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# ISO 9001:2008 in brief

**In December 2000 the 3rd edition of ISO 9001 was published, together with new versions of ISO 9001 and ISO 9004. It was a great milestone in ISO/TC 176 and one of the big achievements of ISO at that time. Almost eight years have passed since then and around 1.000.000 organizations in the world use ISO 9001 as the foundation of their own business management. In the world, thousands of organizations and professionals make a living in providing products and services around this standard. In other words, ISO 9001 is a key element in business management in all organizations globally. Some people may ask: Why make changes to a standard that is good and is a tremendous success?**

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Five years ago some countries conducted surveys and investigations within the user community about the use and value of ISO 9001:2000. Also ISO/TC 176/SC2 developed and deployed a user survey on the Internet to get information and facts about ISO 9001:2000 and ISO 9004:2000 real value in the user community. Regarding ISO 9001:2000, around 25% of the respondents concluded that the standard needed improvement or was inadequate. These results were used as input in the systematic review of ISO 9001 (based on current ISO Directives). This review resulted in the need for an amendment to ISO 9001:2000. A justification study according ISO/IEC Guide 72, was conducted to confirm the need for a project to amend ISO 9001:2000.

The first task was the development of the design specification for the amendment of ISO 9001:2000. The design specification was approved by the end of 2005 and the drafting of the amendment begun right after. The purpose of the amendment of ISO 9001:2000 can be summarized to:

- improve clarity of the requirements;
- improve compatibility with ISO 14001:2004;
- improve consistency within the ISO 9000 family of standards and
- improve translatability.

During five meetings of the drafting task group responsible for this project, the amendment was developed. In this task experts from ISO-member bodies, among others NEN, participated as well as liaison organizations to ISO/TC 176/SC 2.

The design specification and the recommendations of ISO/TC 176/Working Group Interpretations were the key inputs for this process. Comments were received against the different draft that helped to define and

incorporate changes to the standard. It is important to note that no new requirements were added to the standard, neither removed nor modified. Changes were made to the foreword and in several clauses. Annex A and the Bibliography were updated. Annex B was completely changed and now indicates what was changed in comparison with ISO 9001:2000. I would highly recommend to current users of the standard to use Annex B as a guide to identify what is new in the 2008 version. In terms of what can be done in an organization that currently uses ISO 9001:2000, I suggest that a multidisciplinary team studies the standard, focusing on the changes and defines an action plan. In most cases, there will be no need to make significant changes to the current structure and implementation of the quality management system. In other cases, the organization may identify some areas for improvement that will require specific actions. IAF and ISO already published a joint communiqué regarding the new certification to ISO 9001:2008 and the transition from ISO 9001:2000 to ISO 9001:2008. It is very important that certified organizations study this information and interact with their certification bodies to define how the transition will take place. ISO/TC 176/SC 2 updated the ISO 9001 Introduction and Support documents that can be downloaded from [www.iso.org/tc176/sc2](http://www.iso.org/tc176/sc2). These documents provide a useful guidance for the interpretation and implementation of ISO 9001.

Finally, every change is for good. The new ISO 9001:2008 may still have areas for improvement, but a significant improvement was achieved that constitutes the foundation for its future revision.

Always remember that the use of the standard should be for the benefit of the organization, its processes and products, and its customers.