

UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION

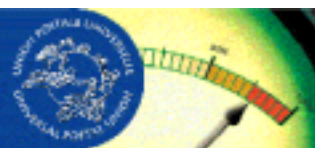
INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

Quality management structure

A model for developing countries

February 2003

Quality of Service Programme
Programme qualité de service



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1 Introduction

Quality of Service is not dependent on operational aspects alone, but also on a quality organization and management.

In the UPU convention, there is a requirement for all customers and users to be able to enjoy the right to a Universal Postal Service that involves the permanent provision of a quality basic postal service at all points in their territory, at an affordable price. Quality is the key ingredient in the provision of a Universal Postal Service.

There are five essential areas that have been identified as crucial for the provision of a Universal Postal Service:

- 1 Access to services;
- 2 Customer satisfaction;
- 3 Speed and reliability;
- 4 Security;
- 5 Liability, provision of information and treatment of inquiries.

It is important that every administration has in place, as a minimum, measurable quality of service standards for all services offered under these headings. Administrations must also make sure that achievement of standards is monitored and that results are published.

This document sets out a model for integrating quality management into the postal operator's structure and is especially aimed at service in developing countries of the world. It is anticipated that the model will be able to be adapted to suit the needs of individual countries. It will also allow administrations to develop organisational and operational plans that can bring about quality improvement. The model has been developed without consideration of any advances in technology and does not assume the provision within an administration of any particular level of automation.

The proposals contained in the document are based on the author's experience of consultancy missions in developing countries as part of UPU Quality of Service improvement projects.

International mail is the main focus of the document, both incoming and outgoing. It is expected that there will be the opportunity for Administrations to integrate quality for domestic mail into any measures and objectives for quality improvement. International mail should travel with domestic mail from posting to dispatch from the country of origin, and from the Office of Exchange (OE) to the point of delivery in the receiving country. The way in which any administration tackles the issue of quality management for international items may well depend on the level of total traffic handled and the proportion of that traffic that is generated to and from international destinations.

Many of the issues covered in this document have been outlined and explained in the Manuals and Guides issued by the UPU, some of which are listed for reference in Annex B. In particular, there is very useful information for administrations in the "Quality of Service Standards Manual" and "A Guide to Quality Management, Quality Testing and Quality Checking". The delivery standards for each administration are now contained on a CD-ROM entitled "Compendium of Delivery Standards".

It would be useful for administrations to consider the terms of reference for a Quality Management section when putting this in place. These are stated in "A Guide to Quality Management, Quality Testing and Quality Checking".

- The operation, development and continuous oversight of quality testing schemes.
- The publication of quality testing results widely throughout the administration.
- The use of testing data to stimulate positive action by identifying malfunctions and by initiating and coordinating the implementation of remedial action.
- The development of new quality checks.
- The development and implementation of major quality improvement schemes.
- The development, implementation and communication of the administration's policies on improving mails quality.

Each administration needs to have an operation that can consistently provide the advertised products and services to the agreed standard at the lowest cost. In order to reach this objective, it may well be necessary to examine all of the operational procedures and the organizational structure. Carrying out a thorough review which starts at the heart of the mails process can usually ensure that the basic operation is sound and improvements can be built on the understanding that the "basics" are right.

2 Quality Management measures and objectives

There is a need to measure the quality given to all mail, both international and domestic. In order to understand any measures, and to set any meaningful objectives, it is necessary for staff at all levels to have a thorough understanding of how the mail system works (both international and domestic). The concept now widely used is to develop an individual, country-specific, mails pipeline which shows the processes required to get mail from the posting customer to the receiving customer.

2.1 Mails pipeline

This can be developed for any mail product and will show each process that forms part of the journey of a mail piece. (This can be a letter, parcel, packet, EMS item or any other product) The pipeline can also be devised to cover counter transactions or customer care processes.

/ An example of a current International mails pipeline is given in Annex A.

With the breaking down of the mails process into constituent parts, it is also possible to identify handover points between processes. In some cases these handover points can be the source of delays in transmission and subsequently affect the quality of service on a particular route. In countries which have adopted the pipeline concept service level agreements have been devised between the various parts of the pipeline. These show the requirements for the way mail has to be handed over and include the provision of signatures between staff in charge of the different parts of the mail process. Each part of the operation has an obligation to ensure that its element of the pipeline specification is achieved consistently. An example of a handover document is given in Annex B.

Once all the processes that make up the journey of a letter have been identified, it is possible to concentrate on each constituent part of the process and set standards and objectives for the way each function should be performed. Standards and objectives can be formulated for the entire process. Measures can be devised to ensure that all staff working in an area or office are performing their work to a satisfactory standard which will ensure that quality for the particular product is maintained. It must be stressed, however, that the pipeline should be seen as a series of dependent processes that allow an Administration to get the basics of their mail system right in order to enhance quality of service.

Definitions of the tasks within a particular work area need to be listed and can form part of a job description for an individual or group. Administrations can devise their own format for these lists to suit local circumstances.

2.2 Setting standards

It is important that the standards for services and products are set by the national operator. Current delivery standards by country are included on a CD-ROM issued by the UPU "Compendium of Delivery Standards". It is, however, equally important that standards are set after consultation with the users of the service (the customers), and in most cases the National Government. In some countries, it will also be necessary to satisfy the requirements of the national regulator.

In the consultations with customers consideration needs to be given to availability of the service to particular groups of people, how the service will be provided, security and the compensation terms that would apply if the standards are not achieved.

Standards will need to be harmonized with the countries that will receive and dispatch items included in the service. There is also the option of bringing about quality improvement on selected routes by the introduction of bilateral agreements between administrations. This method is being used extensively worldwide.

Standards need to take into account the geography of the country and the infrastructure which may not allow full national standards for more time-critical products and services. It is important to note, however, that there must be access for all people to these services in order to satisfy the requirements of the Universal Service. As part of the Quality Management process, it is advisable for administrations to review their current advertised standards.

