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QM&T's Special offer for Christmas

As a special Christmas treat we are offering with every purchase of the Diploma in Quality modules, a software package worth £49.99 absolutely **free**. The software is a risk assessing package and can be used for security, quality, environmental, health and safety, etc. To find out more about the free offer or any of our other products please visit www.qmt.co.uk or call 01483 453511 and place your order.

Army helicopters in storage

According to a recent report from the Government's spending watchdog, dozens of new Army Apache attack helicopters will not be flying until 2007, due to a shortage of trained pilots. These helicopters will have to be stored away in hangars at RAF Shawbury in Shropshire, at a cost of £6m. Although the helicopters were delivered on time, the training of the pilots was delayed by 3 years due to delays in the delivery of the flight simulators, pushing the start date for pilot training from 2001 to 2003. The length of the training courses was also extended from 15 weeks to 26, because of the complexity of the helicopters and UK's poor weather conditions for flying. For more information see BBC news.

New standards for train operators

The government has recently announced that train operators will be expected to reach new standards of excellence or else they will find their franchises removed.

There will be a set of specifications that train operators will have to meet, which includes higher standards of cleanliness in stations and on trains, better information, tighter security around stations, punctuality and value for money. The government is suggesting that these new measures will improve train services, but it will take a long time before the full effect of this new policy is felt. For more information please see BBC news.

IT Service Management Standard

The new version of the **BS 15000 - IT Service Management** was officially launched last month. The revised standard is now available in two parts and will be published in January 2003. The standard has application not just in IT but also for any support function or department. Some of QM&T's clients have recognised the major benefits (system development, benchmarking, improved service standards and performance) compliance to this new standard bring. Consequently, we are developing a number of organisation's Management Systems to reflect this new standard. For further information about this standard please visit www.bsi-global.com or ring 01483 453511 for further information on meeting this new standard.

Root Cause Analysis (RCA)

ISO 9001:2000 implies and possibly even requires a change in thinking in a number of areas; process modelling, customer-

focused, satisfaction, corrective and preventive action. It is specifically corrective and preventive action where RCA can play an important role.

Some definitions:

- Rectification action - action taken to bring a product or service back to the specified standard. For example: reworking or repairing the product, redoing or repeating the service.
- Corrective action - action taken to stop the problem from never happening again. For example using RCA can identify the changes needed.
- Preventive action - action taken to avoid the problem from happening in the first place.

RCA has a clear role to play in addressing the requirement for corrective action (by providing an approach) and is a vehicle for creation of evidence and records (which demonstrate compliance). This RCA approach would necessitate training, which is why there has been great interest in QM&T's RCA training course on 14th February 2003. QM&T have been continuously developing and providing RCA training for many years and this course is the culmination our experience. For more information please see <http://www.qmt.co.uk/trgcrs.htm>

Quality of coffee today

According to a recent report the quality of the coffee we drink everyday has slumped and this is due to the plummeting price of raw coffee in the recent years, caused by a global surplus of the commodity. Although much of the coffee drunk in the UK is considered to be either of "reasonable" or "high quality" standard, there is concern about a few of the brands at the lower end of the market. Rogue ingredients such as ground up twigs, bad beans, dust and floor sweepings have been found in coffee. High concentrations of these rogue ingredients are characterised by the coffee's bitter taste. According to a source at the International Coffee Organisation (ICO), some coffee brands on sale in British supermarkets contain up

to a fifth of ingredients not recognised as coffee. Producers are now fearful that falling standards are giving coffee a bad name. Sales of coffee, the world's second most valuable commodity, after oil, have declined in countries such as the US, Germany and Spain. This led to calls for an international standard from the Speciality Coffee Association of Europe, which was adopted by the ICO, a body representing coffee exporting and importing nations. Last month saw the introduction of the first international coffee mark, introducing "coffee quality-improvement programme", which intends to raise all standards across the world and set minimum standards for exportable coffee. For more information please see BBC news.

