

QB

qualitybusiness®

ISSUE 1 2025 | FEATURING:

- Q *The “new age” auditor with QEHS in 2025.*
- Q *Why Quality Should Report Directly to CEO*
- Q *Building Excellence: The Five Pillars of Quality Leadership*
- Q AND MORE...



In the Q



Welcome to the first issue of Quality Business for 2025!

This issue benefits from QB's new panel of Reviewers. I'd like to recognise the following for helping to make this another great addition: Sandy Thompson; Claire Joy; Calvin Grice and Mary-Anne Lovera; as well as our long serving reviewers Dr Nigel Grigg and Jeff Ryall.

There is no formal, overarching theme for the 2025 Quality Business editions. Nevertheless, there are

some ideas which connect articles in this issue and which connect some with past issues. For example, Russell Veitch reflects on how the Quality gurus have influenced his development as a quality professional – this links back to the Quality Business editions from 2024. In a related way Martin Chesbrough reflects on the impact of having undertaken the 12 Days to Deming course (Deming of course being one of the greatest Quality 'gurus') – a highly-regarded course available to us all.

We reckon that many of you work in organisations in which the Head of Quality is not part of the senior management team! We have two articles on this theme: a short article by Ekaterina Potemkina, and a much longer one by Gladieux and Kaley presenting a North American perspective. Related to this, Jackie Stapleton explores the pillars that contribute to quality leadership.

Anthony Stephenson and Nicky Stephenson continue a theme from the last issue of 2024, exploring what makes an ISO Auditor a good one. This is the first of a four-part series that will run throughout 2025.

Russell Veitch is someone who continually reflects on Quality matters, and this spawns interesting thought-pieces. We have another of these, this time on uncertainty, resistance and resilience.

Cathy O'Dwyer comments on the (too common) pitfall of aiming for compliance rather than effectiveness in your ISO management system.

Ben Dellsperger discusses the best way to categorise your root causes; Ekaterina contributes another article on Quality culture; and Seth Godin shows how using AI form-bots could have a significant role in making our world a more effective and user-friendly place.

We have our usual regular articles, of course. You might not think of 'questioning' as a tool, but that's the focus of this month's quality tool article by Jackie Graham. Louise Edgley introduces us to Cath Magin, AOQ's wonderful administrative manager. And we have the regular updates from AOQ and NZOQ. The AOQ piece gives a heads up about Qualcon 2025, in August in Newcastle. Put that in your diary now!

We would like to acknowledge our (AOQ, NZOQ) members who contributed about half of the articles for this issue: Anthony Stephenson, Nicole Stevenson, Dr Jackie Graham, Russell Veitch, Cathy O'Dwyer, Louise Edgley, Jackie Stapleton. This is great! We encourage others of you to put 'pen to paper' also.

Enjoy some great Quality reading!

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NZOQ Special Service Award recipient

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Is There One Common Sense Reason to Keep a CQO Out of Your C-Suite?



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ABSTRACT

This article addresses an issue that must surely resonate with business professionals in virtually all management disciplines as it applies in all large organisations globally regardless of their industry sector.

We pose one fundamental question that spurs many other thought-provoking questions:

'Is There One Common-Sense Reason to Keep a CQO Out of Your C-Suite'?

We have collectively some 90 years of experience of managing Quality in two high-consequence, heavily-regulated business sectors, namely Nuclear Energy Production and Commercial Aviation – which, we think you'll agree, are indeed high-risk and high-value. In our extensive reflections on and discussions about our experiences and insights, we were compelled to address the CQO subject.

In essence, by this article we are challenging C-Suites everywhere to appoint a CQO!

Editor's note

This is the abbreviated version of the complete white paper available on the GQM Advisors website > Articles page (<https://gqmadvisors.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/GQMAdvisors-C-SteCQO-WhtPpr-08-01-24-R0-23pgs-1.pdf>) or by contacting Paul W. Gladioux (Subject: Your C-Suite & CQO) at paul@gqmadvisors.com.