2.3 Measurement

The most effective way to assess quality of service is to measure the time taken for an item to travel from the point of posting to the point of delivery. This is known as end-to-end (E2E) measurement and is the most effective current measurement. End-to-end testing has been in existence under the guidance of the UPU since 1986, with published results available to all administrations. This testing does not, however cover all routes. Administrations need to give careful consideration to the major routes that they require to be checked in detail. It should be stressed that end-to-end testing is not limited to external methods only.

Between some developing countries, there are measurement systems for quality of service that are operating to give analysis which enables significant improvement to be made. Specific methods operated include:

- Bar-coding of test items;
- Radio frequency monitoring of test items at key points in transmission;
- Electronic exchange of information.

3 Quality Management structure

It is important to have in place an appropriate quality management structure that operates at all levels of the organization. This structure has the power to identify and remedy all parts of the mails process that have an effect on the quality of the service provided.

This section will provide an outline Quality Management organization and also a proposal for a meeting and monitoring structure.

3.1 Start-up/Implementation Team

It is unlikely that a discrete Quality Management structure will already be in place within most administrations, even though some form of quality measurement activity may be operating. There will therefore be a need to set up the new Quality Management structure within the organization to make sure that activities and staffing of the structure are coordinated. In order to do this, it is advisable to set up a team of people who would carry out the work necessary for the structure to begin operating effectively.

In the Implementation Team, it is advisable to have people who are closely involved at present in the provision of mail services and who have day-to-day dealings with international mail. As part of a recent UPU quality mission, one participating administration released for training all their key regional Operating Managers. This was done in an effort to gain commitment for the introduction of the identification of the mails pipeline and the devising of measures to monitor quality of service, especially for international mail.

Within the Implementation Team, it is important to have a small number of staff from local offices who would be able to clarify methods for obtaining the raw data required from sorting office personnel.

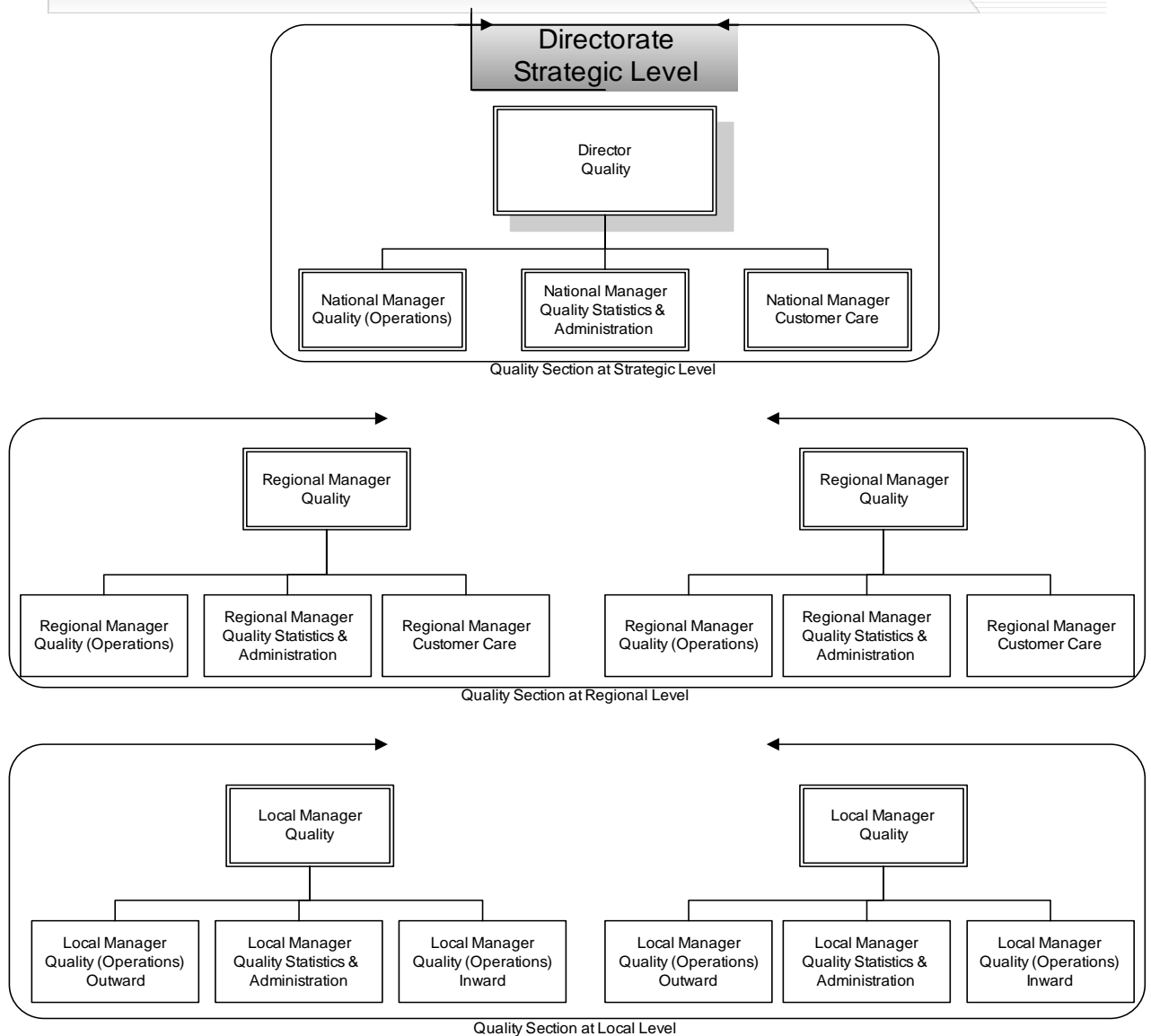
One of the key tasks of the Implementation Team would be to prepare the high-level, country-specific mails pipeline from which much of the measurement data would come. There is also a need for the administration to have clearly defined quality action plans. These plans need to be formulated to set a clear direction towards achievement of quality improvement and to meet, where necessary, the criteria for accessing Quality of Service Fund (QSF) project funding. Plans would include the projects necessary to bring about change.

