

THE ROLE OF ISO 9000 STANDARDS IN MARKETING OIL PRODUCTS

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Abstract: As concerns the modernization of commercial exchanges and the internationalisation of customer-supplier relationships, which are mainly due to the quick evolution of communication and transport technologies, the acceptance of Romania as part of the European Union requires that the same rules accepted in the European countries should become functional in Romania as well.

The certification in the field of quality management represents an illustration of the strong belief that the processes at work within a certain society rely on well-defined procedures, which nevertheless do not hinder a certain degree of flexibility. In order to obtain the certification, the management and all the employees should be constantly concerned with the improvement of services offered to customers.

Section 1. THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF QUALITY CERTIFICATION IN ROMANIA

The Nationals System of Quality Certification in Romania is a result of the Governmental Decision no.167/1992, published in the Official Gazette, Part 1, no. 70/21.04.1992, which was coordinated by the Romanian Institute of Standardization, that includes the totality of bodies for the certification of products and services, the bodies for the certification of personnel and for the accreditation of test laboratories, as well as the totality of accredited test laboratories.

As a result of the coming into effect of the Law no. 245, from 29/04/2002, published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, no.313, from 13/05/2002, which came into effect in 13/05/2002, with modifications and completions and of the Law no.608 (r1) from 31/10/2001, published in the Official Gazette, Part I, no.313 from 06/04/2006, which came into effect in 09/04/2006, concerning the evaluation of products conformity, the co-ordination of the infrastructure for the evaluation of conformity, including the national authority for accreditation, has been transferred to the Ministry of Industry and Resources, and the national authority for the accreditation and the evaluation of conformity is "**The Romanian Association for Accreditation RENAR**".

In accordance with the RENAR rules, the aim of the association is to develop the accreditation and the evaluation of conformity and ensure the impartiality, the technical competence and the independence of accredited bodies (any laboratory, certification body, inspection body or any other type of juridical entity) that activate in the field of conformity evaluation in Romania, having as central aims: to contribute to the development of products and services' competitiveness, in the context of the globalisation of markets and the efforts for the joining of Romania to the European Union; to contribute to the promotion of the free circulation of goods and services; to promote the protection of life, health and the security of both persons and the environment.

Taking into account the internationalisation of commercial exchanges, or the internalisation of customer-supplier relationships, which are largely due to the quick development of communication and transport technologies, the acceptance of Romania as part of the European Union requires that the same rules that are accepted in the European countries should become functional in Romania as well.

The certification in the field of quality management represents an illustration of the strong belief that the processes at work within a certain society rely on well-defined procedures, which nevertheless do not hinder a certain degree of flexibility. In order to

obtain the certification, the management and all the employees should be constantly concerned with the improvement of services offered to customers.

The international recognition of the implemented quality management system guarantees the quality of supplied services, for the complete satisfaction of customers.

In order to ensure the success of future actions, it is crucially important to make the employees, and especially the low and middle management working for a company selling oil products, aware of the importance of the idea mentioned above. With this view, we recommend the organisation of a course, including practical applications as well, aimed at enhancing the awareness of the managerial team with regards to customer satisfaction.

The selling of oil products, especially that of power fuels, represents a service that is performed in specific circumstances, through which the power fuel changes its owner, eventually reaching the final customer.

Power fuels are liquid or gaseous products, which are stable from a physical and chemical point of view and result from the distillation of oil in oil distilleries: with their help, the chemical energy turns into thermic energy and then in mechanical energy.

The specific element of these products is the stable chemical composition for the type of hydrocarbon mix, the high caloric power, their fluidity, volatility, low kindling temperature, the high and controllable kindling speed. The fluid nature of these products, their volatility and low kindling point trigger a series of restrictions in the manipulation and usage of oil products. At the same time, both the base products and the burning ones should have a series of qualities that ensure the safety of the environment and, at the same time, be in correlation with the types of motors and the performances they should achieve. The non-conformity of transport, transfer, storage and manipulation of products and technologies with the quality norms and standards can have dramatic negative effects, both for consumers or motors, and for the environment and for society, respectively.