Note also that the authors are from the USA and that is the context for this article. US institutions and features are quoted in this article.

THE CHIEF QUALITY OFFICER ~ WHY NOT?

What remains fascinating about the word 'Quality' and its use, is everyone has their own interpretation of what Quality is. Companies worldwide expect their employees to adopt and use their version of quality in practice. One challenging aspect is perception. After numerous books, thousands of articles, many certification programs, and many online training courses, wouldn't you think it's finally accepted as a critical management discipline with commonly accepted understandings, one definition of Quality, and routinely represented in C-Suites via a CQO?

But unfortunately, that is not the case.

The 'Quality's Path to Leadership' timeline at the end of this document reveals how The Management of Quality evolved from Production Floors to the C-Suite.

So why isn't The Management of Quality represented in the modern C-Suite among the other Chief Officers? C-Suites originally included 5-7 members such as the CE(Executive)O, CO(Operating)O, CF(Financial)O, CA(Accounting)O, CI(Information)O, CM(Marketing)O, and CT(Technology)O. We have seen new appointments in recent years that make sense such as Chief Programs Officer, Chief Data Officer, and Chief Nuclear Officer.

Of course, there are always people who push ideas and agendas beyond any level of common sense – and some really do represent personal agendas of no real value to a business group or other entity. As we researched the Chief Officer topic, we came across an online article by Rob Kelly (his blog 'Job Titles'), posted on ONGIG, February 4, 2020 <https://blog.ongig.com/job-titles/c-level-titles/>. Mr. Kelly's article is very comprehensive and includes three groups of a total of more than 75 Chief 'X' Officer titles.



We've Googled 'Chief Quality Officer' several times over the years. Typically, the role is defined as something like this: "The Chief Quality Officer is responsible for planning, administering, and monitoring the consistent readiness of all quality management, regulatory requirements, and quality improvement processes." We think this definition works in general terms. Without an accurate, meaningful, and fully endorsed definition of Quality by C-Suite executives, together with a solid system of quality management, effective quality assurance and quality control programs, and a strong quality and safety culture, profitability is necessarily reduced.

QUALITY: DEFINED PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS VS PERCEPTION

The workforce knows its job is to perform to the standards set by their leaders. One of the roles of the quality professional is to assist the organisation with defining performance metrics and determining the proper methods for measuring and verifying conformance to requirements in customer contracts and engineering specifications. Quality engineers typically focus on assisting the workforce to produce engineered products and services.

Seasoned quality management professionals know their job is to advise and assist C-Suite executives and senior management to deploy quality-related policies, process descriptions, and procedures that deliver corporate goals and customer requirements. The deployment goal is an effective management system within legal frameworks and proven quality system structures based on international norms, regulatory requirements, customer contracts, and corporate objectives. They know each person is responsible for the quality of their work activities and tasks related to stated deliverables.

WHY APPOINT A 'CQO'?

Is a CQO really needed? Aren't the CFO and COO working together to accurately address Cost and Schedule relative to program, quarterly, and annual performance goals?

That may be the case in some cases. But:

