QM&T August 2004 Newsletter

BSI's Environmental Design Awards

This year's winners of BSI's Environmental Design Awards were announced on the 29th June at the Royal College of Art. The first prize of £2000 was won by Will Crawford and Peter Brewin for their concrete canvas that was designed for use in refugee camps where it can be inflated on site with water, and can harden into a solid structure within a short period of about 4 hours. It is designed to last for at least 15 years, much longer than a canvas tent's life span and can also be used for facilities such as field hospitals and other vital support facilities. The winners will use their prize money to fund a research programme and will be travelling to refugee settlements in Uganda where they will be able to gather first hand information for their research.

There were two runners-up prizes of £1,500 of which one was awarded to Maureen Valfort and Leah Harrison for their work on tackling the Guinea worm disease problem in Uganda. Dracunculiasis, more commonly known as Guinea worm disease, is a preventable infection caused by the parasite *Dracunculus medinensis*. Infection affects mainly the poor communities in the remote parts of Africa. Guinea worm disease is contracted when stagnant water, contaminated with microscopic water fleas carrying infective larvae, is consumed. The disease causes fever and burning pain and patients are prevented for months from returning to normal activities such as working, going to school and harvesting crops. Once inside a human's body, the larvae mature and grow, some as long as three feet. After a year, the worm slowly emerges through a blister in the skin. Victims often immerse their limbs in water, seeking relief from the burning sensation caused by emerging worms and thus re-contaminate the drinking water. In 1998, 78,338 cases of

Guinea worm were reported. Most of those cases were from Sudan where the ongoing civil war has made it impossible to eradicate the disease. All affected countries except Sudan are aiming to eliminate Guinea worm disease by the year 2004. Valfort and Harrison's work has involved making school children aware of the dangers of drinking stagnant water by providing them with an educational pack. The pack will comprise of a book containing a story about children that drink water from a stagnant pool and a t-shirt and necklace of hose, which can be used together to drink water while filtering Guinea worm.

Laura Carlin and Yu Jordy Fu, also received the runners-up prize of £1,500 for their project, which identified ways of integrating China's traditional rural environment with its current fast urban growth. For more information please visit www.bsi-global.com

Ascii Creater Dies 22nd June 2004

Bob Bemer, the man who developed the Ascii coding system for computers, recently died of cancer at the age of 84. He was the one who helped standardise the way computers represent letters, numbers, punctuation marks and some control codes. He also introduced the backslash and escape key and was one of the first to warn about the dangers of the millennium bug. Today almost all computer systems still use the Ascii codes. Before Bemer's work most computer systems had their own way of representing alphanumeric characters. Bemer also laid claim to the creation of COBOL and the 8-bit per byte standard. It is clear that his legacy will be long

remembered. For more information please see BBC news.

ISO and WorldSID

According to a recent article, the world's smartest crash test dummy known as WorldSID (World Side Impact Dummy) has received international acceptance. Safety for passengers and vehicle design improvements are some of the benefits to be expected from this world's first internationally accepted side-impact crash test dummy. WorldSID, which has been under development since 1997, represents a major breakthrough that will:

- use a common and internationally accepted test for side-impact collisions
- stop the use of different dummies
- increase passenger safety by providing car makers and researchers with an improved simulation of human responses in crash test

To ensure WorldSID is available worldwide, an International Standard is being developed and is expected to be published in 2005. ISO 15830 will consist of four parts and will include all the design details, material specifications, and performance standards required for WorldSID development. For more information please visit www.iso.org

ISO/TR 15801:2004 - Guidelines for Electronic Documents

ISO/TR 15801:2004, *Electronic imaging - Information stored electronically - Recommendations for trustworthiness and reliability*, provides a list of controls for an organisation to safeguard credibility and reliability of information stored electronically. The new technical report is the work of ISO technical committee ISO/TC 171, *Document management applications*, subcommittee SC 3, *General issues*. All organisations, regardless of their size, type, or the quantity of information, will benefit from reviewing their electronic storage activities against the technical report's best practice guidelines. This will ensure the authenticity and integrity of electronic image files, whether created and/or imported directly or through a network. Alan Shipman, Project leader of ISO/TR 15801:2004 has said "The technical report is expected to result in improved access, reduced requirement to keep paper originals or copies, better long term accessibility, and improved confidence in electronic storage, and anyone who stores information electronically, and needs to be able to rely upon their contents, perhaps because of legal and/or regulatory

requirements will find the technical report very handy." For more information please visit www.iso.org

