



**QuEST Forum Newsletter
August 2009**

2009 APAC Best Practices Conference

Registration is now open for the [2009 APAC Best Practices Conference](#). The conference will be held 20 – 22 October 2009 in Shanghai, China. Presentations will focus on “Doing Business in North America – Using TL 9000”.

[View the Agenda](#)

[Register Now](#)

Conference participants within China can register through HKQAA and receive a Chinese Government invoice/receipt. Please email Gary Miao at gary.miao@hkqaa.org for more information.

[Reserve a Hotel Room](#)

Do not forget that travel to China requires a Visa. Please make sure that there is adequate time to process the Visa. For those attending only the conference and related activities a tourist visa is recommended as the most appropriate.

2009 Americas Best Practices Conference

The [2009 Americas Best Practices Conference](#) will be held in Orlando, Florida, 22 – 23 September at the Walt Disney World Dolphin and will focus on the theme “Achieving Next Generation Business Excellence.” The Work Group Meetings will also be in Orlando, Florida, 24 – 25 September.

[View the Agenda](#)

[Register Now](#) [Reserve a Hotel Room](#)

[Come Early. Play Late](#)

Discounts on room, food and spa treatments for QuEST Forum attendees and their families.

TL 9000 Requirements Handbook Release 5.0

The TL 9000 Quality Management System Requirements Handbook Release 5.0 becomes effective 15 November 2009. To buy Handbooks, hard copies or site licenses, go to http://tl9000.org/handbooks/buy_handbooks.html

To access the Delta training course go to <http://tl9000.org/training/elearning.html>. The Delta training is mandatory for any registrar auditor prior to conducting an official audit to the Release 5.0 Requirements Handbook.

Release 5.0 of the TL 9000 Requirements Handbook includes clarifications, additional adders and notes. Three specific areas emphasized in the revision are risk management, supplier management, and design for manufacturability. The TL 9000 Quality Management System Requirements Handbook Release 5.0 also includes the new ISO 9001:2008 language.

Requiring TL 9000 in Procurement Contracts

TL 9000 has been widely accepted and implemented throughout the telecommunications industry. Many service providers and suppliers require their suppliers to be TL certified and incorporate this requirement into purchase agreements and contracts with their respective suppliers.

QuEST Forum has been asked numerous times to provide guidance in the development of this type of purchase agreement language. Two major service providers have graciously shared portions of their agreement language for their suppliers as a guideline for use in other companies' purchase contracts. If you want to ensure greater quality throughout your supply chain, we encourage you to review the samples and implement similar language in your agreements.

[Contract Language Sample 1](#) [Contract Language Sample 2](#)

2009 Member Value Survey Results

The results of the latest QuEST Forum Member Value Survey have been compiled. Thanks to everyone who provided their feedback on the Forum. Overall satisfaction is consistent with previous surveys. However, two key areas that show significant improvements are the Performance Data Reports and the Website. There are also more members leveraging TL 9000 in the development of their organization's quality management system. Three recommendations for continuing to improve member value are:

1. Continue to improve the accuracy and relevance of the performance data reports
2. Continue our focus on addressing regional needs
3. Improve the value of QuEST Forum membership to our Liaison members

These results have been presented to the Executive Board and Leadership Council. The summary recommendations have also been incorporated into the input material for the Executive Board's strategic planning meeting to be held

September 21st. The strategic planning meeting will address all member input regarding ways for QuEST Forum to continue to increase membership value.

TL 9000 Member Value Survey

This survey is now being conducted quarterly, with a targeted audience of 25% of the TL 9000 users (Registered companies) for each survey. This will provide the ability to react on a timelier basis to user needs and inputs. The current quarterly survey was conducted this month and results will be available next month.

November Work Group Meetings

The November Leadership Council and Work Group Meetings will be held in Scottsdale, Arizona, 9 – 12 November 2009.

Registration for the November meetings will open 9 September 2009. Please start making plans to attend.

Validation Audit Project

The review period for the Validation Audit Project documentation closed on August 11th. The 31 comments received will be resolved by the Oversight Work Group per the regular Handbook review comment process via teleconferences during the month of September. Once all comments have been resolved, the Project will be presented to the OSWG for approval to send out for QuEST Forum vote. If approved, a QuEST Forum level vote will be conducted concerning approval to conduct the Validation Audit Project. A status report will be presented at the September face to face meeting.

