GOVERNMENT:
good
or bad?

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6

buzz

Lean, mea **quality**

Elizabeth Gasiorowski-Denis
Editor-in-Chief of *ISOfocus*

Doesn't it drive you mad standing in long line-ups at government offices, sitting for hours in a doctor's practice or in the emergency room, driving along crumbling roads or stumbling over cracks in sidewalks. I, for one, am flustered and disappointed. After all, good taxpayer funding goes towards supporting these services that turn out to be unreliable, inefficient, or quite simply a waste of money.

n, government

surprised to learn that ISO 9001 has the potential to "clean up" bureaucracy and the public sector in the country. In fact, ISO 9001 is a model for how government can – and should – cut spending by leveraging quality management systems. ISO 9001 is by far the world's most established quality framework, currently being used over 1.5 million organizations in 191 countries. Those are some impressive numbers – and among the primary reasons why the public sector is sitting up and taking notice.

This is reflected in two newly published ISO documents giving quality guidelines for the public sector : ISO 18091 for local governments, and ISO/TS 17582 for electoral bodies responsible for organizing electoral processes. In this *ISOfocus* issue, we asked our experts, Carlos Gadsden and Tyler Finn, to give us the highlights of these two new documents and tell us how governments will benefit for the good of all.

Which government services are citizens most/least satisfied with ? In 2013, research firm ETC Institute provided results of a national survey of how citizens feel about their local government. And the numbers are pretty scary. Only 47 % of respondents in the USA were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with public transport, and only 48 % felt that way about roads and transportation infrastructure.

It may come as a surprise, but the public sector is the largest service provider in any country. The slightest change in public services drastically impacts millions of citizens. What's more, when a government tightens its belt in tough economic times, the entire country feels the squeeze. With less money to pay for the full spectrum of government services, effectively managing the available resources and processes, and working together as a system, is a must.

So what solutions are out there ? Most people wouldn't look to ISO 9001 as a source of innovation, least of all in the realm of government. But they'd be

Here are just eight benefits that the public sector could attain by implementing a quality management system based on ISO 9001.

- Improve performance and measurement
- Support the achievement of strategic objectives
- Provide a factual approach to decision making
- Reduce duplication
- Maximize efficiencies
- Enhance service delivery
- Provide a framework for continual improvement
- Improve citizen, customer and stakeholder satisfaction

So what's the bottom line : whether we like it or not, the private sector has raised the bar for customer service and is hands-down better at serving its clients. It's no wonder, therefore, that citizens expect the same from governments now and want public sector organizations to emulate private sector practices.

Does this mean governments should be run like a business ? Of course not, it simply means that any entity that ignores these realities will eventually "go out of business" – whether or not it's a business.

Social feed

ISO **Social Media** Guidelines

YES, YOU CAN TALK TOO!

© ISO 2014, you can use the content under

Our social media guidelines summarized in a tweet:

Use the same common sense online as you do offline. Remember, the Internet is a public space. Have fun, but be smart.

Rocking social media

Social media has become part of routine interaction, changing the way we do business. It makes sense for organizations to have some form of policy in place to help navigate these virtual communities in a professional manner. Whereas some still seek to restrict social media, we at ISO are looking at expanding and encouraging it. The challenge is to come up with "rules" to empower colleagues to get on board.

In setting up our policy, we opted for two simple guidelines supported by a set of values. First, for transparency and credibility reasons, we asked colleagues using social media to identify their place of work. Second, because not all accounts are created equal, we needed our audience to be able to distinguish between official and personal accounts of all users.

Today, our social media values highlight the importance of being transparent, positive, relevant, impartial, "playing nice" and giving credit where credit is due. But we thought this didn't quite go far enough. So in order to inspire our colleagues – whether newbies or veterans – to step up to the plate with confidence, we have included a series of useful tips for rocking social media. Here are just a few we wanted to share with you.

Geeks corner!

Hard keeping track of incoming tweets? Here are the 101 best lists to follow in the Twitterverse:
www.postplanner.com/ 101-best-twitter-lists-to-follow/

See the full guidelines by scanning the QR code.

Don't forget !

I spy through my little eye: The Internet is a public space.
What happens in Vegas... stays on Google: What we say online tends to stay there.

Ooops! If you make a mistake, apologize. There is always a record so be clear about edits, don't just erase.

3 golden rules: Before posting, ask:
Would mind if your mom saw it?
Would you mind if your boss saw it?
Would you mind if CNN broadcasted it?

Great content

Be yourself: Use your real name, be honest, speak in the first person, show your personality.
Be relevant: Identify your audience and talk about what they need to know (not what you want to say).

Get your facts right: The best way to be interesting, have fun and stay out of trouble is to talk about what you know. Clearly distinguish between opinion and facts.

I WONDER IF ANYONE HAS SHARED GOOD COOKIE RECIPES...

Sharing is caring: Don't just talk about us, others are doing great things too. Share information, but be careful not to breach copyright. Always link to the source.

Engage

It's a conversation: Remember you are talking to real people.
Listen first: Learn from others. Seize the opportunity to join in discussions where you can add value.

Connect: Build your network.
Speedy Gonzales: Respond in a timely manner.

No trolls: Respect the right of others to disagree with you. Address errors respectfully by sticking to the facts. Think Ghandi, not Ghengis Khan.

DEAR ELECTED OFFICIAL,

LET'S TALK QUALITY...

Governments – local or otherwise – are under increasing pressure around the world to provide results that matter to the public, often within severe resource constraints. Now they are taking pointers from the private sector by using ISO 9001 for quality management to provide efficient and reliable services vital to the lives of millions of people.

Long lines to get your driver's license, poorly maintained hospitals, overcrowded/understaffed schools, disorganized voting processes, delays in election night results, etc., etc. Does this sound all too familiar ? None of us can ignore the fact that the public sector – despite being essential in a civilized society – hasn't had the best reputation. This has been compounded in recent years by tightening public budgets, and more and more cutbacks to public services. At the same time, government officials and managers are challenged to overcome the public's lack of trust in government at all levels. The question is, what can be done to bolster the public sector and its decaying image ? Clearly, more creative solutions must be devised, and that's exactly what many public officials are doing as they take responsibility for achieving results that matter to the public by implementing effective, reliable and quality services. According to them, ISO 9001 is the answer. The acclaimed quality management standard provides a tried and tested framework for managing your organization's processes and activities.

ISO 9001 can help government for the same reason it helps large corporations. It provides management control of diverse operations by allowing objectives to be rolled out to frontline units with clear and transparent measures, enhancing the flow and visibility of information for management, and integrating processes to achieve better service delivery and customer satisfaction.

Does this mean governments should be run like a business ? Of course not, it simply means that any entity that ignores these realities will eventually " go out of business " – whether or not it's a business.

Customers count – and citizens too

To make government work in the 21ˢᵗ century demands the same basic "quality approach" as in any business. Whether in the public or private sector, without customers, or with unhappy customers or stakeholders, any organization is in peril!

Let's start with local authorities, the subject of most of the debate about governance today. Local governments are the main service providers to citizens all over the world and their efficient and reliable performance is vital to the lives of millions of people. How many public services? How should the services be financed? How much and where should we cut? A good place to start is discussing how we can implement ISO 9001, making the necessary decisions to bring efficient and reliable services in line with customer needs and expectations.

That's because, in re-thinking government, the first thing to do is to improve the quality of urban public goods and services, and the governance that is behind them. And this is where ISO 18091 can make a difference.

Published in early 2014, ISO 18091 is the first ISO standard directed at the public sector that gives guidelines for the implementation of ISO 9001 in local government. With a robust quality management system in place, a local government can focus on satisfying the needs and expectations of the community.

It is an essential roadmap for local governments to organize themselves in a comprehensive way, focusing on continual improvement where it matters. It aims to:

- Empower citizens and governments together
- Ensure not only effectiveness but legitimacy
- Provide a common language and understanding between politicians and technicians, and enable comparability across countries and other local governments
- Serve the local population by making politically viable those things that are technically indispensable
- Create a useful tool for the UN millennium goals and objectives for a sustainable world and smart cities
- Produce reliability – essential for society

As Carlos Gadsden, Convenor of ISO/TC 176 that developed the standard, says: "ISO 18091 constitutes an excellent tool for local governments to reassure citizens that their needs and expectations are fully understood and met on a consistent basis and in a timely manner." By strengthening integrity in local governance, we can build stronger regional and national governments and support international efforts.

Sustainable and smart cities

There is also, I'm happy to say, an important role for local governments in creating sustainable communities where quality, cost-effective and consistent public services successfully promote sustainable economic prosperity and social justice. In fact, governments today can provide stability and promote good governance when these are lacking at

The public sector
hasn't had
the best reputation.

People protesting against government spending cuts and tax rises in Aliados Square on 15 September 2012 in Porto, Portugal.

a regional or national level. Consider reliable cities for instance. Many projects – including Microsoft's CityNext – are dabbling in increasing the efficient use of resources and the quality of life of its citizens in a bid to create healthier, greener, more prosperous cities for the future.

Erick Stephens, Chief Technology Officer, Public Sector APAC at Microsoft, sees ISO 18091 as a huge benefit for reliable cities. " ISO 18091 provides any city, regardless of its size or type, with a holistic vision of the real issues for continual improvement. Together with the CityNext initiative, it forms a very powerful combination that cities can adopt to become truly 'smart' and in essence more reliable."

Growing faster than ever before, cities are the economic and cultural hubs that drive global economies and environmental change. Today's cities are experiencing unprecedented challenges, including rapid urbanization, modernization mandates, and economic austerity pressures.

