WITS2001 Quality Assurance Plan

As implemented and managed by:

Qwest Government Services, Inc.

RFP WTT-98-PW-N-0001

July 25, 2003

Product and Quality Assurance

Qwest believes that quality and customer satisfaction are inextricably linked. Customer satisfaction and quality are both measured at Qwest, as Qwest has in-place Quality Assurance procedures and an in-place Customer Satisfaction program.

Quality Assurance Approach

In recent years, Qwest has worked successfully to improve customer service, response times for new service and repairs, and overall customer satisfaction. Qwest participates in and has knowledge and expertise in a variety of quality processes. Qwest has elevated the importance of Quality Assurance through the creation of a new organization, headed by a Senior Vice President Qwest's Chief Quality Officer. The Chief Quality Officer's primary mission is to ensure that quality is a fundamental part of Qwest's culture.

Through this effort, Qwest has greatly improved its in-region performance and is now rated at the top. A report issued on December 5, 2001 by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) confirmed Qwest Communications International Inc.'s dramatic improvement in customer service during the year 2000 for installation, repair and the quality of its network. The report showed that Qwest was first among the major local service providers in four of the seven critical customer service categories measured by the FCC and that Qwest improved in six of the seven.

The FCC's "Quality of Service of the Local Operating Companies, December 2001" is the definitive report for local service quality. It summarizes various service quality data filed by local telephone companies, serving approximately 90 percent of the nation's access lines. The previous report was issued in December 1999. The FCC's data showed Qwest was first in:

- Residential installation intervals – installing service in an average of one day.

- Residential repair satisfaction. Qwest was the only company to show an improvement over the previous year.
- Initial trouble reports per thousand lines, with the fewest in the industry. Qwest showed the most dramatic improvement over the previous year.
- Out-of-service repair intervals among the Regional Bell Operating Companies. Qwest showed the most dramatic improvement over the previous year. In fact, Qwest completed out-of-service repairs, on average, in half the time of others in the survey.

The report also showed:

- Qwest had the second-highest percentage of satisfied customers on residential installation, and was one of only two companies that did not experience a dramatic decrease in customer satisfaction.
- Qwest was tied for second in the percentage of installation commitments met on time.

While every other company surveyed showed an increase in the number of residential and business complaints per million access lines, Qwest showed a dramatic – nearly 50 percent – decrease.

In July 2001, J.D. Power and Associates named Qwest number one in Residential Long Distance Customer Satisfaction among High Volume Users (customers who spend more than $50 monthly). The ranking measures customer satisfaction across a number of key attributes including service, product quality and value, and marks a significant improvement in the company's performance since last year.

Customer Satisfaction Program

The results of an effective Quality Assurance program are measured through customer satisfaction. Qwest measures customer satisfaction in two ways. One way is directly by interviewing customers after a large installation; the second is indirectly by measuring service elements such as call holding times, service to installation intervals and billing accuracy.

Qwest's CVA (Customer Value Analysis) measures Qwest's perceived quality compared to competitors. Factors such as quality of service by product and important customer service attributes are measured. CVA results are then compared to previous CVAs. Sales and installation processes are then reviewed and often revised.

Qwest also measures how much time customers spend on hold in queue, how long it takes or place an order to actual service installation and how accurately we bill. These measurements help Qwest make adjustments in work force assignments, budgets and investments.

Qwest takes its customer satisfaction measurements very seriously and has made headlines for initiating "pay for performance" plans for most of its employees. Qwest is the first RBOC to incorporate a "pay for performance" plan in its CWA (Communications Workers of America) contract, a step financial analysts believe communications companies must take to remain competitive in today's changing environment.

Market Research

Qwest uses several methods and/or processes to gather customer feedback. This customer feedback has a direct influence on Qwest's development plans to deliver specified product enhancements and create new products and services.

Primary Market Research

Qwest's Consumer and Business & Government market units use primary market research to determine what customers need to manage their business. This primary market research is gathered by:

- telephone interviews
- in-person interviews
- focus groups
- direct mail

The goal of primary market research is to gain a better understanding of the key influencers on our future product direction.

Qwest uses both in-house resources and market research firms that specialize in key areas of the data and voice communications industry. Recently Qwest used primary market research results to develop an integrated product offering for CTI (Computer Telephony Integration). Qwest CTI brings together all elements from PBX manufacturers, software developers, call center providers, and related companies to provide complete data and voice call center solutions.

Secondary Market Research

Qwest uses secondary market research for its market and product planning. This research is based on analyses of various industries gathered from external sources. Some of these external sources include Computer Intelligence, Forrester Research, and others. Qwest also uses secondary information about communications technology in relationship to customers' businesses and organization strategies. This information helps Qwest develop product enhancements and new products that address emerging business and industry trends. For example, Qwest is the first company to deploy DSL (Digital Subscriber Loop) technology on a large scale so consumers have high speed, dedicated Internet access from home at affordable prices.