Individual TL 9000 Certification

The program to recognize individuals' knowledge and use of TL 9000 is now fully implemented. Certification is open to all qualified individuals involved with TL 9000 registrations, auditing, training, or consulting. To review the requirements, click on the [Individual Certification](#) link under the [TL 9000 Registration tab](#) on the [TL 9000 web site](#). Please note that since the Requirements R5.0 Delta Training course is now available, it becomes a pre-requisite for individual Certification.

Executive Board Project Updates

Project #1 – Operational Efficiencies

Executive Board Project #1 is focused on facilitating the implementation of the QuEST Forum Initiatives and the operational areas as recommended by the Asaba Group recommendations for improving operational efficiencies. This

is the second year of this initiative and the team has been active during 2009. The team continues to make progress in the implementation of the ASABA Group's recommendations on improving QuEST Forum operational efficiencies. We now have our own QuEST Forum fully functioning staff. This has been a positive move for QuEST Forum and pays dividends daily. The enterprise wide project management tool (PMT) is deployed and gaining adoption for tracking board initiatives and working committee activities. There has also been excellent acceptance of the on-line meeting tracker for tracking attendance and participation in conference calls and scheduled meetings.

The review of the balance scorecard is complete, and it is being put into production with an estimated completion date of July/August. Enhancements to the PMT have also been made to make it more useful in tracking activities and supporting the new balanced scorecard.

The QuEST Forum CRM system has been tested and deployed.

Project #1 Lead:

Don Pickens, COO, QuEST Forum, dpickens@questforum.org

Executive Board Project #3 – Membership and TL 9000 Registrations

The overall objective of this team is to ensure QuEST Forum has the right companies targeted for TL 9000 registration and QuEST Forum membership globally. To this objective the team has been working closely with Executive Board members to work with companies on continued membership renewal and potential new members. This team continues to work with Executive Board Project 5 to insure proper alignment and targeting of companies for TL 9000 registration. Direct involvement by Executive Board Members has added significantly to this team's progress and effectiveness

Through this team's efforts much has been accomplished. Many "At- Risk" members have been retained in response to potential membership withdrawals due to economic pressure. QuEST Forum has minimized lost members in a year of a severe economic downturn. The team also requested support from the QuEST Forum Executive Board members in identifying top supplier candidates for TL 9000 and QuEST Forum membership. A letter and associated lists of QuEST Forum members and TL9000 registered companies was sent out to each QuEST Forum board member with responses forthcoming. This initiative is expected to generate a significant target list of qualified candidates for TL 9000 registration and QuEST Forum membership. In fact, AT&T has already contacted many key suppliers and many have committed to becoming QuEST Forum members. The list will be prioritized by the Project #3 team for strategic recruiting activity, but the team is encouraging the board to use their top 50-100 suppliers as their personal recruitment list.

In addition, the Project #3 team is leading the effort in implementing C-Level(company senior leaders) meetings at all BPC global events. This has already proven to be a great conduit to gain executive understanding, gain QuEST Forum membership, and garner support and understanding of the use of TL 9000. This is a long term project that will continue to leverage the Executive Board and other key leaders to gain entry to companies at the executive level.

Project #3 Executive Board Leads:

Trevor Putrah, KGP Telecommunications, taputrah@kqptel.com

Dave Stahl, Tellabs, david.stahl@tellabs.com

JoAnn Brumit, KARLEE, jabrumit@karlee.com

Tim Harden, AT&T, th8261@att.com

Ed Rohlf, ADTRAN, ed.rohlf@adtran.com

Tanya Penny, Verizon, tanya.penny@verizon.com

Don Irvine, QuEST Forum, dirvine@questforum.org

Member Participation

The team is currently working with 26 companies who have not yet participated in 2009 Forum activities. Two of these companies have committed to attend the Americas Best Practices Conference and one, Teltech Comm, has committed to sponsoring. In addition, three companies will be invited to the C-Level meeting at the Americas Best Practices Conference, and peers have been assigned to mentor seven other organizations. The remaining companies will receive peers as the Americas Region reviews the list. We expect to see a number of companies become engaged in QuEST Forum as a result of the BPC.

The EMEA team has also received their list of non-participating members in the EMEA Region and the initial list shows 14 companies at 0% participation. The team will review the list and provide feedback and begin assigning peers by the end of August.

The team's next effort will be to develop the APAC list of non-participating companies and distribute it to the APAC Region's leadership to begin the same efforts that have proven successful so far in both the Americas and EMEA Regions. The team is optimistic that they will meet the goals to engage those companies that could become "at risk" for continued membership.

