QP 05-04

CORRECTIVE & PREVENTIVE ACTION

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1. INTRODUCTION

This procedure gives an overview of the aspects of the quality system that are concerned with corrective and preventive action.

Detail may be contained within other processes and procedures, the purpose of this procedure is to indicate to staff what aspects of the system they should be considering and possible courses of action in order to meet the requirements of ISO 9000.

Definitions:

1. Something has gone wrong, eg an input error on the computer, it has been identified and we have corrected it. We may also decide to retrain existing staff, amend the wording on the computer or printed forms, reprogramme the computer to only accept certain responses etc. so it doesn't happen again. These are all examples of corrective actions.

2. We identify an area that could possibly give rise to a problem in the future, but has not caused a problem so far, we take action now so that it doesn't happen. This is an example of preventive action.

2. INFORMATION

2.1 Areas within the company that generate reports allow for corrective actions to be recorded, implemented and monitored for effectiveness eg audits, customer feedback, N/C reports etc.

Preventive action is usually considered at the review stage normally within the Management meetings, although it may form part of the internal audit procedure or be identified and recorded on Preventive Action reports.

3 PREVENTIVE ACTION REPORTS

3.1 From time to time it may be identified that preventive action is required to be taken, for example where new legislation has been introduced. (eg in 2005 new requirements for ladders required us to look at what we currently did regarding the footing of ladders and if necessary change our practices, sort out training in the use of scaffolding, buy 'ladder footers' and ensure all staff were aware of the new laws etc)

3.2 All appropriate information will be recorded on the Preventive Action Report by the Operations/Business Manager. This person will be responsible for initiating action and also for reviewing any ongoing reports at least monthly.

3.3 Reports will be stored as detailed in QP01-03.

4 REVIEW

4.1 Management Meetings

4.2 In addition to the formal reviews established by auditing, and ongoing improvements/revisions of procedures as necessary, it is helpful to provide a focus for reporting and review of relevant topics during the course of the year.

4.3 Management Meetings will be held annually. (See QP05-02 for more detail)

4.4 Management meetings will act as a focus for review of instances of non-conformance and a check on the effectiveness of any actions undertaken, from all areas in the company including:

Audits - QA and Product
Corrective / Preventive Action Reports
Goods Returned forms
Customer complaints

as a focus for Customer Satisfaction as detailed in PR07, including:

Unwanted Alarm statistics
Routine Maintenance statistics

and also for factors such as:

new technology
Standards - BSI / ISO / IEE etc
Regulatory practices - NSI / ACPO etc

4.5 The management team will consider all these items (as listed above) with a view to implementing actions to prevent non-conformance in the future, (corrective action) eg:-

training needs
provision of additional resources
changes in working practices
cautious approach to use of new equipment

4.6 They will also analyse the data collected within the relevant procedures/processes in order to implement any preventive action, as an example:

analysis of data shows that the false alarm rate is rising, but is still within acceptable limits.

If the rate becomes much higher it will be within unacceptable limits are there any preventive actions which could stop this rise?

Can we be fairly sure what is causing this rise?

If it is customer related do they need additional information/training? If monitored, have they got written instructions to 'abort' activations? Is the telephone number for the ARC to hand? etc.

If it is Company related what is the cause. Specific equipment? Faulty or poor installation? One particular engineer? etc. What is the solution? Retraining? Change of components?

We are looking for a long term solution not a 'quick fix'.

Corrective actions taken at the time of an engineers' visit, such as replacing a component, may have appeared to have resolved the immediate problem, but evidence / data gathered since his visit may suggest that the 'new' component is likely to fail within a short time. In this example we have a 'quick fix' solution which will result in further false alarms in the future.