



APO *news*

ISO9001 lead auditor course in Malaysia

Twenty-one participants from 15 member countries attended a training course on ISO9001:2000 for Auditors/Lead Auditors in Malaysia, 17–22 April 2006. The project was hosted by the National Productivity Corporation, Malaysia, and conducted by Independent European Certification Limited (IECL).

The course aimed to train participants in ISO9001 quality management system (QMS) auditing to build a pool of auditors and lead auditors in APO member countries. The course gave a better understanding of the requirements of the ISO9001 standard, its documentation process, and the knowledge and skills required for ISO auditing. Participants also learned how certification body auditors audit to the ISO9000 system to help enterprises maintain good QMS.


The intensive course was delivered using interactive accelerated learning, entailing presentations, discussions, structured learning exercises, case studies, syndicate work, live audit practice, and a formal examination on the final day. In the live audit, participants practiced at Sweetkiss Food Industries, a leading ISO9001:2000-certified confectioner. Unlike in most other projects, participants were required to complete assignments each evening, and many worked tirelessly into the small hours to prepare for the two-and-one-half-hour examination. Passing the examination is required for auditor registration with the International Register for Certificated Auditors, UK.



Aspiring auditors taking the exam

The International Organization for Standardization developed its 9000 series in 1987 as voluntary international standards for establishing and maintaining QMS for enterprises manufacturing products or providing services. These standards are accepted in more than 100 countries, have become an international reference for quality, and cover all facets of business activities from design, production, and inspection to after-sales service. They were last revised in December 2000 as ISO9001:2000.

The implementation of ISO9001:2000 is critical for export-oriented firms, as certification yields significant business advantages. Certification is desired by enterprises in APO member countries because it facilitates international trade and offers scope for continuous improvement and customer satisfaction. While several member countries provide training and consultancy in the ISO9001 QMS, not all have the pool of quality system auditors required for internal or second- and third-party audits, and auditor/lead auditor courses are either unavailable or expensive in many. Audits are a major part of a QMS, and, like financial audits, are undertaken periodically to ensure that the system operates effectively and to identify areas of noncompliance.

Over the past five years, the APO has trained about 100 quality system auditors through its multi-country programs and several hundred more through individual country programs. The course in Malaysia was facilitated by Jimmy Chua and B.S. Ong, accredited trainers from the IECL, Malaysia Office. 

Volume 36 Number 6
June 2006

"Let us not look back in anger, nor forward in fear, but around in awareness."

James Thurber

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Published monthly by
Asian Productivity Organization
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