

1stOutsource

Quality Plan

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APPROVAL AND DISTRIBUTION

Approval: This document requires the formal approval of the following named staff. Signed approval forms are filed in the 1stOutsource project files www.1stOutsource.com.

Role	Name	Signature	Appointment	Date
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Senior Executive				
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Financial Control				
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Sales Approval				
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Distribution: This document has been distributed to the approvers named above and the programme/project staff and key stakeholders listed below

Role	Name	Appointment	Date

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1. Purpose

The requirement for the quality plan are driven by the need to achieve customer satisfaction by meeting or exceeding customer requirements by the application of a quality system and includes the continuous improvement and the prevention of non-conformity in delivered services of 1stOutsource Management.

1.1. Scope

The scope is defined as the Consulting and Research business activities of 1stOutsource Management Limited.

1.2. References

References used are:

[ref 1] ISO9001:2000 Quality Management Systems Requirements

[ref 2] ISO9004:2000 Guidelines for Performance Improvement

[ref 3] ISO9000:2000 Fundamentals and Vocabulary

[ref 4] ISO9000:2000 Quality Management Systems Concepts and Vocabulary

Definitions

The concept of the standard is demonstrated by:

- Defining the management requirement
- Determining and applying the necessary resource management
- Establishing and implementing processes for service realisation
- Measuring and analysing results and implementing improvements as a result of feedback.
- Review activities relating to initiating improvements and authorising changes.

The role of customers is to provide demand which is converted into service output via 1stOutsource internal process activities. These outputs are evaluated by customers in terms of customer satisfaction and compliance to the demanded services. Information gained from the monitoring of outputs is used to improve process performance.

1.3. Quality Assurance Policy

1stOutsource Management's quality assurance policy is based on principles and values provided for in the company mission, strategy and goals. The Quality Management System (QMS) creation is a major strategic direction of our business activities and is regarded as a tool enabling the creation and management of effective business processes.

The Company pursues the following goals:

1. The professional and technical level of the services must correspond to or exceed that of the leading consultancies and companies operating in the UK market.
2. We are responsible to customers for the quality of the services rendered.
3. The value of our services as compared with other niche companies operating in our market must be equivalent or better.
4. We development and implement new service products that meet real customer need.
5. We continuously monitor feedback from our clients following project closure to identify quality improvement activities.
6. We position our company as employing professional staff educated to at least Masters Level and providing services based on evidence based practice.

The strategy and behaviours to achieve the goals are:

1. A focus on the process management model and continuous improvement of the company services (in accordance with the market requirements).
2. The QMS development and implementation will conform to ISO 9001 international standards - Certification to 9001 will be applied for by 2010.
3. The services will be provided under Service Level Agreements (SLA) or defined statements of work (SOWS).
4. The fulfilment of the customers' requirements will take place within the shortest periods of time commensurate with high quality following an agreed plan.
5. We will understand the customer needs and their present and future specific requirements and continuously work with customers in order to understand their real needs.
6. Transparency - customers obtain access to information on the quality of the services and our quality review processes.
7. Strict quality assurance procedures will be followed at all stages of the services life cycle with well-defined personnel responsibility for quality assurance embedded in the statement of work or definition of work-packages.
8. 1stOutsource accepts and embeds the PRINCE 2 project methodology in its work practice including all quality processes.
9. The primary focus is on the prevention of a possible decrease in quality rather than on measures to restore the quality level once a decrease has happened (prevention better than cure).

Behavioural Policies

1. All research and consultancy staff and associates employed or contracted will have minimum of Masters level education and experience.
2. The company will reserve in the training budget funding for PRINCE 2 registered practitioner training.
3. All research and consultancy staff will be members of relevant professional bodies and will be encouraged to remain reflexive practitioners.
4. All staff at whatever level will be coached and expected to develop continuous learning as well as complete relevant CPD.
5. For each project regular team meetings will be held and full adherence to quality procedures to ensure rigour validity and reliability will be expected.
6. A full de-briefing will take place after every project to assess areas for learning improvement and development.
7. Consistent training of all personnel in the sphere of quality will take place - each employee's will participate in services improvement and in rewards for quality improvement.