Microsoft CityNext and ISO 18091, says Stephens, help cities make the leap into a new era of innovation that includes

the right combination of public policies and technologies – cloud technology, mobile devices, data analytics, and social networks – empowering cities to take a people-first approach and make a real impact.

Free and fair elections

And that brings us to the third aspect that citizens of all advanced democracies appear to hold dear today : free and fair elections. There's no sugar-coating the fact that, in some countries, there is gross negligence at election time – the pillar of any democracy. But there are better and worse ways to deal with these realities, one of which might involve bringing ISO/TS 17582 and quality management to electoral bodies.

Tyler Finn, from the Organization of American States, believes the new ISO technical specification applies the time-tested quality management system of ISO 9001 to a specifically electoral context : " ISO/TS 17582 creates the

framework for a quality management system that helps electoral bodies provide more reliable and transparent electoral services."

The newly published ISO/TS 17582 is important for electoral bodies because it aims to build confidence in elections through increased transparency, planning and efficiency in electoral processes, all of which are fundamental to any election:

- Voter registration
- Registration of political organizations and candidates
- Electoral logistics
- Vote casting
- Vote counting and declaration of results
- Electoral education
- Oversight of campaign financing
- Resolution of electoral disputes

In this sense, adds Finn, ISO/TS 17582 will be of particular interest to electoral bodies in budding democracies where instilling new-found confidence in the electoral system can determine the success of an election.

The Organization of American States was the catalyst for the creation of a certifiable international electoral standard. The new technical specification, developed in conjunction with a group of electoral authorities from the region, places the organization at the vanguard of efforts to build institutional capacity and promote the professionalism of electoral authorities.

Electoral bodies that choose to adopt the standard stand to benefit in a number of ways. ISO/TS 17582 promotes a high level of organization, efficiency and management throughout the electoral cycle. It also provides a flexible structure that permits the continual improvement of electoral bodies in order to respond adequately to the diverse challenges presented by electoral administration. Furthermore, by certifying against ISO/TS 17582, an electoral body publicly asserts its commitment to transparent electoral processes, thereby building public confidence in electoral services.

So, to whet your appetites, here are some examples of the benefits experienced by electoral bodies around the world that have implemented ISO's quality management standards.

An Indian woman casts her vote at a polling station on 23 April 2009 in the Muslim-dominated town of Mukalmua, near Guwahati, India.

Mother and child put the ballot in the box during early parliamentary elections in Serbia.

We will need to completely redesign and reposition government.

- **Guiding transparent and credible electoral processes.** As the National Electoral Board of Peru found out : " [ISO/TS 17582] represents a binding commitment to achieving continuous process improvement. The aim is to provide a better quality of service, and our citizens' appreciation makes this effort well worth it. "

- **Ensuring the objectivity of electoral results.** According to a Russian governmental authority that has implemented quality : " The application of ISO/TS 17582 in Russian electoral bodies will significantly improve public acceptance of, and confidence in, the electoral results. This is an important aspect of political stability in Russia. " Many also argue that implementing ISO/TS 17582 will lead to a substantial reduction of the number of electoral disputes.

- **Strengthening democracy.** Implementing a quality management system under ISO/TS 17582 is vital, confirmed another public authority, this time in Ecuador. The National Electoral Council of Ecuador is committed to directing its efforts towards implementing a system that ensures a participatory, equitable, egalitarian, intercultural, free, democratic and just service for elections. Choosing quality as the model on which to structure public service is a key pillar for the continual improvement of the institution.

Beyond quality

ISO 9001 is by far the world's most established quality framework, currently being used by over 1.5 million organizations in 191 countries. Those are impressive numbers, and among the primary reasons why the public sector is sitting up and taking notice.

Certification is not necessary to achieve a government's objectives of reliability, responsiveness and transparency. Nor should it be regarded as the be-all and end-all, for once a government is delivering the end goods, it needs to look beyond conformance to performance in order to maintain its high standards and credibility. Re-thinking quality in government will help, but it still won't make government competitive for the 21st century. To do that, we will need to completely redesign and reposition government to make it fit for the challenges of our dawning century – for example by giving government officials the flexibility, tools and resources they need to make a results-oriented, post-bureaucratic government succeed. A mammoth task by all accounts and any suggestions are welcome. I know one committee that is willing to generate some ideas. EGD

Happy 25th birthday "WWW"

On 12 March 1989, Tim Berners-Lee published a paper that is widely considered to mark the birth of the World Wide Web. Twenty-five years on, he used the occasion of the Web's landmark anniversary by making a call for global action to defend users of the technology he created all those years ago.

Spurred on by the recent revelations of governmental surveillance, the British computer scientist argued for the creation of a "Magna Carta" of the Internet to protect the freedom of online users from the tyrannical interference of the state and corporate influence.

"We need a global constitution – a bill of rights," Sir Berners-Lee told The Guardian, in order to guarantee the openness and neutrality of the system and enshrine its independence.

Deploring people's complacency in the face of their eroding liberties, he urged Internet users to stand up for online freedom in their respective countries. A call for mass global action where International Standards will certainly have their place.

Bright future for energy

With oil and coal prices rising, periodic blackouts and riots over electricity cuts, how do we beat the energy crisis? Key players from the energy world have attempted to provide some answers at the Workshop on International Standards in support of policies for energy efficiency and renewable energy, that was held in March 2014 in Paris, France.

Co-hosted by ISO, the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) and the International Energy Agency (IEA), the event sought to reinforce ties between policy makers, energy stakeholders and standards developers. It provided a golden opportunity to explore how systemic approaches could be used to ensure International Standards better support the transition towards more sustainable energy systems.

The workshop highlighted the positive contribution of standards to the global energy challenge in such areas as climate change induced by fossil fuels, constraints on energy availability, and the need to open up access to sustainable energy in order to drive economic and social development. As the repository of ground-breaking expertise in energy management, energy-sector standards could be the answer to cutting our power bills and protecting the environment.
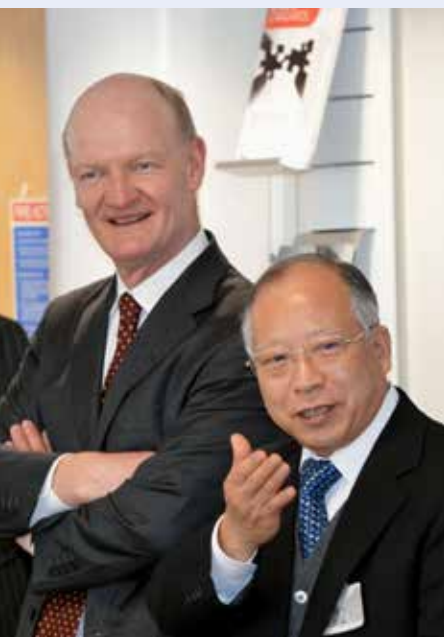
UK Minister's standards tour

The UK Minister of State for Universities and Science, the Rt. Hon. David Willetts MP, made a visit to BSI, ISO's member for the United Kingdom, at their London offices in March 2014.

The Minister was given an insight into BSI's work as the country's national standards body and shown how standards can help improve business performance and encourage innovation and economic growth.

As part of his visit, Mr. Willetts was invited to attend an ISO working group meeting on ergonomics for people with special requirements. Prof. Ken Sagawa, leading the group of experts, gave the Minister an overview of their activities, including the revision of ISO/TR 22411 on addressing the needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities. The topic is particularly important today with almost every country in the world facing ageing populations.

Mr. Willetts greatly enjoyed his brief encounter with standardization and left with a far better understanding of how International Standards are developed and their vital role in business and society.

Experts at the eHealth standardization forum in Geneva, Switzerland.

Health on the Net

eHealth is the new buzz word on everybody's lips. So much so, in fact, that this emerging field at the intersection of medical informatics, public health and business now has its own forum, underpinning the importance of health data standardization in eHealth systems and services.

Hosted by WHO, the Joint Inter-Ministerial Policy Dialogue on eHealth Standardization and Second WHO Forum on eHealth Standardization and Interoperability took place in February 2014 at the WHO headquarters in Geneva.

The forum's aim was to facilitate a dialogue on the need for policy and governance mechanisms that will help countries adopt and implement health data standards. Revealingly, approximately 20 % of the panellists were from ISO/TC 215 on health informatics, which plays a leading role in promoting interoperability between independent systems, enabling their compatibility and consistency for health information data.

The event attracted 190 experts, including representatives from WHO member states, health data standards development organizations, and academic and research institutions. And many more participants followed the discussions through live webcasting, reflecting the growing worldwide interest for " health on the Net ".

Smart steps for smart cities

Today's cities face complex choices for the future. With over half the world's population living in urban areas and the challenges of climate change and natural disaster, there is a growing need for sustainable urban infrastructure planning and development.

Happily, the " smart city " is on the horizon. The latest innovations in information and communication technology (ICT), and the capacity to gather and analyse urban infrastructure data, means cities are now able to deliver services in areas such as smart grid, green buildings, energy and water use, waste management, and transportation.

ISO is creating an ISO Advisory Group on Smart Cities to provide expertise on how cities can make use of these smart products and services for the future. Led by BSI, ISO member for the United Kingdom, the group will draw on a broad range of stakeholders from the areas of construction, transportation, energy and ICT, as well as from city authorities and service providers.

