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April 5, 2013

Loss of Nuclear Vessel USS Thresher - Lessons from 50 Years Ago

Periodically I attend Australian Standards meetings where I am a member of several Quality related committees and also a committee on Pressure Equipment. These can be dry of course but the Quality one's were often enlivened with yarns by Bob Innes, retired ANSTO & Steelplant engineer. One of the most evocative stories from Bob was that of the loss of the USS Thresher, which occurred 50 years ago in April 1963.

She was the first of a new class of nuclear submarine, and was lost with her **129 men**, inspiring the movie Grey Lady Down. But there was no happy ending & her lessons still apply eg in Australia with incidents such as those of the HMAS Westralia & HMAS Kanimbla naval vessels. **A memorial service was held in April 2013 Portsmouth USA** to mark the 50th anniversary of the tragedy.

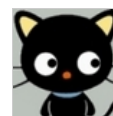
The Thresher sank off Cape Cod during her first descent to her 400m test depth, pushing beyond previous experience, in April 1963. It was believed back then that ...

Ice formed, bursting an engine room seawater pipe (weakened by dealloying or failed silver brazing?). Icy seawater poured in creating a foggy mist, with the control valves scattered about the room. She could not blow her ballast tanks, due to an unauthorised change – a strainer, causing icing up by a venturi cooling effect. Water soaked electrical circuits caused a power outage, the reactor shut down. Losing forward momentum, she slowed, drifted down; her hull bent, twisted, imploded and then split into three sections.

Why? Political pressure to deploy new weapons systems & so standards were relaxed, due to an over confidence with submarine successes in WW2. They ignored the loss of 52 of 288 submarines, some possibly due to shoddy workmanship, including defective welding. Inspectors didn't believe that the high standards were necessary. Indeed she was designed & built to 2 different standards ie nuclear power plants were constructed to very exacting tolerances, while the design criteria in non-nuclear areas were seen only as goals.

Later review found too many penetrations of the hull, with defects detected ultrasonically in many of the silver-brazed joints on pipes penetrating the hull. But the shipyard commander did not pursue new U/S inspection, considering it wasn't a dangerous situation. Less accurate x-ray was the usual test & he was only required to try U/S methods. At that time there were no clearcut procedures for correcting the faulty joints. He was trying to meet a deadline, seeking to avoid pipe unlagging delays & increased costs.

Navy procedure allowed the shipyard commander to make such decisions as he was on-site, ostensibly having hands-on knowledge of the ships. In fact, he wanted to test only the repaired joints. But the Bureau of Ships would not allow so minimal a testing program. They compromised however – requiring the testing of only those joints that time would allow & were easily accessible. He did not immediately report the ultrasonically detected defects to his superior



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officer. The test report did not arrive at the Bureau of Ships until after the sinking.

Later some joints on the Thresher were found to not be brazed at all! Although a brazed joint on the Barbel had failed earlier, this was not shared, so procedures for the Thresher were not reviewed, nor the Portsmouth shipyard's Quality Control issues.

"The high performance required of these ships, the exotic materials being used, the pushing of older materials to greater limits, means the Navy cannot afford not to use higher standards throughout". These were the words of Admiral Rickover, father of the US Navy's Nuclear Submarine Program, in an address in 1962, before the sinking. Overriding these concerns, his senior officers feared tougher standards would add to costs. Some non-nuclear standards were even lowered. They were working at the limits of technology and not knowing the consequences of not knowing those limits.

Lessons learned from the subsequent Inquiry included:

1. Give equal weight to design & construction of nuclear & non nuclear submarine parts.
2. Cost & time pressures must not override safety in design, construction & overhauls.
3. Communicate near miss events to resolve weaknesses or flaws to avoid future tragedies.
4. Test equipment & parts on receipt & under operating conditions to assess suitability.

For many years the above was the accepted scenario of failure - however in recent years there has been some re-thinking - and utlising evidence now available that was classified at the time. According to an article from the [website](#) for Mass Live, it is now postulated that :

"the initial Thresher casualty as an electrical bus failure, which shut down the submarine's main coolant pumps causing the instant reactor scram. Unable to rapidly restart the reactor to regain propulsion, and unable to blow ballast, the Thresher slowly sank toward the ocean floor — a depth of 8,400 feet — with 129 men on board. "

Regardless of which scenario prevailed back then, we can read how lessons were drawn from the loss - see the [Mass Live article](#) ...

' "The Navy accelerated safety improvements and created a program called "SUBSAFE," an extensive series of design modifications, training and other improvements. People involved in the SUBSAFE program are required to watch a documentary about the Thresher that ends with an actual underwater recording featuring the eerie sounds of metal creaking and bending as a U.S. Navy submarine breaks apart with the loss of all hands.

"Every job we do, we need to have in the back of our minds that we have the lives of the sailors in our hands. It's that critical and it's that literal," said O'Connor, president of the Metal Trades Council.'

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April 2, 2013

Trialing with Feedly vs Google Reader - Issues with Tags-Search Your Own Feed-Email

So far I am working with Feedly as my Google Reader substitute.

It doesn't take Tags across from Google Reader as yet - possibly may in future - so there is a manual cut and paste approach which I've started doing - also taking the opportunity to rationalise some of these tags along the way.

I am still waiting for my feeds to go across to The Old Reader - think they've been swamped.