2. Management system

2.1. General requirements

The Quality Management approach of 1stOutsource Management is in the form of a fully documented system involving this manual, company standard operating procedures, project documentation, sales and operational planning documents, general documentation and proprietary methods.

It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure that their activities fully comply with the requirements laid down by the Quality System and all employees are required to adopt a positive approach to the Quality Policy as described in this manual.

The documents involved in the Quality System:

Quality Manual

This Quality Manual is designed to give an overview of the Quality System and to describe the company's policy with respect to quality related matters.

Operating Procedures

Operating Procedures are provided to personnel in order to describe and control each individual aspect of the company's operation. They lay down relevant responsibilities and define the method by which processes are to be performed.

Work Instructions

Work Instructions are provided to personnel where necessary to define in detail the manner in which certain important processes are to be controlled.

Inspection Instructions

Inspection Instructions are provided to relevant personnel who are involved in inspection activities such as Quality Review they lay down the means by

which inspections and tests are performed, the procedures to be followed and the appropriate acceptance/rejection criteria.

Quality Planning

In general the above documentation covers the requirements for the planning of quality.

Where necessary extra documentation in the form of samples, drawings, flowcharts, preliminary problem diagnosis etc may be used as required for a specific assignment. If a customer requests any more detailed requirements other special requirement e.g. the preparation of a testing plan this will be discussed with the relevant project management.

2.2. Documentation requirements

Document Approval and Change Control

Established processes cover the control of manuals, procedures, documents and records related to the Company's Quality Management System.

The preparation issue and change of documents/records are version controlled to ensure that the correct documents/records are being employed and distributed within the company. Such documents/records and their subsequent revisions, are reviewed for adequacy and approved prior to release.

The Company uses its computer network for controlling the availability of the Quality Manual, Operating Procedures and Work Instructions. The documents are controlled documents and subject to formal release. Employees have read-only access to the Quality System area of the network. Editing and write access is restricted to the Company Secretary who is the Quality Co-ordinator. Paper copies of Quality related documentation are held by the Quality Co-ordinator in the fire proof safe in the document

repository and are controlled under the organisations disaster recovery procedures.

National and International Standards and technical information held by the Company are controlled by the Chief Engineer. All standards are reviewed as part of project requirements, and updated where applicable.

Current versions of documents/records used in the Company are shown in the document register, maintained by the Quality Co-ordinator and stored in the fireproof safe.

Proprietary computer software is evaluated within the appropriate department, and approved by the relevant department manager. Software version and licensing details are recorded by the IT department.

The Services Director is responsible for ensuring that all in-house software development is effectively controlled, approved and registered on the Company's computer network. IT management reports to the Board via Services.

Computer data is backed up in accordance with the Company's IT policy and copies of discs and tapes are safeguarded and stored in a fireproof safe. Specific individuals are allocated the responsibility of periodically storing back-up CD's off-site in the fire-proof safe.

Changes to documents are controlled by a change control process, and identified by a change to the version number – computer backups on CD operate within the versioning procedure.

3. MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY

3.1. MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT

The Directors have shown commitment to the implementation of a Quality System to meet the requirements of ISO9001:2000. This has been achieved by ensuring that adequate resources are available to meet customer's requirements, by reviewing systems and processes and looking at methods to improve operations.

The Directors place considerable effort into ensuring that customer needs and expectations have been determined and translated into applicable customer requirements and that these requirements are achieved.

The following methods are used to achieve these requirements:

- Ensuring that systems are in place for staff to be clear as to customer requirements
- establishing a written quality policy and objectives
- putting in place a quality management system
- performing management reviews at regular intervals
- ensuring resources are available to meet quality requirements

3.2. CUSTOMER FOCUS

The Directors have ensured that there is a system in place for determining customer's needs and requirements. Personnel are responsible for ensuring that these requirements are reviewed, understood and met. Senior personnel are involved in the review process ensuring that all departments are aware of the resource requirements for customer orders.

3.3. QUALITY POLICY STATEMENT

The Directors have determined a policy, ensuring that it:

- Is suitable for the needs and requirements of customers
- Includes commitment to meeting requirements and continuous improvement for all levels of the organisation
- Provides a framework for establishing and reviewing quality objectives
- Is communicated, understood and implemented throughout the organisation
- Is regularly reviewed for suitability and effectiveness
- Is appropriate to the business, complementing the business objectives

The Directors and Managers place particular importance on "continuous improvement" and realise that the policy may need to be continually changed to reflect the challenges arising within the business environment.