It is important that the Director designate responsible for quality has significant input into the make-up of the Implementation Team. The preparatory work done by this Team has to be of such high quality that it enables the appointed quality management staff to enjoy a transition which is seamless in its introduction and yet makes a maximum contribution to quality improvement from its first day of operation.

3.2 Model Quality Management structure

A proposal for a management structure to bring about quality improvement is shown below.

MODEL QUALITY OF SERVICE STRUCTURE



3.3 How a Model Quality Management structure would work

3.3.1 Director – Strategic Level

The model proposes a Director responsible solely for quality at the strategic level who would have overall responsibility for quality performance. In some instances, it may be difficult to have this additional person with sole responsibility at strategic level and the responsibility may be given to an existing Director. It is important that the quality responsibility is not just seen as an add-on function for an Operations Director or a Finance Director as there would almost inevitably be a conflict of interests at some stage. The Director would have line management responsibility for all the Strategic Managers, as well as overall responsibility for all staff working within the Quality Management structure.

3.3.2 Managers – Strategic Level

The proposal here is for a split at national level into the three key functional areas of quality. These are:

- 1 Operations;
- 2 Statistics and Administration;
- 3 Customer Care.

The three key Managers would report direct to the Director and would act as important advisors to the Director in setting the following policies:

- Measurement and Standards;
- Transportation;
- Security;
- Access;
- Compensation;
- Communication.

These Managers would also be the main point of contact between the administration and the appropriate service providers for both domestic and international services. This arrangement may be seen as reducing the influence of national Operations Managers. It should, however, be remembered that the information obtained by the quality management sections would allow much more thorough analysis of the mail operation to be carried out. They would also be able to devise systems, routes, etc. that would bring about quality improvement. There does, though, need to be close interaction between the Quality Managers and the national Operations Managers.

The administration element of the Statistics Manager is seen as being the control and storing of information from both internal and external sampling.

3.3.3 Managers - Regional Level

The structure at regional level covers the same areas as the national structure and has Managers for the key areas of Operations, Statistics and Customer Care.

The regional structure is seen very much as a link between the strategic and local structures and can be used to help decision making at the strategic level by presenting a more customer-oriented view based on direct links with customers and operators.

The regional structure is a link role incorporating mail processing, delivery and conveyance staff, counter staff and customers (both Business and Public).

In the case of the regional Customer Care Manager, this would be the direct link between the customer and the administration for two main reasons:

- 1 To ensure consistency of approach in the application of standards and compensation.
- 2 To take the workload off staff at a local level in their dealings with customers and give customers one regional centre as a point of contact.

By having regional centres for customer-care case handling, this also enables the levels of expertise to be improved in dealing with customer inquiries and complaints. It is important that the Customer Care function is seen to be transparent and diligent in its dealings with all cases, and it is considered that this structure would allow that to happen.

Regional Operations Managers would be able to ensure that there was coordination of transport arrangements and standardization in the sorting and delivery methods and standards. They would also be able to help to implement and monitor any necessary improvement projects which would have been identified through quality trend analysis.

Regional Managers would have line management responsibility for local managers within their sphere of expertise. i.e. Operations, Statistics and Administration.

3.3.4 Managers - Local Level

The main function of the local Quality Managers is to monitor and analyze current performance and instigate quality improvement activities. An additional function is to help to identify national and international problems that have a direct impact on the local office.

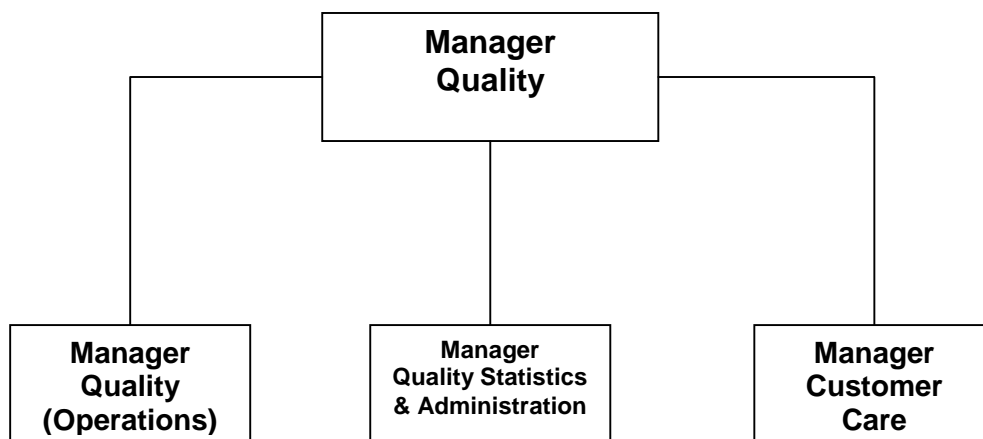
The proposal at a local level includes the provision of two Operations Quality Managers to cover the Inward and Outward operation. These Operations Quality Managers would be a source of support for the Outward and Inward Operations Managers responsible for the direction of staff in these areas and would need to work closely together to identify and bring about improvements in performance.

The Statistics and Administration Manager would be the main contact for the collection and analysis of all data generated internally and externally. It is envisaged that this Manager would have staff at local level to issue, collect and analyze all check and reporting forms and staff to carry out the required checks.

3.3.5 Adoption of the model in small administrations

The structure adopted by an administration will be very much determined by the size and quality of the workforce. In some cases, there will not be the need for a regional structure and the local and strategic staff will be at the same location.