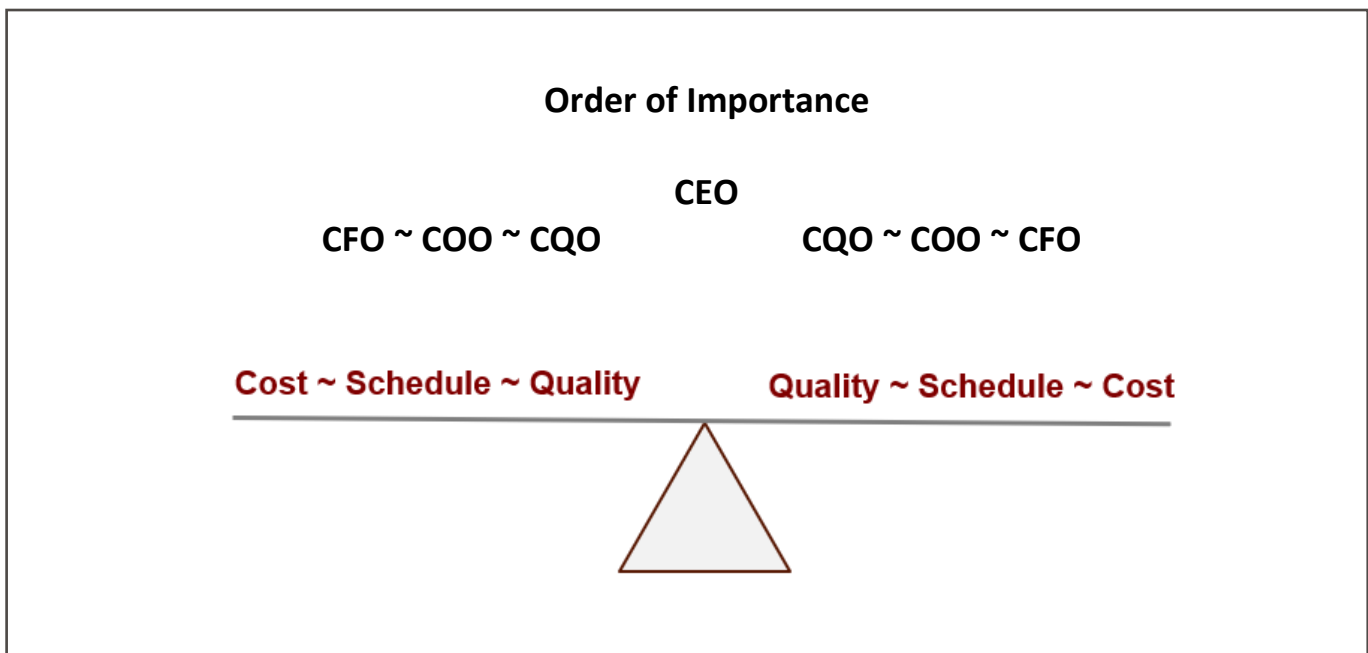
- Who's addressing and directing the C-Suites' Vision, Mission, and Policy on 'The Management of Quality' for all operational and program goals and the employees?

- Who is the CFO working with to ensure budget allocations are correct and expenditures are effectively reported?
- Does the CFO understand the true basis of cost impacts when nonconforming conditions arise?
- Does the C-Suite routinely evaluate quality performance metrics in terms of supply chain performance, cost of poor quality and schedule delays due to rejects/repairs/reworks, customer satisfaction results, and workforce attitudes?
- Who reports quality metrics to C-Suite members and ensures process improvements will be made as applicable?

Wouldn't you think that at least all publicly listed companies would be required under SEC rules to appoint a CQO just as SOX compliance (Sarbanes Oxley Act 2002) is the rationale and minimum basis for a CFO? We know shareholders want risk prevention methods and customer satisfaction. Why wouldn't everyone in the C-Suite want to know their operational 'Cost of Poor Quality'? Wouldn't your C-Suite want to know areas of employee concern and the root cause of non-conforming conditions?

With more than collectively 90 years of experience in the quality profession, why would we keep asking these same questions regarding the three well known key elements of management and success: Cost, Schedule, and Quality? Note that these three elements are typically expressed in this order of importance? We've both experienced deficient planning, weak performance, sub-standard execution, inadequate resources to accomplish goals and objectives, and little to no follow through.

In your organisation, which depicts the 'Order of Importance'?



The correct order must surely be the second one – get Quality right and schedule and cost follow suit.

