BSI VIDEO FOR SCHOOLS
As part of their centenary celebrations, BSI has launched an educational video. It is targeted at 12-14 year olds and aims to raise their awareness of the organisation. Star of the video is Colin Baker (who played one of the Dr Who's) and also features Captain Standard and Kite mark girl. The video shows the type of work done by BSI and the type of everyday products tested by them. Information for schools and colleges is available at BSI's special educational website: www.bsieducation.org.

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS
The Government has been accused of abandoning a major scheme aimed at improving the basic skills of millions of people. The Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) introduced in 1998 have recently suspended amid complaints of fraud. It is reported that people were being pressured into signing up for training that did not meet their needs. The Education Secretary, Estelle Morris, has given assurances that a further scheme would be introduced to replace it.

ISO STANDARD FOR DOPING CONTROL
ISO (International Organization for Standardization) is developing the first International Standard for doping control in an attempt to help combat against the misuse of drugs in sport.

The International protocol for doping control, will be further developed from its current status as an ISO Publicly Available Specification (PAS) to become a fully fledged ISO International Standard. The first drafts are expected to be completed by the second half of 2002.

The move to raise the status of ISO/PAS 18873, International protocol for doping control, to that of International Standard is designed to encourage unity of the different doping control procedures practised in several countries and by various sports organizations. A common and internationally accepted ISO International Standard will provide a uniform set of guidelines to ensure a fair and equitable international doping control system that will protect the integrity of honest athletes and detect the wrong doers.

Currently, ISO/PAS 18873 has been implemented by Australia and Norway while another nine countries are involved in implementing the standard within their national systems: Canada, Finland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Denmark, South Africa, Portugal, Austria and the United States. In addition, another six countries will begin implementation in the next six months. For more information please visit the website www.iso.ch

NEW WEB SITE ADDRESS FOR ISO
ISO has acquired a new Web site address- www.iso.org - which will eventually replace the currently used www.iso.ch. However, in order to ensure a smooth transition between the 2 sites, both iso.org and iso.ch will function in parallel for an indefinite period.

The ".ch" suffix which ISO has used up to now is drawn from the ISO standard for country codes (ISO 3166-1:1997); "ch" is the standardized abbreviation to denote Switzerland, where the ISO Central Secretariat is located ("ch" derives from Confédération Helvétique - the Helvetic Confederation - the alternative name for Switzerland). The ".org" suffix, denoting "organization", is one of several generic ones used in Internet and Web addresses.

STOP ELECTRONIC CHEATS
At least 1000 computer aided assessments are done each day in the UK, and computers are playing a greater and greater role in examinations. This has opened up a new range of cheating opportunities such as sending electronic messages and hacking into examination papers. In response to this expansion, the BSI has launched a new set of guidelines. BS 7988 introduces minimum requirements for any organisation using computers to mark assessments. These organisations include schools, universities, awarding bodies and companies running their own internal examinations.
To comply with the new standard, organisations running examinations will have to demonstrate for example, how they verify on-line candidates who may be at remote locations. Opportunities will

also have to be given to candidates to practice with the systems so that the examination's format does not disadvantage those unfamiliar with the technology. The standard also covers how to deal with rest breaks, avoiding e-cheating and illegal surfing.

The draft standard BS7988 "Code of practice for the use of information technology in the delivery of assessments" costs £20 (£10 for BSI members) and can be ordered from British Standards Online.

ISO 9000 COMMUNITY URGED TO 'POLICE ITSELF'

According to NHK reported on TV news, one of the largest certification bodies in Japan disclosed eighty million yen tax evasion by national tax offices. It was reported that the organisation had hired part-time assessors to respond to the rapid increase of assessments and were paid less than the amounts entered in the account books. The difference between true payments and the book accounts amounted to eighty million yen - falsifying accounts.

