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ISO9001:2000 & TickIT Certification

IDBS, leading provider of integrated data management, analysis and decision-making software for the pharmaceutical, biotechnology and agrochemical industries, today announced that it is the first vendor in the drug discovery data management sector to receive the International Standards Organisation's ISO 9001:2000 and TickIT certifications. ISO 9001 is an internationally accepted standard that represents good management practices and aims to ensure that organisations consistently deliver the products or services that meet their clients' quality requirements. TickIT is a software management standard which provides a set of guidelines and a production methodology for the design, development, production, installation and servicing of quality software. Det Norske Veritas (DNV), an internationally recognised certification body, conferred IDBS' ISO 9001 and TickIT certification. IDBS' Quality Manager Geoff Vorley, author of the best selling book "Quality Management Principles & Practice", commented: "The enthusiasm and self motivation of all the staff was shown clearly by their commitment to the development and application of IDBS' Quality Management System." For more information please visit the following websites: www.qmt.co.uk, www.iso.org, www.tickit.org, www.dnv.com

Improvement Guides

There has been much talk in the press about the performance of the NHS. Recently they have shown some improvements in a number of areas; for instance they have managed to significantly reduce the numbers of heart disease patients - this was reported in the Guardian newspaper on 25th March 2004. Others in the media have been very critical of the measurement culture in the NHS and the

bureaucracy surrounding this. It seems you can't win. The NHS Modernisation Agency does appear to have been successful in creating an improvement culture within some areas of the NHS. Established in 2001, it was designed to support the NHS and its partner organisations in modernising services and improving experiences and outcomes for patients. Their website is full of useful information,

<http://www.modern.nhs.uk/improvementguides> / showing practical advice and tips for improvement, but please don't be misled, these guides can have obvious applications in other sectors. For example process mapping can be applied in manufacturing, purchasing, warehousing, handling orders etc. It is a techniques that can be employed to not only provide a visual representation of a procedure but also have the potential to identify significant savings in the way in which the process is organised and performed. In other words it provides the basis for the analysis, comprehension and design of key business processes. For more information please visit www.process-mapping.co.uk

Home PCs Used by Spammers

According to a recent article in BBC news, it has been estimated that at least one third of all junk e-mail messages sent could be coming from home PCs that have been turned into spam-spewing relays by computer viruses. "Hackers" create these viruses that search for vulnerable machines preparing them as a pool of PCs ready to take action when a command is remotely sent to mass mail from those machines. This trend of using home computers as spam relays started in January 2003, with the Sobig virus. Viruses such as Sinit, Fizzer and MyDoom have continued this trend. Security firms strongly recommend

home broadband users to use a firewall and keep anti-virus software up to date to avoid their PCs becoming a tool for spammers. For more information please see BBC news.

Safer Medical Laboratories

ISO (International Organization for Standardization) has recently published *ISO 15190:2003, Medical laboratories - Requirements for safety*, which is designed to make laboratories a safer working place. This standard covers all aspects of laboratory safety, from management requirements and personnel responsibilities to radiation safety and fire precautions. The new standard is the work of ISO technical committee ISO/TC 212, *Clinical laboratory testing and in vitro diagnostic test systems*, working group WG 1, *Quality management in the medical laboratory*. This standard is intended for use in all types of medical laboratories, from research and teaching institutions to field laboratories with limited resources. The special needs of laboratories that work with unusual infectious agents requiring very high levels of containment are not addressed by this standard. ISO 15190:2003 is available from ISO national member institutes and from ISO Central Secretariat. For more information please visit www.iso.org

New Standard BS EN ISO 14698:2003

A new standard, *BS EN ISO 14698:2003, Cleanrooms & Associated Controlled Environments - Biocontamination Control* has recently been published in two parts and is designed to reduce the hazards of contamination and their occurrence in production areas. It is necessary for manufacturers to produce safe and stable products hygienically and to adopt biocontamination controls. Contamination can affect the safety and stability of the products produced in all kinds of industry e.g. aerospace, automotive, pharmaceutical and food industries and many others. Part 1 of the standard includes the general principles and methods. It demonstrates how to establish a formal system of biocontamination control in order to assess and control factors that can affect the microbiological quality of the process and the product. It indicates the methods needed for monitoring risk areas and the necessary control measures required according to the degree of risk involved. Part 2 of the standard provides guidance on the evaluation and interpretation of the data. It can

help users estimate results in the risk areas and to take corrective actions before biocontamination problems arise. BS EN ISO 14698-1:2003 and BS EN ISO 14698-2:2003 are available from BSI Customer Services or from ISO Central Secretariat. The new standards are the work of ISO technical committee ISO/TC 209, *Cleanrooms and associated controlled environments*. For more information please visit www.bsi-global.org and www.iso.org

