

Chapter 1

A real change in direction

Learning outcomes

After studying this chapter you should be able to:

- ❑ understand the real change in direction of the 2000 standard
- ❑ understand the reasons for change
- ❑ recognize the difference between conformance to standard and system performance
- ❑ explain the linkage between the role of the QMS and business outputs

A system focused on achieving business objectives

The ISO 9000:2000 family of standards is based on the process approach to management. This approach recognizes that all work is performed to achieve some objective - also that the objective is achieved more efficiently when related resources and activities are managed as a process. In addition it is believed that the objectives of the organization which serve to meet its mission will be met more effectively when the organization is managed as a system of interrelated processes.

It follows therefore that this system should be designed to enable the organization to meet its objectives and should interconnect all the processes required to deliver the desired results. Objectives are derived from the expectations of interested parties as now referred to in the ISO 9000:2000 family. Who are these interested parties? These for most organizations include:

- ❑ Customers who want products and services that fulfil their expectations
- ❑ Suppliers who want commercially viable and stable relationships
- ❑ Employees who want satisfying employment
- ❑ Shareholders who want a good return on their investment
- ❑ Society that wants organizations to operate responsibly, lawfully and ethically

None of these interested parties or stakeholders have objectives that are unrelated to the others and therefore they cannot have systems that operate independently - in fact there can only be one system. The process approach is therefore concerned with managing the interrelationships between the interested parties so that all are satisfied - not just customers. It is not a trade-off or a balancing act. Employee satisfaction or care for society or the environment cannot be traded-off against customer satisfaction. Clearly this is a change in focus and direction.

The fork in the road ~ old versus new interpretation

On first reading, the 2000 standard can be interpreted as shown in the Customer fulfilment cycle (Figure 1.1). Here there is a clear linkage between quality policy, objectives and where the QMS delivers the outputs to satisfy customer needs. To many this does not represent a significant change from how a QMS has been perceived. In reality the QMS was only a system of documentation focused on conformity to procedures (defined by a standard) as shown in the Conformity cycle (Figure 1.2). Here the linkage is between procedures which implement quality policy and deliver records that demonstrate conformity, often independent of business objectives. What the 2000

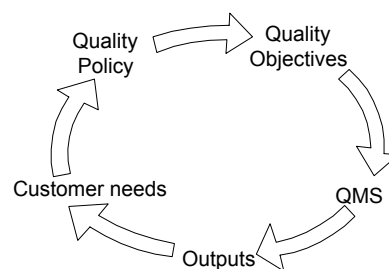


Figure 1.1 Customer fulfilment