Quality Policy Statement

1stOutsource Management's quality assurance policy is based on principles and values provided for in the Company Mission, strategy and goals.

Quality Management System (QMS) creation is a major strategic direction of the business activities. The QMS is regarded as a useful tool for creation and management of effective business processes. The system formation will result in provision of services of consistently high quality, fully meeting customers' expectations.

The company pursues the following goals in the field of quality assurance:

1. Strict compliance of the company's services with international, national, and corporate standards and requirements.

2. Professional and technical level of the services must correspond to or exceed that of leading enterprises and companies operating in the UK market.
3. Responsibility to customers for the quality of the services rendered.
4. Cost efficiency of the services as compared with other companies operating in the market.
5. Development and implementation of new services that fully satisfy our customers' needs.
6. Continuous monitoring of complaints and claims from customers, and aim to maintain these at zero.
7. Positioning of the company as employing professional staff educated to at least Masters Level, and providing services of high quality.

The strategy for achieving the goals is the following:

1. Focus on the process management model and continuous improvement of the company services (in accordance with the market requirements).
2. The QMS development, implementation, and maintenance in conformity with ISO 9001 international standards. Certification to 9001 will be applied for by 2008.
3. Satisfaction of customers' requirements to all services. Fulfilment of the customers' requirements within the shortest periods of time, ensuring highest quality. The services can be provided under Service Level Agreements (SLA).
4. Understanding of the customer needs their **present** and **future** specific requirements.
5. Continuous cooperation with customers in order to understand their needs.

6. Transparency - customers obtain access to information on the quality of the services.
7. Priority of quality issues in "personnel – technology - organization" chain.
8. Strict quality assurance procedures at all stages of the services life cycle, well-defined personnel responsibility for quality assurance.
9. Primary focus on *prevention* of a possible decrease in quality rather than on measures to restore the quality level.
10. Consistent training of all personnel in the sphere of quality, each employee's participation in services improvement, rewards for quality improvement.

Employees are aware of the Quality Policy and the documented Quality Management System. They acknowledge their responsibility to comply with the system and to strive for customer satisfaction, to ensure the continuing prosperity of the Company.

4. PLANNING

4.1. QUALITY OBJECTIVES

The Directors have agreed documented objectives consistent with the Quality objectives for all levels of the organisation. These objectives are linked to targets, which 1stOutsource considers to be achievable and measurable. These are continually monitored to ensure that they are relevant to the company's objectives.

The objectives are shown in a plan that is agreed by the Board of Directors. The actual implementation of the plan and progress is agreed annually by the Board and at the operating and review meetings monthly.

Management have given consideration to the following as part of the overall planning:

- Allocation of resources, responsibilities and authority
- Processes and where specific procedures and instructions apply
- Identification and acquisition of necessary equipment, resources and skills
- Standards of acceptability for all requirements
- Identification of suitable verification activities
- Need for and preparation of quality records
- Definition of selected processes and determining inputs and outputs

The company does not consider the necessity for a specific quality plan. The whole of the Quality System may be considered to be the plan as the company considers that the system provides controls to achieve the necessary service or quality of product.

Individual progress plans are produced for design programmes. These show critical milestones and progress towards each target achieved.

5. RESPONSIBILITY, AUTHORITY AND COMMUNICATION

5.1. Company Management

The Board of Directors has agreed a structure allocating specific roles, responsibilities and authority to managers and employees. Details are shown in job descriptions, contracts of employment and supporting documentation. Personnel are aware of their responsibilities. The reporting lines and structure are shown in the company's organisation chart.

The current organisation chart is a controlled document on display on the main notice board and is also available from the Quality System area on the company's computer network.

The Managing Director is the Lead Management Representative.

