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Water

Water seems to be in the news regularly at the moment. The South East of England is suffering from (English style) drought conditions and hosepipe bans have been introduced. New sea water purity regulations are being introduced by the European Union to improve bathing conditions. The EU will introduce three categories for ranking clean water – excellent, good and sufficient. All EU countries will have to ensure that all their bathing areas reach the sufficient standard at least. “Sufficient” means that there is a 5% -8% risk of sickness after immersing your head. The EU are aiming for introduction from 2015 onward (BBC News). However, the issues hitting the headlines in the UK are only the tip of world wide water issues. In many areas of the world people are concerned about the quality of water they have to drink and drought means much more than not being able to water the lawn! About 300 million Africans do not have access to safe drinking water. A UN report has said that Africa’s water systems need annual investments of about \$20 billion over the next twenty years. March 22 2006, was **UN World Water Day** and this year’s theme is “Water and Culture”. Coinciding with this day was the meeting of the 4th World Water Forum which aims to raise awareness of water issues throughout the world. At the opening of the Forum, the UN said that failed policies are the main reason why about 20% of the world's population lacks access to clean water. (BBC News)

During this meeting, a suite of future ISO standards for the assessment of water and waste water was discussed. The implementation of the standards will assist authorities to achieve a level of quality that best meets the expectations of the consumers and the principles of sustainable development. The standards will be applicable in industrialised and developing countries, in cities and in small towns and to public and private bodies. Alan Bryden, ISO Secretary General said, “Water is a worldwide challenge for the 21st century and many countries are still not on track to reach the water-related targets of the Millennium Development Goals. ISO is providing internationally-recognised guidance documents for improving governance, quality and efficiency of water services. Without sustainable water management to ensure that there are sufficient supplies of clean, safe water, the health of the ecosystems and those who depend on them will suffer. These ISO standards are a shining example of what standardisation can achieve for a sustainable world”. For further information please visit www.iso.org

Benefits of ISO standards– a view from the ADOBE president

Shantanu Narayen, President and Chief Operating Officer of Adobe, is interviewed in the ISO Focus magazine and in his view “Standards are the engine enabling our industry to develop software in a low-risk, cost-effective manner”. He is very supportive of ISO and feels that “ISO Approval helps



promote international adoption of file formats and languages that bridge paper-to-digital worlds and advance global commerce and communication”. You can read the rest of the interview with Mr Narayan in the ISO Focus magazine as www.iso.org/isofocus.

Personal Financial Planning Standard

A new standard was launched last month that is aimed at improving the service for people using Financial Advisors and at setting a benchmark for these advisors. BS ISO 22222 Personal Financial Planning – Requirements for personal financial planners, describes best practice for financial planning.

Tyre Pressure Warning Standard

The International Standards Organisation have released a standard for tyre pressure early warning devices. When vehicles are driven with under-inflated tyres, the performance and safety of the vehicle is reduced. In the worst case this could result in an accident, perhaps triggered by a tyre “blow out”. Electronic sensing devices can be installed that will measure the tyre pressure and alert the driver, and a new standard provides guidelines for these devices: ISO 21750:2006 Road vehicles – Safety enhancement in conjunction with the tyre inflation pressure monitoring.

Jean Pierre Cheynet, chair of the ISO technical committee involved said, “There are many dangers to having under-inflated tyres, because they are designed for use at their recommended pressures. Tyre pressure monitoring systems that conform to the standard and ultimately extended to all road vehicle types such as trucks or motor cycles will contribute significantly to improved road safety.” For further information visit www.iso.org

Improved Car Repairs

A plan to end poor practices in the car repair trade has been released by the National Consumer Council (NCC) and it wants Government to put pressure on garages to sign up to the plan.. The NCC wants trading standards officers to launch a national enforcement campaign to help bring an end to shoddy service.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders has developed a code of practice and the BSI have developed a Kitemark scheme for garages. But despite this many garages are still not offering the consumer a good service. The NCC have warned that if the industry is not seen to be making progress then they will lobby for a system of formal regulations for car repair. For further information visit www.bbc.co.uk/news

Detecting Genetically Modified Organisms in Food

Many consumers, businesses and legislators are concerned about whether GMOs are present in food products. A new ISO standard has now been released that provides the general requirements for identifying and quantifying GMOs. *ISO 24276 Foodstuffs – Methods of analysis for the detection of genetically modified organisms and derived products – General requirements and definitions* The standard covers analysis using polymerase chain reaction methods as well as other procedures. It includes validation of methods, report checklists and laboratory set up guidelines. As well as food stuffs the standard can also be used for seeds, feed, or plant samples from the environment.