Executive Board Lead:

Ed Rohlf, ADTRAN, ed.rohlf@adtran.com

Executive Board Project #5 – PDRs

Last month the team highlighted the expansion of "Advisor" software implementation to 11 additional product categories to help identify potential data issues.

The PDR evaluation sub-team will soon be reviewing the number and types of advisories generated to determine future roll-out plans to other product categories.

The team also continues its work on generating the first QuEST Forum "industry report" to assess telecom improvement trends. A "technical" draft has been developed that is being synthesized for QuEST Forum to publish as an article. Plans are to have this article available for the APAC conference in October.

In preparing the technical draft, the team noticed that there may be some confusion regarding the normalization factor for on-time delivery. Looking at industry statistics for product categories such as components and handsets, it was observed that while there are many registrations in these product categories, only the minimum or a small number of registrations (3 to 5 for example) were actually eligible for best-in-class and worst-in-class consideration. "Eligible" registrations must have at least 2% of the data in the product category to be considered. It is speculated that in some instances, an organization may be incorrectly using the number of units, rather than the number of line items as the normalization factor. Since the number of units can be orders of magnitude greater than the number of lines items, even if only one organization in the product category incorrectly uses "units", this will prevent many other organizations from being "eligible" for consideration as best or worst in class because of the 2% rule. UTD will be notifying organizations in these product categories of this potential problem. The sub-team will also be assessing the need for further communication on this subject.

Project #5 Executive Board Lead:

Ken Koffman, BigBand Networks, ken.koffman@bigbandnet.com

IGQ Co-Chair/PDR Evaluation Sub-team Lead

John Wronka, Alcatel-Lucent, jwronka@alcatel-lucent.com

Executive Board Project #6 – Network Reliability

The intention of this initiative is to develop a set of service provider metrics to enhance the TL 9000 Quality Management System (QMS). These enhancements will measure quality and services as managed by Network Operations Centers (NOCs) specifically from the Network Reliability Centers (NRCs).

This project is broken into the following phases:

Phase 1 – Develop a White Paper or Executive Briefing. This document will be used to engage senior level leaders in a service provider's operations unit.

Update: This phase is complete as both the Executive Briefing and the White Paper were finalized.

Phase 2 – Identify at least 5-15 companies to participate and begin the NRC benchmark study.

Update: The list of service providers providing commitment to the study is growing each month! This month welcomed Telenor Pakistan to the study. There are also invites still pending with other EMEA service providers.

The SME calls now have been re-scheduled to occur every Wednesday at 8 AM Central until the end of 2009 to better accommodate the global participants.

The two sub-teams continue to meet weekly via conference calls and are in the process of identifying measurements with historical data common to the sub-team participants. The SMEs have also scheduled a face-to-face workshop for August 27 and 28 in Dallas. Their goal is to finalize an initial base set of metrics.

Phase 3 – Publish study results. Incorporate into the Measurements and Requirements TL handbooks.

Update: Not yet started.

Phase 4 – Add more Network Centers for benchmarking. Begin studies. Have core team make suggested additions to TL 9000 Measurements and Requirements Handbooks.

Update: Not yet started.

Phase 5 – Find and/or develop centers of excellence in network operations. Once these centers of excellence are identified, develop training on managing world class network centers. This should be a value added service and revenue source for QuEST Forum.

Update: Not yet started.

Project #6 Executive Board Leads:

Fraser Pajak, TELUS Communications (Lead), fraser.pajak@telus.com

Amador Lucero, Qwest, amador.lucero@qwest.com

Tim Harden, AT&T, th8261@att.com

Dave Sanicola, The Desara Group, Dave.Sanicola@DesaraGroup.com

Executive Board Project #7 – Engaging the Regions

Executive Board Project #7 is closely aligned with the Global Work Group and is working to actively engage the regions in developing short and long term plans to address regional needs. This year as part of this initiative, QuEST Forum has planned and accomplished Executive Delegation visits to EMEA and APAC. The purpose of these two visits was to recruit new members/TL 9000 registrations and encourage more active participation in QuEST Forum activities.

Both visits were focused on key service providers. Currently this activity is focused on the Greater China Hub (APAC) for the coordination of the Shanghai BPC and the Indian Hub (APAC) for replacement of lost senior leaders. The Executive Delegation to both EMEA and APAC had board member participation, which added tremendously to these visits. QuEST Forum would like to thank Ken Koffman, Kevin Calhoun, and Tim Harden for their participation. UTD also participated in both visits.