We all know an ‘Effective Quality Culture’ is the key to success – but it’s a complex discipline with extreme difficulty in gaining consensus. Is it difficult to achieve due to perception differences? Wouldn’t an effective quality culture emerge and be ingrained in an organisation if the CEO and all the chief officers truly understood and endorsed the management of quality as a part of routine business? Do you wonder how many chief officers worked in a quality professional position during their career path on the way to the C-Suite? We envision executives using the ‘Quality’ word often!

The paper is intended to keep the Why, Who, Where, When of the CQO subject alive until common sense takes over among the sectors and segments that need to have Quality representation in the C-Suite do so as a matter of routine – not as part of corrective actions due to a catastrophic failure and a public apology tour! We mean pure business in our efforts to sound the alarm and bring the general consciousness of Quality Awareness to everyone. Conforming to Requirements is a simple concept and something everyone should understand whether at work, home, school, church, travelling, medical care, and the communities and neighbourhoods around the world. It is what most would call ‘Quality of Life.’

WITHOUT A CQO, WHICH C-SUITE EXECUTIVE ‘AUTOMATICALLY WEARS THE QUALITY LEADERSHIP HAT’?

Does that person address quality policy often during daily operations and through internal / external correspondence? Does your workforce know this person is serious about the management of quality and fully understands all aspects required in the leadership role? Is the designee executive position stated in the governing policies and by-laws of the C-Suite? When applicable, does the Board of Directors know who is ultimately responsible for addressing, correcting, and improving quality-related issues? Perhaps it’s time to take a second look at the timeline at the end of this article: ‘Quality’s Path to Leadership’.

THE CQO BODY OF KNOWLEDGE ~ ROLES | RESPONSIBILITIES | REPORTING

Defining the qualities required for the CQO role seems rather impossible. Who is qualified to know all aspects of quality throughout an entire corporation? Who knows all the requirements and how they are met? Aren’t ethics and truth the key to total compliance? Is it possible the CQO position requires a person with inherent generalist ‘big picture’ skills and the ability to focus in on individual parts? Wouldn’t it be best for the person in the CQO role to demonstrate

rudimentary beliefs in Quality and The Law with clear understandings of managing risk? We know how fortunate a company would be for the CQO to have had hands-on-experience working in the quality profession in Quality Control, Quality Assurance, and Quality Management before being appointed to the C-Suite as the CQO.

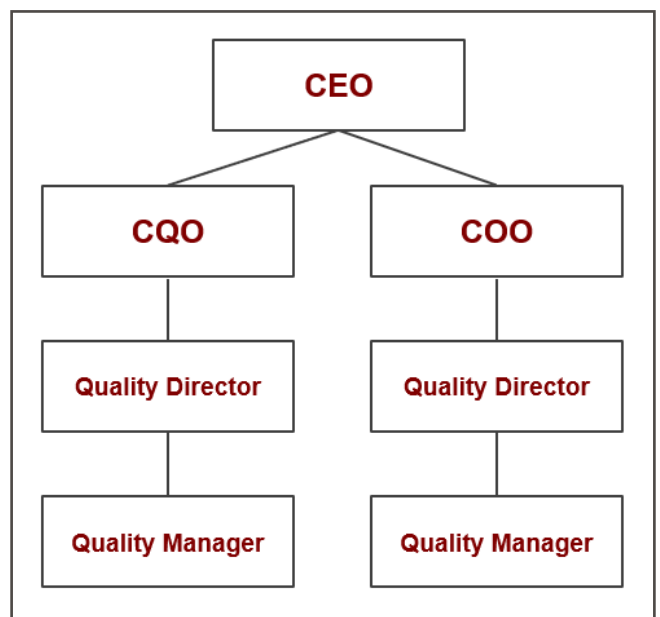
Quality reporting structures vary across business sectors worldwide. In highly-regulated high-consequence sectors, Safety and Quality requirements documents state specific reporting roles and structures. These are where ‘free from production pressure’ requirements apply. What isn’t consistent is the requirement of reporting quality-related performance and related issues to the CEO. Have you ever talked with a new hire that says ‘our Quality Director isn’t allowed to talk with the CEO’? Have you ever heard someone say ‘our CQO is the only person allowed to send messages or talk directly with our CEO’?