Managing Director

Responsible for:

- All aspects of the the 1stOutsource group
- Developing business plans and strategies
- All Company statutory requirements
- All aspects of the Quality System
- Review and approval of the Quality Policy to ensure it meets the Company's objectives
- Approval of the Company's Quality Manual
- Allocation of Quality System roles and responsibilities, ensuring that there are adequate resources to maintain and develop the system
- Chair of the Management Review meetings

- Instigation of long-term preventive actions, ensuring continuous improvement is made in all aspects of Quality throughout the Company
- Health and Safety within the Company and ensuring operation of an effective Health and Safety policy
- Liaison with external consultancy resources to ensure that statutory Health and Safety updates are received
- Recommending human resource policies and procedures and monitoring their implementation

Sales Director

Responsible for:

- Establishing Sales organisational structure and processes
- Recommending prices and conditions of sale for all products and services
- Recommending and implementing agreed sales channels
- Recommending strategies for customer order fulfilment
- Developing and implementing sales strategies and tactics
- Liaison with customers, suppliers and knowledgeable others to understand business trends

Marketing Director

Responsible for:

- Product Road Map / Product Portfolio, to fit with the business plan and with a 2 to 3 plus year view
- Product Plans including lifecycle, positioning & pricing, promotion and enhancements

- Marketing Strategy for differentiation, brand and pricing philosophy
- Marketing Communications, to include trade shows, marketing collateral, advertising, data sheets and related promotional materials

CTO

Responsible for:

- All technical activities, including product development and manufacturing technology
- Provision of technical support to Marketing
- Liaison with external technical organisations relevant to the Company's business
- Provision of technical input to the Company's strategic decision making on market and product opportunities
- Preparation and implementation of product development strategies
- Development of conceptual designs of all new products
- Provision of overall direction of engineering/product development efforts
- Establishing and monitoring security policies and procedures
- Developing and implementing procedures for protection of intellectual property
- All aspects of the Operations and Manufacturing functions of the Company including application of purchasing, manufacturing, inspection and support mechanisms
- Overall direction of manufacturing and purchasing operations
- Recommending and implementing IT strategies, infrastructure and policies

Quality Manager

Responsible for:

- Reporting to the Board on the operation of the system, including needs for improvement
- Maintaining awareness of customer needs and requirements
- Management of the Company's Quality System and ensuring its effectiveness
- Approval of the Company's Quality System Operating Procedures
- Ensuring the Company's Quality System conforms to ISO9001:2000
- Reviewing and reporting on problems arising from the Quality System
- Structuring and updating of the Quality System (Manual & Procedures)
- Establishing and reporting the principal causes of Quality failure
- Monitoring the System and carrying out Corrective Action as required
- Performing a planned and documented annual Quality System review
- Promotion of quality awareness throughout the Company
- Initiating internal and external Quality Audits
- Establishing purchasing, inspection and support control mechanisms

Financial Controller

Responsible for:

- All financial aspects of the Company
- Preparation of financial and manufacturing forecasts
- Liaison with external accountancy organisations to ensure the Company complies with Statutory requirements

- Liaison with 1stOustource group
- Managing the audit process

Sales Manager

Responsible for:

- Maintenance and ensuring adherence to the Company's Quality Control Code of Practice

Quality Executive

Responsible for:

- Day-to-day maintenance of the Company's Quality System
- Distribution of the Quality Manual, Operating Procedures and Work Instructions
- Ensuring that amendments to the Quality Manual, Operating Procedures and Work Instructions are correctly implemented, approved and distributed
- Collation of corrective action reports
- Assisting the Quality Manager in promotion of Quality Awareness throughout the Company
- Control of manufacturing documentation to ensure that the latest version is available to appropriate personnel
- Co-ordination of internal and external Quality Audits and liaison with external assessors
- Assisting with Quality System audits
- Analysis of corrective action reports, identifying significant long-term preventive actions

Other job descriptions are held by the Personnel Manager.

5.2. Internal Communications

Management ensures that appropriate communication processes are in place to ensure that information is received at the correct time by the correct person.

The Directors attend Board meetings during which they discuss the Group's objectives/strategy and any financial constraints. This information is passed to Managers via budget and briefing meetings. Weekly production meetings are held with relevant Managers to discuss planned schedules and any issues arising from manufacture. Departmental Managers are responsible for discussing departmental issues with engineers and operatives ensuring that they are made aware of company issues.

The company also uses their computer network as a means of updating employees of changes within the company. Company policies are stored on the public area of the network, which is accessible to all personnel.