Developing sustainable urban environments is a global priority that requires a coordinated approach to standards and conformance, making our cities a " smarter " place to live.
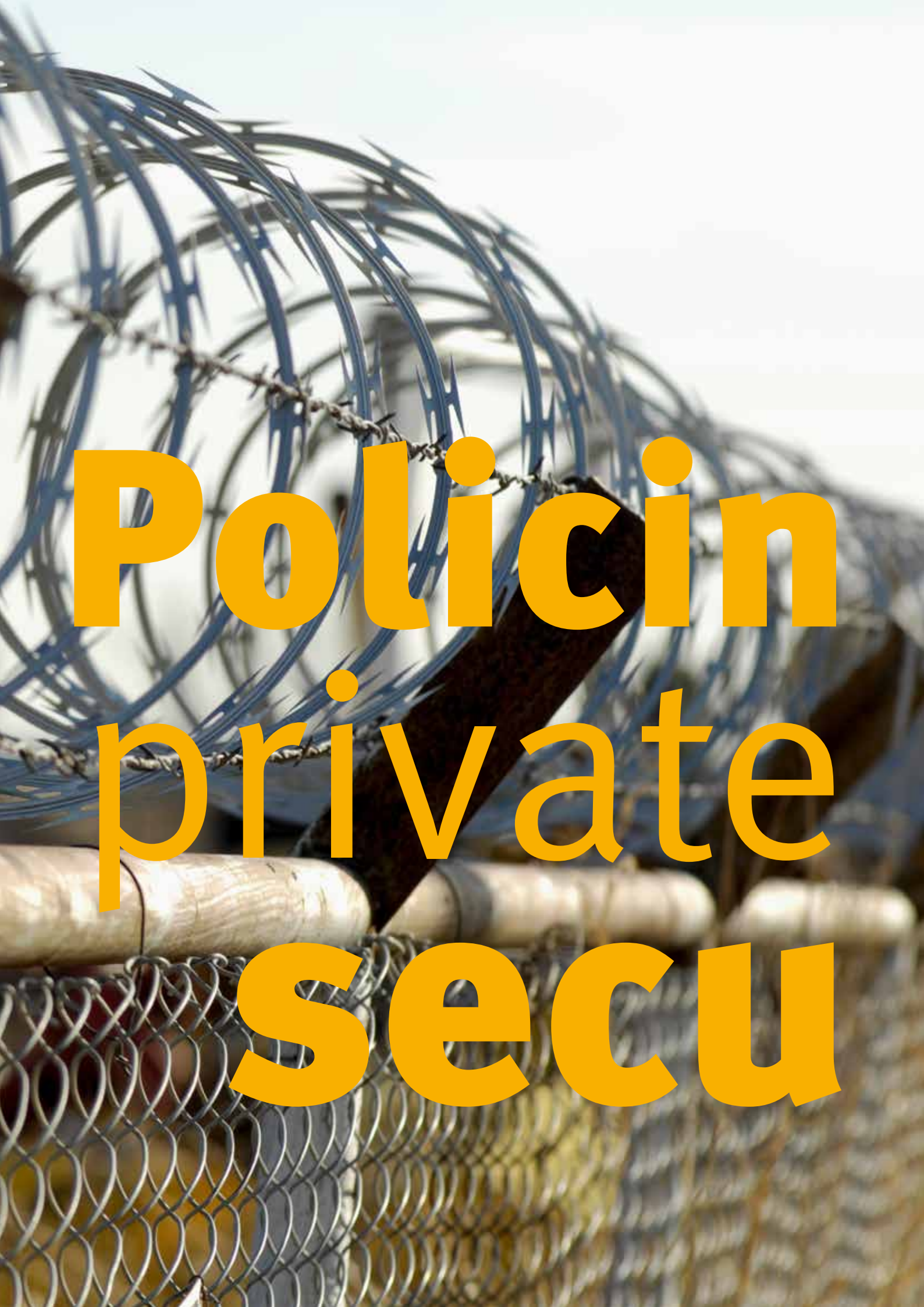
Policin
private
secu

During the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the use of private security companies (PSCs) came into the public eye. A number of incidents, including alleged involvement in the deaths of innocent civilians and the use of unnecessary force and torture, led many to believe such companies were operating outside the rule of law. Responding to this challenge, a new ISO project committee has started work on an international framework to help the industry adopt good practice and improve accountability.

Nisour Square, Baghdad, 16 September 2007. Seventeen civilians were killed and 20 injured in a shooting incident involving employees of US-based private security company (PSC) Blackwater (now called Academi). The guards were protecting a convoy of US officials leaving the square but, according to an inquiry by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the shooting was "an illegal, unprovoked attack on civilians"[1]. While most PSCs operate within the law and without incidents, a few bad actors have made headline news, bringing the entire PSC community plenty of bad press. Not surprisingly, the private provision of security and military services challenges

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1) Horwitz, S., "New charges brought against former Blackwater guards in Baghdad shooting", *The Washington Post*, 18 October 2013.

Private security services
are procured on
an international scale.

A security guard oversees a bomb detection performed by a dog at a security check point.

conventional assumptions about the role of the nation state as the main protagonist in military affairs and the guarantor of physical security for its citizens.

Private security services are called on primarily to protect people and property in countries where protection provided by the state is deficient, or when disaster or conflict makes heightened security necessary. In many of these high-profile cases, including the Nisour Square incident, the contracting organization was a government (in this case the USA). Governments, however, make up only a third of the clients in the sector. Non-governmental organizations, private enterprises (particularly the extractive industries of oil, gas and mining), transport companies, even aid and development agencies, also hire PSCs to help protect people and property on the ground. In countries of weakened governance where local security, such as the police force, cannot guarantee protection, the use of PSCs can be a necessary alternative.

The fact that PSCs often operate in zones of conflict and disaster or countries where the rule of law and local law enforcement are inadequate makes this a high-risk business. Complicating matters further, private security services are procured on an international scale. The PSC can be based in one country, contracted by clients in another, to perform security services in yet another... and all while hiring employees from still another country. Under these circumstances, whose national regulations apply and how is justice served if misconduct occurs ?

Defining best practice

All these questions have prompted work on an international scale to try and resolve the situation. For example, the Montreux Document on Private Military and Security Companies[2] (named after the town in Switzerland where negotiations took place) and the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (ICoC) (see Sidebars on pages 17 and 19) have laid down some guidelines to clarify the current legal framework and define best practices that encourage PSCs and their clients to honour their commitment to international human rights. Additionally, on a national scale, the ANSI/ASIS.PSC.1, launched in 2012, provides auditable criteria for PSC operations to meet business and risk management objectives while respecting human rights.

" These three documents lay the foundation for where we want to be," explains Dr. Marc Siegel, Chair of ISO/PC 284, a new ISO project committee investigating the topic. " However, " he adds " there is pressing need for an International Standard that helps PSCs and their clients demonstrate accountability so that human rights and fundamental freedoms are adhered to, and illegal and excessive acts prevented."

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2) Full title : *The Montreux Document – On pertinent international legal obligations and good practices for States related to operations of private military and security companies during armed conflict*, ICRC, August 2009.

Private security contractors go into some of the most dangerous situations in the world to protect civilians.

The Montreux Document

The international community, led by Swiss government and the International Committee for the Red Cross, developed the Montreux Document in 2008. It sets out the legal framework affecting the sector, including all relevant pieces of international and national law, and best-practice guidelines.

See the full document by scanning the QR code.

ISO/PC 284 held its first meeting in Montreux, Switzerland, in December 2013, which I had the chance to attend. (The meeting place was chosen to coincide with ongoing work on the ICoC and Montreux Document which was taking place in town.) The committee plans to develop a management system standard for PSCs using the Montreux Document and the ICoC as a foundation, and this, Siegel believes, will help companies take concrete action to demonstrate conformance to the code.

According to Siegel, an international management system standard will help a company manage the risks associated with its operations, and ultimately protect human rights. "There is no denying that these companies operate in high-risk environments, so an understanding of these risks and how to plan for them must be paramount," he says.

"Among the beneficiaries of the standard will be the communities directly affected by the security services. The human rights impact of a PSC's presence in these communities must be at the forefront of company thinking," adds Siegel. He is also keen to highlight an oft forgotten group – the PSC employees themselves who are working in high-risk situations. "If something goes wrong, they can find themselves in danger. It is really important that they are well prepared and know what to do if things get nasty."

This begs the question: Is an International Standard, which is by definition voluntary, not too soft an approach for a sector that has such a serious impact on human rights? Would strict, enforceable international laws not be more relevant? The answer is pragmatic. "Hard law is notoriously difficult to implement," says Siegel. While the Montreux Document has clarified the international human

rights and humanitarian laws that do exist and should be applied in these situations, they remain difficult, costly and time-consuming to enforce, he explains. On the other hand, a robust and rigorous standard, which can be certified by a competent third-party certification body, could provide an additional piece of the puzzle to help the industry consistently improve standards and accountability.

Benchmarking good conduct

Accountability ? Yes, because in addition to helping companies put best practice into action, an International Standard will help PSCs demonstrate their commitment to these international expectations and guidelines. This will give them an edge over the competition and, ultimately, improve standards across the board. " This should remove the bottom feeders that drag the reputation of the industry down, " Siegel concludes.

Having a standard in place will also reassure the clients of PSCs as well as the general public that the company is taking all the necessary steps to minimize risk and protect human rights. This will drive accountability in the industry, believes Dr. Rebecca DeWinter-Schmitt, a specialist in human rights and humanitarian law at the American University Washington College of Law, who also took part in the discussions of ISO/PC 284.

