach for training might be preferred for some organizations, but often it is not necessary.

CIMS-GB calls for training that is very specific to the Standard.

Rather than focusing on the number of hours of training, CIMS-GB hones in on the effectiveness of the training and bases the amount of training on what is most appropriate for each organization.

**Does CIMS-GB recognize multiple cleaning product certifications? Yes.**

CIMS-GB, because it is a newer Standard, recognizes many types of product certifications, including Green Seal, Environmental Choice and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Design for the Environment (DfE).

There is also an option to defer to alternative qualification through an independent, third-party assessment.

As long as cleaning products meet certain criteria, organizations are free to select the products that are best for their facilities.

**Are there CIMS-GB certification experts available to help organizations with certification? Yes.**

Built on an already successful CIMS framework, CIMS-GB comes with an arsenal of more than 500 ISSA Certification Experts (I.C.E.) who are available to provide support and expertise to organizations applying for CIMS or CIMS-GB certification.

To find an expert, simply go to the ISSA website.

**What is the renewal period for CIMS-GB certification? Two years.**

Different from other standards that require organizations to renew certification annually so they are always in compliance mode, CIMS requires organizations to renew every two years.

This renewal schedule helps organizations save time to focus on operating as a CIMS-certified organization and it also saves them money with fewer renewals.

**Does CIMS-GB certification cost more than other industry certifications? No.**

CIMS-GB certification actually costs less than other industry certifications, even though it covers six principles.

Organizations are getting an excellent value and breadth of recognition with CIMS-GB certification. **CM**

*Jim Peduto is the president of Matrix Integrated Facility Management LLC and the co-founder of the American Institute for Cleaning Sciences (AICS).*

*AICS is the registrar for the ISSA Cleaning Industry Management Standard certification program.*