ISO Secretary-General, Dr. Lawrence D. Eicher, speaking at the opening of the 17th meeting of ISO/CASCO, Committee on conformity assessment, held in Geneva on 29-30 November 2000, has announced that ISO9000 certification bodies and the accreditation bodies that approve them as competent need to do a better job of policing their community to weed out malpractice and dishonest operators.

Also in his speech he added "We regularly receive complaints about certificates being awarded undeservedly to companies who have not been properly audited, or certification bodies who offer to write the quality manual for the company and then sell them a certificate, or others who claim to have been approved by ISO. No one at ISO has ever approved such certification bodies." Although ISO itself does not audit companies and does not issue ISO 9000 certificates, nor control the certification bodies that do so independently of ISO, these bodies base their business on ISO standards and guides. Dr. Eicher said that ISO was concerned about such practices and that all conformity assessment professionals needed to be concerned too if they wanted to avoid being seen as "charlatans", concluding: "You need to police yourselves." For more information visit www.iso.ch and www.bin.co.uk/eicherdir.htm

SMALL BUSINESS SITE

A new business website, hosted by the British Standard Institute (BSI) is being launched as part of an initiative funded by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). The site is aimed at small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). The information to be found on the website includes details about the standards popular with small business; about BSI membership, and includes links to the DTI, patent office and other SME services. There is also an email enquiry service through which firms can request the scope and contents of standards or find out where they can be viewed.

Also to be found on the site are 150 four-page Directors Briefings from BHP Ltd giving advice on various aspects of finance, law, export and import, marketing, strategy and tax.

The site can be accessed free of charge at www.mysmallbiz.co.uk

NEW ISO MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS MAGAZINE

ISO's new full colour magazine, ISO Management Systems is now available in English, French and Spanish editions. However, the magazine is not to be a mere mouthpiece for ISO. It is to encourage expression of constructive criticism of the standards. While some people swear by management system standards, others swear at them. They will be able to get their views expressed in the columns of ISO Management Systems and therefore contribute valuable feedback that may influence the future development and improvement of the standards. For more information please visit www.iso.ch

INFORMATION SECURITY AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

BSI is launching two new courses.

A five-day residential course, IT06 ISO17799.This course will show managers and consultants how to construct an information security management system. It includes guidance on all aspects of the standard from defining the scope to documentation and audit.

The other new course is on implementing an integrated management system. It will show attendees how to combine quality management (ISO 9001), environmental (ISO14001) and Health and Safety (OHSAS 18001) systems to provide improved efficiency and focus for a business. An integrated management system can also mean less duplication in documentation and record keeping and can lead to a reduction in audit fees.

Both course are available from January 2002. For more details contact BSI Business Solutions: www.bsi-global.com.

ISO'S PALLET TESTING PROJECT
ISO's technical committee on Pallets is looking for participants to take part in an international pallet testing project designed to aid global material handling efficiency. The project is intended to help the committee finish the development of the new pallet testing procedures and publish them as ISO International Standards. The results of the project will establish performance criteria that can compare the performance of many different pallet designs made of many different materials when tested anywhere in the world. Also, the new standards will help manufacturers - looking to become more globally competitive - reduce their material handling costs by introducing more cost-effective pallets into the global market. Over 90% of the pallets used are made of wood. Wood fibre, both in pallets and in packaged material, represents the second largest use of wood fibre in the world, second only to the use of wood fibre as fuel. For more information please visit www.iso.ch

RECORDS MANAGEMENT
The first international standard for the management of records has been released recently. The standard is in two parts, BS ISO 15489-1 and PD ISO/TR 15489-2. Information professionals from Europe, North America and Australasia have developed this standard over the last three years. It looks at how organisations can establish a framework to enable them to put together a comprehensive records management programme. It focuses on the business principles behind records management and demonstrates how the efficient management of them is vital for many aspects of business. Records act as a corporate or institutional memory and they can be used to benefit a business. BSI-DISC will soon release a short series of publications to complement the standard with practical help for using the standards. For more information contact BSI.