One of the goals of the QuEST Forum Executive visit in China was to further engage China Mobile, China Telecom, and China Unicom in QuEST Forum. In addition, QuEST Forum wanted to understand and engage various regulatory/governmental agencies. In fact, meetings with governmental/regulatory bodies CNCA, CNIS, SCA, and SHCIA were held and were beneficial in developing relationships and understanding the roles of these agencies as well as addressing how to improve communication between QuEST Forum and these groups. The continuing development of the China and India Hubs will focus on an Executive Mentoring program. Discussions were held with the Greater China Hub including discussions with Zhang Wei Hua and Xu Feng. In addition, Tim Harden met with Dr. Li Yingtao.

During the China Executive visits, HKQAA agreed to play an even more active role in developing marketing material for the APAC Best Practices Conference. Grace Lao will provide the marketing support and will be an active member of the Greater China Hub.

Recently a call was made with the Indian hub(Kumar Satyendra) to discuss strategic appointments to the QuEST Forum board from India and the best strategy to move the Indian Hub forward. These talks were very fruitful.

There has been excellent participation during the APAC Hub calls and the input received from the Japan hub on workgroup activity. The Validation Audit has helped to strengthen the communication with this hub.

The Americas region is leveraging the success of its previous Best Practices Conference processes as it plans its next conference in Orlando, FL this September. The conference planning is progressing and on track. This team has excellent participation from Project #3 and in most cases leads strategic efforts to help gain membership/TL registrations and to encourage member engagement. John Russell and his team should be commended for their tireless efforts.

Project #7 Executive Board Lead:

Kevin Calhoun, Corning Cable Systems, kevin.calhoun@corning.com

Supported by:

Shunichi Fujii, Fujitsu, fujii.shunichi@jp.fujitsu.com

Zhang Wei Hua, China Telecom (Shanghai), zwh@shtel.com.cn

Xu Feng, ZTE, xu.feng@zte.com.cn

Satyendra Kumar, Infosys Technologies, Ltd., satyendra_kumar@infosys.com

Steve Dickens, BT, steve.c.dickens@bt.com

Don Irvine, QuEST Forum, dirvine@questforum.org

New Members

QuEST Forum is pleased to welcome the following new members: **Genesis Networks**, Americas Region Supplier, **Goodman Networks**, Americas Region Supplier and **Restor Telecom**, Americas Region Supplier.

TL 9000 Registrations

Congratulations to the newest TL 9000 registrants: **AERO Technologies, AFL Network Services, Colt Safety, Inc., Flextronics Israel, Gonzales Communications, InterBay Technologies, I-ON Communications, Insprit, Inc., Intops Tinjin, Plexus Service Corp, Pride Communications, and SeaChange International.**

Congratulations to the organizations that have added new locations: **ADVA Optical Networking, Foxlink Precision Industry Co., Ltd., Infosys Technologies Limited, Intraline, Jurong Hi-Tech Co., Ltd., Keymile International GmbH, Leadcom Israel, Unihan Corp, Volt Information Sciences, and Vtech Holdings, Ltd.**

QuEST Forum's Don Pickens, Chief Operating Officer

[Don Pickens](#) was appointed the Chief Operating Officer of QuEST Forum 1 April 2004. Don's previous experience with the Forum as both an Executive Board member and Vice Chair of the Board as well as his 30+ years with the Bell System makes him uniquely qualified to serve as QuEST Forum's COO. Don's last job with BellSouth was Network VP of Network Reliability. Don's love of travel and his interest in other cultures have also been beneficial to QuEST Forum and its purpose of serving the global telecommunications industry.

Don enjoys sports that require physical prowess such as golf and if the sport also includes the element of speed, as it does in snow skiing and riding jet skis, it is even better. Don's athletic exploits also extend beyond the more traditional sports. Once in Lafayette, Louisiana, his athletic ability as well as his knowledge of aerodynamics enabled him to choose and throw a perfectly shaped projectile to win a cow pie throwing contest. Don's ability to throw this seemingly difficult material did not surprise those who know him best.

Don holds a BSEE and MBA from the University of Tennessee as well as graduating the Harvard Advanced Management Program. Don has three sons, two now grown and a seven year old, and two granddaughters and lives with his new bride, Eva, in Destin, Florida.

Suggestions or Comments on the QuEST Forum Newsletter?

Please email information@questforum.org. We look forward to hearing from you.

If you would like to unsubscribe from all QuEST Forum emails, please email information@questforum.org with Unsubscribe All in the subject line.

If you would like to unsubscribe from the QuEST Forum Newsletter, please click below.

Click [here](#) to unsubscribe