

At the same time, a greenhouse gas validation or verification differs from a management system certification in that the statement is issued based on an assertion issued at a specific point in time and covering a defined period of activity. In that respect, it is quite similar to an audit of a financial statement.

In fact, the similarity to a financial audit does not end there because the claim itself often has a future financial value in the market-place and many of the schemes currently use this value as a tradable commodity. In such cases, the believability of the statements is vital in order to allow such trade to take place. The resultant document will therefore require a delicate balance between the two disciplines.

The work of ISO/TC 207 working group WG 6, the joint working group with ISO/CASCO has progressed very well indeed. The group met for the first time in conjunction with the ISO/TC 207 plenary meeting in August 2004 in Argentina and has had two subsequent meetings.

Cross-section

The experts that have been nominated to the group reflect a wide cross-section of interests in the area and include the following: practitioners in the field of greenhouse gas verifications; validators of projects; scheme administrators; accreditors and people with vast experience of management system and product certification schemes.

With a group as diverse as this, there are bound to be differences of opinion and approaches. There has, however, been an underlying commitment by the group to resolve these differences in a way that remains true to the requirement for technical rigour but that will allow us to complete the document in the shortest possible time.

After all, we are repeatedly reminded that the world is waiting for a document like this – a document that will allow administrators to appoint and recognize verifiers and validators as being competent to carry out these important activities and thereby allow their schemes to function.

Where schemes exist, the administrators are looking at this as a tool that will allow the recognition of the validators or verifiers (by various means such as accreditation or peer review, or others) so that the markets can grow.

An increase of greenhouse gas as a result of our industrial activity is possibly one of the most serious threats facing mankind. We need to act together in order to manage and possibly mitigate the impact of this threat and International Standards are certainly one way in which we can make this happen. •

ISO 9001:2000 guidelines for local government

by Roger Frost



An international workshop to develop guidelines making it easier for local government authorities to implement quality management systems based on the ISO 9001:2000 standard was scheduled for 22-23 May 2005 in Veracruz, Mexico.

ISO Secretary-General Alan Bryden commented: "Since the first ISO 9000 standards were published in 1987, this approach to ensuring the quality of the output of organizations has been taken up firstly by manufacturing industry, then by the service sector and, in more recent years, by public administrations. This evolution would not have taken place unless the ISO 9000 approach provided concrete benefits for the organizations that implement it.

"The latest version, ISO 9001:2000, is even more suitable for implementation by service providers, whether in private or public sectors, and the development of guidelines specifically

for local government authorities will further encourage the spread of quality management systems where they can make a positive difference to the lives of the citizens served by those authorities."

Guidelines specifically for local government authorities can make a positive difference to the lives of the citizens

The Veracruz workshop¹⁾ was being hosted by the ISO member for Mexico, DGN (*Dirección General de Normas*). Supporting DGN are the Mexican National Institute of Public Administration (INAP) and the National Standardization Technical Committee on Quality Management Systems (COTENNSISCAL) –

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the Mexican national “mirror committee” to ISO technical committee ISO/TC 176, which is responsible for the ISO 9000 family.

Alternatives

Following approval by ISO, the guidelines will be published as IWA 4. “IWA” denotes an “International Workshop Agreement” which is one of several types of deliverable offered by ISO for cases where swift development and publication of an international agreement take priority.

DGN hosted a similar workshop in 2002 that developed IWA 2, *Quality management systems – Guidelines for the application of ISO 9001:2000 in education*. ISO’s first IWA was published in 2001 and also relates to a sectoral application of quality management systems: IWA 1:2001, *Quality management systems – Guidelines for process improvements in health service organizations*. (IWA 3, which deals with image safety, has not yet been published.)

Compared to the traditional ISO process of developing International Standards through its technical committee structure, IWA’s are developed in open workshops and organized by one of ISO’s national member bodies.

Prior to the Veracruz meeting, COTENNSISCAL had already developed draft guidelines for debate and improvement at the workshop. First presented to ISO/TC 176, the positive interest in this work from the national delegations of some 20 countries led Mexico to pro-

pose to ISO the development of international guidelines.

The Mexican proposal, which was accepted by ISO in February, stated: “By securing a high quality performance of the municipal government, public policies coming from other government levels can be corrected and improved, allowing the whole system to strengthen itself. This is a new approach to help building world-class governments, both at local and global levels.

“For this reason, there is the need to standardize an effective implementation of ISO 9001 2000 in local governments in such a way that acceptable conditions of quality management on integral local governance are assured for all people present on their territory.”

Mexican interest in applying quality management to local government authorities goes back more than 20 years

Expertise

Mexican interest in applying quality management to local government authorities goes back more than 20 years and the leadership role in this field of a number of Mexican specialist has been recognized in many national and international forums as standing for an innovative approach to the assessment of local government performance.

The approach has been implemented by more than 200 Mex-

ican municipalities²⁾, by local authorities in Latin America (Colombia, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Peru and El Salvador), as well as in Pakistan and Russia.

The Latin-American Institute for Quality Management (INLAC), liaison member of ISO/TC 176, first showed interest in the possibility of building on the Mexican experience to develop international guidelines and enlisted the support of COTENNSISCAL.

The joint proposal to ISO by DGN and COTENNSISCAL included the following justification: “At present, local governments worldwide experience higher levels of democracy and pluralism, which requires them to increase their capacity to perform their mandates in an efficient and legitimate way, in order to provide their citizens with higher standards of living.

“Lack of capacity commonly leads to governability crisis; for that reason, one of the greater challenges that societies face today is the need to develop citizen’s trust towards their governments and their institutions. To advance governance and guarantee good governments, therefore, institutions are to grow stronger; and that demands political, economic and social reform, seeking for excellence and total quality.”

2) See “ISO 9000 helps transform public sector in Mexico”, *ISO Management Systems*, January-February 2003.

‘Dynamic’ launching of work on ISO 26000 – future guideline on social responsibility

by Roger Frost

“Dynamic!” That was how the Brazil-Sweden leadership team of the ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility (WG SR) described its first meeting to launch the development of the future ISO 26000 standard giving SR guidelines, for publication in 2008.

“As well as giving a focus to the development of the SR standard by providing it with a designation, ISO 26000, this first meeting was the scene for the essential first phase of ‘team forming’ which must take place before ‘team performing’ can swing into action,” commented ISO Secretary-General Alan Bryden.

The meeting, held on 7-11 March 2005, in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, was the “kick-off” of ISO’s first venture into the area of SR and, fittingly for a new initiative, achieved a high attendance and set a fresh benchmark for innovation in stakeholder participation.

The WG SR meeting was attended by 43 ISO member countries (including 21 developing countries) plus 24 organizations with liaison status, all together represented by 225