Review Process

The quality system is reviewed at least once every twelve months to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. Minutes of meetings held are recorded, signed and retained as defined in the Quality records.

Agenda

The agenda for the management review meeting is established by the Quality Manager, and includes the following:

- Minutes of the previous meeting
- Outstanding actions from the previous meeting
- Consideration of company Quality Policy and objectives
- Review of the Quality Manual, procedures and associated documents
- Results of internal audits

- Results of external audits
- Client complaints
- Review the Training Policy and training needs of company personnel
- Review of KPI's

6. Resource Management

6.1. Provision of Resources

In determining resources the Directors have taken into consideration the need to establish and improve the quality management system and enhance customer satisfaction.

All personnel are provided with adequate resources and equipment to ensure that their activities can be performed in such a way that they comply with the specified requirements.

6.2. Human Resources

General

Responsibilities are assigned based only on the competence of each individual, determined upon experience, training and education. No form of direct or indirect discrimination is tolerated on any basis including: gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin or disability.

Competence and Training

The company employs highly qualified consultants who have a detailed knowledge of their industry sectors. Where necessary, additional training is be provided, in order to ensure that each individual has the necessary competence to undertake assigned tasks.

The line managers are responsible for reviewing employee's skills, to ensure that there is sufficient experience to meet client requirements.

New employees receive induction training covering Health and Safety, Quality and company procedures and diversity policies. After a probationary period (of six months) targets and objectives are set, based upon required skills. These are monitored as part of the annual appraisal system.

Annual appraisals are carried out for all employees by their Supervisor or Line Manager. Details are recorded onto individual appraisal forms and signed by both parties.

The Directors are advised of regular training shortfalls in specific areas. Requirements are discussed firstly as part of the appraisal system, and subsequently as part of the annual budget plans. Training may be provided internally or by external training organisations.

Infrastructure

The Directors are responsible for ensuring that adequate resources are available to meet client requirements.

The Directors realise that the success of the organisation depends upon the way it manages the relationship between its internal capabilities and the market environment in which it operates. Factors outside its immediate control are monitored closely to take advantage of any opportunities arising.

Work Place Environment

Managers and Team leaders are responsible for monitoring the environment in their areas. The Health and Safety Officer is responsible for carrying out and reviewing risk assessments.

7. Quality and Process Realisation

7.1. Planning

The Directors are responsible for planning assignments in conjunction with the principle consultants. Initial planning is undertaken during the contract review process known as a Red Team Review. Orders are accepted or declined dependent on the time-scales, profitability and available resources.

All enquiries received by the company are formally reviewed by the Directors and nominated Managers before the quotation is prepared. A Contract Red Team comprising at least a Director and the Senior Sales Manager formally reviews orders before acceptance. These reviews enable the company to plan accurately for future commitments and to arrange where necessary for the provision of additional facilities and specialist training.

Product and Service Development

Effective proposal control is practised, from submission of the initial concept through to completion of the assignment. Procedures ensure that proposal development are adequately planned, controlled, documented, reviewed and executed from tender stage (RFI) to proposal acceptance.

Planning involves internal meetings with relevant Managers and Directors who are responsible for ascertaining whether the request is viable. If it is viable, clear responsibilities are allocated. Proposal input may be in two forms:

- Client specification
- A brief prepared jointly by a consultant (for a new product). This brief is prepared where the company identifies a specific market need.

Design Output

Design output is presented in the form of a product description that is a specification and instructions including any special inspection or quality review requirements and any special safety requirements to be observed during the product creation process.

Verification and review procedures are followed in order to ensure that the resulting design fully meets the design input requirements. 1stOutsource has implemented and incorporated the PRINCE II quality processes into the standard procedures.

The purchase of material, components and services is the responsibility of the Company Secretary and the Directors. Purchase orders show endorsement as evidence of approval and review prior to submission to the supplier. An Approved Suppliers List is maintained by the Company Secretary. All suppliers of components materials or services are subject to the supplier approval process.

Suppliers are approved by one or more of the following means:

- Their continued acceptable performance
- An in depth assessment of the Supplier
- The satisfactory delivery of the first three orders

Records are maintained by the company detailing any non-conforming products or service received. Such non-conformities are regularly reviewed and form the basis of the continued inclusion of the Supplier on the Approved list.