For further information visit www.iso.org

Standard for Medical Packaging

The ISO9001:2000 standard and Good Manufacturing Practices have proven benefits and a new ISO standard has now made them to achieve to easier for the pharmaceutical sector - particularly with respect to the design, manufacturing and supply of primary packaging materials (glass, rubber, plastic, aluminium etc) for medicinal products. ISO 15378:2006 Primary packaging materials for medicinal products – Particular requirements for the application of ISO 9001:2000 gives a new management tool to improve patient safety.

Dr Jurgen Thurk, convenor of the working group that developed the standard said “The standard is of vital importance to the pharmaceutical industry and its suppliers of pharmaceutical primary packaging materials. For the first time, the principles of Good Manufacturing Practice are specified as part of



an ISO Standard.” The standard also provides information on risk management and validation, with guidance annexes on these issues. For further information, please visit www.iso.org

Small business and ISO management system standards

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are often put off from implementing the ISO management system standards such as ISO 9001:2000 and ISO 14001:2004, as they believe that it will take too much resource and the standards are not really aimed at them. In order to help SMEs with the implementation of the standards and to achieve real benefits from using them, the ISO have launched a new section on its web-site. This contains a range of articles that are aimed at helping and supporting SMEs. Alan Bryden, the ISO's Secretary General has said “SMEs’ may mistakenly perceive of International Standards as being only for big business and government. In fact, SMEs’ too can benefit from the state-of-the-art technology and management practices disseminated by International Standards which also open the door to export markets and participation in global supply chains. To encourage SMEs to use International Standards and to become more involved in developing them, ISO and its partners the International Electrotechnical Commission and the International Telecommunication Union have chosen SMEs and standardisation as the theme for World Standards Day 2006”.

There is also an ISO Handbook “ISO9001 for Small Business” that contains help and advice on how to get started. For further information visit www.iso.org

Communication

Communicating is something we've been doing since birth; a baby's first cry is its first reaction to the world, and a mother quickly learns whether the baby's cry signals hunger, tiredness or discomfort. Communication is human interaction; 90% of our lives is spent communicating. When you communicate with someone you are conveying ideas and feelings.

Why then, as we grow up, does it become so fraught with difficulties and problems? How is it that sometimes things get in the way and we are not understood in the way that we intended? Why, even when we are understood, do we often fail to get people to think or behave in the way we want them to? All too often there is a mismatch, intentional or not, between what we say and what others understand us to mean. When this happens at work, consequences can sometimes be far-reaching and disastrous. At the very least they can give rise to frustration, offence, demotivation, instructions that are difficult to follow, or poor customer relations. Communicating effectively with your employees will make them feel more valued and help to increase their motivation. It will also improve efficiency, as everyone will have a clearer idea of the role they have to play in the organisation. Some ideas to improve employee communication are:

- Use staff surveys – find out what people think about their jobs and their managers – are they getting the right information and feedback – what is stopping them working efficiently?
- Review the current methods of communication – is the staff magazine effective? – are there better ways of keeping everyone up to date?
- Consider the tone used in any written communication – is it too formal with long words that will seem to be talking down to them?
- Don't forget that although magazines and intranets are great for keeping people up to date – all employees want some time for face to face discussions and this must not be ignored.
- Corporate information such as business plans needs to be interpreted for the audience – figures are not very exciting on their own.
- Consider leadership and communication training for any supervisors, team leaders etc. Make sure they have the tools and techniques to cascade information down the organisation.
- Use areas such as coffee rooms to advertise key company results and objectives.

Communication does not have to be expensive. A few small changes could really have an



impact – but – once you start it must be kept up to date – showing two year old information on staff room notice boards is de-motivating!

New ISO Standard for the Market Research

Today's industry relies heavily on market research. The need for standardising the requirements for market research worldwide has never been greater, encouraging consistency and transparency in the way surveys are carried out. The new standard **ISO 20252:2006, *Market, opinion and social research – Vocabulary and service requirements***, applies the principles of ISO's quality management standards (specifically ISO 9000:2000, *Quality management systems – Fundamentals and vocabulary*) and harmonizes at the international level the requirements of the various national standards and industry codes that already exist for market researching. The standard gives guidance and requirements relating to the way in which market research studies are planned, carried out, supervised and reported. ISO 20252 covers all stages of a research study from the initial contact between the client and service provider to the final stage of presentations of results to the client. ISO 20252 is the work of ISO technical committee ISO/TC 225, *Market, opinion and social research*, which was set up in response to an initiative by the European Federation of Associations of Market Research Organizations (EFAMRO), which is participating as a liaison organization along with the World Association of Research Professionals (ESOMAR) and the World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR). For more information please visit www.iso.org