The "en detail" commercialisation of oil products is done in special units, that are generally supplied by a single producer. The producer/distributor binds itself to supply the company oil products with the same quality.

The certification of the Quality Management System, in the case of the company selling oil products, does not include the certification of products and/or of services and vice-versa; the certification of products and/or of services does not include the certification of the Quality Management System. However, these two types of certification can support one another: in the case of products and services certification for the firm selling oil products, the certification body for products and services can accept the certification of the Quality Management System; at the same time, if the company has certified products and/or services, part of the Quality Management System are fulfilled.

The Quality Management System, in the case of companies selling oil products, is related to ISO 9000:2000.

The adoption of a Quality Management System should be a strategic decision for the commercial society selling oil products. The design and the implementation of a Quality Management System are determined by different demands, specific objectives, the products that are sold, the processes involved and the structure and the size of the company. This international standard is not intended at the standardization of the quality management systems structure or the standardization of the documentation.

The ISO standards have been devised in order to help organizations, including the ones selling oil products, to implement and efficiently manage the systems of quality management.

The role of changes generated by the implementation of the quality management system in companies selling oil products is that of gaining the customers' trust.

A principle of quality management is a rule, or a fundamental and complete conviction for the management of the company selling oil products, which aims at the continuous improvement of long-term performance, while focusing on the client and giving consideration to all the participants in the business.

In order to be successful, the process of certification in the commerce with oil products should start with the "PROGRAM FOR THE ELABORATION AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A QUALITY SYSTEM, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ISO 9000".

Section 2. PROPOSAL FOR A PROGRAM FOR THE ELABORATION AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A QUALITY SYSTEM, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ISO 9000, AIMED AT COMPANIES SELLING OIL PRODUCTS

2.1 Instructing the managerial team

In order to ensure the success of future actions, the whole personnel, especially the low and middle management, should become aware of the challenges of ISO 9000. In this respect the managerial team might participate to a course, where the following topics will be addressed:

- Quality: Concept and Evolution
- The quality-related standards: ISO 9000 and ISO 10 000 and EN 45 000
- Accreditation and certification
- SR EN ISO 9001-2001 – main demands
- The organization of the quality system
- The documents of the quality system
- The management of the processes

There are 12 hours included in the course, which can be organised in the following way:

- 2 days of 6 hours/day
- 3 days of 4 hours/day

One alternative to be taken into consideration is the organization of the course during a weekend (Saturday and Sunday, or Friday, Saturday and Sunday).

The course can be organised properly when the following conditions are ensured:

- at least 8 participants, mostly 20 participants
- overhead projector with a reserve bulb, plus a white board (which can be supplied by the firm that organises the course)
- course-room for 20 persons (preferably with the tables arranged in a U shape)
- flip-chart or board (white or black)

Each participant to the course receives:

- ✓ a written material on the presented topics
- ✓ a document that certifies the participation to the course

The course has an interactive character and relies very much on the exchange of ideas between lecturer and participants, on completing some exercises and on identifying the way in which the presented elements can be applied in the particular case of the society that sells oil products.

If there are less than 8 participants to the course, they can be instructed at the company's centre.

2. 2 Initial evaluation audit

The approved company starts from the idea that, in order to achieve a system of quality management that is viable and easily accepted and applied by the whole personnel, it is absolutely necessary to check the existing experience of the company selling oil products. In order to devise a system of quality that might be perfectly appropriate, the activity of the society that would apply it should be known very well. Starting from these assumptions, the first stage in creating a quality system is the evaluation of the technical and the organizational system that already exists in the society for the selling of oil products. The objectives aimed at during the audit are the following:

- the identification of the real working system and the comparison of this system with the demands of the accepted reference standard (ISO 9000).
- The identification of technical and organizational elements and practices that might constitute the core of the future management system
- The identification of situations considered inappropriate in relation to the reference standard
- The determination of the degree of personnel understanding in relation to the necessity of a quality system implementation
- The identification of some critical points in the flux of activities, that might cause delays, deficiencies, etc, and consequently additional costs.

