

# November 2001 Quality Assurance Bulletin

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European Quality Awards and UK Business Excellence Awards

The finalists for both the European Quality Award and UK Business Excellence Awards 2001 have recently been announced.

The finalists for the **European Quality Award** are broken down into three categories:

Large Businesses with ten finalists, include Opel's Hungarian manufacturing plant, Oracle – one of the world's largest software suppliers, and Infineon - a semiconductor giant amongst seven others.

Public Sector Section with two finalists both from the UK; Mary's College, Londonderry and The City Technology College, Kinghurst.

Small to Medium Sized Enterprises (SME) Section with nine finalists, include Maxi Coco-mat, a Greek maker of ecologically friendly bedding products and The Edinburgh International Conference Centre who are a finalist for the third year running.

The finalists, winners and prize winners in each of these three categories will be announced at the awards ceremony during the Lucerne Forum.

The **UK Business Excellence Awards 2001** finalists are divided into two sections, Public Sector and Private Sector. The Public sector finalists include names such as Rolls Royce, Northern Ireland Electricity, Siemens, Scottish Courage Brands, Marconi Systems and NSK Bearings. The Public Sector is represented by Inland Revenue Accounts, Shipley. Each of these finalists will go forward to Awards Final on 23 October 2001, held at the London Hilton.

For more information visit <http://www.efqm.org> and <http://www.quality-foundation.co.uk>

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## Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is an increasingly important element of a Quality Management System, especially with the emphasis placed upon it by the new ISO 9001: 2000 standard. Dealing with customer complaints is one element of this. If you would like to benchmark your approach to complaints, then the CMSAS 86: 2000, the Complaints Management System Specification may well be helpful. The specification was developed by BSI, and stresses that customers need an effective and easy to use system; that staff need the right level of training and resources so that the system can operate effectively; and finally that Senior Management must be involved with the system and use the feedback to improve the performance and service given to customers. Also see <http://www.customer-satisfaction.co.uk>

## European Directives

Quality Managers possibly need to be aware that if their organisation uses packaging for their products, then they may need to comply with Packaging & Packaging Waste - 94/62/EEC Directive. This regulation will impact on all the stages in the packaging process from production through to disposal. The legislation "Producers Responsibility Obligation (Packaging Waste)" is associated with the recovery and recycling obligations placed on individuals or companies producing packaging waste. The regulations set out the role and responsibilities of individual companies, registered schemes and the environment agency. The aim is to ensure that the national recovery and recycling targets of the UK are achieved. For more information visit <http://www.ace-help.co.uk>

The EU is also in the process of developing a regulation called the Waste, Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive (WEEE). This directive will include a range of guidelines for the disposal of electronic goods. It includes producers being responsible for taking back and recycling electrical and electronic goods. The aim of the proposed directive is to encourage producers to adapt the design of their products to the prerequisites of sound waste management. The legislation has been approved as a draft law, but has not yet come into effect.

## World Standards Day – 14<sup>th</sup> October 2001

"The Environment and Standards: close together"

On 14<sup>th</sup> October each year the members of ISO, IEC and ITU celebrate World Standard's Day. It is a method of recognising and thanking the efforts of the thousands of experts worldwide that have developed the voluntary technical standards.

In the presidents' message they recognise that many high profile events (e.g. Rio Earth Summit, Kyoto Convention) have shown the problems faced by governments in dealing with environmental issues. "*Perhaps the greatest and certainly one of the most public challenges of the new century is our environment, how to protect it, how to manage it better*"

They point out that international standards have for many decades been useful as a tool in resolving such issues. They address the quality, safety, producibility and many other aspects of an ever-growing array of products, processes and services as technological and industrial development accelerate around the world. By offering globally applicable solutions, they are cost-effective and allow all to take advantage of the knowledge and experiences gained in the more advanced countries. It was pointed out, that although many countries do not have the resources of the industrial world to worry about quality and safety; the environmental aspects of standardisation are in fact a component of sustainable developments.

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The president ended by saying *“Even international standards cannot be all things to all people. But the informed, realistic and responsible way in which ISO, the IEC and ITU are addressing environmental issues that affect us all will have a growing impact on society’s response to meeting its own expectations. The environment and international standards are perhaps more than just close together, for the foreseeable future they are inexplicably linked”*

### Institute of Quality Assurance

The criterion for membership of the Institute of Quality Assurance (IQA) is changing. The IQA has recognised that the employer demand is now moving toward flexible education and training, which requires training to be tailored both to the individuals and companies needs. Also the major providers of higher education are being challenged by non-traditional organisations, such as corporate and virtual providers. In recognition of these pressures the IQA is changing the structure of the Diploma.