BSI New Standards Published recently

BS 7799-3:2006 *Information security management systems - Part 3: Guidelines for information security risk management*. This new standard provides this guidance and covers:

- Risk assessment
- Risk treatment
- Management decision making

- Risk re-assessment
- Monitoring and reviewing of risk profile
- Information security risk in the context of corporate governance
- Compliance with other risk based standards and regulations

BS 5852:2006 *Method of test for assessment of the ignitability of upholstered seating by smouldering and flaming ignition sources*. This new standard measures the ability to ignite upholstered furniture.

BS 2869:2006 *Fuel oils for agricultural, domestic and industrial engines and boilers – Specification*. This new British Standard specifies requirements for eight classes of petroleum fuels for engines and boilers used in agricultural, domestic and industrial applications.

For further information on BS Standards visit www.bsi-global.com

ISO Standard for Early Assessment of Radiation

ISO (International Organization for Standardization) has recently published a new International Standard to help protect workers from radiation exposure and to increase the overall safety of the work environment. **ISO 20553:2006, *Radiation protection – Monitoring of workers occupationally exposed to a risk of internal contamination with radioactive material***, is designed to protect workers against risks of radiation by monitoring potential intakes and exposures. Exposure to radiation – whether accidental or chronic – carries risks and a monitoring programme will reduce this risk. The new standard offers guidance for deciding whether a monitoring programme is needed and how it should be designed, established and maintained. ISO 20553:2006 was developed by ISO technical committee ISO/TC 85, *Nuclear energy, subcommittee SC 2, Radiation protection*. For further information please visit www.iso.org

ISO/IEC Standard Benchmarks Provision of Software Asset Management



A standard Published by ISO (International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission), **ISO/IEC 19770-1:2006, Information technology - Software asset management - Part 1: Processes** will enable organizations to benchmark their ability to deliver services, measure service levels and assess performance, giving improved efficiency, risk management and customer satisfaction. Software asset management (SAM) principles apply to the media, installations, licenses, and intellectual property associated with the software. The implementation of ISO/IEC 19770-1:2006 will standardize the structure and make it possible for companies to integrate SAM into their other compliance and best practice models. ISO/IEC 19770:2006, is issued in two parts under the general title, Software asset management, providing guidance in understanding *how* to enhance the quality of service delivered to their customers, both internal and external.

- Part 1: describes the processes involved in SAM.
- Part 2: defines a product identification to simplify the software inventory process. *ISO/IEC 19770-2 is not yet published.*

The standard is intended to support and align closely to ISO/IEC 20000:2005, issued in two parts under the general title, *Information technology - Service management*.

ISO/IEC 19770-1 was developed by ISO/IEC JTC 1 subcommittee SC 7, *Software and systems engineering*. For more information please visit www.iso.org

Disabled Web Access

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) published a report in 2004 bringing to light that more than 80% of websites studied failed to meet the minimum standards for disabled web access. As a result of this report the BSI was commissioned by the DRC to produce a formal guidance on web accessibility for disabled people which was launched in March 2006. This Publicly Available Specification (PAS) 78 – A Guide to Good Practice in commissioning accessible websites costs £30 and can be purchased directly from BSI. For more information please visit www.bsi-global.com

ISO and Social Responsibility

The ISO have published a short brochure on ISO and Social Responsibility. It looks at the forthcoming ISO 26000 standard, which is due to be published in 2008. According to the brochure, “ISO 26000 will be a distillation of international expertise on social responsibility – what it means, is what issues an organisation needs to address in order to operate in a socially responsible way, and what is best practice in implementing Social Responsibility.” The brochure can be downloaded free of charge from the ISO website www.iso.ch.

ISO Packs

ISO Packs are being developed and released by ISO. These are aimed at specific industry sectors. The packs are CD compilations of standards and should save time and money for organisations by bringing all the relevant standards together in one place. This means that customers can select the relevant ISO Pack of pre-selected standards for their industry rather than buying the full collection of standards individually and this will save them money. The first two available packs are:

- Paint systems for corrosion protection of steel surfaces – specification and performance. This covers protective paint systems, laboratory performance and test methods and design considerations
- Paints – Assessment of old coatings. This covers standards on measuring the surface roughness and dry-film thickness.

Both packs can be bought from the ISO Web store www.iso.org/isostore