8. Service Operations

8.1. General

Operations are performed under controlled conditions defined in manufacturing documents, inspection and test specifications, which specify the methods and sequences of operations and quality criteria.

Management controls operations by:

- Providing clear instructions to personnel
- Ensuring personnel are suitably trained in order to carry out specific tasks allocated to them
- Providing suitable equipment/machinery to carry out operations
- Providing a safe working environment

The main documentation used in these processes are:

- The Quality Manual
- Statement of Work
- Resource planning schedules
- Plans

Emphasis is placed upon safe working practices risk management and improvements.

Validation

The company have no activities which cannot be validated or verified by subsequent monitoring inspection or review.

Client Satisfaction

The Customer Support Department is responsible for recording client feedback as part of the end project review. Specific incidents or problems are investigated and discussed with the Senior Consultants concerned and their direct senior manager.

The 1stOutsource marketing manager maintains frequent contact with existing and potential customers. Any comments received are recorded as part of the contract review system (and entered in the CRM system).

The complexity of the business means that 1stOutsource has to work closely with customers in order to provide solutions. This working relationship is reflected in the customer's involvement during the consulting contracting and start-up stages.

Internal Audits

Internal audits are performed on a regular basis and are intended to ensure that the Quality System is being adhered to by all responsible personnel. Internal audits are performed by designated, trained staff that have no direct responsibility for the area being audited. The Directors have made the decision to use an external Quality Manager from RG consulting to carry out most internal audits.

In addition to completing compliance audits, the auditor also reviews progress made towards specific objectives set as part of the company's business. This is achieved by reviewing the effectiveness of the monitoring or reporting systems in place to measure these processes.

The audit programme is agreed annually by the Directors and is designed to ensure that all aspects of the operation of the Company and the Quality System are audited at least once during the twelve-month period.

Non-conformities observed during the audit are detailed on an audit report stating the nature of the non-conformity, the corrective action to be taken and the time-scale during which the corrective action must be

completed. The CTO is responsible for overseeing the completion of the corrective action.

Measurement of Processes

The company retains records of reviews and tests carried out for all products such as personality test instruments.

These include:

- Design and development of on-line tests
- Client reviews
- Testing of prototypes
- Quality Review Process

All records form part of the quality records.

Processes are monitored and measured by the Manager and/or Directors. Actions are allocated to specific personnel, with set target dates.

Control and Corrective Actions

The Client Services Director is notified of problems occurring during client use or in the field. These are recorded and appropriate actions instigated by the CRM system. Where necessary products are withdrawn and returned to 1stOutsource for investigation. Detailed processes for damages and refunds (including dissatisfaction) are shown in the disputes procedure DIS01.

Analysis of Data

Company objectives are covered by the strategic plan that is updated annually. Targets relating specifically to these objectives are also contained in the plan, which is reviewed and amended by the Board of Directors.

Business objectives are determined as part of the annual board meeting attended by the Directors, Managers and key personnel. The results

are used to formalise the annual plan. This plan is owned by the Managing Director.

9. Improvement

9.1. Continuous Improvement (Kaizen)

The Company uses a combination of processes to identify areas where improvements can be made:

- The agreement of the strategic plan outlines potential areas for improvement whether related to market demand, investment, new technology or requests from customers.
- Board meetings are used to determine strategic decisions, based upon new developments in the industry.
- The Company carries out a detailed risk analysis as part of the annual meeting.

9.2. Corrective Action

Corrective actions may arise from the following:

- Internal audits
- External audits
- Deviations from specification found during the design, delivery of a service or product
- Customer complaints

The Managing Director is responsible and accountable for ensuring that the corrective action has been implemented satisfactorily and resolved.

9.3. Prevention

The Directors are responsible and accountable for reviewing the causes of potential non-conformities and implementing the necessary preventive

action. The information may result from the analysis of reports or from meetings/discussions.

Preventive action is also incorporated into the planning, design and contract review stages of a project. Specific issues arising from similar projects are discussed during the initial stages and if considered necessary, alternative approaches, different methods or sequences of work are implemented to prevent potential problems.