According to DeWinter-Schmitt, an International Standard will be instrumental in establishing the global expectations we have with regard to PSCs. " It will allow some civil society groups, in particular those that serve as watchdogs of the public interest, to have a benchmark against which PSCs can be held accountable should they fail to respect human rights, as they have committed to do. "

She also argues that it will enable civil society to call the clients of PSCs to book if they misbehave. For example, as large clients of PSCs, governments could use the standard to ensure the PSCs they are contracting are doing everything that is in their power to protect human rights and minimize risks. If they don't, civil society groups will be able to hold governments to account for shirking their responsibilities.

High-profile individuals such as journalists seek protection from private security guards when " in the field ".

Photo : Aegis

> An International Standard
> will be instrumental
> in establishing global
> expectations.

A call to action

For all this to work well, however, the International Standard must be rigorous and clearly based on the principles already set out in the Montreux Document and ICoC, but also, most importantly, it must be multi-stakeholder.

This means that civil society groups with their human rights specialists and humanitarian law expertise need to be actively involved in the standard's development. "This International Standard will be the first of its kind to address the human rights risks of an industry through a management system process, and it is important to identify and bring on board human rights expertise," DeWinter-Schmitt asserts.

In supporting her argument, she highlights the insights that civil society in general can bring to the standards development table. "Civil society can serve a useful role in identifying potential limitations of management system standards, and can aid in finding ways to improve active contribution of all affected stakeholders, increase transparency in standards development, and strengthen conformity assessment mechanisms."

Here, then, is a call to action. The facts are clear : private security companies are here to stay. The past decade has seen the rise of a multi-billion euro global industry for private security provision with companies operating in countries worldwide. More coherent and directed thinking is therefore urgently needed on the issue of regulation, to guarantee the physical security of civilians. If you have expertise in human rights law or are involved in private security and would like to have a say in the development of this standard, please contact the ISO member in your country to find out more. **KB**

International Code of Conduct

Following the publication of the Montreux Document, the Swiss government convened a multi-stakeholder initiative for private security companies called the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (ICoC). This aims to "set private security industry principles and standards based on international human rights and humanitarian law, as well as improve accountability of the industry".

www.icoc-psp.org

When Kristin Bårnås embarked on a history degree at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, she had no idea it would lead her to ISO. But her thesis took her on a journey of discovery about the mysterious world of environmental standards, with a few surprising findings.

My journey
to discovery
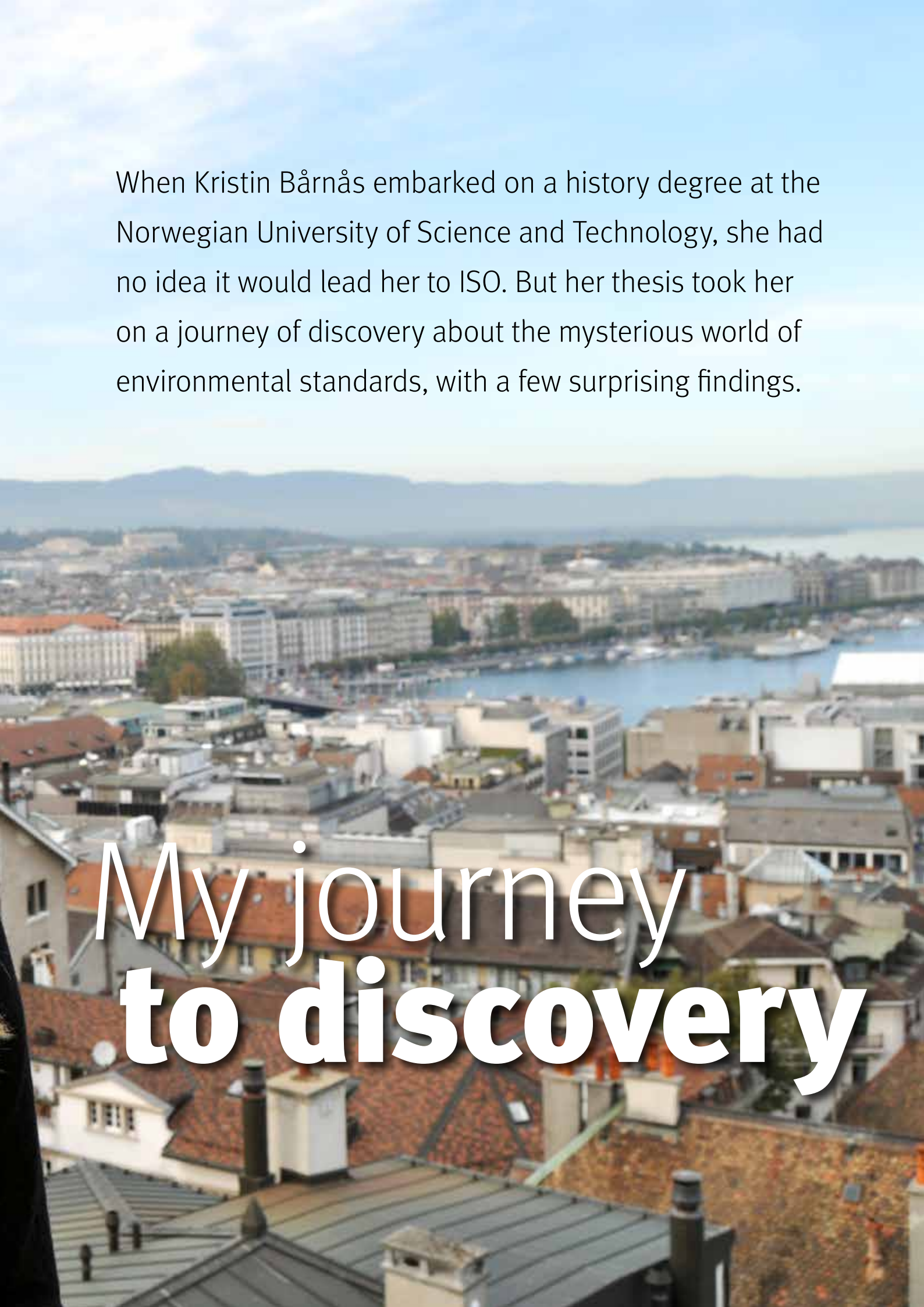
I finished my thesis for my History Master's in May 2013. The paper was entitled : " Two trends meet – ISO and its environmental standards ". When I started out, I had no idea I would be spending the next two years of my life researching and writing about ISO. Why, I didn't even know what ISO was !

But first, let me introduce myself : my name is Kristin, I'm 25 years old and I'm from Norway. I started reading history just over five years ago indulging a passion that started many years earlier. In 2008 I began a Bachelor's degree in History in Norway, which I supplemented with modules in political science. That's where my interest lay : international modern history, with its conflicts and collaborations across borders.

My light-bulb moment

Anyway, to cut a long story short, it was the autumn of 2011 and I had one month to decide what I wanted to write my thesis on. I didn't have a clue. All I knew was that I wanted to write about something international and something modern. I ended up joining a project called " Managing risk " where I knew the supervisor would be

good for my thesis. It was my supervisor's idea to write about ISO, a suggestion I promised to look into.

To be honest, I didn't think ISO would be my " thing ". But, to my surprise, I found it really intriguing. I couldn't believe there existed such an important international organization I had never even heard of. The fact that this remarkable, though relatively unknown, organization had developed standards on a question that elicited such vigorous debate as the environment struck a chord with me and I wanted to find out more about it. Suddenly, I had the topic for my thesis.

Understanding ISO

Then the work started. Learning about ISO wasn't too difficult as there were books about the organization. Finding out how environmental standards are developed, on the other hand, proved a lot harder. But, as I progressed and was put in touch with the right people, I finally got a hold of the information I needed. The highlight of my research was my trip to Geneva to study the papers of the ISO SAGE, the ISO Strategic Advisory Group on the Environment.