Where small administrations are operating, a suggested format is shown below:



It would be possible under this structure for all the Managers shown to carry out more than one task within the administration, but with their main responsibility being quality improvement. Examples of additional tasks that could be carried out are:

Manager Quality Operations

- Sorting Office/OE Manager
- Distribution Manager
- Delivery Manager
- Security Manager

Manager Quality Statistics and Administration

- Finance Manager

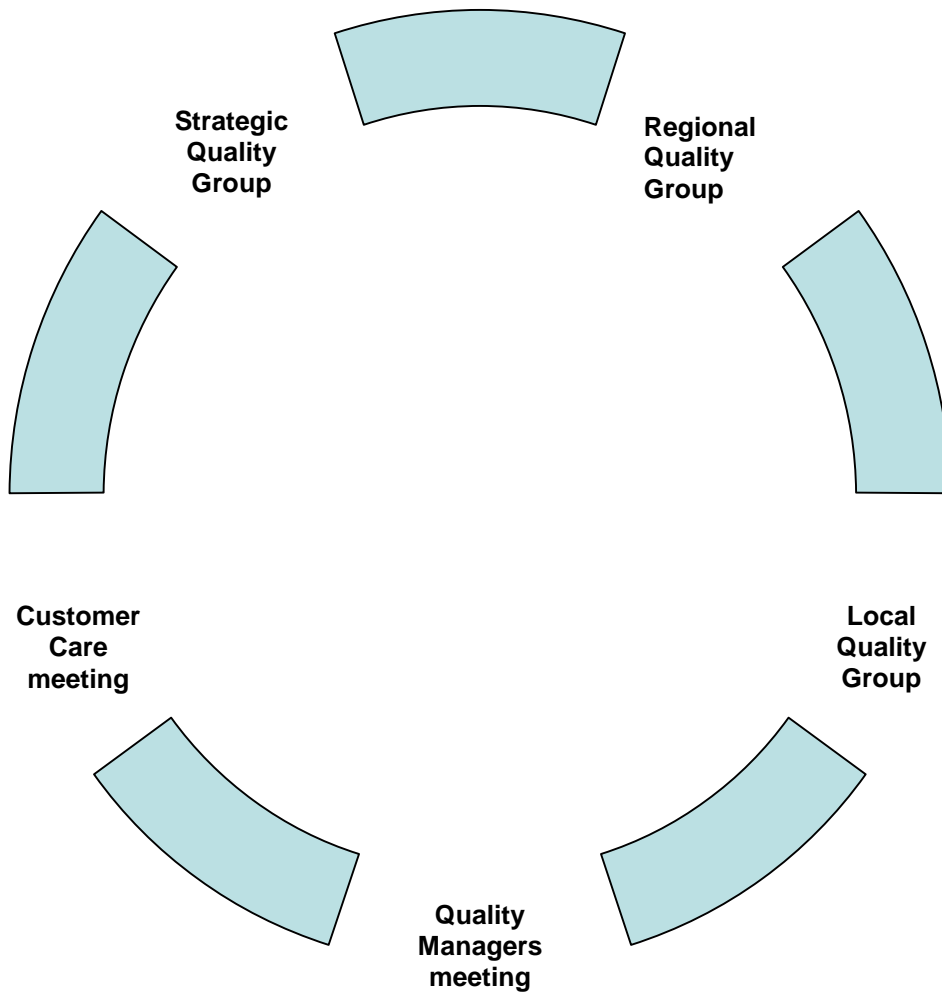
- Counters Manager

Manager Customer Care

- Communications Manager
- Resources/Personnel Manager

3.4 Quality Management meeting structure - an example

The timings of meetings within this structure will be dependent upon the requirement for provision of information at a strategic level for the Quality Director. Shown below is an example of a structure which could be followed, based on an assumption that the requirement for receipt of detailed information by the Quality Director is during the third week of each month.



Meeting Timetable

An example of a timetable for the operation of the Meeting Structure is shown below. The timetable is for the first four months of the year 2003 and assumes the receipt of detailed information by the Quality Director during the third week of each month.

Strategic Quality Group	22 January	19 February	19 March	23 April
Regional Quality Group	15 January	12 February	12 March	16 April
Local Quality Group	8 January	5 February	5 March	9 April
Customer Care Meetings		17 February		21 April
Quality Ops Managers	20 January		17 March	

3.5 Quality Management Forums

The meeting structure as shown at 3.4 above covers arrangements mostly for internal quality management. There are a number of additional meetings suggested that would allow the views of customers and special interest groups to be heard. This in turn would allow fully informed decisions to be made that would bring about quality improvement. The initial meetings of these Forums would need to be at a strategic level and would be with nationally recognized bodies representing mail users. The Forums would be most effective by covering the following areas.

3.5.1 Customer

Customer Liaison Group

This should meet on a quarterly basis. It would be aimed at major users of the mail service (particularly international) and would be likely to include the National Chamber of Commerce, industry groups, publishers and other major mail users. Depending on the number of groups operating within a country, it might be appropriate to include a representative from the public interest group or the regulator (but see also the Postal Consumer Council – below).

There is a need to set up Customer Liaison Groups at both regional and local levels. The frequency of meetings should also be quarterly but timed to be able to allow any unresolved issues to be discussed at a higher (regional or strategic) level. With a structure in place at regional and local level, this would also allow for new ideas and best practice operating at local level to be fed into regional and national operating procedures.

Postal Consumer Council

This group should meet either two or three times each year. Its aim is to influence the strategic direction of the postal administration. Members would need to have responsibility for significant groups of mail users and be members of influential national organizations. There could also be a link between this group and the national regulator, where one exists.

3.5.2 Operations

Airlines Operating Liaison Group

Meetings should be monthly and should be at a strategic level, unless there is more than one airport used for the transmission of international mail. It will be necessary to have meetings with all the airlines used, and meetings must include representatives from the airline handling agents. Monitoring information will be important to any discussions which are likely to include handover

times, capacity, timekeeping and security. In view of the likely discussions about penalty clauses, it is important that the necessary statistical information format is agreed by all parties.

Customs Operating Group

This meeting should be at operational level and involve Quality and Operations Managers that have direct links with the Customs officers at the airport, and possibly in processing centres linked to main airports. The suggested frequency is monthly, although this could be changed depending on the level of traffic involved.

Security Monitoring Group

Frequency of meetings for this group is likely to be quarterly as some of the issues discussed will be derived from trends analysis of compensation payments and mailbag violations.