Also I discovered this morning that it seems that **you can no longer search your own items on Feedly** - ie "*But Feedly says it current search-your-own-feeds service didn't scale well enough to work with the influx of new users. So the company has removed it for now, planning to bring it back later this year.*"

More information is available from - Feedly's blog

- <http://blog.feedly.com/2013/04/02/announcing-the-new-feedly-mobile-and-welcoming-3-million-reader-refugees/>

It was supposed to be still able to be accessed with a work around

- <http://liliputing.com/2013/04/feedly-updates-its-rss-apps-but-removes-a-favorite-feature-for-now.html>

"Update: It turns out you can still search your own feeds, just not from the search box in the sidebar. Using the Feedly browser plugin, type "gg" and then enter your search term and then choose the "in my feedly option."

But now that work around option seems to have been turned off as well.

I can understand the issues that Feedly is having with the increased uptake - but being able to search my own items was a key factor in my using Google Reader and why I went with Feedly.

However there is another work around for searching your own feeds in Feedly

<http://www.feedly.com/home#search/X>

eg to search my feeds for **IAQ** I do this

... <http://www.feedly.com/home#search/IAQ>

and if you have more than one word, between each one place this:

%20X

eg to search for **Google Reader** in my feeds ...

<http://www.feedly.com/home#search/google%20XReader>

seems to be working so far - **sort of - as this search seems to return up to only 30 items from my feeds**

other issues emerging on [Feedly's blog](#)

Send by email button has been removed

"The previous implementation did not scale to meet the demand of all the new users who joined feedly over the last 2 weeks. We retired the button until we have a new implementation ready. Between now and then, you can use the email capabilities of the G+ button. Works really well."

and

"We have temporarily removed the direct gmail forwarding, and we're currently working on making it better integrated. In the meantime, the work around is to use google+ email capabilities to share articles. On feedly for desktop, in their article view click the g+1 icon (below the article name). Add email addresses in the bottom box and click send. This workaround using g+1 also works on feedly mobile."

It's a journey and must be a challenge - Feedly is claiming that they have picked up 3 million Google Reader refugees ... that's a lot to deal with in a really short time frame

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March 31, 2013

Social Media - Cloud Tools - blessing or curse for the Quality Field - Quality in Unusual Places

Quality Management needs and Social Media Tools in the Cloud often seem totally unconnected. So is finding a long term quality tool in the social media cloudy universe probably asking too much or not? I chose this as my theme when ASQ's Paul Borawski asked the ASQ Influential Bloggers to explore finding [Quality Tools in Unusual Places](#) as their theme for March 2013.

Both Quality and Social Media share an focus on improvement and innovation. However Quality Management requires procedures with documents and records to be kept for extended periods - whereas the Social Media in the Cloud paradigm is more rooted in ephemera and the ever ephemeral - also seemingly all too trivial to some.

Nearly 5 years ago, as the Global Financial Crisis exploded onto the world stage, I found my Quality Manager role totally shaken up. For the previous two years it had mainly required a "steady hand on the tiller". But as my company wanted to expand its export efforts it faced an ever increasing number of non-tariff barriers aka Technical Barriers to Trade aka TBT's. As Quality Manager I was tasked with working through the maze and getting the certifications in place.

The amount of information I had to sift through to understand the global trade and standards system of each country or region that I was dealing with seemed insurmountable - as various countries fled increasingly into the use of the TBT's to protect their domestic economy. The US Trade Representative's report of 2010 showed how the number of TBT's experienced exponential growth. So a lot of work for me, but when you consider each boatload of steel sent to Europe was worth 15 million Euro's - it became quite compelling to get on top of those evergrowing mountains of information.

Coincidentally in late 2008 I had attended a National Knowledge Management Conference in Canberra Australia where newly emerging social media tools were being enthusiastically shared. Initially hesitant, but by March 2009 I had decided to dive in head first into the social media tools pool to help deal with the TBT information overload :

- storing & sharing favourite websites aka bookmarks - (then Yahoo's) [Delicious](#)
- scanning for information - [Twitter](#) & [Hootsuite](#) microblogging tools plus Google Alerts, groups in [LinkedIn](#) and powerpoints in [Slideshare](#)
- blogs - although back then the number of Quality related blogs was still quite low - initially I used Google's [Blogger](#) but then moved over to [Posterous](#) which was a little friendlier to use
- RSS feeds & RSS reader - when great sources of information were located I could feed them into [Google Reader](#) where I could read them in one place without doing Google searches or going to individual websites - a great time saver - and the articles could be tagged eg Quality, Records, Audits, TBT's etc. And it was all searchable and shareable. Over the following years I evolved to become one of Google Reader's Power Users.
- and I managed to get them inter-connected and talking to each other - my own beautiful little Quality ecosystem.
- I then shared the information in a Company Sharepoint site via a wiki - a great tool for on-boarding a new team member. And to also minimise a whole lot of people going off and doing the same Google searches over and over again. My new team member soaked up the knowledge and information on that wiki like a sponge.

Together these tools all made up my electronic Quality Personal Knowledge Management System Toolkit.

My company achieved certifications for several Asian countries and for the European CE Mark Construction Products Directive & Regulation. Using the Social Media tools helped save my sanity back then. And over the following couple of years, more folks in the Quality space began using these tools too, as well as ASQ, ISO, SAI Global etc - so it was all a great resource as my Quality Manager role expanded.