Let’s consider some basic questions regarding organisation structure and reporting.

- Does your CQO report directly to the CEO? Why not?
- Does your Quality Director or Manager report directly to the COO? Why?

The diagram below sets out two contrasting reporting paths for Quality.

- Which one most closely represents how quality is reported to your CEO in your organisation?
- Which reporting path, in your opinion, is the most effective?



THE CQO

C-Suite Executives and Boardroom Directors, if you want a feel for where Quality stands in your organisation, ask your employees to submit their definition of Quality and their assessment of the company's overall quality performance metric using a 1 to 10 scale. If you want to know your workforce status on the need for a CQO, we suggest you also ask them this question as a simple yes or no.

Q: If you have a CQO, are all employees encouraged to directly contact your CQO?

THE U.S. FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OF QUALITY (DOQ) & U.S. SECRETARY OF QUALITY

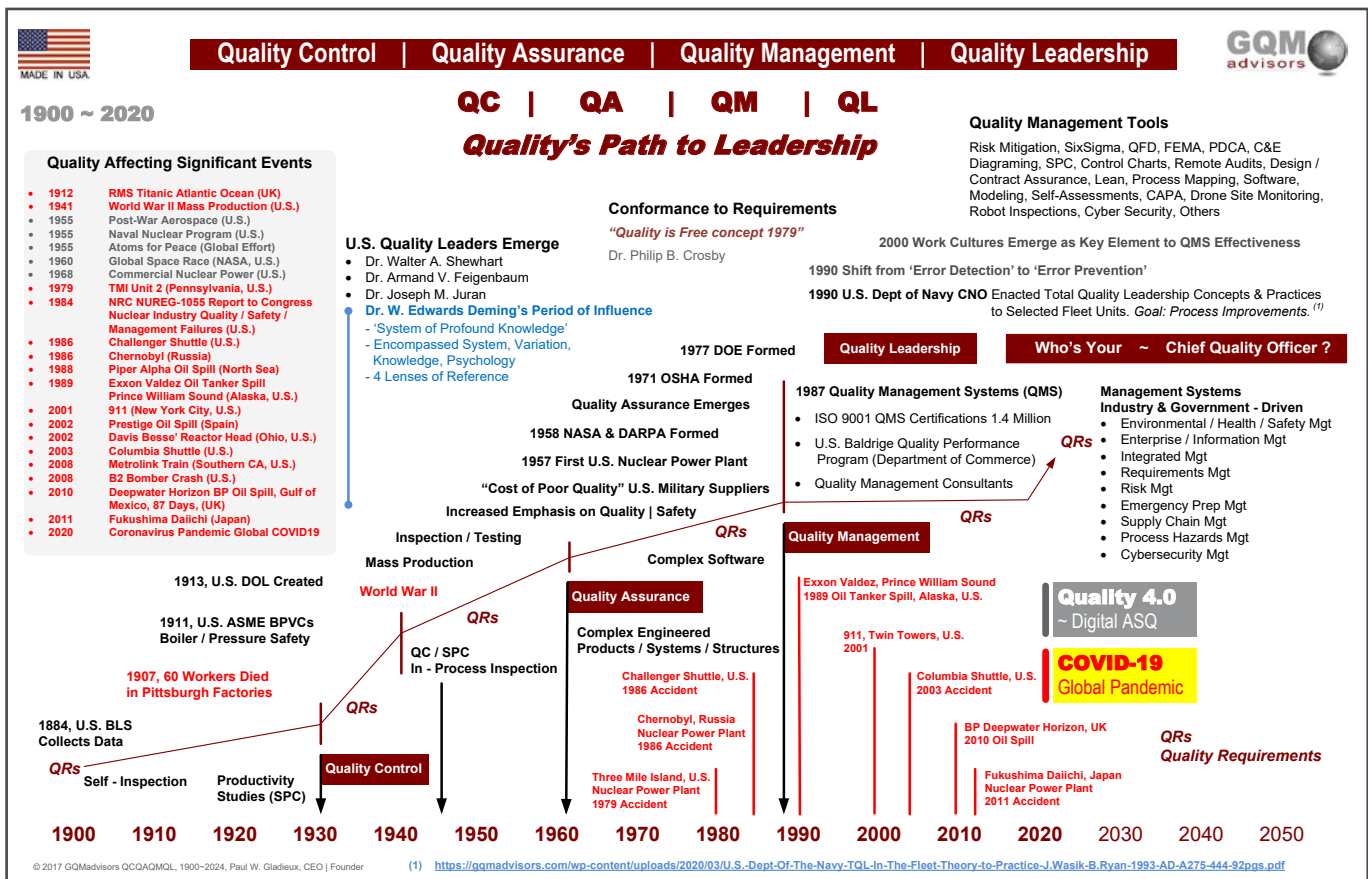
Please think about it. After considering what we've shared in this paper, doesn't it make common sense to have a U.S. Federal Department of Quality headed by a U.S. Secretary of Quality? We have the DOJ, FBI, DOE, EPA, FAA, OSHA, DOC,

