Are you ready for Disaster?

Business Continuity Management is an increasing requirement for organisations and it is not just the recovery of IT systems, but is an organisation wide issue. Apart from the major benefit of being able to continue trading after the disaster, there are other business benefits such as lower insurance premiums and marketing of your contingency capabilities. As a Quality Manager you need to ensure that your organisation has a disaster recovery plan in place. When disaster strikes the quality of service provided to clients will be affected, but this affect will be significantly reduced if a plan is in place.

The DTI have provided a 10 point plan for Business Continuity.
1. Initiation and Management. You need senior management commitment and clear business continuity roles and responsibilities
2. Risk Evaluation and Control. A risk assessment must be undertaken and risk reduction measures put in place
3. Business Impact Analysis. Establishment of the critical business processes, what is the impact of losses, where do the priorities lie?
4. Developing business continuity strategies. Agreement of the recovery timeframes for all the critical processes. Recovery and risk reduction should both be included in the strategy and this must be appropriate for the business
5. Emergency Response and Operations. A crisis management process must be established to respond to incidents, with everyone aware of their responsibilities

6. Developing and implementing business continuity plans. There must be plans in place to deliver the strategy and these must be owned and managed by the business
7. Awareness and Training Plans. All staff must have been made aware of the business continuity management and the recovery team must be trained so that they can deal with any incidents
8. Maintaining and exercising business continuity plans. The plans and processes must be maintained by the organisation and review and updated regularly.
9. Public relations and crisis coordination. Internal and External communications must be planned so that all stakeholders can be kept informed and also to ensure that any trauma counselling required is available
10. Co-ordination with public authorities. Local authorities and emergency services must be included in the plans and procedures must comply with any applicable statuses or regulations.

There is a Business Continuity Management Standard BS 25999, and this provides a framework for implementing, managing and maintaining effective Business Continuity. External certification against this standard is available. BSI have released an online assessment tool for organisations to use to see how ready they are for disaster and this is available at www.bsigroup.com/BS25999Online The DTI have also provided a Fact Sheet on "Business Continuity Management" and more information is available from www.dti-bestpractice-tools.org and www.dti.gov.uk/industries/information_security.

World Standards Day

The 38th World Standards Day was celebrated on 14th October 2007. The theme of this year's day was "Standards and the citizen: Contributing to society". The message was signed by the leaders of the three principal international standardisation organisations: Mr Renzo Tani, President of the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), Mr Hakan Murby, President of the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO), and Mr Hamadoun Toure, Secretary General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). They pointed out in their message that standards solve problems in all spheres of activity, for example "A world without standard would soon grind to a halt. Transport and trade would seize up. The Internet simply would not function. Hundreds of thousands of systems dependent on information and communication technology would falter or fail – from government and banking to healthcare and air traffic control, emergency services, disaster relief and even international diplomacy".
If you would like further information on World Standards Day, please visit www.iso.ch

Defra helps the Environment

Packaging Waste Targets
New targets for recovering and recycling packaging come into effect in January 2008. These are being set by the UK Government to help the UK meet its obligations under the EC Packaging Directive. Joan Ruddock, the Environment Minister said, "Since the introduction of the UK Packaging Regulations packaging recycling has improved significantly, from just 27% in 1997 to over 57% last year. But there is must more to be done. Further cuts in packaging waste are an essential part o f reducing our reliance on landfill and cutting greenhouse gas emissions"

Further information on the targets can be found at www.defra.gov.uk

Construction site waste management plans
Feedback to Defra from the construction sector on the idea of legally binding Site Waste Management Plans (SWMP) has been supportive and these will now feed into new regulations that are due to come into force in England in 2008. Joan Ruddock said, "This level of support for our proposals is very welcome. The Government is determined to drive down waste production and increase recycling and re-use. It is very good to have the backing of the industry as we move towards new Regulations"
The SWMPs aim to reduce the amount of materials used on site and also to encourage reuse and recycling. At the moment, around 13% of all the solid material delivered to construction sites goes unused and up to one third ends up in landfill.
Further information is available on www.defra.gov.uk

Red tape reduced to help business and protect the environment
Currently industrial and waste activities that could harm health or the environment require various environmental permits. From April 2008, a single environmental permit will be introduced and this will combine and streamline the waste management licence (WML) and pollution prevention and control (PPC) systems. The new system is expected to bring the following benefits
- A simpler permit application process with less paperwork
- Much clearer guidance
- More flexibility for businesses to make changes

When the new system comes into effect all existing WML and PPC permits will automatically become environmental permits.
For further information, visit www.defra.gov.uk/environment/ppc/index.htm

Investors role in encouraging companies to be 'green'
Environment Minister, Joan Ruddock encouraged investors to take account of a company's environmental record when making

investment decisions. She said "It is imperative for Government and businesses to work closely together to question our practices, challenge them and, more importantly, make business choices that reflect the importance of a low carbon economy. Investors have a particularly key role to play in this. They should give consideration to environmental and social credentials, sending out signals to the financial markets to say that carbon disclosure is vital and show companies that it will affect their investment decisions. Together we must work to drive out emissions"

For further information, visit www.defra.gov.uk

Direct Marketing and the Environment

Although you may not think that Direct Marketing and the Environment are natural companions – just think of all those adverts on the doormat, the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) is working with the BSI to develop the first standard for environmental performance in the field of direct marketing.

The Publicly Available Specification (PAS) is expected to form a benchmark for the UK and will enable users to make a verifiable environmental claim. Robert Keitch, Director of Media Channel Development at the DMA, says, "For the first time, businesses will be able to effectively and collectively demonstrate their environmental credentials and cut through the 'greenwash'. We believe that a standard will act as a credible means of differentiation in a competitive marketplace."

To register interest in the PAS email britishstandards@bsi-global.com

ISO General Assembly

The ISO 30th General Assembly took place in Geneva in September. An open session was held on "International Standards and Public Policies". The session looked at two main issues – how international standards can support public policies for sustainable development and international standards in relation to public safety and security policies. The drive for the open session comes from the realisation that in the globalised world, it is not possible to develop and implement public policies in isolation because they affect trade, health, security and the environment.

Also, at the Assembly, the inaugural ISO Award for Higher Education in Standardisation was presented. The winner was the China Jiliang University, People's Republic of China.

For further information on the proceedings of the Assembly, please visit www.iso.ch

CQI John Loxham seminar and Awards

Thus year's CQI Awards ceremony and the John Loxham seminar takes place on 8th November at Murrayfield, Edinburgh. This year's speaker at the John Loxham seminar is Stan Marshall, director of Operational Excellence of the Edrington Group, who will talk on "An evolution to lean manufacturing". The Edrington Group includes wel-known brands such as Famous Grouse, Highland Park and Cutty Sark. Mr Marshall will speak about how quality assurance is made to work on harmony with innovation and learn manufacturing.

Awards will also be presented to the top performing students in the CQI's Diploma and Certificate courses and the best Education centre – results in next month's newsletter.

If you would like to attend visit www.thecqi.org

And Finally

In response to last month's comment on a BS standard for making tea, Chris Wainwright in Blackburn emailed to say "We use BS 6079 - the standard for Project Management as part of our D4 teaching Last year one of our students accidentally tried looking up ISO 6079 by mistake. This turns out to be the standard for "Instant Tea"