Then a few ripples and ructions.

I was headed to an ISO TC 176 SC2 Working Group meeting in Sydney Australia, when I heard that Yahoo decided to [drop Delicious](#) in December 2010. I had so many Quality related websites favoured in Delicious so I was definitely shaken by the news. A few days later I moved to [Diigo](#) along with quite a few others. Delicious was subsequently reincarnated - so I decided to use both - a sort of back up plan if either should fall over again.

Twitter bought Posterous Blogging and there were whispers that the end might then be nigh for Posterous - although this was denied - so I started moving copies of my blog articles over to Blogger as a backup just in case. I also began using [Wordpress](#) in late 2012 when I set up the social media tools for a local resident community group, but I hesitated to copy all of my own Posterous articles to the Wordpress Blog site - wouldn't copies of the same article in three places have been overkill ?

And then in February 2013, on the day I was heading out to South America for 6 weeks vacation, [Posterous's demise](#) was announced by Twitter's CEO - with no access available from May 2013. I was relieved that I would have time on my return to make sure all my article

posts had gone to Blogger. And I began to re-think posting them all into Wordpress after all.

Finally in mid March 2013 when I was still vacationing in South America, Google announced it was retiring aka [axing Google Reader](#) as part of its "spring clean" - now that had me worried. So much of my Quality related information was in there. Previously I had put aside niggling thoughts of what to do if this ever happened.

By the time I was back home in Australia, possible solutions were emerging - 500,000 people had moved to [Feedly](#) - which looked prettier, but didn't have all the functionality of Google Reader although it is promised. Will it make the July 1 2013 deadline ? Who knows ? However it seemed the best of what was on offer.

Two other big guns, [Digg](#) and Wordpress have promised to develop solutions - and there is an alphabet soup of other products out there - but many were anchored in Google Reader so how they will go once it is axed - then again, who knows ?

Google advised of a tool to download your stored data from Google Reader, cutely entitled "[Takeout](#)" - unfortunately for some of the power users like me, we had to wait for even more tinkering to get our information downloaded.

Various folks began to remonstrate - can you trust Google - can you really trust social media tools in the cloud? Is it wise to develop such a reliance on them ? ([Harold Jarche](#) and [John T Spencer](#)). Others were like ... just get over it and move on - [Beth Kanter](#) - with references to Spencer Churchill's 1988 "[Who moved my Cheese?](#)"

Indeed the pace of change in this field of Social Media Tools in the Cloud is so great - such a very short half life. But for some of us, we need a much longer information half life - eg for Quality certification requirements or operation of physical infrastructure like power stations, highways and dams etc. Finally, I read, a couple of days ago, that some folks were beginning to recognize these [differing half life paradigms](#).

I liked the [comments](#) on educationalist John T Spencer's blog post on Google Reader's demise. He ended up agreeing it's worth using these tools - but make sure you have educated the students to understand change - and be sure you have a back up plan in case the plug gets pulled on the tool.

I would still advocate the use of these tools for the finding and sharing of supporting information in the Quality Management field - and definitely agree you need a back up plan to ensure continuity of this information. But for that key information, documents and records needed for Quality Certification I would contend that they be kept in a place where you control their destiny - and not the boards of companies like Google, Yahoo and Twitter.

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March 2, 2013

Brazil - Eco Sustainability - Joining the Dots.

Our journey into South America has continued - visiting the World Heritage listed Iguacu Falls in Brazil was beyond awesome. Likewise on the Argentine side of the Iguazu Falls.

And of course the Magellanic Penguins and Sea Lions in the Patagonia in the areas of Puerto Madryn and Puntas Arenas etc. And it is clear that EcoTourism is an important part of the economies in these areas. To be honest I can't recall seeing so many people with Digital SLR Cameras with 200-300mm telephoto lenses as I did at Punta Norte, near Puerto Madryn in the wild Argentine Patagonian coast. All keen to get their own penguin or sea lion shot... not to mention a whale!

At the Agenda 21 activities on Rio in 1992 and 2012, the importance of the Environment has been recognized, as well as at the various International Intergovernmental Climate Change meetings, the COP's, (Council of the Parties) eg at Cancun Mexico several years ago. NGO's and colourful protesters attend as well to lobby the various government representatives from around the world.

Back in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, Agenda 21, the International approach to the Environment was initiated under Gro Bruntland, then leader of Norway- with the message communicated

in "Our Common Future" - its ethos inspired from First Peoples -
'we do not inherit the earth but instead hold it in trust for future generations.'

This 1992 Agenda 21 initiative led to the beginning of a change in philosophy - The Precautionary Principle - in assessing prospective development projects.

So with millions of people visiting these world heritage listed areas in South America each year, it's no surprise that management systems have been initiated to protect the environment. A water pipeline in the Iguacu Falls area displayed its ISO 14001 certification. ISO9001 certifications are also displayed at various tourism businesses - like Hotels. Recycling bins are plentiful at tourist sites to deal with waste - and cruise boats have Ocean Care to discourage tourists from throwing waste into the sea.

So in order to improve the environment we need the protestors to raise awareness, sympathetic governments and also strong NGO organizations. But also groups like ISO and its member organizations to develop confident accreditation systems such as ISO14001 - to help deliver the outcomes desired by communities, as we face challenges such as climate change- global warming.

