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Memo

To Participants

From Ron Beatty

Date 23 October 2008

Subject Q-Base as deemed equivalent to AS/NZS ISO 9001:2000

For your information

Background

Schedule J1 of part J of the Electricity Governance Rules (Rules) sets out the processes and requirements for reconciliation participants to be certified to perform certain tasks. Applicants for certification must have either AS/NZS ISO 9001:2000 or an alternative quality certification that the Electricity Commission (Commission) Board (Board) deems to be equivalent in accordance with rule 7 of that schedule.

This information memo specifies the circumstances in which Q-base has been deemed to be an alternative quality certification.

Q-base is a quality management system developed by Telarc SAI specifically for small and medium sized businesses. The Q-Base Code is based upon the ISO 9001 quality system standards and ensures that basic management disciplines are implemented to assure quality of products and services. Telarc SAI is formally recognised as a Systems Certification Body by JAS-ANZ (Joint Accreditation System - Australia and New Zealand) to certify quality and environmental management systems.

Over 600 businesses in New Zealand are using the Q-Base management system. Characteristically, businesses that have adopted the Q-Base Code:

- 1. Employ fewer than ten people;
- 2. Rarely employ staff who are quality management professionals; and

3. Are managed by the owner, who has a strong hands-on role and spends after-hours on paperwork.

Board deemed equivalent

The Board has determined that Q-base is an equivalent quality certification alternative to ISO 9001:2000, but only for reconciliation participants that employ no more than 10 total full time equivalent (FTE) technical and operational staff (including subcontractors).

How to rely upon the equivalent

If you intend to use the Q-Base equivalent, when you apply for certification please ensure that your application includes confirmation that you will not have more than 10 FTE technical and operational staff (including sub-contractors) working for your organisation.

Irrespective of which quality certification a participant uses, all other obligations under the Rules for certification as a reconciliation participant still apply, which include, but are not limited to:

- applying for certification using the prescribed application form on the Commission's website;
- obtaining and maintaining current quality certification; and
- obtaining an annual Rules audit.

If you have any questions or concerns, please send an email to retailoperations@electricitycommission.govt.nz.

Ron Beatty

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