Quality Steering Group

There is a need to have a sharp internal focus on the operation of the international mail service. It is important, therefore, to involve as many representatives as possible in a Quality Steering Group at strategic level. This Group would include all the senior Quality Managers (at strategic level), and would also have as its members the Manager of the domestic network and the Manager responsible for international mail. It would be beneficial to have strategic planners and the National Communications Manager as part of the Group.

Objectives of the Group would be to identify required improvement activity and to plan, produce and monitor responses to quality improvement communications campaigns. The Group would also need to consider the resource implications of any improvement activity.

Quality improvement projects

Quality improvement projects promote the involvement of staff in carrying out changes within their own work area that will bring about quality improvement. In most cases, the schemes are devised by the workers themselves and can involve changes to their own working practices and methods. Projects are planned and introduced in such a way that changes can be measured and monitored to bring about the desired levels of improvement.

4 Information requirements

Included in this section will be a summary of information which can be used to measure current performance and to analyze emerging trends that could affect quality of service.

A UPU publication "126 - Point Quality Control of International Mail Circulation" was distributed to all member countries. This document contains an important checklist for the entire international mail pipeline and can be used to help to identify and prepare a country-specific pipeline, as outlined in Section 2.1 above. It should be noted that many of the 126 points are incorporated into various parts of this document because of their importance and relevance to quality of service performance.

Listed below are some examples of information that can be obtained through sampling checks and reports that will, in many instances, already be provided as part of normal operational monitoring. This list is not exhaustive.

4.1 Posting/Collection/Stamping

- Collection monitoring - have collections been made at the correct time and forwarded to the appropriate mail processing centre.
- Mail collection from post offices - has all mail been collected?

- Mail stamp cancellation – have all mail items been date-stamped with the correct date and time? Have all date-stamps been checked for quality and accuracy?
- Special item processing – have all special items such as registered/insured/COD been collected and recorded and date-stamped?
- International mail – has all international mail been given the same treatment as domestic items?

4.2 Sorting – Outward and Inward

- Sorting accuracy for outward dispatches.
- Appropriate bundles included in dispatches.
- Dispatches cleared to time and labelled correctly.
- Special items – Registered/Insured/COD included in correct dispatches and bags containing special items labelled and sealed correctly.
- Where containers are used – are bags loaded to the right containers?
- Documentation checks and recording – is all documentation checked and are bags recorded?
- Are arrivals of mail notified and recorded and bags opened and sorted immediately?
- Checks of contents of bags received – are random/regular checks made of contents.
- Label checks should be carried out and details recorded.

4.3 Airline handover

- List of weights of mail dispatched on each flight – including transfer bags.
- Handover times to airline and flight departure time.
- Container numbers.
- Time of receipt from airline for inward mail and condition of mail when received.
- Details of flight mail received from airline and touchdown time.

4.4 Quality sampling

- Date-stamp checks
- Sorting accuracy for outward dispatches
- Addressing standard checks outward and inward
- Dispatch clearance times
- Bag labelling checks
- Airline handover times
- Recording of violations/damage
- Inward labelling checks
- Inward date-stamp examination
- Recording of inward bag receipts

4.5 Security

- Record of violations

- Details of delays and losses by route and airline
- Customer complaints by country
- Details of bags/items held or subject to delay by Customs examination

4.6 Customer satisfaction

- Customer complaints record
- Payments for damage/violation/delay
- Time taken to deal with complaint
- Analysis of complaints
- Customer survey results

5 Processing critical information and key tasks

This section will build on the systems proposed under the quality management structure and identify ways in which information can be used to improve performance. It will show some of the key tasks that are necessary to be carried out at each level within the organization in order to increase or maintain quality of service.

Level	Manager	Task and Information
Strategic	Operations	Analyze air conveyance reports. Identify poor routes. Devise alternative routes/airlines.
Strategic	Operations	Check airline handover times. Discuss remedial action with airlines or agents.
Strategic	Operations	Obtain details of violations/losses/damage. Discuss problem areas with airlines and take remedial action.
Strategic	Operations	Get detail of dispatch/handover failures. Agree remedial action with Regional Operations Managers.
Strategic	Operations	Obtain detail of customer complaints. Identify areas of weakness. Propose remedial action.
Strategic	Statistics and Administration	Examine all regional returns from checking systems. Ensure checks are appropriate for quality improvement.
Strategic	Statistics and Administration	Decide appropriate methods of presentation of data. Produce accompanying commentary and present data to appropriate audience.
Strategic	Statistics and Administration	Put in place systems for ensuring that all checks are carried out and the results fed back to the section for analysis.
Strategic	Customer Care	Receive analysis of complaints and compensation. Use information to refine existing regulations.
Strategic	Customer Care	Devise communications campaigns. Agree strategy for methods and timings of campaigns.
Strategic	Customer Care	Deal with high-level complaints and canvas views from major opinion formers.
Strategic	Customer Care	Devise customer questionnaires. Analyze and act on feedback.

Level	Manager	Task and Information
Regional	Operations	Receive details of operational failures. Arrange for remedial action to be taken by local offices.
Regional	Operations	Ensure regional operating arrangements meet targets for connection to international conveyance.
Regional	Statistics and Administration	Collate all data received from local offices and produce regional results.
Regional	Statistics and Administration	Ensure all required checks are carried out at local level. Send out/receive documentation to agreed timescales.
Regional	Statistics and Administration	Work out regional trends and their effect on national statistics and notify results.
Regional	Customer Care	Deal with and monitor all customer complaints. Arrange and monitor compensation payments in line with national regulations.
Regional	Customer Care	Deal with all regional/local media inquiries.
Regional	Customer Care	Arrange regional/local roll-out of any publicity campaigns. Monitor effect of campaigns.
Regional	Customer Care	Carry out customer surveys. Canvas regional/local views from opinion formers.

Level	Manager	Task and Information
Local	Operations Outward/Inward	Ensure all dispatches/receipts are on time and correctly labelled/sorted.
Local	Operations Outward/Inward	Carry out checks of sorting and labelling. Arrange training where necessary. Ensure all documentation completed.
Local	Operations Outward/Inward	Investigate use of work aids and information sources to increase awareness of individual effect on quality.
Local	Statistics and Administration	Prepare and distribute forms for checks to be made and ensure timely collection when complete. Highlight any problems/difficulties.
Local	Statistics and Administration	Analyze results from checks and ensure feedback communicated.
Local	Statistics and Administration	Provide information to regional/national Managers.
Local	Statistics and Administration	Monitor local effect of publicity campaigns to improve quality.