Listening to our guide in Patagonia he shared of the changes already occurring. Frogs now exist there, whereas previously they did not prior to the climatic and eco changes that have already occurred.

The reality is that there is still much work still to be done by ISO and its member organizations with all the environmental challenges. And the guardians of Quality cannot treat such issues as Externalities to be ignored in Quality systems. The March 2013 meeting of ISO TC176's committees in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, has some big issues to address.

◀ ▶ 1 of 6



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February 21, 2013

A South American Intersection of Art and Failure

Currently I'm travelling in South America - enjoying scenery, wines, culture and looking forward to its heritage and arts. Unfortunately the pre-planned itinerary didn't allow for participation in the ISO TC 176 committees in Belo Horizonte Brazil in early March. However it brought to mind one of the spectacular failures in the 20th Century.

The theft of the Mona Lisa from Musee du Louvre in Paris nearly 100 years ago. Some believed, at one stage, even Pablo Picasso may have been implicated. In fact it was initiated and masterminded by an urbane South American gentleman, who acted with at least one Italian.

It was a grand failure of security processes and procedures for the Louvre, which forced them to change, improve and adapt. Without such an audacious heist the upgrade might have taken years longer. Coincidentally, the theme for this month's ASQ Global Bloggers suggest by ASQ chief Paul Borawsky is Failure, Change, Improvement and Success.

As is often the case the theft was in part an inside job - with former Louvre employees providing the crucial intelligence on where the gaps were. Gaps - surveillance systems were being introduced into some of the great galleries of the world - but not at the Louvre. Perhaps there was a complacency and besides the costs were probably considered unnecessary and too high. The security jobs of the gallery were given to ageing former soldiers as a thanks for their past services for France.

And there were no security procedures covering temporary removal of paintings from the Gallery walls, say for repairs to frames. So initially it was thought there was nothing untoward in the absence of Mona Lisa aka La Joconde or La Gioconda from the walls of the Louvre.

The disappearance caused stunned amazement which could not be covered up. The story helped the fledgling Parisian newspaper industry to explode onto the scene - with everyone wanting to know the latest. It would take months even more than a year before accomplices of the urbane South American mastermind to commit errors. Ultimately Mona Lisa was located in Italy - and of course exhibited there before her return to Paris.

A truly spectacular failure of security systems, procedures and processes unable to be hidden from the global stage of the early 20th Century. However ultimately these failures led to re-vamped one's which may have helped reduce the incidence of later thefts - never fully preventing them of course - inside "jobs" continue every few years - and sometimes art treasures are returned years later.

And perhaps we grumble when visiting a gallery to see a little card on the wall advising of official authorization to temporarily remove an art treasure. However it is part of the systems to prevent future failures and thefts. Such bureaucratic processes and procedures could have only come about after early failures and crises.

There have been articles, books and this week a documentary by the Smithsonian Institute on the story behind the heist. A classic case study of a failure in quality systems.

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November 3, 2012

Plagiarism vs Knowledge Sharing in a Public Sector Organization - different or not ..

I've recently been engaged in debate as to the differences in perspective between Plagiarism and Knowledge Sharing in the Educational Setting vs Government Public Sector organizations seeking to overcome Silos.

Having spent 12 years on the Council, the governing body of the local University, I had been very exposed to the Plagiarism issue - even participating in a Council sub-committee to investigate allegations of student plagiarism. Plagiarism is a key issue for universities and other education bodies and with the ever growing possibilities of the internet of course it has to be taken very seriously.

I had also spent over 12 years as an elected city councillor, and 4 years as a director of a public electricity utility. My experience was that these are quite different "animals" to the university setting, when it comes to the sharing of knowledge and experience, not to mention avoiding Silos.

There is an expectation that public resources & dollars should be used efficiently, and that public sector departments should not be unnecessarily reinventing the wheel. Rather such bodies are expected to collaborate or knowledge share - to leverage off examples of best practice or leading practice. Thus to reduce the burden on the tax payer and the public purse.

As a consequence, a lot of cross sharing goes on informally and formally. And it would be considered possibly unusual to admonish, or "out", a public sector organization as having ostensibly "plagiarized", for utilising another like organization's wording for a plan, policy or procedure.

Typically where a public organization or authority is recognized as having developed some leading practices then it is often happy to share its manuals and documentation with other like organizations. As such it wouldn't consider it plagiarism if some of its work were appropriated into another organization's documentation, unlike in the education sector. Additionally it is not expected that every source document would be referenced in the types of such documents listed above, ie policies, plans or standard procedures. In fact many such organizations, with their professionals committed to their discipline area, are in fact flattered to be requested to share their experience by such "borrowing" by their peers. Attribution of the original source is of course desirable.

For example in Australian Local Government there are annual [awards](#) for good or leading practice which other councils may then adopt, even expected to do so, or adapt to their own needs - see [more](#). The Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government was [set up](#) in part to promote such [Knowledge Sharing](#). There have long been ROC-like organizations in local government ie Region of Councils and Roundtables for many years which promote and facilitate the sharing of leading practice to improve efficiency, lower costs, avoidance of reinventing the wheel.

There are also groups such as Communities of Practice (COP's) within various professional disciplines which break down Silos, facilitating sharing between members within and outside an organization. Often there is a generous sharing of documentation within such bodies, and indeed is considered part of developing Organizational Social Capital.

