



# **RABQSA INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASE #2**

**ISO/IEC 17024:2003 *General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons***

## ***the new era of personnel certification...***

Following advice earlier this month to our respective key stakeholders and customers regarding the merger of QSA International, the Quality Society of Australasia (QSA) with the US-based Registrar Accreditation Board (RAB), I am pleased to advise that our progress in the transition from independent organizations to '**RABQSA International**', the world's leading accredited personnel certification body, continues to move rapidly to conclusion.

As advised, the new organization will come into effect 1 January 2005. Principal offices will be located in Milwaukee and Sydney, with Joint Venture offices located in Tokyo, Taipei, Hanoi, Kuala Lumpur and Auckland. Expansion into Mexico and Canada is planned for 2005.

*This is the second in a series of News Releases that will provide you with a progressive update on the merger transition plan, and the service profile and operations of RABQSA International in 2005.*

### **Background....**

ISO/IEC 17024:2003 *General Requirements for Bodies Operating Certification of Persons* was released 1 April 2003. The impact of this new Standard on the personnel certification industry has been profound.

The unique benefit of the Standard is that, for the first time, the issue of personnel competence has been taken seriously. At the core of the Standard is the requirement for the Accredited Personnel Certification Body (RABQSA) to determine Industry's requirements, then define, measure and objectively examine personnel competence. The down line benefits of clearly articulating industry's expectations of personnel performance, is that the alignment of the competence of the person to the achievement of defined business outcomes, is now the essential first step in the certification process.

Determining and examining competence is about the recognition of persons with the required knowledge, skills, personal attributes and qualifications, to satisfy industry's requirements. This will have a significant and positive impact on business performance, and the fundamental value and relevance of personnel certification.

### **Today.... Update #2**

The first *News Release* outlined the key outcomes across Governance, Stakeholder Engagement, System Design (including the introduction of skill and personal attribute examination), Scheme Committee Operations, and related aspects of the Transition Plan.

I am now pleased to advise that the merger of RAB and QSA, and the supporting 2005 Business Plan, has been approved by the respective Boards of Directors and endorsed by the American Society of Quality (ASQ).

*Update on the transition plan ...*

Salient points to note .....

- The newly accredited (ISO17024) personnel certification schemes; Quality, Environment, Occupational Health and Safety and Food Safety Management System Auditing, and the Training Provider and Examiner Certification Scheme Ed. 5 (TPECS), will be introduced 1 January 2005.
- Essentially, applicants seeking certification or recertification from 1 January 2005, to one or more of the accredited schemes, will be required to achieve the appropriate competency specific to the scheme, including the examination of:

**Knowledge.** Applicants will require a Certificate of Attainment from a RABQSA Certified Training Provider (TPECS). During 2005 and 2006, Certificates of Attainment from RAB accredited training providers will be recognised as meeting the knowledge-based competency with the addition of a 'gap' examination.

The 'gap' (the difference in the current competency profile against the requirements of TPECS) will be developed by the RABQSA Training Provider Sub-Scheme Committee.

All Training Providers seeking agreement to examine knowledge will be required to transition to the TPECS no later than YE2006.

**Skill.** Applicants will require a Certificate of Attainment from an RABQSA Approved Skill Examiner. The examination will be coordinated by RABQSA.

**Personal Attributes.** Applicants will be required to successfully complete PAAS Master®, specific to the appropriate scheme. PAAS Master® will be accessed via the RABQSA web site and involves no more than 35 mins of your time.

**Qualification.** Applicants will be required to provide evidence of recognised qualifications reflecting the additional competencies required for the scheme and/scope of certification.

**Agreement** to the RABQSA Code of Conduct and related administrative requirements.

The new criteria documents will clearly outline the requirements for certification.

A competent RABQSA Examiner will examine your application against the competency profile detailed in the scheme criteria. Yes, our Examiners need to meet specific competency requirements also! Audit logs, reports and details of CPD will no longer be required!

