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**Celebrating Quality and Standards**

The autumn calendar is full of ‘celebration’ or ‘awareness’ events to raise the awareness of the role that standards and quality play in our world today. October 14<sup>th</sup> was 36<sup>th</sup> World Standards Day. The IEC, ISO and ITU use this day as a way to pay tribute to the work of many experts that contribute to international standards as well as highlight an aspect of the part standards play. This year’s theme is “Standards for a Safer World”. In a message from the three leaders of these organisations they say, “Standards developed at the international level through IEC, ISO and ITU are available for use at the national and regional levels to meet the needs of society at large, the market and government regulators”. These three organisations contribute to a safer world in different ways. The ITU (International Telecommunication Union) are working on a range of standards that include some that will help in disaster situations such as the recent earthquake in Kashmir. These standards will allow prioritisation for calls in these situations allowing telecommunication systems to be cleared for emergency use only. They have also developed standards that allow doctors to communicate and administer treatment remotely. The IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission) have standards that cover electrical and electronic products and systems. These cover the electrical safety of everything

from your laptop to the factory systems. They have product standards which means goods certified to these standards are safe to use. These standards do not only cover electrical safety but also ensure that the product does not have sharp edges, create excessive heat, emit excessive electromagnetic emissions etc. The ISO (International Standards Organisation) is probably the best known of the three and has a wide range of standards that contribute to safety in all aspects of life, e.g. fire and alarm systems, child car seats, food safety management, machinery management etc. Meanwhile in the United Kingdom, the IQA (Institute of Quality Assurance) is celebrating the World Quality Day on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2005. In a meeting to be held at the Imperial War Museum, Manchester, Sir Tom Farmer, the founder of Kwik-Fit will be giving the John Loxham Seminar. Also, at the meeting, the IQA will be presenting their annual awards, including the UK Quality Leader of the Year. For further information about the meeting please visit [www.iqa.org](http://www.iqa.org).

**New ISO Standard for PDF Files**

Portable Document Format (PDF) files have become the standard for the exchange and storage of data and is widely used by organisations for storing and sharing information electronically. ISO 19005, *Document management – Electronic document file format for long-term preservation – Part 1, Use of PDF 1.4 (PDF/A-1)*, will allow organisations to store



their documents electronically in a safe manner over a long period of time. It also ensure retrieving and rendering documents with a consistent and predictable result in the future, independent of the tools and systems used for creating and storing the files. ISO 19005-1:2005 is available from ISO national member institutes and from ISO Central Secretariat. For more information please visit [www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org)

### **Improving Quality Management in Local Government**

ISO has just released guidelines for improving quality management in local government worldwide through the implementation of its ISO 9001:2000 management system standard by public authorities. ISO 9001:2000 is already in use by more than 670000 organizations of all types in 154 countries, including local government authorities and public services. The new guidelines explain the standard in more familiar terms to people who work in local government. This should make it easier for them to implement the standard and so improve the quality of their services to the public. IWA 4, *Quality management systems – Guidelines for the application of ISO 9001:2000 in local government*, is not intended for certification and does not require the public authorities that use it to become ISO 9001:2000 certified. It gives advice on implementing ISO 9001:2000, but does not alter in any way the requirements of that standard. For more information please visit [www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org)

### **Cowboy Builders**

Building firms have had a bad reputation in the past and over 111,000 complaints have been registered with the Office of Fair Trading. To overcome this problem and to restore the public's faith in the industry, Alun Michael, the Construction Minister has announced the launch of "TrustMark" which is a government initiative to help consumer find reputable firms. Companies

registered with TrustMark will show consumers that they have signed up to an industry code of practice and their quality of work will be regularly checked. The new scheme is expected to become self financing within 2 years through membership registration. For more information please see The British Quality Foundation, UK Excellence magazine.

### **BS EN 1279**

CE marking for glass BS EN 1279 standard is now complete. It is written in six parts and the transition and implementation phase has officially begun. This means that by February 2007, insulating glass unit manufacturers will need to demonstrate compliance with the Construction Products Directive. For further information please visit [www.bsi-global.com](http://www.bsi-global.com)

### **Child Safety Gates**

According to a recent report, the gates used to block off stairs and areas like kitchens and bathrooms, have failed the British standard's safety test. Five of the best selling child gates were dangerous for toddlers. According to Which? Report, the Jonelle Wood and Metal Gate, the Bettacare Auto-Close Gate, and the Safety 1<sup>st</sup> Portable Safety Travel Barrier all risked a piece of toddler's clothing getting caught. This could lead to child possibly getting strangled. Also the Jonelle Metal Extending Gate and the Mothercare Wall-Fix Extending Gate both have a fixing that can be removed, thereby releasing a spring, which a child could choke on. For more information please see BBC news.

### **Zotob Computer Worm Creators Arrested**

According to a recent report the two men responsible for creating the Zotob Computer worm that targeted computers using Microsoft Corp. operating systems have been arrested. One of the men was



arrested in Morocco and the other in Turkey. Many US firms were affected including CNN and The New York Times. The Zotob worm emerged just a week after Microsoft Corp warned of a security flaw in the Plug and Play feature of Windows 2000. Microsoft's team of 50 investigators had analysed the Zotob worm and its variants to discover where it was coming from. The software industry was working hard to improve computer security and had made significant gains in a short time. The fact that these arrests have been made in less than two weeks and halfway around the world is remarkable. For more information please see BBC news.

### **Birds and bees to educate spies**

It has been recently reported that a research team at the University of Bath are developing a spy plane the size of a bee with flapping wings and which will be able to send back video recording of battlegrounds and therefore removing the risks to humans. It could also be used for wildlife surveys, fire and rescue operations and the detection of hazardous substances in peacetime. A prototype could be made in a couple of years if the research works. Dr Ismet Gursul, head of the aerospace research group at the University of Bath, told Reuters: "We are looking for the most efficient way of flying, and the rapid flapping of a flexible wing is one of these. In this respect we are imitating nature and the flight of insects and birds. The smaller an aircraft is made, the slower is its speed and the more it is vulnerable to high winds. This means that existing micro air vehicles can only fly for short periods at low speed and are too large to carry out fine manoeuvres." A separate report has shown that aviation researchers at the University of Florida have copied the wing action of seagulls to develop spy drones than can morph shape mid-flight. This research, which is funded, by NASA and the US Air Force could be ready for action in two to three years. They watched how seagulls fly

and alter their wing shape, and using morphing techniques, the agile craft can squeeze through confined spaces, such as alleyways, and change direction rapidly. According to the researchers, the micro air vehicles could fly in urban environments to detect biological agents or automatically find their way to monitor locations, such as apartment blocks, where suspicious activity is detected. For further information please see BBC news.

### **New Automotive Kitemark**

BSI has recently launched a new Kitemark scheme for the protection of the consumers and to improve customer services standards in the repair and care of vehicles. The new Automotive Kitemark will allow garages that meet the new PAS 80 standard to benefit from the values of trust, quality and integrity that the Kitemark has long stood for. Mike Pearson, Head of New Product Development at BSI Product Services explains that, "more than 80 per cent of UK adults recognise the Kitemark and it will provide significant commercial advantages to those who opt for the scheme. Enhancing customer service leads to improved business performance and service standards. The Kitemark acts as an asset enabling the more professional operators to differentiate themselves from the less reputable traders whose behaviour has blighted the reputation of the industry." For more information please visit [www.bsi-global.co.uk](http://www.bsi-global.co.uk)