- <http://www.lgmaqlld.org.au/content/thevillages.asp>
- <http://www.lgam.info/policies-directives-procedures>

Sharing in other levels of government include :

- <http://www.anao.gov.au/Publications/Better-Practice-Guides?page=1>
- <http://www.fairwork.gov.au/resources/templates/pages/industry-specific.aspx>
- <http://www.roadwise.asn.au/resources/resources/fleetsafety>
- <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/older/toolkit/02PersonCentredPractice/docs/Client%20Centred%20Care%20Nursing%20Best%20Practice%20Guid>
- http://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/92349/101117_Good_Practice_Guide_Nov_2010_Revision.pdf
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- <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/emergency/edcc-guidelines.pdf>
- <http://www.vha.org.au/uploads/5case%20studies%20combined%2020June.pdf>
- <http://lgfocus.com.au/editions/2003/october/sharebest.shtml>
- <http://siandvasupport.sydneyinstitute.wikispaces.net/file/view/2009+Sharing+Best+Practice+Programs+for+Women+100305.pdf>

In the private sector, there have been undeniable problems with intellectual property, copyright, confidentiality and patents. Plagiarism could be argued where a design of artwork or fashion has been copied - or in journalism notably more recently with online newsmedia. And there is brand plagiarism too, especially with logos.

- <http://www.talkaboutcreative.com.au/blog/how-to-check-for-duplicate-content-using-a-plagiarism-checker-quick-answer.aspx>
- <http://www.trulydeeply.com.au/madly/2011/10/10/silverwater-resort-and-emaar-brand-plagiarism-or-coincidence/>

Also the legal cases between Apple and Samsung regarding smartphones and tablets have provided current examples of conflict on copying.

What do you think in the Public Sector context ? Borrowing words from a policy, standard procedure or plan shared by professional colleagues in public sector bodies ? In doing so is it more about knowledge sharing to leverage efficiencies for cost cutting within the government sector ? Or could it be considered plagiarism of the sort worthy of grave censure and outrage in universities ?

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September 29, 2012

CSR crisis in Oz Football Grand Finals Week - responding to ASQ Fast Changes in Quality

It's Football Grand Finals weekend here in Australia for two of the major football codes. AFL on Saturday and NRL on Sunday. As in America, fans are wildly enthusiastic about their favourite teams. In the state of NSW, it's not only Grand Final Weekend, but also the Labour

Day long weekend - to celebrate workers winning an eight hour working day against exploitative work conditions many decades ago. Ironically, allegations by a Fairfax news media journalist, Ben Doherty, of **child labour to stitch AFL Sherrin footballs**, almost "blindsided" the AFL and Sherrin during Grand Finals week. This was then capped off with product safety concerns, when **needles were found inside some Sherrin AFL footballs**.

Some might have argued that CSR/SRO issues are externalities to traditional Product Quality paradigms. Perhaps in the long distant past it could have all been ignored - however as ASQ chief **Paul Borawski nailed it**:"time ... for a conversation about how the practice of quality could evolve to support the needs of a rapidly changing world." That increasingly includes CSR / SRO impacting the business bottom line, as well as a stronger focus on product safety.

Indeed, a few weeks earlier, in mid September 2012, a university study into **variability in performance of Sherrin AFL Match footballs**, and their size/shape, was reported in Australian news media. At the time Victoria University's Professor Hans Westerbeek was reported as saying that Sherrin had attributed the variability to quality of the raw material (leather) and "how the different panels are assembled". Sherrin balls have been used in AFL since the 1870's. The publicity generated then, was nothing like that for the allegations of child labour to stitch Sherrin AFL footballs, although these allegations do not seem to have extended to actual Match footballs.

It was alleged that the use of child labour in India for stitching footballs was **widespread and systemic - despite independently audited codes of conduct, which outlaw child labour**.

Another sports product brand, Canterbury, has also been caught up in the allegations and is **investigating** the matter. The child labour issue was passed along in social media platforms Facebook (**World Vision CEO's article** & **Great Southern Rail** featured a Sherrin ball as publicity ahead of the weekend) and **Twitter**. A **petition** was launched on **Change.org**.

World Vision, a Christian Charity which focuses on Child Sponsorship in Developing Countries, was quickly on the case (**article**). And initially, the other major football code, NRL, was dragged in as well, however its balls are made by Steeden, and this company was able to demonstrate **it was clear of the child labour crisis impacting Sherrin**.

Just for the record, in Australia, we don't have a single national football code, but rather have a number : AFL (Australian Football), NRL (Rugby League), Rugby (not to be confused with Rugby League), Soccer, as well as Touch Football, Futsal and Wheelchair Rugby, along with American Grid Iron Football.

The AFL and Sherrin were both shocked at the discovery of the stitching of balls using child labour, which was widely reported in news media outlets across Australia. And their responses to the looming crises were undeniably fast. Corporate Social Responsibility and Product Safety issues can no longer be swept under the carpet - not to mention featuring in discussions on the next version of ISO 9001 as far back as 2010, along with "customers and stakeholders" being extended to "interested parties".