- RABQSA will continue to offer the non-accredited schemes, QMS, EMS, OH&S, Food Safety, Aged Care, Waste, HVAS, B-Qual, and Management Consultant, until YE2006, at which time all schemes will transition to the accredited competency based schemes.
- The certification period for the accredited schemes will be four years. Throughout this period RABQSA will conduct surveillance examinations (an e-based knowledge examination as appropriate to each scheme) to ensure that, in terms of knowledge, the certified person remains competent.
- Persons currently certified by QSA or RAB who intend to apply for accredited certification post 1 January 2005 will not be required to maintain audit logs, details of professional development etc. These requirements do not adhere to ISO17024 competency-based certification and may be dispensed with immediately.
- QSA Professional members will be invited to transition to ASQ. ASQ is preparing an innovative membership package that will enhance the current recognition and benefits QSA members currently enjoy. ASQ is also developing a business case that will underpin the establishment of an *International Membership Unit* based in Australia.
- Pending Industry's requirements, from 1 January 2005, all new scheme design and development will be against the accredited ISO17024 model. The Australian Government (Dept of Agriculture), Japanese Frozen Food Inspection Corporation (JFFIC), Sydney Airport Corporation, EMS Globe21, and AgriQuality New Zealand are moving quickly to engage RABQSA on scheme development projects.
- In situations where an applicant has applied for certification to an accredited scheme and RABQSA is unable to examine the demonstration of the required Skill competencies, the applicant will be certified (non-accredited), pending the Skill examination.

The new application, criteria and related administrative requirements, will be available as read only documents for your consideration, on the RAB and QSA web sites from 1 December 2004.

The above profile is constantly being reviewed and will be amended as appropriate to ensure a smooth international transition that will not disadvantage your current certification.

**The outline transition plan (in diagram format) is attached for your reference.**

*The fee structure ...*

The new fee structures remain under consideration. Fees will be prescribed specific to each accredited and non-accredited scheme internationally by region and/or country. It is expected that the skill and personal attribute examination will add an additional cost to the Application Fee for each accredited scheme, and shall be adjusted to reflect local economic conditions around the world.

While the Application Fee will increase, there will no longer be a requirement to undertake costly CPD activities, and the amount of documentation required to maintain certification will be nearly non-existent, saving time and expense.

*RABQSA Scheme Committee ...*

As advised, the Scheme Committee is fundamental to the relevance and value of the certification scheme. The ability to engage key stakeholders, and define the structure and competency profile of the scheme is critical.

I am pleased to advise the following key appointments (Chairpersons):

RABQSA Scheme Committee

Mr. Peter Reeves  
IMS Consulting  
Australia

*Sub-Scheme Committees (current):*

Product and Management System Certification Bodies

Mr. Garry Ferris  
NCS International  
Australia

Training Providers

Mr. Mark Ames  
AQS Management Systems  
USA

Management Systems Auditing

Scott Weyburn  
Consultant  
USA

Australian Government (DAFF)

Ms. Lyn Malcolm  
DAFF  
Australia

Japan Frozen Food Inspection Corporation

Mr. Mamoru Tajiri  
JFFIC  
Japan

Sydney Airport Corporation

Mr. Peter Adams  
Manager Airport Operations  
Australia

*Membership of IAF ...*

RABQSA has been accepted as a member of the IAF Technical Committee with Effect 15 November 2004. Membership of the TC will place RABQSA at the leading edge of technical development and provide the opportunity for issues relating to personnel certification to be placed on the IAF table.

Considerable work remains to be completed in the development and rollout of the transition plan. QSA's and RAB's investment in the process of change and innovation is considerable.

The outcome in terms of improved personnel performance, designed to achieve Industry's expectations, will provide a substantial contribution to business improvement.

Meetings of the management system and product certification bodies, and training provider sub-scheme committees, are programmed for December 2004 and January 2005.

If you would be interested in providing input on a Scheme Committee as a key stakeholder, please contact Ms Cindy Miller, [cmiller@rabnet.com](mailto:cmiller@rabnet.com) detailing the committee, your interest and your CV.

Further detail to follow in the next update.

*RABQSA International, a non-profit (not-for-profit) organization, is one of the world's leading certification organizations for the provision of accredited personnel and training certification services and related professional development services. A wide variety of organizations employ our certified persons for the purposes of improving business performance.*

**For further information regarding RABQSA International, accredited certification and the 2005 Transition Plan, please contact Ms. Toni Smith on [tsmith@qsanet.com](mailto:tsmith@qsanet.com) or +61 2 88336408.**



# RABQSA PERSONNEL AND TRAINING CERTIFICATION TRANSITION PLAN