NRC, DHS, and others. Why not the U.S. DOQ? A starting point is a commitment by the executive branch and congress to enact the U.S. Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence Program of 1987 throughout all U.S. federal governmental organisations. Considering that there has been global adoption and implementation of the ISO Standards for quality, safety, environmental, aviation, medical, cybersecurity, and other management system disciplines, we believe certain requirements in these documents should also be committed to by applicable government entities.

FINAL WORD

Why would a knowledgeable and seasoned quality management professional work in a company that does not have direct representation in the C-Suite for the entire workforce?

Is there one common sense reason to keep a CQO out of your C-Suite?





qualitybusiness

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Board Update

Our mission is clear: to provide leadership in quality that builds a stronger, more competitive Australia.

Recent developments like the "Future Made in Australia" plan and the US Government's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) highlight the growing importance of quality practices globally. These initiatives underscore the vital role of quality practitioners and quality sciences in shaping our future.

Quality practitioners are essential to success. Their expertise ensures that new technologies and processes meet rigorous standards while maintaining efficiency and reliability. Working alongside them, the quality sciences provide the fundamental research and development needed to advance products and services, enhancing both domestic capabilities and international competitiveness.

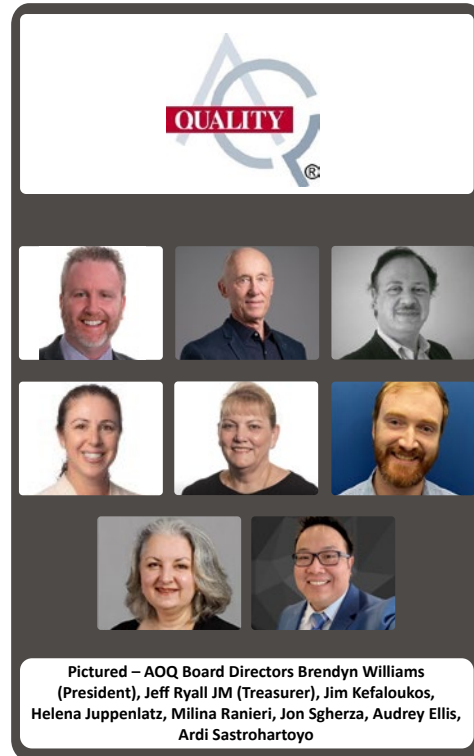
Our Quality Business continues to share valuable insights from industry leaders on topics ranging from quality culture to auditing and compliance, helping professionals stay informed and effective. These articles consistently renew my enthusiasm for quality practices.