Back to the AFL - traditionally at the AFL North Melbourne pre Grand Finals breakfast, **promotional footballs are free give-aways** to the guests who pay \$A350 to attend. This year they **axed the giveaway** of Sherrin branded footballs to their guests - caught between the pincer of Corporate Social Responsibility Crisis coupled with the quality-safety issue of the needles found inside some balls. The child workers were reportedly paid a mere 12 cents for stitching each of these balls. Sherrin balls can be **bought online** for up to in excess of \$A100. Other Sherrin AFL balls **hand stitched in Australia** sell online for similar prices. Sherrin has now offered employment to the parents of the child labourers.

Sherrin announced a **recall of all Auskick balls produced in 2011-12**, expected to be **nearly half a million balls**, and also donations to a charity, World Vision's Child Rescue program. They claimed unauthorised outsourcing by their supplier in breach of Sherrin's manufacturing standards. Inquiries have been directed to **Spice and Soul Marketing & PR's** staff. Sherrin also lamented that the Fairfax news media journalist had been investigating the child labour issue for a year and yet only in recent weeks made these concerns public. This is interesting in that concerns about exploitative stitching of footballs by children in India have existed since the **mid 1990's** have been aired in **2001, 2008, (more) and 2010** at least. See also Wikipedia article on **child labour**.

Outsourcing in supply chains is a responsibility for organizations accredited under ISO 9001, and with Globalization, increasingly is impacted, not only by product and safety reliability issues, but now also by CSR / SRO concerns. Social media merely accelerates the sharing of consumer and community CSR / SRO issues. Sherrin's suppliers had been independently audited, raising questions that the effectiveness of audits, and auditors, of CSR/SRO compliance need to be regularly and genuinely reviewed. Organizations aiming

for a long term sustainable existence, in the face of consumer and community globalized backlashes, must adapt to this world of "new" and "fast" Quality Paradigms.

See below for comments on Twitter.com

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2h **christopherbieg** @christopherbieg

North Melb FC shuns **child**-labour **Sherrin** footballs, donates savings to World Vision's **Child** Rescue. <http://www.theage.com.au/afl/afl-news/north-withdraws-sherrins-for-breakfast-20120929-26rpe.html>

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28 Sep **ABC Q&A** @QandA

Sherrin has pulled football manufacturing from India <http://bit.ly/QJL1DS> Does this hurt the 3rd world? Jianying Zha could discuss on #QandA

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28 Sep **The Age** @theage

Sherrin to offer jobs to **child** stitchers' parents <http://www.theage.com.au/afl/afl-news/sherrin-to-offer-jobs-to-child-stitchers-parents-20120928-26q6y.html>

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28 Sep **smh.com.au** @smh

World News: **Sherrin** to employ parents of **child** stitchers <http://bit.ly/QhZ0Aj>

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27 Sep **VEXNEWS** vexnews @vexnews

Fairfax attacks **Sherrin** for using **child** labour. Fairfax then attacks **Sherrin** for not using **child** labour. <http://bit.ly/PqsK8d>

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26 Sep kon karapanagiotidis @Kon__K

Sherrin doesnt recall its footballs after finding out thousands were made by Indian children but 1 white **child** is injured & 500,000 recalled

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26 Sep SBS News @SBSNews

Australian Rules football manufacturer **Sherrin** says it had no idea stitching on some balls was done using **child** labour <http://bit.ly/Sldh2Q>

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26 Sep AFL @AFL

CEO Andrew Demetriou says it is digusting that **child** labour was used to make some **Sherrin** footballs in India: <http://afl.to/Q8NXcz>

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26 Sep triplejHack @triplejHack

Sherrin has pulled its footys from Indian subcontractors after **child** labour revelations writes @SouthAsiaCorro <http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/world/sherrin-pulls-footballs-stitched-in-sweats-hop-20120925-26j5m.html>

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26 Sep Radio Australia News @RANews

Australian football manufacturer **Sherrin** closes down some operations in India after discovering the use of **child** labour <http://bit.ly/SjVGUL>

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26 Sep HumanRightsLawCentre @rightsagenda

Child labour revelations force football maker to take more responsibility for #humanrights issues in its supply chain <http://www.smh.com.au/national/ball-backdown-as-sherrin-ends-child-labour-20120925-26jjh.html>

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25 Sep **Chris Varney @chrisvarney**

Sherrin gives **child-labour** balls the boot <http://www.theage.com.au/afl/afl-news/sherrin-gives-childlabour-balls-the-boot-20120925-26j3f.html> via [@theage](#)

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25 Sep **Derryn Hinch @HumanHeadline**

Sherrin withdraws footballs made with Indian **child** labor from GF breakfast. Will end practice and donate to World Vision. Congrats The Age.

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24 Sep **triplejHack @triplejHack**

Fairfax media has discovered kids working as **child** labourers in Indian slums, hand sewing **Sherrin** and Canterbury footies destined for Oz.