" Underwater rugby is one of my main spare-time activities. I am player number 9."
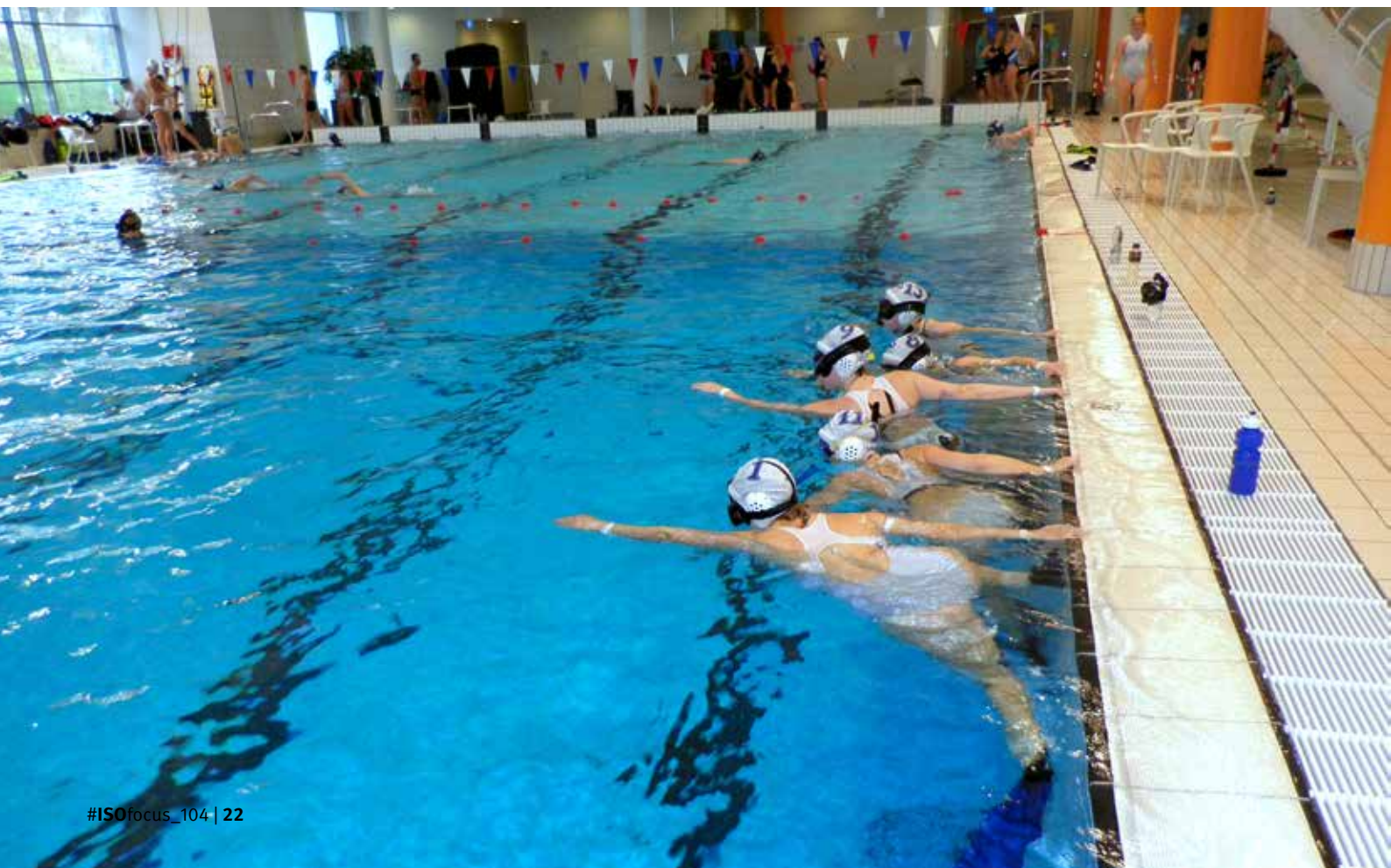
As it happened, SAGE ended up becoming the focus for most of my thesis. I searched and probed ; I looked into questions such as why and how ISO started developing environmental standards and ended up with management standards for the environment. And I began to understand. Environmental standards had to be seen in the light of two other trends : the extension of ISO's work on management standards, and the fact that environmental concerns were gradually gaining international momentum. That's how I got the title for my thesis – the meeting of two trends ! What I also discovered – which I personally found the most interesting – was the true motivation behind these environmental standards.

A means to an end

According to my research, conserving the environment was not the driving force behind the creation of environmental standards. Don't misunderstand me, I am not suggesting it wasn't an important concern, but it didn't seem to me to be the main concern. Rather, the crucial reason for developing environmental standards was that businesses wanted to have a hand in laying down environmental regulation. I felt it was unfair that any business could claim to be doing their bit for the environment on the backs of a few companies that really had paid good money to reduce their environmental impact. The second incentive was the opportunity for companies to enhance their environmentally caring image in the eyes of their customers. The interesting thing is that the "ISO approach" can be seen to be much more successful than other approaches, which are based purely on environmental concerns. Ironically, perhaps the motivation for doing something is less important than the fact of actually doing it.

The tip of the iceberg

In May 2013, after months of hard work and frustration, and occasional fun times, I finished my thesis. I have learned a lot along the way, and I would love to, one day, continue researching about ISO. I feel as though my thesis is just the tip of the iceberg ; there is so much more research that can been done on environmental standards. I have learned that ISO isn't just a technical organization, but an organization that affects all our lives on a daily basis, an organization that has both a political and international scope. In my experience, these were also the things about my thesis that most captivated my friends and family – not the technical details ! As one of my friends, after reading my thesis, so beautifully put it : "It wasn't as boring as it sounded !" VR

Learning about ISO

wasn't too difficult.
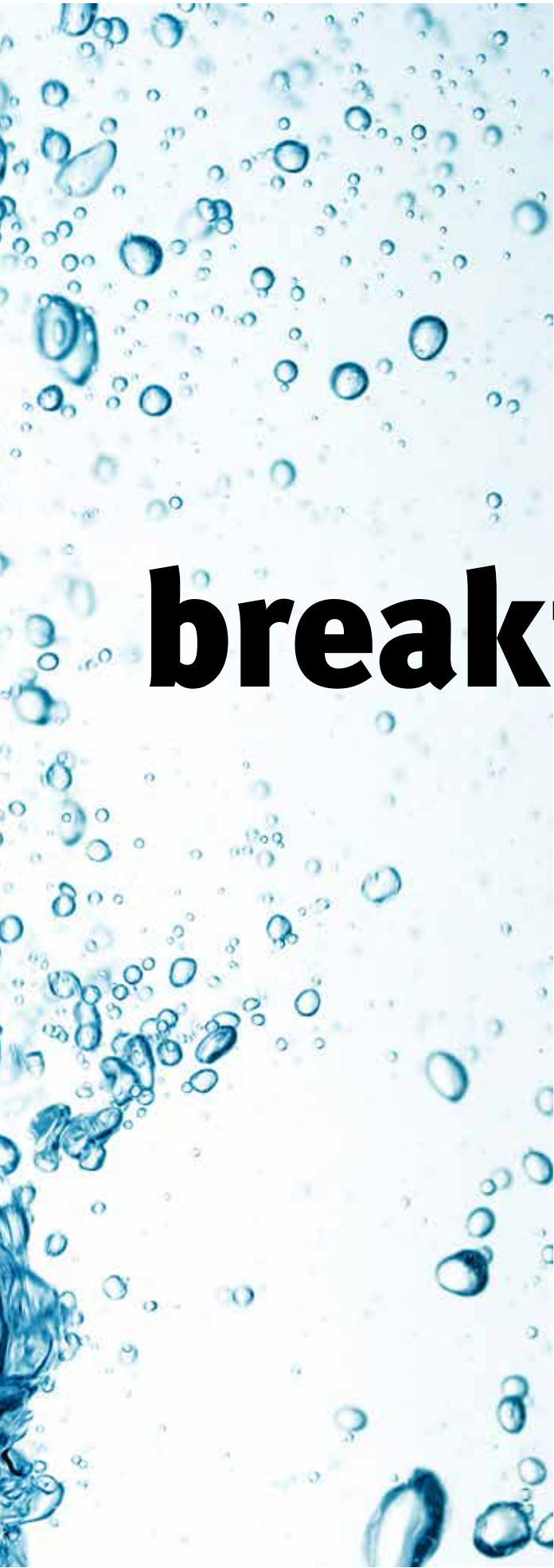
The fine bubble breakthrough

Imagine your kitchen floor or bathroom tiles being cleaned by very tiny bubbles. Or imagine round-the-clock restrooms staying clean and functional. Sounds great, but how is it possible and is it too good to be true ? Not anymore, a new technological era is dawning.

This innovative technology has recently generated much attention.

Washing with soap and water may soon be a thing of the past thanks to an incredible new technology that creates water containing ultra-fine bubbles (smaller than the wavelength of light) – a scientific feat heralded as the next technological breakthrough. It sounds too good to be true, but according to the Fine Bubble Industries Association (FBIA) in Japan, it's a very real solution to the wasteful (and not to mention laborious) task of cleaning. And it's not only household chores that will benefit. Fine bubbles are also expected to give plenty of advantages to other applications, from accelerating the growth of hydroponically grown plants to enhancing the power of skin creams and serums. So what's the big deal with bubbles? Perhaps you're not aware, but there are bubbles and bubbles. They come in all shapes and sizes: bubbles, fine bubbles and ultra-fine bubbles (see Sidebar on page 26 for the science).

Dr. Bob Carr from NanoSight Ltd., a UK-based company that measures ultra-fine bubbles, sees a very bright future for the new technology: " Fine bubbles appear to be an extremely interesting and exciting new technology and such is the rate of growing interest in a very wide range of applications that we hope to be in a position to design and develop instrumentation for use by many industries in this field."

The bubble boom

In the last decade, the use of fine bubble technologies has skyrocketed. According to the preliminary market research conducted by the FBIA, the total amount of fine bubble business including management and operation services, facilities and related systems that are connected to core products was USD 20 million in 2010. It is expected to rise to USD 4.3 billion in 2020, and USD 8.5 billion in 2030.

While interest in fine bubble technology is nothing new, what's different about recent optimism is that this innovative technology has recently generated much attention, and its potential has become a lot clearer – especially in the last few years.

FBIA Chairman Dr. Akira Yabe points to a remarkable case at the Isahaya Bay of Nagasaki, where high water pollution levels were causing clams to die. The use of fine bubbles in the Isahaya Bay not only improved water quality, but enhanced clam survival rate. "The potential of fine bubbles in the treatment of water is enormous, particularly in developing countries suffering from water pollution and shortage. I believe the use of fine bubble technologies will spread very widely in a short amount of time."

In Japan alone, calculating the global business scale based on the Japanese global share of the water business, the fine bubble business volume worldwide was USD 1.26 billion in 2010 and is expected to be USD 44.3 billion in 2020, and USD 126.7 billion in 2030.

