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## **New Year Resolutions**

Have you made any New Year resolutions? What about implementing a new quality initiative? Tackle one of those areas that you have always meant to improve. You can base your approach on:

- Define the problem
- Understand the problem
- Initiate the Action
- Corrective Action
- Confirm the Solution

If you would like any reminders about the tools and techniques available to help you, a free mini guide is available from [help@qmt.co.uk](mailto:help@qmt.co.uk) (requests for multiple one copies will subject to a charge).

Alternatively, if you are already on top of everything then what about applying for a 2008 UK Excellence Award. This award is run by the British Quality Foundation (BQF) and you should apply if you can answer 'yes' to the following questions about your organisation:

- Are you producing excellent results?
- Is systematic improvement a way of life?
- Are your key major processes under control, subject to regular review and improving?
- Would you be proud to show others what you are doing?
- Do you believe that recognition is an important part of continuous improvement

If you would like further details then you should contact the BQF on 020 7654 5010 or [sally.green@bfq.org.uk](mailto:sally.green@bfq.org.uk).

## **Universal Symbols**

The universal language of information symbols used in public places is contained in a new International Standard. *ISO 7001:2007 Graphical Symbols – Public Information Symbols*, covers the main requirements for images displayed on signs in all kinds of public areas, for example symbols for car parking, toilets and hospitals. Also, published is *ISO 22727:2007, Graphical symbols – Creation and design of public information symbols – Requirements* and this aims to ensure consistency in new designs.

For further information, please visit [www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org)

## **Food Safety**

A new CD has been released by ISO that contains all the key standards related to food safety:

ISO 22000:2005 Food safety management systems – requirements for an organisation in the food chain

ISO 22004:2005 Food safety management systems – guidance on the application of ISO 22000:2005

ISO 22005:2007 Traceability in the feed and food chain

ISO/TS 22003:2007 Food safety management systems – requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of food safety management systems and ISO/IEC 17021:2006

For further information, please visit [www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org)



## **Water Services Standards**

The ISO have recently released a set of three standards that provide guidelines for service activities relating to drinking water supply systems and wastewater sewage systems. The ISO Secretary General Alan Bryden has said "These ISO standards will play a primary role in promoting access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation through improved governance at all levels. Their publication is a first step towards responding to the United Nations' concern in recognising that access to water is an essential human right. The UN has set ambitious goals to increase access to drinking water and wastewater services, particularly in developing countries".

The three standards are:

1. ISO 24510, Activities relating to drinking water and wastewater services – Guidelines for the assessment and for the improvement of the service to users
2. ISO 24511, Activities relating to drinking water and wastewater services – Guidelines for the management of wastewater utilities and for the assessment of wastewater services
3. ISO 24512, Activities relating to drinking and wastewater services – Guidelines for the management of drinking water utilities and for the assessment of drinking water services

For further information, please visit [www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org)

## **UK Patent rules overhauled**

An overhaul of the rules governing the UK patent system should make things easier for British businesses. The new system is more flexible and allows for greater use of e-business services. There are simple new rules on litigation, setting out flexible and user-friendly procedures with clear case-

management powers. Chief Executive of the Intellectual Property Office (IPO), Ian Fletcher, said, "I am pleased to have in place a new set of Patent rules which lift the burden from UK businesses and better allow the UK-IPO to expand the range of electronic services we offer customers."

Further guidance is available on [www.ipo.gov.uk](http://www.ipo.gov.uk)

## **Emissions Trading Auctions**

The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs are now consulting on how auctions for the second phase of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme could work.

The consultation has four proposals for dealing with emissions trading:

- Auctions or sales of carbon allowances will take place on a quarterly basis
- Auctions will consist of a single round using a uniform price model where all successful bidders will pay the same price
- Bids can be either direct non-competitive bids of up to 10,000 allowances or indirect competitive bids via intermediaries
- Auctions will not be restricted to particular sectors or to UK registry account holders but will be open to anyone with an EU registry account

More information can be found on [www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk) and the deadline for responses on the consultation document is 14 March 2008

Also, the EU has recently decided to include aviation in the European Union's Emission Trading Scheme. Under the new proposal, emissions from aviation will be capped at 2004-06 levels so that any further growth in aviation emissions will need to be cancelled out by emissions reductions in other sectors. Airlines will be able to trade their emissions and be subject to a 'polluter pays' policy. The new proposal now goes to the European



Parliament, with the aim of reaching an agreement in 2008. Further information is also available from [www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)

### **Don't forget to WEEE**

The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive has made recycling electrical and electronic goods easier and there are now 1556 collection sites in the UK. The latest UK figures show that the average person recycles 7 kg of electrical goods a year, well above the EU directive's target of 4kg by 2008. Over the next few months the Government will be looking to see how the WEEE system can be improved based on the feedback so far. They will also be hosting the inaugural meeting of the new WEEE Advisory Body, which will meet quarterly to offer the government practical advice, and will be participating in the European Review of the WEEE Directive.

For further information, please visit [www.berr.gov.uk](http://www.berr.gov.uk)

### **Improve your Management Skills in 2008**

John Denham, Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills is calling for small business managers to improve their leadership skills and boost their competitiveness. He wants them to take advantage of the huge expansion in Government funded training that is coming in 2008. From 2008, the overall Train to Gain budget will double to over £1billion in 2010/11 ensuring that skills training is available for employees in every company in the country. The increases in funding for management training for small and medium-sized enterprises (those between 10 and 249 employees) will support managers in around 42,000 companies over the next three years.

For further information visit [www.traintogain.gov.uk](http://www.traintogain.gov.uk)

### **And Finally.....**

Some ideas from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to cut your carbon footprint this year:

- Cycling to work or walk children to school rather than take the car
- Make sure you unplug appliances when not in use and don't leave TVs, DVD players or stereos on stand-by
- Turn the thermostat down by 1°C
- Insulate your hot water tank and pipes
- Extend your low-carbon entertainment into the New Year and switch off the TV and entertainment systems for the night
- Ensure you use the dishwasher or washing machine only when you have a full load

For other ideas visit [www.direct.gov.uk/ActOnCO2](http://www.direct.gov.uk/ActOnCO2)