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23 Sep **The Project @theprojecttv**

In light of the **Sherrin** scandal, we explore other items on our shelves that have been produced in sweatshops <http://www.smh.com.au/afl/afl-news/sherrin-may-get-the-boot-over-alleged-use-of-illegal-child-labour-20120922-26dvo.html>

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23 Sep **CFMEU National @CFMEU_National**

RT [@Bandit2809](#) **Sherrin** may get the boot over alleged use of illegal **child** labour <http://www.theage.com.au/afl/-26dvo.html> [#ausunons](#)

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22 Sep **Steve Cooke @Steven_Cooke**

Indian **child** labourers making Australian sports balls, like **Sherrin**. Please watch this clip! <http://www.theage.com.au/national/stitching-up-child-workers-20120921-26c86.html> [#childlabour](#) [#exploitation](#)

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22 Sep HAIL SWANS @hailants

Good. RT @smh: National News: AFL may sack Sherrin over child labour
<http://bit.ly/Tg69HV>

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22 Sep Brisbane Times @brisbanetimes

AFL may sack Sherrin over its alleged use of child labour <http://tinyurl.com/8aux6a5>

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22 Sep smh.com.au @smh

A Herald investigation reveals that the Sherrin your child is kicking around could have been made by India's... <http://fb.me/23lzqx2i>

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22 Sep Ponnaiyan Selvan @catamaran_tales

"@hailants: Im beyond appalled dat child labourers get paid \$1/day to make Sherrin footballs.FIX THIS IMMEDIATELY. <http://www.theage.com.au/national/all-work-no-play-for-footys-child-labourers-20120921-26cgd.html>"

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September 1, 2012

ASQ global voices blogger - Quality Culture and Pigs might fly.

Quality Culture and Pigs might fly Paul Borawsky, head of ASQ, asked the ASQ Global Influential Bloggers to reflect on what a quality culture means. I was inspired by my home town, Thirroul, in its transition - a metaphor for many businesses facing paradigm shifts - change or die.

Pre the early 1960's Thirroul, 80 kilometres (50 miles) south of Sydney, was a Workingman's town of coal mines, nearby steel mills/coke ovens /industrial brickmaking

and a railway maintenance yard, with clothing factories to employ the women. Still largely recognisable from that depicted by the English author D H Lawrence in his 1920's novel Kangaroo - where he also spoke of the local rugby league football club, the Butchers, who today are playing their end of season Grand Final.

Thirroul up until even the early 1980's meant a couple of pubs and three Workingman's style clubs (including the RSL - Returned Servicemen's Club). The food served at each was unpretentious and dominated by large quantities of meat with chips (fries) or a few heavily boiled veges. Plus some milkbars, hamburger joints and a couple of fish and chip shops. A Chinese cafe provided the exotica.



[Download full size \(1520 KB\)](#)

The World War 1 Soldiers Memorial facing winter afternoon sun in Fred Woodward Memorial Park, Thirroul, outside the now closed RSL (Returned Servicemen's) Club.

Flash ahead 10 years, closure and/or downsizing of coal mines, steel mills and factories, electrification of the State Rail line to Sydney, the Women's Lib movement, and growth of a nearby University, had generated change. An influx of young professionals and arty types moved into this Workingman's town - and a couple of young Thirroul women, came home from travelling in Europe. They decided to offer a different cafe.

So **Pigs might fly** was born (in fact its real name was just a little different). Serving alternative style (semi vegetarian and quiches) food to the usual Thirroul fare. Their largely professional class customers loved it, eschewing the smokey bars and poker (slot) machines of the clubs. They lingered there over Saturday morning coffees, read the Saturday newspapers and chatted to mates.

Pigs might fly had met a key quality requirement - satisfying their customers in an ambiance and culture that their customers wanted. And they relished this. It was really the first inkling of a CAFE SOCIETY in Thirroul. As a 6th Generation resident, engineer, and the local City Councillor married to a Sydney IT professional commuter, I straddled both old and new worlds in Thirroul. **Pigs might fly** was one of my favourites.

Time came for the owners of **Pigs might fly** to move on. They sold the business, generously offering their recipes to the new owner. He declined with some reputedly derogatory remarks about their menu. **Pigs might fly** began to serve not dissimilar meals to one of the Workingmen's style clubs not 5 minutes walk away, and at slightly higher prices. The former clientele fell away, not liking the new ambiance and culture, as the fledgling Thirroul CAFE SOCIETY receded for a few years.

After a while **Pigs might fly** was replaced by an Italian cafe and renamed. I went there once for a late Sunday lunch with two family members - we were the only customers. I was still the local City Councillor and we were squashed onto a tiny table - told to leave the bigger tables alone for any larger groups that might arrive. They didn't. We were the only lunch time guests. Sometime later the Italian cafe also changed hands and offered mid-week "all you can eat pizza and pasta". Later it closed too. A real estate agency, selling homes, moved in - the cafe restaurants were gone. From the 1980's the town was changing - but its evolution was unrecognised or resisted by some.

Ironically, ten years on, Thirroul has truly become a CAFE SOCIETY. A place for Sydneysiders to come down for a Sunday drive (or train ride) and a wander, followed by a coffee and light meal at one of the 8 to 10 cafes serving great coffee throughout the town.

And lots of Thai restaurants too but no Starbucks yet! These new cafes had learned what previous successive owners had missed. The key customer focused quality paradigm - well understood when **Pigs might fly** first opened. Satisfy your customers plus get that ambiance and culture right. Truly a metaphor for businesses, across the economic spectrum, who are facing paradigm shifts - change or die !

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June 25, 2012

Fakes Fraud Broadway Lessons Learned for CEOs

Fakes Broadway GRC CSR - Lessons Learned for CEOs. [ASQ's CEO Paul Borawski](#) had asked the Global Influential Voices to blog on taking Quality to the C-suite, the CEO's.

Faulty parts. Planes falling from the sky. Taking military pilots & their crews to their deaths. Unlucky? Pushing the technology boundaries in an urgent war time era?