ISO 16603:2004 & ISO 16604:2004

ISO (International Organization for Standardization) has recently published two new international standards ISO 16603:2004 and ISO 16604:2004, test methods for protective clothing to help reduce injury and death. These new standards are the work of ISO technical committee ISO/TC 94, *Personal safety - Protective clothing and equipment*, subcommittee SC 13, *Protective clothing*. Health care professionals such as doctors, nurses, as well as rescue workers, paramedics, vets and laboratory technicians may be at risk from biological liquids transmitting diseases. ISO is helping to reduce this risk by introducing these two new International Standards for assessing the effectiveness of their protective clothing. ISO 16603:2004, *Clothing for protection against contact with blood and body fluids - Determination of the resistance of protective clothing materials to penetration by blood and body fluids - Test method using synthetic blood*, will be used to determine the resistance of materials to synthetic blood and ISO 16604:2004, *Clothing for protection against contact with blood and body fluids - Determination of resistance of protective clothing materials to penetration by blood-borne pathogens - Test method using Phi-X174 bacteriophage*, will help detect micro-holes in materials using a micro-organism that is similar to the hepatitis C virus in size and shape but also serves as a substitute for the hepatitis B virus and HIV (human immunodeficiency viruses). The new standards describe methods of testing for measuring the penetration resistance of clothing materials to blood, body fluids and other potentially infectious materials. This will make it possible for manufacturers to develop protective clothing that will reduce the potential of direct skin contact to the different type of viruses that put the lives of medical personnel at risk. For more information please visit www.iso.org

New ISO Standard for Illegal Trafficking of Radioactive Materials

ISO (International Organization for Standardization) has recently published, ISO 22188:2004, *Monitoring for inadvertent movement and illicit trafficking of radioactive material*. This new standard will allow a more

efficient use of equipment for identifying radioactive substances for countries to monitor their borders at any control point where people or goods are checked, such as land boarders, maritime ports and airports, in order to stop the illegal trafficking of radioactive materials. The new standard is the work of ISO technical committee ISO/TC 85, *Nuclear energy*, subcommittee SC 2, *Radiation protection*. In the hands of terrorists, radioactive materials can be used for criminal uses such as building of nuclear weapons or selling to countries who would want to use the material illegally. According to the International Atomic Energy Agency Illicit Trafficking Database, 884 cases involving illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive materials had been recorded between January 1993 and December 2003. ISO 22188 describes the procedures and the associated instruments requirements, whilst the IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission), which has been following its progress, is developing standards for the instruments themselves. For more information please visit www.iso.org

Trains Running On Time

In a recent article, the government's rail watchdog has reported to have said more trains are running on time - but operators must still increase their efforts on punctuality after record spending. In January to March 2004, approximately 83% of trains ran on time, compared to 80% in the same period last year. Although, the Strategic Rail Authority has said that train punctuality was still worse than before October 2000's Hatfield train crash. These figures were released after the Rail Maritime and Transport (RMT) union called off a strike in June, due to Network Rail offering a better deal on pay and pensions. For more information please see BBC news.

Are You Using The Right Protection?

Tests recently carried out by the consumers magazine, *Which?,* have shown that the sunscreens we use may not be providing the protection we expected. Sunscreens are classified by SPF (Sun Protection Factor). The higher the SPF, the greater the protection. SPF is measured by timing how long skin covered with sunscreen takes to burn compared with unprotected skin. An SPF of 15 means that skin covered with sunscreen will take 15 times longer to burn than unprotected skin.

Industry standards allow sunscreens to fall 20 per cent either side of their claimed SPF because test results can fluctuate due to human variation and the difficulty of measuring skin redness. Therefore this means a sunscreen's SPF can vary between 12 and 18, and still be called 15.

Malcolm Coles, editor of *Which?, said:* "Currently one product's SPF 15 doesn't necessarily equal another's, so you could get burned even if you followed all the instructions on the label. The SPF on the label should reflect the lower end of the range, so people aren't putting themselves at risk". "Manufacturers need to work on more robust test methods to reduce inconsistencies and ensure we're getting the protection we're promised. The companies that failed our tests should investigate these problems immediately." The main danger of sunscreen is that its use may make people believe they are fully protected from harm - so they spend more time in the sun. Most sunscreens are good at blocking UVB but not so good at UVA. Skin damage and skin cancer are caused by both UVA and UVB. However, no one is yet sure just how important the role of UVA is in causing skin cancer. For more information, please visit www.which.net

Legal Obligations Concerning Computer Usage In The Workplace

The BCS (British Computer Society) has recently published a new guide for managers, titled 'A Manager's Guide to IT Law'. It explains the current and new legal requirements for businesses and organisations that govern computer usage. The BCS has drawn up five tips to help managers prevent breaking the law:

- Create an official email and internet policy to be distributed to all staff and make sure recipients sign to say they have understood the terms and conditions. This will justify disciplinary action if the policy is breached.