Looking ahead to 2025, the AOQ board has a full agenda. We're expanding our chapter events, introducing new Special Interest Groups (SIGs), and preparing for QUALCON. The AOQ Board, comprising professionals from diverse industries, works together towards our core purpose: making quality meaningful, compelling, and satisfying.

Our vision remains focused: to establish AOQ as the recognised intellectual and practical centre of quality in Australia, with influence that extends globally. Through these efforts, we're building a foundation for excellence that will serve Australian industry for years to come.

Jim Kefaloukos

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Pictured – AOQ Board Directors Brendyn Williams (President), Jeff Ryall JM (Treasurer), Jim Kefaloukos, Helena Juppenplatz, Milina Ranieri, Jon Sgherza, Audrey Ellis, Ardi Sastrohartoyo

NZOQ

Board update

2025 QUALITY TRAINING.

Recent media commentators have said, “Lifting New Zealand’s productivity means doing a thousand things better” and “Achieving it takes doing a lot of small things over time”. These are critical concepts as we, a trading nation, rise to meet the impending disruptions to the international rules-based order. We must be smarter and more innovative to ensure positive growth. Investment in practical quality skills training will assist individuals and employers in providing high quality, high value products and services. Please tell your networks and colleagues that NZOQ, the national society for quality practice and practitioners, can assist in improving quality and productivity. They can become NZOQ members for 2025 now.

2025 MEMBERSHIP

Please ensure that your 2025 NZOQ membership status and details are up to date. The family of members that makes up NZOQ provides vital assistance and support to each of us all. All members, by engaging and participating, can ensure positive progress for NZOQ and its members.

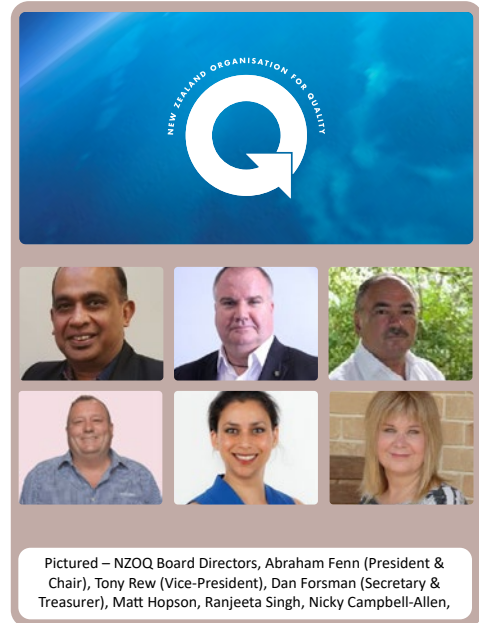
2025 CONFERENCES

There is a diverse and interesting international quality conference and events schedule in 2025. They include the AOQ Qualcon in Newcastle, New South Wales, the APQO international conference in Beijing, China and the ANQ international congress in Bangalore, India. NZOQ President, Abraham Fenn, in his role as APQO President & Chair, is directly involved in the APQO international conference being hosted by the China Association for Quality (CAQ). We are also supporting and promoting the International Best Practice Competition (IBPC) organised by our colleague, Dr Robin Mann at the Centre for Organisational Excellence Research (COER). These events will be featured in this year's Quality Business magazines as well as our NZOQ social media and e-zines.

2025 NZOQ DIRECTORS ELECTION RESULTS

Following the call, in Quality Business issue 4 last November, for director nominations to serve on the NZOQ Board two formal nominations were received by due date of January 17, 2025. They were from Nicky Campbell-Allen and Matt Hopson. As there were fewer nominations than positions available there was no need for an election process and accordingly Nicky and Matt have been elected for a two-year term as per 7.1.1 of the constitution. Nicky was an existing elected director. Matt was an appointed director. All remaining directors still have one-year to serve.

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