Or something more sinister? Perhaps an aircraft parts factory co-owner Joe Keller pushed to keep an impossible deadline? Crucifying penalties if he didn't? So a compromise to keep the factory afloat? To ensure the planned legacy for his own son and heir Larry Keller? But blinding himself & in denial to the risks he was creating for other men's sons ?

So another Quality case study - the human story behind the investigation into yet another corporate train wreck over the last few years? But would it not be a foolish, albeit brave, action to name this factory manager who so recklessly flouted GRC & CSR principles ? Even worse when the dodgy parts causing the planes crashing finally came to light, the blame was sheeted to his factory co-owner, Steve Deever, the future father in law of his own son and heir.

What are the root causes underpinning this sorry saga not unlike what we have read of late? There has been Toyota, BP and Wall Street finance controversies. The lessons in quality, integrity, values that I learned from this issue came not from the pages of an ASQ article or a quality training course. But instead from a then-young Californian English Literature teacher on exchange in the 1970's in regional Australia just south of Sydney. Eschewing the traditional British literature he opened our minds to mid 20th Century American writers: Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams, William Faulkner, John Steinbeck and Robert Lowell.

This tale of morality and corruption shared by the young American, Roger Zelus, was of course "[All My Sons](#)" - a Broadway play of the mid 1940's by [Arthur Miller](#) and recently [revived in 2008](#) - again on Broadway -starring [Katie Holmes as Ann Deever](#). In some ways with the Toyota and BP debacles it seemed that life was imitating art. In Australia we had the [Equine Flu](#) which sickened and killed many horses - shutting down horse racing for weeks and months. Quality and integrity given way to short term approaches without due regard to the risks? Has quality too often been overshadowed by safety environment and financial drivers ? Rather than being seen as an equal partner in the long term sustainability of organizations ?

Thus was my first formative lesson in quality of [Arthur Miller's "All My Sons"](#) shared by Roger Zelus - a lesson in Quality CSR and GRC for CEO's.

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May 4, 2012

Happiness - Optimism - a Dichotomy with IT and Quality Managers ... or not

April - May seemed loaded with happiness blog posts across the globe - something to do with the northern hemisphere Spring perhaps ? Throwing off SADS - Seasonal Affect Disorder Syndrome - from cold winters ?

ASQ's Paul Borawski recently posed the [question](#) to ASQ Global Influential Voices for Quality Bloggers - are Quality Professionals Happy on the Job ? It all arose because of a study showing that [Software Quality Assurance Engineers](#) were the [happiest professionals](#). I've been enjoying the comments of my fellow ASQ Global Influential Voices for Quality

Bloggers as they explore Happiness in their Worlds.

As a Quality Manager in Manufacturing & Labs I could certainly face times when it was frustrating and a real uphill battle - but there were times of breakthroughs - like achieving EU CE Mark Certification for my company's products. A lot of hard work but delight to have achieved it.

However as David, my "significant other" is in governance in an IT Project Management world, and the conversation kicked off from the IT world, I decided to quiz him about what made him happy about his job. Specifically he is the Manager of the IT Program Management Office in an Australian Government Research institution - his role ? To mentor IT Project Managers to bring projects in on time, on budget and achieve the customers' requirements. Needless to say - lots of governance related discussions in our home over a glass of wine or two.

What matters to David as a Manager in IT Quality & Governance are :

- Recognition
- Respect
- Reasonable level of Resources so that projects can be managed & controlled
- Interesting Projects - creating a sense of challenge & achievement
- Innovation - opportunities to use or be exposed to new technologies
- An Organizational Management Structure & Culture that has the maturity to not set unrealistic deadlines in an arbitrary manner - interesting of course in a politically charged paradigm at times
- Having good Project Management methodologies with established tool kits rather than being hamstrung by old disfunctional technologies
- Opportunities to work with Aligned Team Members - but also with those who have a life beyond IT - (travelling is always a favourite topic and one workmate even inspired him to have our family start raising chickens as an eco-thing!)

Happily in his current role, a lot of those boxes are ticked - and happiness at work helps for happiness at home - and vice versa.

In the meantime I'd like to share some links I've received in 2012 on Happiness & Optimism :

- [10 Things Science says will make you Happy](#)
- [6 Ways to become more Optimistic](#)
- [50 Ways to Nurture Your Happiness](#)
- [Optimistic Enthusiasm as a Form of Realism & more](#) from Seth Godin
- [10 Psychological Keys to Job Satisfaction](#) - one of my favourites !
- [10 Ways to find Joy at Work](#)
- [The Science of Happiness](#) - fundamentally " *Stop and smell the roses,*" and *premised on the idea that experience itself, or "pursuit," is the true fountain of happiness"*
- [The Happy Secret to Better Work](#) - " *find a way to **become positive in the present**"*
- [10 Habits You Must Quit to be Happy](#)
- [Why Happiness Matters in Networks](#)
- [Why Learning Leads to Happiness](#) - *it's not just the money "As we get older, it is more important to find things to do that light up our lives," James says. Our minds are central to this effort, and thrive when we are finding new things for them to do"*

As for me - a final note - happiness comes from "living" my favourite quote - as shared in my Facebook account

"...care more than others think is wise;

...risk more than others think is safe;

...dream more than others think is practical;

...expect more than others think is possible."

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