ISO standard for customer complaints

International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is developing the first International Standard for the handling of complaints in order to help protect consumers in the global marketplace. The standard provides the fundamental elements for handling consumer complaints from the first stages of the receipt of complaint right the way through to the final stage of complainant satisfaction. ISO Committee Draft, ISO/CD 10018, *Complaints handling*, sets out an effective complaints handling process. ISO/CD 10018 is being developed by a working group on complaints handling within ISO technical committee ISO/TC 176, *Quality management and quality assurance, subcommittee SC 3, Supporting technologies*. A common and internationally accepted ISO International Standard will provide a uniform set of guidelines to ensure consistency of treatment, no matter where the transaction took place. The draft ISO 10018 addresses the following aspects of complaints handling:

- Helping enhance customer satisfaction
- Management involvement and commitment

- Recognizing and addressing needs and expectations of complainants
- Providing open, effective and easy to use complainants process
- Analysing and evaluating complaints
- Auditing and reviewing the effectiveness of the complaints process.

It worth noting that customer complaint is a measure of customer *dissatisfaction* not *satisfaction*. For further information on customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction see Quality Management (Principles & Practice) please visit

<http://www.qmt.co.uk/books/principlesnpractice.htm> and see New QA Books releases.

For further information on the standard please visit www.iso.org

New QA Book releases

Here are two more recent releases which we recommend

- Principles of Health and Safety at Work by Allan St John Holt, 6th Edition, ISBN 9780750658447 published by IOSH Services Ltd. The essential manual for those requiring a sound foundation in the principles of occupational safety and health.
- Quality Management (Principles and Practice) by Tickle & Vorley, ISBN 1904302025 published by Quality Management & Training (Publications) Limited. The book comprehensively covers the IQA D2 syllabus. Now in its 5th edition it is expected to be a good "stand alone" reference book to quality management.

Both books can be obtain from QM&T. Telephone: 01483 453511 or visit our website www.qmt.co.uk

Calorie counted menus

According to a recent report restaurants will soon have to provide customers with information on the calorie and fat contents of the meal they are buying. This proposal

will be considered by a new European Union body which will soon begin its work on a review of food labelling. If implemented, every restaurant, hotel, cafe and fast-food outlet would have to list the nutritional contents of the meals alongside their prices. The UK's Food Standards Agency believes the move could help to improve eating habits and tackle rising rates of obesity. However, the Food Standards Agency did say that any move in this direction is a long way off and would need legislation at EU level. For more information please see BBC news.

Slowing down of computer viruses

According to a recent report computer viruses will find it much harder to spread themselves from one computer to another via the internet. The research was carried out by Hewlett-Packard and was intended to prevent infecting other computers rather than killing the virus. The method investigated was to slow down the rate of infection by limiting the number of connections at any one time from an infected computer, allowing time to detect and eliminate the virus. For more information please see BBC news.

Safety standards at Dounreay

Last month the safety processes at the Dounreay nuclear site in northern Scotland had been questioned because of the radioactive contamination of two of its workers. Radioactive contamination was found on the worker's hands and one also had some on his face. The footwear of further 12 workers on that site was also found to be contaminated. The contamination was removed on site and both workers were declared free of contamination the next day. Both UKAEA and the industry watchdog the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate have launched an investigation.

Dental Practice Board receive BS7799 accreditation

The Dental Practice Board, which provides the payment, treatment authorisation and quality audit service for

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the NHS dentistry is the first organisation within the National Health Service to achieve the Information Security Standard BS 7799. Registration to BS 7799 helps organisations to be more efficient by reducing the disruption and expense of recovering from potential information losses or misuse. For more information please visit www.bsi-global.co.uk

Revision workshops for IQA Diploma

Revision workshops for D1, D2, and D3 modules of the IQA Diploma in Quality are to be held at QMT's site on December 9 and 10. The price is £149 + VAT per student and includes lunch and refreshments. The course starts at 9am and finishes at 4.30 pm with the usual lunch and tea/coffee breaks. To find out more about these workshops and to reserve you place please contact QM&T Telephone: 01483 453511.