6 Human resources and qualifications

It is unlikely that the full proposed structure will be appropriate to cover all administrations receiving this document, but this section will endeavour to develop the resources required and also give some guidance on the qualifications that are considered necessary for staff who will become involved in quality management.

There are no specific indications of the numbers of staff required for each job as these will be different for each administration depending on the total number of people employed within the organization, the administration's level of commitment to its Quality Management structure and the geographical size of the country (for its regional structure).

6.1 Quality Operations Manager

There is a requirement for a thorough understanding of the mails operations process in order for the Quality Operations Manager to be able to put together plans that will:

- a Identify a weakness in the mails pipeline that will have a detrimental effect on quality of service;
- b Propose a solution that will rectify the problem;
- c Make the change happen;
- d Monitor the effect of the change.

It is likely that the individuals filling these jobs – at national, regional and local levels – will have experience of working in all areas of the mail operation. It is particularly important that the national Manager has experience of international circulation and links with airlines or their handling agents. It is also important that the Strategic Managers are used as the agents for change. They would need, therefore to have change and project management experience and capability.

There is potentially a conflict between the Operations Managers who manage the day-to-day operation and the Quality Operations Manager. The Quality Manager, therefore, needs as a further qualification, an ability to be diplomatic in his dealings with operational managers and staff and be an influential person in dealing with staff at all levels.

6.2 Quality Statistics and Administration Manager

The Quality Statistics and Administration Manager (QSAM) is the key job in the drive for quality improvement. The QSAM will be providing all of the detailed information to allow any change to be considered.

It is important that the QSAM has an in-depth knowledge of statistical methodology and procedures and also a thorough knowledge of operational procedures. Knowledge of customer care methods and compensation arrangements would be an advantage. As well as having an ability to analyze statistical information the QSAM must also be able to convey the information to a wider audience of Operational Managers and staff who could be sceptical of the data presented.

The ability to be able to find the measures that will allow informed decisions to be made is a key element of the job. As well as finding the right measures to track, there is a need to make sure that suitable time periods are set which will enable an accurate picture of any situation to be assessed.

At local level, it will be necessary for a suitable number of support staff to be provided to help in the collection of data. The Manager needs to have had sufficient experience to ensure that the data collected is appropriate for the right decisions to be made.

The ability to identify trends and produce evidence to verify the trend analysis is another key element of the job. Diplomacy and the determination to convince others of your conclusions will be needed.

There are a considerable number of measures taken to analyze quality and the essential elements of the mails process. It will be necessary for the QSAM to be able to pick out the key measures and use them for helping to make change happen. It will also be necessary to decide which external systems will be best used for measures such as:

- Test letters;
- Total end-to-end measurement;
- Customer satisfaction.

The reference to "Administration" within the title of the job concerns the administration involved in establishing and monitoring the different measurement schemes that will be set up. Many internal measures will already have been started, and these will need to be transferred to the control of the QSAM. The QSAM will also act as the main contact point for any external measurement schemes and for the links with other administrations when compiling and analyzing data.

6.3 Customer Care Manager

The position of Customer Care Manager has only been proposed at two levels – strategic and regional. It is unlikely that the level of work would be sufficient to warrant a Manager at local level unless there were infrastructure problems within a country that made this necessary.

It is likely that people filling these jobs will have had experience of dealing direct with the public and/or media experience. A good knowledge of the international mails operation would be useful, as would knowledge of the law relating to the postal service.

6.3.1 Strategic Customer Care Manager

The main purpose of this job is to help to define the policy for dealing with customer enquiries and to propose compensation levels for poor performance, damage and loss. The jobholder should also canvass customer requirements both at the national and local levels. There would be an element of the job concerned with public relations and the media which could involve leading publicity campaigns.

This individual would not be expected to deal directly with public complaints or inquiries but could become the person who deals with cases where a solution cannot be found at a Regional level or where enquiries are received from influential people within the country e.g. Members of Parliament.

6.3.2 Regional Customer Care Manager

The key role of the regional Customer Care Manager is to deal direct with all customer complaints and inquiries made through the local offices. Although routine inquiries would continue to be dealt with by the local Operations Manager, e.g. searches for mail, all other issues should be referred to the Customer Care unit. The numbers of staff employed within the regional structure would depend on:

- The number of enquiries handled at present;
- The location of the regional offices;
- Potential customers – this would usually be defined by the centres of high population density;
- Centres of media activity.

It would be expected that any written links with customers would be handled by the Customer Care unit and that all dealings with the media would be done by the Customer Care Manager.

6.4 Support staff

Strategic level

The main function of any support staff at this level would be the presentation of data for reports, etc. The number of staff required, therefore, is likely to be low. All preparatory work and data provided would come from regional units.

Regional level

Specialist support staff might be required for the Customer Care function. Other support would concern administrative tasks and the collection of data. Numbers of staff involved would be determined by the amount of monitoring and data collecting carried out at local level and by the reporting requirements at strategic level.

Local level

Staffing numbers would need to depend on the amount of checking carried out and the reporting arrangements to the regional unit. In most administrations, much of this work is already being carried out. Each administration would need to decide, therefore, if staff were to be transferred into a specialist Quality Section.

The model structure would envisage the responsibility and management of the local unit as resting with the regional Quality Section.

7 Staff motivation

This section will cover the ways in which it is possible to improve staff motivation and increase awareness of the steps necessary to bring about improvements in quality of service. These are ideas that have been tried and shown to be of benefit. The list shows a limited number of examples, and administrations may wish to consider alternatives that would be appropriate to local circumstances.

There are three levels at which it should be possible to encourage staff motivation. These are:

- Reward and recognition;
- Environmental;
- Generic.

