QM&T December 2009 Newsletter

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SEASONS GREETINGS FROM QMT

Climate Concerns

Environmental Issues are again dominating the news at the moment with the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen taking place in December. According to Energy and Climate Change Secretary Ed Milliband, "The two weeks in Copenhagen are crunch time for the planet. "To help understand some of the consequences a new map has been launched by the UK government. The map was developed using the latest peer-reviewed science from the Met Office Hadley Centre and other leading impact scientists. The map highlights some of the impacts that may occur if the global average temperature rises by 4 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial climate average. The impacts include: effects on water availability, agricultural productivity, extreme temperatures and drought, the risk of forest fires and sea level rises. The map is available at www.actoncopenhagen.decc.gov.uk/4degrees. If you would like more read more about the evidence for climate change, please visit www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/proveit

So what does this mean to businesses on the ground? More and more organisations are being asked by their customers what their environmental policy is and how they are addressing their environmental impact. This is particularly so for businesses selling into the public sector where ISO14001 certification can be a go/ no-go question when winning government funded activity. It is expected that this requirement will cascade down through many organisational sectors, such that having ISO 14001 certification will no longer be a choice, but essential – as the ISO9001 certification is in many sectors today.

Often the person that management turns to when asked about anything ISO will be the Quality Manager and so it is worth spending some time understanding what the standard requires and also how many of the processes within the ISO 9001 quality management system standard overlap with the processes in the ISO 14001 environmental management system standard. Whilst the main aim of the ISO 14001 standard is to reduce an organisation's environmental impact and assist with legislative compliance, many of the requirements such as management review, auditing, document control, corrective and preventive management will be familiar to any quality manager. It is therefore advisable for the quality manager to study the ISO 14001 standard and even look at carrying out a basic gap analysis so that the main issues can be identified and the environmental activities that are already being carried out – due to legislative requirements, can be drawn into a coherent system. For further information on the standard and what you need to do for certification you should speak to your certification body.

UK Support for a Low Carbon Future

A variety of support is being offered by the UK government to assist organisations reduce their environmental impact.

New funding to support a green economic recovery in the UK was announced in the Chancellor's Pre-Budget Report. The new measured announced included:

- Support for four commercial scale demonstrations of Carbon Capture and Storage technology on coal power generation

- Further investment in low-carbon energy projects
- Implement energy efficiency measures to cut public sectors energy bills
- Further investment to develop a unique UK capability for testing wind turbine blades
- From 2011, reducing the rate of relief from the Climate Change Levy for business with Climate Change Agreements from 80% to 65% and including plastics and industrial laundries in the scheme

A new Forum, the Forum for Just Transition has been set up by the UK government to ensure that the opportunities and challenges for moving to a low carbon economy are shared equally around the UK. The Forum has representatives from the Trades Union Congress, the Energy Intensive Users Group, Industry, Education and Skills groups. Chair of the meeting, Business Minister Pat McFadden said. "The Forum for Just Transition will help us work to ensure that all people have a stake in the low carbon economy and the opportunities it brings. There is a danger that responding to climate change can become abstract or an issue for the elite, driven simply by a commitment to change individual behaviour, when what it can be is a huge new industrial and employment opportunity for the country, one that cherishes the planet and gives people a real stake in a greener future."

Low Cost Carbon R&D

A Competition to support industry-led collaborative projects which focus on strengthening UK capability and developing the UK's supply networks for low and ultra low carbon vehicle projects has been announced. Ian Gray, Chief Executive of the Technology Strategy Board said, " This is the fourth competition run by the Technology Strategy Board under its five year Low Carbon Vehicles Integrated Delivery Programme which is aimed at integrating the innovation chain from the science base, through collaborative research and development to fleet level demonstration." For further information please visit www.innovateuk.org

Increase in use of Food Safety and Information Security Standards

The latest survey from the ISO on the use of standards shows that Management System standards for food safety and for information security have sharply increased. Certification to ISO 22000:2005 (food safety) went up by 96% in 2008, where as certification to ISO 27001:2005 (information security) went up by over 20%.

The most popular standard is still the ISO9001 standard, with 982, 832 certificates issued up to Dec 2008. Services have significantly increased their share of certificates, with service providers accounting for 40% of all ISO 9001 certificates compared to 32% in 2007.

ISO comments in the introduction to the survey, "This is a clear demonstration that they *(standards)* have become essential tools of the world economy and retain their attraction for organisations even in time of crisis. It is also possible that organisations look to management systems for supporting their objectives even more during a crisis."

The principle findings of the survey can be found free of charge on www.iso.ch

New standard for software documentation

Most people would agree that the effective use of software can be helped by well designed and user friendly documentation. The new standard *ISO/IEC 26513:2009, Systems and software engineering – Requirements for testers and reviewers of user documentation*, will help to ensure that software users are provided with consistent, complete, accurate, and usable documentation. The standard will be useful for testers and reviewers as well as specialists such as information designers or architects involved in planning the structure and format of products in a documentation set, as well as usability specialists and business analysts who identify the tasks the intended users will perform with the software.

For further information, please visit www.iso.ch

Manufacturing Excellence

The 2010 manufacturing excellence awards are now open. The awards are run by the Institute of Mechanical Engineers and attract entries from

manufacturing businesses in all sectors. The closing date for entries is the 31 January 2010, with the closing date for the completed audit the 26 February 2010. Entry is free and each entrant will receive a customised, confidential benchmark report. This compares your company to industry accepted best practice and highlights areas for improvement. There will also be benefits for the finalists and winners through media activities such as press releases and in the past stories have appeared on the radio and television.

For further information, and to obtain the entry form please visit www.mxawards.org

Standard that aims to improve emergency response

The faster the emergency services can reach a road traffic accident, the higher the chances of survival for the people involved. In the event of a road accident, vehicles equipped with a crash sensor automatically notify emergency services of the location, time and direction of the vehicle. By transmitting messages that will be unambiguously understood by emergency services, rescue teams can reach the scene more rapidly and with the right support. A new standard *ISO 24978:2009, Intelligent transport systems – ITS Safety and emergency messages using any available wireless media – data registry procedures*, enables relevant parties to immediately understand the precise and clear meaning of an emergency safety-related message.

According to Bob Williams, leading of the ISO working group, "The benefits are clear and significant, particularly for incidents that take place in remote areas or far from the town centre. Statistics show that knowledge of the exact location reduces the response time of rescue teams by 40% in built-up areas and 50% in rural environments"

Further information can be found on www.iso.ch

EFQM 2009 Award Winners

The EFQM Excellence Award is given to Europe's best performing companies and not for profit organisations. It honours leaders in industry who have a track record for turning strategy into action and continuously improving their organisation's performance.

This year's winners are:

Customer Focus – Bradstow School a residential school in the UK for children with autistic disorders and learning difficulties and NXP Sound Solutions based in Austria who manufacture and distribute speakers to the mobile phone industry

Leadership and Constancy of Purpose – EDF Direction Commercial Region Est in France that sells electricity and gas, St Colman's College in Northern Ireland, a catholic grammar school for boys and Volkswagen Motor Polska who assemble diesel engines.

Continuous Learning, Innovation and Improvement - EiTB, the main communications group in the Basque region of Spain and Robert Bosch in France who manufacture automotive components

For further information please visit www.efqm.org