

Quality Control: An Option for the Management of Small Scale Accelerator Facilities

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Research laboratories, no matter what their size is, require more and more attention to the work organization, to the effectiveness of the technical procedures, to the traceability of the operations, to the interaction with users. All these actions will, at the end, result in an optimal benefits/cost performance, absolutely relevant in determining the impact of each laboratory on its reference community and the effectiveness of the use of the associated (public) investment. Casting of the work procedures into a Quality Management System (QMS) can allow the laboratory management to achieve the above stated. Although it is not the only possible option it certainly is a powerful and motivating one, tested moreover in millions of equivalent cases around the world. The respect of a norm, like the ISO 9001:2008 (soon to be replaced by the ISO 9001:2015), can facilitate the construction of a very efficient working framework. On the other side, the certification by an independent authority is a guarantee for the funding agencies and for the laboratory user of the quality of the service provided by the laboratory. In the case of a public university laboratory, the use of which is fully open and competitive, this is particularly true as regards the equal opportunity of access for all potential users and the traceability of the peer review process that leads to access granting. The crucial point is to set very carefully the balance between the advantages that a QMS can provide and the investment in terms of human and economic resources that the implantation and maintenance require.

We will address these points using the experience gained from the QMS, built around the “Delivery of ion beams”, implanted and maintained at CMAM since three years, as a result of convinced and strong move towards quality assurance made a few years ago both by the Universidad Autónoma, to which the CMAM belongs, and by the Public Laboratories Network of the Madrid community, of which the CMAM is member.

Presenter: ZUCCHIATTI, Alessandro (Universidad Autonoma de Madrid)

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