CARRYING OUT THE INITIAL EVALUATION AUDIT

The initial evaluation audit will be carried out at the centre of the company selling oil products and will check the way in which the demands of the agreed reference standard are put into practice. With this aim, the accredited company will send a mixed team, made up of specialists in quality, which is being co-ordinated by a certified chief audit. The evaluation audit demands the direct participation of the personnel involved in the evaluation activities, that must answer the questions asked by the audit team and support these answers with objective proofs (registers, procedures, etc.).

The initial evaluation audit will start from the supposition that, within the company selling oil products, a series of interconnected processes are at work. For each of these processes, the entrance data represent the exit data of another process. The analysed processes will be ranked in 2 groups:

- ❖ Main processes - the processes that contribute directly to the achievement of the objective of the department's, storage section's, branch's or pump's activity.
- ❖ Support processes – the processes that contribute to, and indirectly lead to the achievement of the activity of the department, storage section, branch or pump.

Each process in particular will be analysed separately.

This approach to the processes mentioned above is in accordance with the demands of the ISO 9001:2000 standard, which is explicitly process-oriented.

ELABORATING THE REPORT

The data gathered alongside the evaluation process are later processed at the centre of the accredited firm. They are included in an **Evaluation Report**, which is organised in the following chapters:

I.GENERAL ASPECTS	III.FINDINGS
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II. TERMINOLOGY

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The “Findings” chapter will include:

- The general findings for each demand of the reference standard
- The nonconformities in relation to the demands of the reference standard
- The actions required for the complete fulfilment of the demands of the reference standard
- The structure of documents, recommended for the future quality system, by the accredited firm

Starting from the Evaluation Report, the future plans will be established, in order to design and project the quality system.

2.3 Elaborating the documents of the quality system

During this stage, the documents that define the quality system are elaborated, which were established after the evaluation process and presented in the “Recommendations” chapter of the Evaluation Report.

For the efficient development of this stage, the project team should be formed. It should have the following structure:

- The representative of the Management for Quality Ensuring, who is also the co-ordinator of the project;
- The co-ordinating committee, made up of the chief executives in the main departments;
- Proposals for the work/teams for each system procedure and each process

2.4. The implementation of the projected quality system

The implementation stage, by the society that sells oil products, under the guidance of the accredited firm, of the quality system defined by the documents elaborated during the stage 3, will include the following activities:

- The conducting of the intern audit, under the guidance of specialists of the firm accredited for the identification of non-conformities and possible implementation problems (5 days-person);
- Workshops aimed at analysing the non/conformities and the establishment of some corrective and preventive actions (2 days-person)

2.5. The final audit (pre/certification audit)

During this stage, the accredited firm organises the audit of the implemented quality system, which is strictly limited to the demands of the reference standard SR EN ISO 9001:2001. The audit will be carried out in conformity with the questionnaires used by bodies for certification that are internationally acknowledged (other than those involved in consulting), having a statute of Chief Audit, registered at the “International Register of Certified Audits”, supported by IQA or AFAQ ASCERT INTERNATIONAL. This audit will result in a number of non/conformity reports and a final recommendation report. At the same time, the accredited firm can recommend more certifying bodies, with whom it

collaborates and that can provide the necessary assistance during the whole process of certification.

The accredited firm (the consultant) will come up with a neutral point of view, with regards to the quality system and the operational system of the company selling oil products or the companies it makes business transactions.

The Audit Report will identify the non-conformities and the areas of non-functionality of the system, the products and/or processes and will recommend preventive or corrective measures that must be taken for the increase of the performances of the system.

The accredited firm can offer, for example:

- The structuring and the development of the internal audit system;
- The theoretical and practical training of internal audits;
- Preparing the procedure of internal audit;
- Preparing the checking lists for the evaluation of the internal audit;
- The audit of the suppliers' quality system;
- The supervision and monitoring of the suppliers' performances during the development of the contracts/orders;
- Preparing the procedure for the evaluation and audit of the suppliers;
- Preparing the checking list for the suppliers' audit.

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