

## ISO:9000 Spreads Worldwide

by Sunil Thawani

The Quality Management System standards (QMS), ISO : 9001 is perhaps the most popular product of the International Organisation of Standards (ISO), Geneva. The debate on the benefits of implementing ISO : 9001 never ends. Debates are opinions – mine is as good as yours. Instead of debates, let us look at some facts and figures

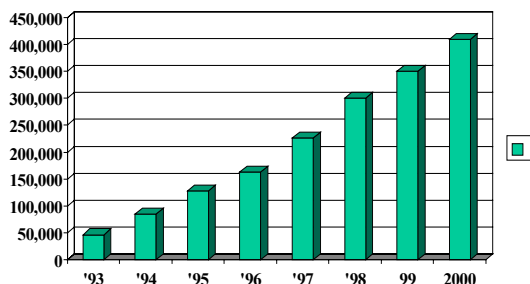
Before I proceed further, it may be appropriate to mention here that contrary to popular perception, the ISO organisation does not issue the certificates of conformity. In fact Certification bodies, independent of the ISO organisation, carry out assessments and issue the certificates of conformity. The ISO organisation develops, issues and updates various standards like QMS standards ISO : 9000. However, it regularly conducts survey on its implementation.

The latest survey findings of upto 31<sup>st</sup> December'2000 were recently published by the ISO organisation. Findings provide an interesting insight into this ever interesting and hotly debated subject. Given below are the excerpts taken from the survey findings:

- ISO : 9000 standard continues to be adopted worldwide. From 1993 to 2000, No. of certificates issued grew from about 50,000 to 408631 - near 8 fold growth in 7 years. (Figure 1).

Figure 1

ISO 9000 - No. Of Certificates Issued Worldwide



Source : Mobil Survey

- In 1993 certificates were awarded in 48 countries. It has proliferated to 158 countries by Dec. 2000 - almost a worldwide acceptance.
- Albania, Chad, Krygyzstan, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Suriname, Uganda and Uzbekistan are the latest addition to the list of countries implementing ISO : 9000

- Europe with 220127 certificates followed by Far Eastern countries with 81919 certificates account for 54 % and 20 % respectively of the regional market share of ISO : 9000 certificates awarded.
- Within the GCC nations, UAE and Saudi Arabia top the list with 1007 and 610 No. of certificates awarded till 31/12/00 (Table 1).

**Number of ISO : 9000 Certificates Issued in GCC**

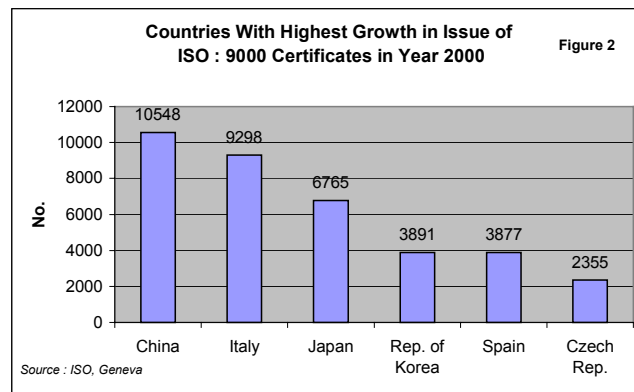
GCC Nations	Dec.'95	Dec.'96	Dec.'97	Dec.'98	Dec.'99	Dec.'2000
Bahrain	9	20	30	31	31	33
Kuwait	9	15	28	62	67	74
Oman	20	26	53	70	82	66
Qatar	5	7	20	20	20	55
Saudi Arabia	98	159	211	280	324	610
U.A.E.	104	139	314	632	1045	1007

**Table - 1**

Source : ISO, Geneva

- China, Italy and Japan recorded the highest annual growth of new certificates issued in Year 2000. (Figure 2)

Country	No.
China	10548
Italy	9298
Japan	6765
Rep. of Korea	3891
Spain	3877
Czech Rep.	2355



- At the end of year 2000, some 15886 certificates have been withdrawn due to variety of reasons like organisation failed re certification audit, organisation ceased its business activities, organisation discontinued ISO : 9000.
- Out of 15886 certificates withdrawn, only 897 certificates pertain to “ insufficient return on investment “ and “ No business advantage “. This is less than 0.2 % of the total of 400000 plus certificates awarded so far.

- Basic metal & fabricated metal products, Electrical and optical equipment & Construction industrial sectors are the top 3 industrial sectors with highest number of certificates.

Looking at the numbers, readers can decide for themselves.

### **ISO : 9001 : 2000**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> revision of ISO : 9001 standard was released in December 2000. Organisations have 3 year period to adopt the new standard. In comparison to the earlier revisions this has quite significant changes in terms of top management commitment, process based approach, use of Dr. Deming's' PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Act) approach, setting measurable Quality objectives, management of resources including competence of personnel, process based audits, minimal need for documentation, compliance to statutory and industry specific regulatory requirements, data collection and analysis using appropriate statistical techniques, continual improvement, etc.

Implementing 9001 : 2000 will offer challenges to all parties concerned – consultants, certifying bodies and organisations implementing the standard. If the requirements are implemented in letter and spirit, there is no doubt, organisations will stand to benefit and so will the customers and society at large. The demand for QMS will only increase.

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