Scrub-free cleaning

Fine bubble technology can be put to a multitude of cleaning uses. Its cleaning power is more effective than regular water, using less water, and less manpower. Also, fine bubbles are good for the environment, as pre-determined by the amount of water used or waste generated. It also reduces the need for toxic chemicals and other detergents. The biggest benefit is probably the cost implication of producing fine bubbles, which is far smaller than most businesses would spend on traditional cleaning solutions. NEXCO-West (West Nippon Expressway Company Limited), the Japanese expressway company, has been using fine bubble water to clean restrooms in service and parking

areas and to remove salt – in other words sodium chloride – that would otherwise damage highway bridges. It says that it has seen a number of improvements, such as:

- 90 % reduction in water use
- 30 % reduction in the number of cleaning hours
- Zero environmental impact (resulting from cleaning agents and other chemical detergents)
- Significantly lower odour levels

As Naoyuki Sumida, Executive Director and Director General of NEXCO-West, puts it: "Fine bubble technology has made effective and efficient cleaning possible. The technology will now need to be applied to a wide range of industries around the world – an indispensable condition for its future development and expansion."

From fizzy drinks to food

There will be a broad spectrum of business potentials that will benefit from fine bubble technology in the coming years, including the food sector – and I don't mean just carbonated drinks.

An ongoing collaborative research between MTEC and Kasetsart University (KU) in Thailand concludes that fresh vegetables washed with fine bubble water are more resistant to food-borne pathogens

It's all about size and science

Bubbles contained in a liquid are classified based on size:

- Bubbles – volume of gas enclosed by an interface in a liquid
- Fine bubbles – bubble of a size typically less than 100 micrometres
- Ultra-fine bubbles – fine bubble of a size less than one micrometre

USD billions

10

5

1

8.5 billion

4.3 billion

20 million

2010   2020   2030

The bubble industry boom

than vegetables washed with normal water. It also concludes that using bubble technology for vegetable growing can effectively prolong the shelf-life of the produce.

The study's head, Dr. Wannee Chinsirikul, of National Metal and Materials Technology Center in Thailand, reports that washing fresh vegetables with fine bubble water shows great potential.

"Washing of fresh produce is an important step for removing soil and debris, improving the appearance of the commodity, lowering the produce's temperature (pre-cooling) and limiting the development of physiological changes," says Dr. Chinsirikul. "Washing also reduces the microbial load on the surface of incoming produce or residual pesticide which impact the product's quality, shelf-life and safety (Reference: Xuentong Fan et al., 2009)."

What are some other food applications for fine bubble technology? Lettuces grown hydroponically, thicker and creamier mayonnaise, not to mention tastier and nicer-smelling drinks, just to name a few.

Wishful thinking?

Fine bubble technology has advanced over the past decade, with more "real serious widespread adoption" happening in the last two years. What types of applications will appear? Will fine bubble technology be widely adopted?

Are there more exciting developments on the way? Where do things stand and where are they going? These are definitely exciting times.

According to Maurice Wedd, the new Chair of ISO/TC 281 for fine bubble technology, ISO's move to create a new committee will be key to fostering consumer confidence and increasing industry uptake.

"Engineering has now developed apparatus that can reliably generate fine bubbles in quantity, and we have already seen numerous applications of their use. All of these current uses and applications, together with new ones evolving over time, are likely to meet a degree of regularization with standards as they mature."

Sounds interesting, right? Of course it does. Sounds easy? Hardly. A number of issues still need to be addressed before fine bubble technology truly gets off the ground. There is also much controversy over why fine bubbles exist in water for long periods of time, or even why they are so effective. In fact, scientists have only really been able to prove their existence quite recently.

It's going to be an exciting – if at times overwhelming – journey for fine bubbles in the next few years. Over time, the development of standards into this new and innovative technology will spur industry-wide adoption and deployment. But one thing is clear: there's no bursting this technology bubble. EGD

Did you know we have standards for government?

Most people think our governments can do better – and they're probably right! Why not give ISO standards a try?

The incredible story of diving

We could give you a million reasons why standards are key for the tourism industry, but sometimes all you need is one story to make it real. So here is the tale of one man, a small company, and a revolutionary standard that transformed one of the largest tourism activities worldwide : diving.

Scuba diving opens up a world often inaccessible to man. It is an adventure of discovery where the ocean reveals its hidden secrets. This wonder and beauty has its share of risk. Yes, diving can be hazardous, not just for participants, but also for the environment. The good news is that with adequate precautions, the danger can be reduced to acceptable levels.

But how do we know what these precautions are? Most diving centres offer training; but if you are new to the sport, choosing a reliable instructor is tricky as you might not know what to look for. You may then focus on the price, ask your friends for advice, or turn to the Internet for recommendations. But there is one other factor to consider, and that is International Standards.

Our story begins in Vienna, Austria. The small land-locked country has had a firm place in diving history since Austrian diving pioneer Hans Hass (who sadly passed away in June 2013) inspired a generation to get involved in what was then a new activity – recreational diving.

In 1994, Martin Denison, an Austrian diving expert of British origin, set up his own franchise business in Austria using an American qualification system to train divers and instructors. The tiny company flourished... until a new sports law required that teachers have a licence issued by local authorities on the advice of the relevant national federations. This meant that Austrians trained in the American system would no longer be able to teach diving, including those in Martin's company.

Martin turned to Austrian Standards (AS) for help, the ISO member for the country. Most standards at that time targeted products, and diving would become one of the first to focus on a service. AS rallied together the different stakeholders in the industry and developed a national standard for diver and instructor training that allowed certification. For Martin this meant that, even if he used the American training system, as long as he complied with the requirements in the new national standards, instructors would be recognized by local authorities.

Yet this was only the tip of the iceberg and diving standards were soon to become one of the great success stories of standardization in the services sector.

The Austrian standards had barely been completed when the European Underwater Federation decided to introduce common European rules for diver and instructor training. Instead of reinventing the wheel, they approached the European standards body CEN, who turned to the published Austrian standards as a starting point. The new working group developing these standards became the largest in the European

This wonder and beauty

has its share of risk.

Martin Denison, *an Austrian diving expert of British origin.*

standardization community, with around 35 representatives from 17 countries.

Soon, countries outside Europe started to show interest and the standards were adopted by ISO, who maintains a cooperation agreement with CEN to avoid unnecessary duplication of work. Over the past 15 years, the standards have found wide acceptance in diving schools around the world.

This is important because adequate training is central to the sport. Standards put the diver first to ensure a high level of quality and safety. They consider the needs of both recreational divers and scuba diving professionals, and bring benefits to all stakeholders in the industry.

As a result, the current internationally recognized diver qualifications mean clients can compare and select the best offers from diving centres around the world. For training organizations and service providers, standards create a benchmark for "state of the art" best practice. Instructors can use them for worldwide recognition, and tour operators can confidently select the best partners for their diving

tours. Even governments and regulators can rely on standards as part of their licensing systems for diving centres. Take Greece for example. There was a time when, out of thousands of kilometres of shoreline, only a tiny stretch of about 160 km was open to divers. But the country was among the early adopters of the standards and made certification of training and diving centres compulsory. Reassured by the impact this would have on the safety of the industry, diving is now allowed almost everywhere in the country, bringing huge benefits to the tourism industry. Similarly, when Egypt made ISO 24803 for recreational scuba diving service providers compulsory, over 600 diving centres started to be audited on a yearly basis. After just two years, Egypt reported a 24 % decrease in the number of diving accidents.

So next time you go on holiday, look out for the suite of diving standards ISO 24801, ISO 24802 and ISO 24803, and snorkelling standards ISO 13289 and ISO 13970. They are just one example, among many, of how standards make an impact on our lives. ML

Farewell to Bruce Harding

Prof. Bruce A. Harding, a long-standing member of the ISO community, sadly passed away on Sunday 23 February 2014 at the age of 66.

A professor of mechanical engineering technology, Prof. Harding was deeply involved in the US and international standardization community, where he assisted in the development of voluntary consensus engineering standards. He served as Chair of ISO/TC 10 on technical product documentation, as well as being a respected member of the ANSI Board of Directors, the ISO member for the USA.

Prof. Harding will be remembered most for his passion, energy and devotion to his job. He is survived by his wife, Martha Jane Harding, and his son, Seth Harding. Our thoughts go out to his family at this difficult time.

Energy standard benefits Morocco

ISO 50001 on energy management systems and GemTech MoniToring, a Web-based energy and productivity monitoring service in real time, helped Moroccan tile and floor covering manufacturer Les Géants du Revêtement reduce its energy bill and avoid costly investments.

The company began implementing ISO 50001 in early 2013 with the primary focus of supplying floor coverings that had a minimal carbon footprint, equivalent to an energy performance indicator (EnPI) of less than 1300 Wh/m^2 instead of the current 1700 Wh/m^2.

Supported by GemTech MoniToring, Les Géants du Revêtement implemented an energy management system (EnMS) based on the real-time metering of the company's energy consumption and output, which is accessible from any Internet connection.

Through careful management of its peak power demands, the company also avoided spending in excess of EUR 130000 on a new transformer. In addition, a bank of energy projects maintained by the staff helped shave 23 % off energy costs.

Backing by senior management, the commitment to continuous improvement and strong staff motivation were all key to unlocking success. After a 12-month run time, Les Géants du Revêtement were awarded ISO 50001 certification in February 2014.

UN framework on climate change backs ISO 50001

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change is currently showcasing on its Website ISO 50001, ISO's flagship standard on energy management systems – an undisguised nudge for organizations to join the nearly 5000 companies worldwide that are already using the standard.