- Ensure your organisation is familiar with latest health and safety regulations concerning the safe use of computers. For example, ensuring wheelchair access is available and making sure employees are sat in the correct positions. Make this information available to all staff.

- Ensure staff using computers are offered free eye tests at regular intervals and cover the costs for basic spectacles or contact lenses if necessary.
- Make sure that the footers to all your organisation's emails contain the mandatory information about your organisation including the company name, registered company number and the registered office address.
- If your organisation monitors staff emails, inform them and let them know the reasons why the action is being taken. Make sure that managers are aware of when they can, and cannot, read employees' emails.

For further information please contact the British Computer Society

Safety Symbols

According to a recent survey carried out by the Health & Safety Sign Association (HSSA) it has been revealed that only one in five people know the biological hazard warning sign. Safety sign purpose is to help people immediately know the danger and take appropriate action to prevent the accident or potentially to save lives in the event of an emergency. BSI and HSSA are working together to ensure all signs and symbols conform to standards which will allow the Health and Safety Executive to provide accurate information for consumers and the industry. Signs are tested to International Standard ISO 9186: 2001, *Graphical Symbols – Test methods for comprehension*. The new Standards BS 5499 Part 1 2002, Part 5 2002, Part 4 2000 address all the problems that the research has highlighted. This will help both the industry and the consumer to achieve a much safer working and public environment. For more information please visit www.hssa.co.uk and www.bsi-global.com

Child Tracking Controls

According to a recent report, the Children's Charities' Coalition on Internet Safety (Chis) has urged the UK government to set controls on services that let parents track their children by their mobiles. They presented their case outlining their concerns to MPs. A new service will offer parents the ability to pinpoint their child's mobiles via text messages or the web. The coalition is worried that as more and more companies offer this service, a lack of strict controls could mean tracking facilities

could get into the wrong hands. Companies who offer this service, such as ChildLocate, have already consulted with mobile operators and children's charities about suitable safeguards. Jon Magnusson, managing director of ChildLocate, said he was satisfied his service had the appropriate verification and security measures in place to protect children. For a subscription charge and a fee for text message, ChildLocate tracks a child's mobile and texts back its location to parents within seconds. Currently, the UK's main mobile networks, Orange, Vodafone, O2 and T-Mobile offer this service. Such tracking ability has been used for some time by police authorities, but this is the first time ever to be made available for the general public to buy. For more information please see BBC news.

URS Launch New Website

URS (United Register of Systems Ltd) unveiled their new website to the world on the 7th July 2004. The site has been developed to reflect the new corporate image that URS is currently working on. The site still has a few enhancements to be made but it is far superior to the previous version. The reaction worldwide has been very positive. Managing Director David Riggs said "This is just the beginning of a huge change programme for the company". Geoff Vorley from Quality Management and Training Ltd. has also commented that "The new website is certainly a challenge to the other certification bodies by creating a website with such comprehensive information and clarity". The site can be found on www.urscertification.com or www.urs.co.uk.

ISO's New Standard for Customer Satisfaction

ISO (International Organisation for Standardisation) has introduced a new standard **ISO 10002, *Quality management - Customer Satisfaction - Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations.*** It was developed by Subcommittee 3 of ISO/TC 176, the same ISO technical committee that was responsible for ISO 9000 family of quality management standards. ISO 10002 offers a solution for organisations when faced with a customer who is dissatisfied with a product or service. It details a complaints-handling process that can easily be integrated with the implementation of a quality management system based on ISO 9001:2000, which requires organisation's top management to focus on customer satisfaction

and continual improvement. Customers usually complain when a product or service does not meet their expectations. This could be the conditions of sale, after sale service, faulty product etc. ISO 10002 and two other standards, best practice in codes of conduct (ISO 10001) and external customer disputes resolution systems (ISO 10003) which are under development will collectively form a comprehensive system for the different phases of managing a customer complaint. ISO 10001 and ISO 10003 are currently working drafts which are expected to be published in 2006. For more information please visit www.iso.org