7.1 Reward and recognition

One of the most commonly used methods to motivate staff is incentive schemes that reward an individual or group for a certain level of performance or achievement. The key objective for the administration may well be the need to increase productivity, but there is more chance of acceptance by staff if the scheme includes links to quality improvement. In terms of quality improvement, the most appropriate incentive scheme would be one based on quality improvement or achievement of standards or targets. This would need a baseline standard to be set and realistic performance improvement targets that could be achieved, in this case by a defined group of people. It should also be possible to set measurable individual targets for specific tasks. The reward would be a subject for agreement within the Administration but could include bonuses, incremental salary increases or other non-pay related awards.

The non-pay related awards could be flanked by additional forms of recognition which could extend to benefits that would allow the individual or group to take their reward through additional participation in a leisure activity or interest of their choice.

Recognition of the performance of an individual or group can also take the form of an acknowledgement of achievement. The acknowledgement does not have to be financial and can be through a certificate or simply a public recognition by a senior manager of the individual or group achievement. In some cases, the fact that an individual or group actually gets feedback on performance from their manager can be sufficient motivation in itself.

7.2 Environmental

In some cases, motivation can be achieved by improving the environment in which people work. Although in some cases capital investment could be required, in many cases, simple changes to sorting office accommodation or layout can bring about the desired effect.

Many sorting offices, transportation/storage facilities are dirty and dusty because of the use of bags and some forms of machinery. Where this is the case, painting or general regular cleaning of the area can lead to a "feel-good" factor among staff. It is also worth considering improvements to the recreational and dining areas for staff, where necessary.

The responsibilities of Quality Operations Managers include the need to check the standards of work of staff in the operational area. In order to help staff achieve the standards required and to motivate them, it is always useful to provide work aids in particular areas. These can take many forms. Sorting/labelling/dispatch lists will help sorters. Segregation lists will help distribution/transport staff. Airline dispatch lists will help staff dealing with handovers to airlines. As well as written aids, the use of new or well maintained equipment will give staff the incentive to do the job well. The issue of suitable uniforms and protective clothing can also provide the necessary motivation.

Although staff will benefit greatly from the issue of work aids and improvements in their immediate environment, the real benefit for quality improvement will come from adequate and timely training. Each individual should have a specific training plan that should be discussed with their immediate manager or the Training Manager. Motivation will come from an individual's knowledge that the appropriate training will be given to them and that they will then be able to play a full part in the achievements of their team or group.

7.3 Generic

Individuals and groups will be motivated by seeing the external results of their achievements.

Improved quality performance will generate a confidence in the users of the postal service that will lead to increased volumes of traffic handled. Even though there can be additional pressure on staff resulting from the need to process and transport more mail, the fact that volume is higher will act as a stimulus to improve performance still further. Increased volumes also lead to increased revenue, which can, in turn lead to the availability of increased capital investment or funding for reward schemes.

It is also useful to get public recognition of improved performance, especially for international mail. The recognition by bodies such as the UPU, through the publication of performance figures measured against agreed standards, can also be used as a method of motivating staff at all levels within the administration.

8 Communications

There are a variety of communication methods that can be used to convey messages about quality of service performance. This section will identify some internal and external methods that can be used as part of a Communications Plan. It is important to stress that all communications should be planned to an appropriate timescale. Plans should also be in place to make sure that the effect of any communications activity can be measured and monitored.

8.1 Internal communications

In order to motivate all staff who can affect quality of service, it is important that a form of communication exists that can tell them how they are performing. For that purpose, regular bulletins are required that show performance against targets for all processes within the operation. There also needs to be a link within these bulletins to the advertised performance target and any internal targets that have been set.

The way in which the information is presented can take many forms. It is important for each administration to give consideration to the most applicable method for staff in the various parts of the operation. Some examples of methods used at the moment are:

- Staff briefings by a local manager;
- Visual display units within the work area with a constant message projected over 24 hours;
- Posters;
- Internal memos;

- Newsletters;
- Internal newspapers;
- Internet websites.

It would be useful when first setting up the Quality Management team and preparing the mails pipeline (see section 2.1), for members of the team to make presentations to mails operating staff and managers. This would allow an explanation of the pipeline that had been devised and allow Quality Management team members to explain their role.

8.2 External communications

In making the decision about which form of external communication to use, it is important that administrations assess the most appropriate medium to maximize the message transmitted. In general, this will be through using the different types of media.

News releases in newspapers, on television or radio tend to have the best impact. It is necessary though to have an excellent knowledge of deadlines for producing news releases to the media and to have an interesting story to tell.

It is useful to have within the Customer Care team a communications or media specialist so that maximum communications coverage can be obtained.

Use of Internet websites is becoming a very powerful method of communications and is being used by more and more administrations worldwide. It is particularly helpful in large geographical areas with a spread of population centres.

The use of Quality Managers to address meetings of opinion former groups needs to be considered. This allows a two-way flow of information, with messages being conveyed direct to key customers and immediate feedback being obtained from the target group. It is also worth considering attending key conferences and exhibitions in order to communicate messages. At such functions, it is always useful to endorse any message with the use of promotional materials and hospitality.

9 Implementing a Quality Management structure

By suggesting a model Quality Management structure, this document gives administrations the opportunity to consider their commitment to improving quality of service to their customers.

There is the opportunity for each administration to introduce a modified version of the proposed structure that best suits their individual circumstances. This will allow for the integrating of quality management into the existing operating structure and give a revised and improved focus on the organization's performance.

The proposed management structure has two levels of direct line management responsibility. The Strategic Managers control strategic support staff and the regional team who control regional support staff and local quality managers. The structure means that people within the teams will be:

- Focused on quality and process improvement without the distractions of directly managing the day-to-day operation.
- Able to introduce effective data gathering systems and to make sure that meaningful information is collected.
- Responding to customer needs and giving them the services and products they want.
- Helping to reduce the costs of the organization and increase volumes and revenue by getting things "right first time".