Kid's ISO 14000 Programme

ISO (International Organization for Standardization) recently launched a new environmental website www.iso.org/kidsiso14000, promoting the ISO 14000 Programme for children. This programme originated in Japan in 2000 and is operated by a non-profit, non-governmental organisation called ArTech. With the help of ISO, this programme is now going international, aiming to target children around the world to deal with the environmental issues. In support of this programme, ISO has published a brochure (ISBN 92-67-10388-1), which is available free of charge from ISO members and from ISO Central Secretariat. The *Kids' ISO 14000 Programme* website includes information on the programme's origins, objectives, how it works, the sort of results it achieves, and how schools and organizations can participate. The programme employs a simplified version of the Plan-Do-Check-Act methodology. It hopes to develop environmental awareness amongst children teaching them to implement environmental management in their homes and local communities and to communicate their message to other children all over the world in order to collectively take a positive action towards the global environmental issues. For more information please visit www.iso.org

Management of Data

A new technical report for the management of data *ISO/IEC TR 10032:2003, Information technology - Reference model of data management* aims to make it easier for organisations to improve their information sharing procedure. Organisations need to collect, keep and process information, therefore it has become necessary to create standardised facilities to permit sharing of the data by the various number of users. This will also help minimise the cost of supporting an information system, including design,

development, operation and maintenance costs. ISO/IEC TR 10032:2003 defines a reference model of data management by providing a common basis for the coordination of standards development, while allowing existing and new standards to be placed into perspective. ISO/IEC TR 10032:2003 is available from ISO national member institutes and from ISO Central Secretariat. The new standard is the work of joint technical committee, ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*, subcommittee SC 32, *Data management and interchange*. For more information please visit www.iso.org

Fraudulent Vehicle Registration

According to a recent article the DVLA will be clamping down on fraudulent vehicle registration applications. It aims to improve the accuracy of its database by using a credit reference agency to check the accuracy of the applicant's details. A report commissioned by the Department for Transport found that the present vehicle registration system could be improved by linking to a third-party ID-checking database as all plans between government agency databases are held back by data protection laws. The new plan means that the names and addresses provided by applicants will be cross-checked to make sure they are not false. A DVLA spokesman said all data protection requirements will be met. The DVLA is now looking to sign a three-year contract with a private sector company that could do the checks. The UK Passport Service is one government agency that already uses credit checking firms such as Equifax. It is currently testing a 'personal ID project' at its Glasgow processing office that uses DVLA, DWP and Equifax databases for extra checks. But the process is hampered by the need to gain consent from every applicant in order to conform with data protection legislation. Concerns over the accuracy of some government databases means the move is vital if the DVLA's records are to be used for the Home Office's proposed national ID card scheme. For more information please visit www.silicon.com

Certified Ethical Hacker's Course

UK is to organise its first "ethical" hacker's training course in order to help IT professionals to secure their networks by teaching them the tools and techniques that hackers use. The EC-Council-recognised Certified Ethical Hacker's course is run by the

Training Camp company in April and is an intensive 5 day course. The organisers claim strict screening will take place in order to prevent any malicious hackers using the course to improve their own skills. The IT professionals who wish to go on this course will have to at least have had 2 years of IT security experience, a working knowledge of TCP/IP and familiarity with both the Windows and Linux environment. For more information please visit www.silicon.com

EU Making Internet Safer for Children

In a recent article it was reported that a four year plan has been put forward by the European Commission in an attempt to make the Internet a safer environment for children. The programme will be launched in 2005 and will run until 2008. It proposes a spend of over £30m and needs the approval of the EU governments. EU states are being urged to join forces to raise children's / parent's awareness about harmful content online. Several surveys have been carried out showing that parents underestimate the extent their children are exposed to harmful content and dangerous situations online. According to a recent study carried out by Cyberspace Research Unit at the University of Central Lancashire, has shown that children still arrange meetings with people they talk to online, despite the warnings about the dangers of Internet chatrooms. Also this study showed that 60% of children did not know that people they chatted to online were not always what or who they said they are. For more information please see BBC news.

Employees Being Watched

According to the TUC, it has been reported that companies are increasingly using advanced technology to keep an eye on their employees during their working hours. Last year, when a number of brewery workers were sacked for drinking whilst still at work, the evidence to support their actions came from surveillance cameras. Video surveillance have also been used to check up on compensation claims. Employers can also keep an eye on those who work outside the office. GPS devices use satellites to track vehicles making sure they are where they are supposed to be. For example, lorry drivers are monitored regularly by a device called a tachograph which is usually placed on the dashboard and measures how long and how far they drive, without a rest. Some employers need to carry



out random drug and alcohol tests on their workers. This is commonly used on train drivers and pilots. There are certain software that can be installed in a computer to measure how fast you type, which web pages you visit, and what email you send. You may think that wash rooms and toilets are out of employer's watchful eyes, but this is not always the case. One US company has installed a device which uses sensors on soap dispensers to make sure their workers follow good hygiene procedures. If they fail to wash their hands, their names are black listed on the main computer. For more information please see BBC news.