Energy can be a financial drain on organizations, incurring economic, environmental and societal costs by depleting resources and contributing to climate change. The good news is there is a lot individual companies can do to improve the way they manage their energy consumption and maximize their use of natural resources.

A case in point, ISO's energy management standard provides public and private sector organizations with management strategies to increase their energy efficiency, reduce costs and improve energy performance. Its supportive framework goes a long way to reinforcing good energy management behaviours among organizations, which proves gentler for their budgets and for the climate too!

UN projects go green

The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) has achieved certification to ISO 14001, recognizing the organization's commitment to protecting the environment when managing construction sites.

UNOPS implements a wide range of development projects in some of the world's most challenging environments, providing infrastructure, project management and procurement services.

In order to achieve ISO 14001 certification, UNOPS developed an environmental management system (EMS) to help staff monitor and control the environmental impact of its projects by determining how to handle waste and make the best use of natural resources. As a result, any negative effects can be mitigated, and the environmental benefits maximized, from the early stages of a project.

UNOPS' Jerusalem office was the first to fully implement the EMS and gain ISO certification. In the wake of its success, the management system is now being adopted by all UNOPS field offices. The new "green scheme" is part of the wider UN Climate Neutral Strategy towards sustainability.

Mickey's trip to Big Data

Walt Disney recently announced it has invested one billion dollars in a wireless wristband capable of tracking its visitors' every move around its different amusement parks using radio waves. Linked to a credit card, the "Magic Band" also doubles up as a park entry pass and hotel room key.

Offering many advantages such as queue jumping, pre-booking of rides and change of reservations via smartphone, the device proposes to make your Walt Disney World visit an even more magical experience – while in return recording your complete data trail.

Since almost 100 million people visit the Walt Disney parks around the world, that's a huge data potential, which the company stocks and analyses to improve its offerings, tailor its marketing message, and drive more profits.

Although the entertainment company does respect visitors' privacy, allowing them to control how much and what sort of data is collected, stored and shared, there are concerns about the ethical issues of building such gigantic databases. Fortunately, a new ISO/IEC JTC 1 Study Group is mapping a comprehensive picture of the complexities of big data, so that organizations can ethically exploit these sprawling data resources in the future.

What does ISO 9001 have to do with animal parks? In 2004 Mexico's Africam Safari was certified to ISO 9001 for its guided tours, becoming the first zoo in the world to receive this distinction. Since then, the park has gradually integrated most of the quality standard's processes and can now boast a happy staff, happy clients… and happy animals!

Africam Safari's
animal paradise

ISOfocus asked Bibian Pinto, Head of the Quality Department of Africam Safari, to tell us how they manage to keep quality up, and complaints down.

ISOfocus : Why did Africam Safari decide to use ISO 9001 ?

Bibian Pinto : The decision to implement ISO 9001 was motivated by the need to formalize our activities, methods and responsibilities and, more generally, the work of each member of the " tribe ". For although the park was operating efficiently – it was in a phase of expansion at the time – we saw a need to assist its growth by ensuring things were run in a more systemized, regulated and standardized way. We knew that, if we didn't go down this road, we risked growing in a chaotic fashion and losing control, which would compromise the efficiency of the organization's processes and staff and could mean losing our loyal existing clients as well as any future clients. We looked for a tool that would help us meet

Photo: Africam Safari

Photo: Africam Safari

Photo: Africam Safari

this goal and found ISO 9001 to be a good choice, which ticked all the boxes.

What sort of advice would you give to others who want to implement the standard?

First of all, they need to be clear about why they want to implement the standard – be careful not to confuse the means with the end. There is no doubt that ISO brings a competitive advantage to most organizations, but this should only be seen as a positive side-effect. At the end of the day, a management system is designed to establish order, control and efficient planning processes and to help make decisions based on data analysis. And this is what we should be focusing on when applying a management system; the certification should only be used later as proof of a well-oiled organization where everything is running efficiently.

What did you find to be the biggest challenge?

The hardest thing was convincing the people involved that the system is working for them, and not the other way around. Once you have overcome this hurdle, you will secure people's "buy-in" and everything else will follow on naturally.

How many staff worked on the project?

We had a group of six people to implement the standard, but now have only two full-time staff for quality management, and an additional four (that's six people altogether) to maintain the system (training, monitoring, technical assistance, auditing, support, surveys, etc.).

What were the main results and impacts?

We had a raft of positive results:
- Optimal use of resources (time, money, supplies)
- Improved performance (clients, suppliers and a more contented staff that is happy to have achieved the expected results in the allotted time frame)
- Compiling a company history (we documented the knowledge and experience gained from all our processes and through our staff and were able to apply what we had learned to optimize and streamline the way the park was run)

- Generating data and making informed decisions based on their analysis
- Establishing greater equity and fairness, and more transparency throughout

The hardest thing
was convincing the people
involved.

Do you have any tips or advice for ISO 9001 users?

As with any project, implementing ISO 9001 requires an in-depth knowledge of ISO and what it represents, which must then be communicated effectively throughout the organization with all the advantages and benefits. But you also need to support those using the management system by strengthening their knowledge of the system and its benefits, and streamlining it continuously so that it becomes more flexible and practical, and generally easier to implement – in other words, by making the system work for you. The real challenge is getting the system to be a true reflection of reality and, conversely, getting reality to reflect the system so that ISO 9001's most basic principles can be part of the daily working life of each member of staff. This also ensures that audits, inspections and random checks can be carried out without precious time being wasted preparing them. Instead, anyone assessing the system should be able to understand immediately how things work. VR

Barcelona school aces **records management**

Keeping business records safe can be a corporate headache. The School of Archival and Records Management in Barcelona was faced with this predicament. They needed an efficient system to keep control of their documents but also felt they had to be a reference for good practice in records management. That's when they turned to ISO 30300, a management system for electronic records, to help them work smarter rather than harder.

We had to take the lead

and be a reference.

School of Archival and Records Management in Barcelona, Spain.

We now have more control over our management system.

Established in 2002, the School of Archival and Records Management, which is linked to the Autonomous University of Barcelona, trains up experts who can respond efficiently to the challenges of information and records management in a world context marked by technological innovation and quality of service.

The problem

We were looking for a management system that would allow us to guarantee the creation and control of our documents in a transversal way. As an authority on archival and records management, we had to take the lead and be a reference.

The solution

ISO 30301 helped us make a transversal analysis of how we work with a view to simplifying processes, generating standards and quality documents, and minimizing the risks associated with records management.

Risky business

Good records management is essential for any corporate body to function efficiently and protect its assets. But collecting, controlling, storing and retrieving records are not without risk. For example, what happens when documents are misfiled, damaged, or even worse, deleted. Quite simply, they fail to meet the organization's purpose.

But help is at hand with the recently published technical report ISO/TR 18128:2014, *Risk assessment for records processes and systems*. Developed by ISO/TC 46/SC 11 on archives and records management, it is intended to help records professionals identify, analyse and evaluate the risks associated with managing their records.

Based on the structure of ISO 31000:2009, which sets out the ground principles for managing risk, the new technical report includes an easy-to-follow checklist to help records professionals find their way around the document.

Now organizations can go about their daily business safe in the knowledge that their records are in good hands.

Anahí Casadesús de Mingo, Coordinator ISO 30300 Training Plan, School of Archival and Records Management. Other team members include Ramon Alberch, Alfred Mauri and Remei Perpinyà.

Initiatives taken

We established a work system that allows us to be more efficient and competitive. Procedures and documents have been standardized, which saves us time and reduces costs.

Staff and resources

It was important for us to be able to rely on a records management expert who could lead the design and implementation of the management system at the operational level.

Biggest challenge

Without a doubt, going from the ISO theory to real solutions for a truly functional management system... not to mention the change of management inside the company.