D1 - Introduction to Quality based on the old A11 course; Standards, Applied QC, Statistics, etc.

D2 Quality Management based on the old A12 course; Quality Management Systems and Auditing, Quality Gurus, Total Quality Management, etc.

D3 - Quality Tools and Techniques based on the old C5 course; Total Quality Management.

D4 - Communications and Project Management based on the old D1 course; Communication module and an industrial project.

D5 – Project D 2 based on the D1 Industrial Project.

Successful completion of this course will enable students to use the designatory letters Dip.Q after their name and will assist in gaining IQA membership (MIQA).

### Standards for Corporate Social Responsibility

The consumer policy committee of ISO (COPOLCO) is engaged in a study on standards for corporate social responsibility and has launched an on-line forum to gather views.

The drive behind the initiation of this feasibility study is the growing number of consumers who are concerned about the social integrity of companies and how they operate in the global market place. A recent survey by Environics International of 25,000 people in 23 developing and developed countries showed that 79% felt that large companies should be held “completely responsible” for protecting the Health and Safety of workers, 73% for protecting the environment and 72% for avoiding child labour. ISO International Standards could play a useful role in setting guidelines or defining conduct. The chairman of COPOLCO, Dr Ringshedt has said *“ A growing number of companies have recognised the business benefits of corporate social responsibility policies and practices. Companies which take these issues seriously not only achieve benefits to society, they can also enhance their reputation, improve their competitiveness and strengthen their risk management.”*

If you would like further information contact the Canadian Office of Consumer Affairs at [webb.kernaghan@ic.gc.ca](mailto:webb.kernaghan@ic.gc.ca). There is also a workshop on corporate social responsibility in June 2002 and information can be obtained from [frost@iso.ch](mailto:frost@iso.ch).

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### Railtrack pays the ultimate price - *Editors comment*

It would appear that Railtrack has paid the ultimate price for not paying sufficient attention to Quality of Service and Health & Safety. With the Government's decision to call in the administrators it looks like the shareholders in Railtrack plc may have to write off their investment as worthless. The problems of Railtrack have been well documented in the press. These include many Health & Safety issues some of the most important being the Hatfield and Paddington crashes. The Customer Satisfaction and Quality of Service issues "Only 30 per cent of Cross-country trains and 63 per cent of West Coast services arrived within ten minutes of the timetable in March" (The Times) being just one example of missed performance targets. There can be no clearer message. The Chairman of one multinational was asked, "What is the prime objective of your organisation?" Before you read his response you may like to consider what your answer would be? "Make a profit" "Improve the share value" "Increase turnover" "Reduce costs". Well here is his answer "The prime objective of our organisation is to satisfy our customers – everything else will happen as a consequence of achieving this aim" - clearly a TQM based organisation. It would be interesting to note the answer given by your senior management to this question.

### ISO 9000 Compendium

ISO has published a new edition of the ISO 9000 Compendium that includes the revised ISO 9000:2000 series of its quality management standards. The latest edition is the ninth published by ISO since 1991, indicating the strength of demand for the ISO 9000 standards. At the end of 2000, a worldwide total of 408,631 certificates of conformity to ISO 9000 standards had been issued in 158 countries.

The Compendium *ISO 9000 – Quality Management (ISBN 92-67-10340-7)* can be obtained from ISO member institutes and details of these can be found from [sales@iso.ch](mailto:sales@iso.ch).

### Quality Assurance Knowledge

How about trying out your QA knowledge with the QA quiz at <http://www.qmt.co.uk/quiz.htm>. It includes questions on ISO9001, Quality Gurus etc.

Ever wondered how some measurements are derived? For example, did you know that the metre was first defined 'one ten millionth of the polar quadrant of the earth passing through Paris'. These days we use light i.e. the length of the path travelled by light in a vacuum during a time interval of 1/ 299 792 458 of a second. There is much more information regarding the basis of measurements at the National Physical Laboratory website found at <http://www.npl.co.uk> or in the book "Introduction to Quality Assurance" ISBN 0952839164.