There is a considerable amount of help and advice about quality management and control in the various documents published by the UPU and listed in Annex C. It is not necessary for administrations to spend valuable time and money on devising their own new measurement systems or analysis methods when help is already available. Visits and exchanges with other administrations or simply finding out the best practice for a process can also produce the desired result. The implementation of this model structure for quality management does not require any introduction of new technology, nor does it assume the introduction of any automation within any of the mail processes.

Quality is a key element in all of the processes that are carried out within an administration and can be the key to institutional and structural change.

Implementation of a Quality Management structure can and will provide the impetus for postal development with an administration.

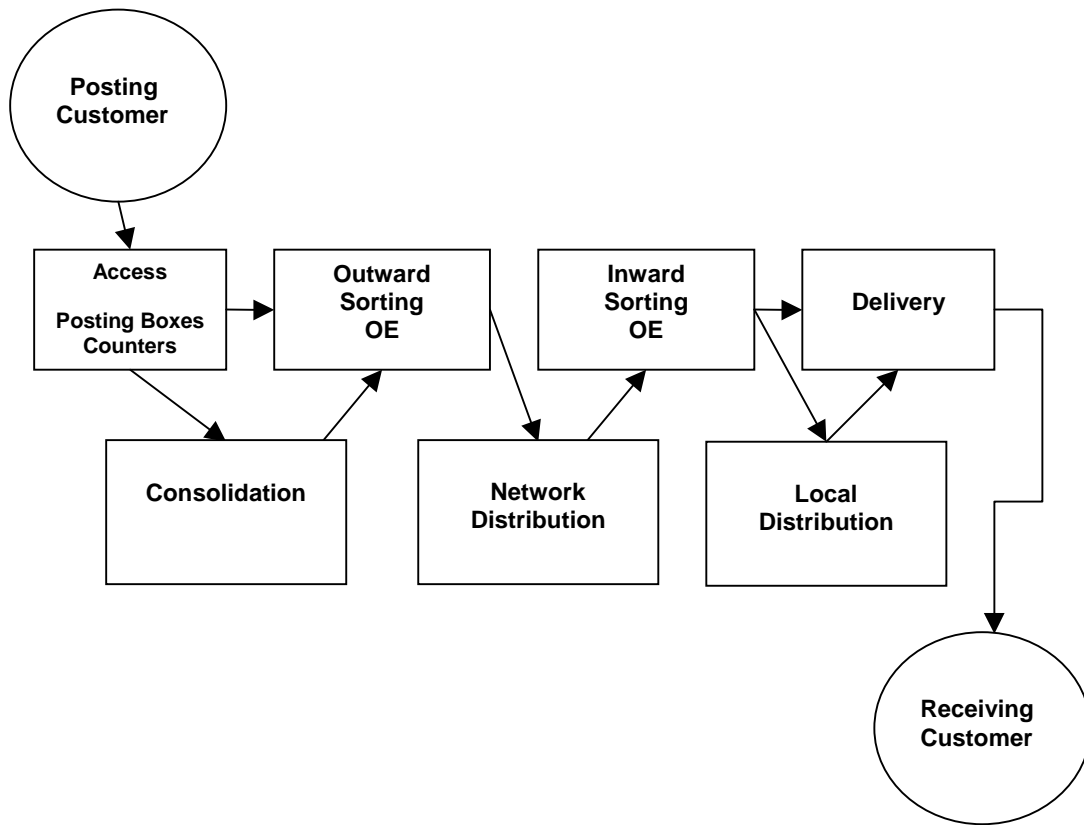
9.1 Seven steps for implementing a Quality Management structure

- 1 Nominate the Implementation team and set out its objectives.
- 2 Prepare country-specific pipelines for all levels of the mails process.
- 3 Produce Quality Action Plans. Review current mails operation and produce proposals for change where necessary.
- 4 Decide on the measurements that will be introduced. How and when will they be produced?
- 5 Decide on the Quality Management structure that is to be introduced and appoint the right people to the posts.
- 6 Communicate details of the structure to all staff and customers.
- 7 Start to improve quality.

Annex A

International Product Pipeline

High-Level Process Definition



Annex B

EXAMPLE OF A PIPELINE HANDOVER DOCUMENT

PROCESSING TO LOCAL DISTRIBUTION

KEY INTERFACE MEASURES - INTERFACE 6

1 ADHERENCE TO AGREED SCHEDULED FLOW OF MAIL

1/LO1 DISPATCHES HANDED OVER AT THE CORRECT POINT
NO. BAGS/TRAYS CHECKED NO. INCORRECT

2/L01 MAIL TO BE HANDED OVER BY TIMES SHOWN ON CONTROL SHEET
NO. OFFICES CHECKED NO. LATE

2 ADHERENCE TO AGREED FORMAT OF PRESENTATION

1/LO1 ALL BAGS TIED AND SEALED
NO. BAGS CHECKED NO. INCORRECT

3 CORRECT LABELLING

1/LO1 ALL BAG LABELS WITH TIME AND DATE
NO. BAGS CHECKED NO. INCORRECT

2/L01 ALL TRAYS TO BE LABELLED CORRECTLY
NO. TRAYS CHECKED NO. INCORRECT

4 ADHERENCE TO AGREED FORMAT OF SEGREGATION

1/LO1 TRAYS AND BAGS TO BE PLACED IN CORRECT WORK CONTAINERS
NO. TRAYS/BAGS CHECKED NO. INCORRECT

SIGNED DMS NIGHTS

DAY DATE

Annex C**Reference Sources**

- 1 A Guide to Quality Management, Quality Testing and Quality Checking
International Bureau UPU
- 2 Permanent control of international postal service quality – Annual summaries
International Bureau UPU
- 3 Practical guide to organizing the sorting and forwarding of letter-post items in the
international service
International Bureau UPU
- 4 End-to-End testing of ordinary mail – Operational Guide
UPU
- 5 Quality of Service testing of ordinary mail – Operational Guide
UPU
- 6 Quality of Service Standards Manual International Network
International Bureau UPU
- 7 126-Point Quality Control of International Mail Circulation
UPU
- 8 Memorandum on Universal Postal Service Obligations and Standards
International Bureau UPU