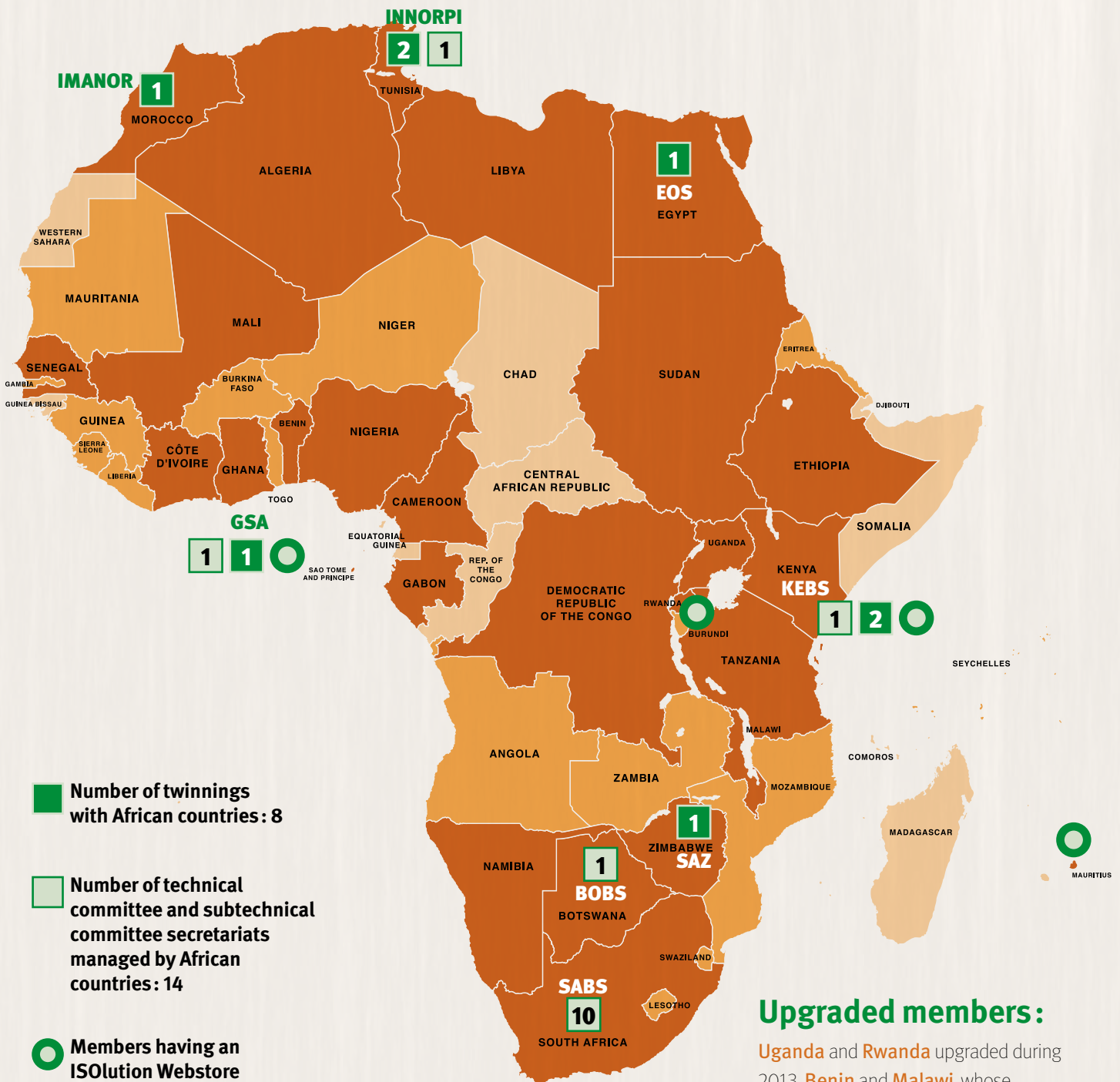### The results

We now have more control over our management system, which has allowed the company to grow and become more competitive. As an educational institution, we are at the cutting edge of records management and this is fundamental to our business.

Trusted tips

Seek out an expert in documents management who will be capable of making the informed choices and decisions you can't make! ML

Africa's outlook

42 **ISO members** in Africa
26 Full members
16 Correspondent members

INNORPI **2** **1**
TUNISIA

IMANOR **1**
MOROCCO

ALGERIA

LIBYA

1
EOS
EGYPT

WESTERN SAHARA

MAURITANIA

MALI

NIGER

CHAD

SUDAN

ERITREA

DJIBOUTI

SENEGAL
GAMBIA
GUINEA BISSAU
GUINEA
SIERRA LEONE
LIBERIA
CÔTE D'IVOIRE
GHANA
TOGO
BURKINA FASO
BENIN
NIGERIA

CAMEROON

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

ETHIOPIA

SOMALIA

GSA
1 **1** ◯
SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

GABON

REP. OF THE CONGO

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

UGANDA

RWANDA ◯
BURUNDI

KENYA
KEBS **1** **2** ◯

SEYCHELLES

TANZANIA

MALAWI

COMOROS

ANGOLA

ZAMBIA

MOZAMBIQUE

MADAGASCAR

◯ MAURITIUS

NAMIBIA

1
BOBS
BOTSWANA

ZIMBABWE
1
SAZ

SWAZILAND

SABS
10
SOUTH AFRICA

LESOTHO

■ Number of twinnings with African countries: 8

□ Number of technical committee and subtechnical committee secretariats managed by African countries: 14

◯ Members having an ISOlution Webstore

ISO statistics at 18 March 2014.

Upgraded members:

Uganda and Rwanda upgraded during 2013. Benin and Malawi, whose applications were processed in 2013, upgraded on 1 January 2014.

With a population of more than 1 billion and a GDP of USD 3 359 148* million, Africa is one of the most dynamic regions in the world and the second fastest growing, just behind Asia. International Standards play an important role in this growth, as evidenced by Africa's increasing participation in ISO. Here is a snapshot of ISO's members on the African continent...

Number of ISO training activities in Africa

1550 participants

46

71
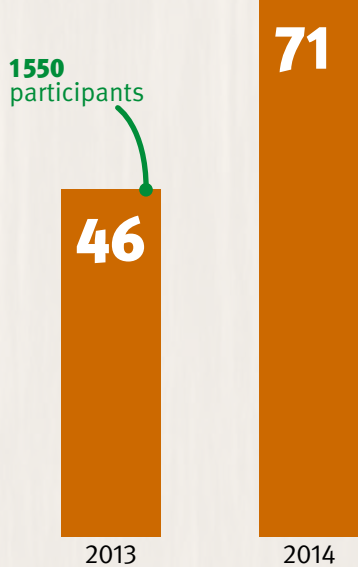
2013

2014

In 2013, **46** training and technical assistance activities were provided to **1550** participants.
For 2014, **71** training and technical assistance activities are planned.

African countries involved in ISO technical committees

610
ISO/TCs and ISO/SCs

36
African countries
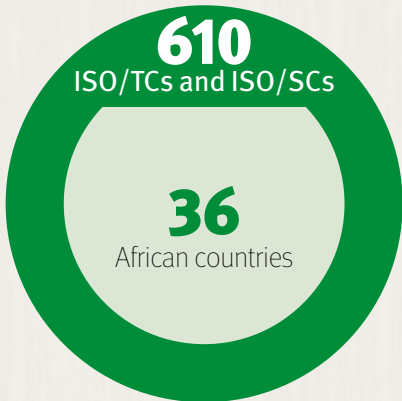
36 African countries are involved in **610** ISO/TCs and ISO/SCs.

African experts participating in ISO work

351
working groups

336
experts

336 experts are registered in **351** working groups.

*Source : africaneconomicoutlook.org

MyBlog

The Laura *diaries*

MAY 30

Thursday, 30 May

This being my first meeting with technical committee ISO/TC 133 on clothing sizing systems, I was a little nervous when I arrived at the meeting venue in Paris. Fortunately, our French hosts lived up to their gourmet reputation with an impressive spread of croissants, tasty pastries and coffee, which provided the perfect ice-breaker.

We all know that ISO's work is international, but actually going to TC meetings makes you appreciate how global our activities really are. Among the 30-or-so delegates at this meeting were representatives from all over Europe as well as China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, South Africa and a liaison from the USA, all brought together by their shared commitment to their industry.

We kicked off the meeting by agreeing the agenda. Then delegates presented reports and comments from their national mirror committees, whereupon I realized that my Parisian sojourn might not be all plain sailing. Some participants from Asia questioned why so many meetings are held in Europe when so much of the work is done in the Far East. This was a fair point which provoked a debate about budget constraints. My golden opportunity to promote the use of WebEx and collaborative tools for working groups had arrived.

I really settled into my role when we got on to discussing the TC's draft standards; I advised on structure, how to reference other standards correctly and explained some of the finer points of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2, our rule book for drafting standards. But I have to say I was stumped when the conversation turned to terminology – who knew there were so many English terms for exactly the same thing?

Comments (0) | Likes (152)

Posted by Laura Mathew on 31 May at 17:02 in France.

As an Editorial Programme Manager, Laura Mathew fulfils a dual role : guiding technical committees (TCs) in drafting standards and advising them on ISO processes and procedures. Here, she recounts a recent TC meeting where her editorial support at an early stage will hopefully reduce the need for intervention further down the line.

MAY
31

Friday, 31 May

While yesterday's focus was editorial, today's plenary meeting centred around the TC itself : the status of its various projects, updates to the business plan and its relationship with other committees in liaison. The TC secretary kept us apprised of actions taken since the previous meeting before I took the floor with my presentation on all things ISO.

A lot has changed in the last year or two — our transition to XML single-source publishing, improvements to the Directives, innovative pilot projects that will benefit the entire standardization community — and I think my enthusiasm came across. Members were nodding their heads, taking smartphone snaps of my slides and asking me tricky questions that had me reaching for the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1, on how we carry out our technical work, and e-mailing colleagues back in Geneva for advice (hooray for modern communications !).

After lunch in a local bistrot, the drafting of the resolutions and the all-important group photo, it was time to say goodbye to the delegates and head home.

I whizzed past the city sights to Gare de Lyon feeling pleased with our progress. This had been a very fruitful and rewarding meeting — and an enjoyable one too !

Comments (3) | Likes (119)

Hi ! I'm Laura and I work for ISO as an Editorial Programme Manager. The job has evolved from my dual functions of Technical Editor and Technical Programme Manager. In this role, I advise and guide committees in the development of standards from both a procedural and editorial standpoint. Much of my work is done by e-mail and via WebEx but, ISO being an international organization, I've been to committee meetings in some far-flung places from Kuala Lumpur to Milan to discuss topics ranging from customer services to stylish shoes !

Posted by Laura Mathew on 01 June at 20:19 in Switzerland.

Smooth and safe freight transport thanks to new ISO online collection

Who runs the world ? Why freight containers of course ! Over 20 million freight containers are in use, moving 80 % of the world's trade by road, rail and air.

Consumer goods we rely on every day travel long distances across international borders at relatively little cost thanks to freight containers. With the new ISO online collection, get the latest information on all your freight container needs – lifting, loading, stacking, securing and storing – from one single source.

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This online collection is the latest to be made available through the ISO Online Browsing Platform (OBP), which already contains the quality management, environmental management and food safety management families of standards.

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