Customer Value Analysis (CVA)

Qwest uses both in-house resources and market research firms that specialize in key areas of the data and voice communications industry. Qwest also conducts the CVA interviews on a quarterly basis. CVAs provide customer feedback on service, repair, billing and sales experiences. These are incorporated into our product enhancements and new product direction. For example, Qwest recently utilized billing suggestions from the CVA results to enhance a web-based customer-billing tool that is in beta test with a select number of large customers.

Customer User Groups

Qwest uses Customer User Groups to gather valuable input for product enhancements and new product development. Qwest is fortunate to work closely with very strong user groups including the I-MUG (International Meridian Users Group) for Nortel PBX users. Qwest works with individual chapters on a local level, as well as the national level. Our product managers work closely with these groups, and with the manufacturers, to take customer input and translate it into new product enhancements and product development. Qwest's customers' input has had a direct impact on Nortel's current products. Qwest believes customers' input is the key to future product direction.

Escalation Procedures

Qwest Account Teams are committed to high quality customer service; Qwest's goal is to ensure that customers like Boeing are more than just simply satisfied. To meet and exceed our customers' expectations, Qwest established a Service Management Program that is a cooperative interdepartmental plan within Qwest. Customer specific plans are created to quickly resolve installation, repair or billing issues. A Customer Account Team and other virtual Qwest teams work to quickly resolve such problems when normal procedures are not working.

The Service Management Program includes an organization chart created for each individual customer. This organization chart identifies Qwest departments and a single point of contact and telephone number for each of those departments. The individuals on this organization chart are First Level Manager, Second Level Manager, Director, and Vice President. These charts are to be used for escalation purposes if ever necessary. A brief functional departmental description is also included.

If this escalation procedure fails to meet a customer's requirements, Qwest has CSMs (Customer Service Managers) whose sole responsibility is to respond to customer service issues. These CSMs expedite and resolve all installation and repair problems.

A project specific escalation chart will be created for the NMD undertaking. It will include the Qwest NMD Program Manager,

and Senior Vice President of Qwest Government Systems Division.

History of Quality Operations

Qwest is committed to a CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement) Process and shall demonstrate its commitment during the performance of any awarded business. Over the years in CQI, Qwest has become a benchmark against which other suppliers are measured. Our teams continuously work diligently to improve our processes, quality of products and services, and help reduce costs to our customers. We have a proven and established track record.

Qwest's Quality Council, established in January 1991, adopted performance metric targets in June 1991. These metric targets are adjusted on an annual basis. We believe that the metrics should be stretching, yet attainable. The most important concept regarding the metrics is Continuous Improvement; the ability to demonstrate sustained performance improvement over an extended period of time.

Extensive CQI processes have been established and are used within our day-to-day business practices. Historical detailed performance charts and metrics results can be provided upon request.

Qwest Quality Plan

Qwest Government Services, Inc. and Qwest Construction Units have developed and use Quality Control Plans (QCP) based on a Total Quality System (TQS). The QCP is different for the Construction Activities then the QCP for the Maintenance Activities. The QCP establishes quality objectives, identifies the tools and methods to measure quality objectives, and provides a process for preventing and correcting deficiencies. The specific QCP's developed for specific projects include detailed procedures for evaluating, inspecting, and/or testing the quality of installations, workmanship, and maintenance tasks. Detailed mechanisms for accessing the effectiveness of quality processes and procedures are also included in the final QCPs.

The philosophy behind the QCP is to "build Quality into Qwest's product/service – not to inspect for deficiencies at the conclusion of the work!"

Qwest considers Environmental and Safety issues involved in Construction to be an integral part of our "Quality" program. Our QCP is an integrated approach to providing a Quality Product, Safely and in concert with Municipal and Military Standards and Law.

The TQS has evolved to continuously improve all the processes that deliver products and services to our customers. The major components of TQS are:

Policy Management — implement policies which incorporate customer feedback, system performance data, and accountability and responsibility at the operational level.

Engagement Systems — implement team and individual problem-solving skills.

Process Management — implement training, standards, and quality measurement techniques to incorporate improvements to products and services.

ISO Quality Standards, Telecommunications and Qwest's TQS

In recognition of the lack of manufacturing functionality at the Regional Bell Operating Company level and the difficulty of conforming a telecommunications provider's operations to the ISO 9000 standards, Telecordia (formerly BellCore) developed the Customer Supplier Quality Program (CSQP). The CSQP was innovative and built upon ISO 9000 requirements to develop a process. The process proved to be costly and difficult to staff and manage. After several years, ISO 9000 processes had matured and viable alternatives had emerged.

A consensus in the telecommunications industry emerged to create a sector specific ISO 9001 based quality system.

The result of the effort was the creation of TL9000. It is based on common requirements for Hardware, Software and Services. The next step was the development of standard measurements for the Hardware, Software and Services.

As TL9000 work evolves, many major telecommunications providers are evaluating and analyzing their applicability and considering adoption of the TL9000 standards. Several major suppliers now require TL9000 as a part of any procurement action. Qwest is evaluating TL9000 and its applicability to various activities within the Qwest family of Companies.

Qwest's Quality Control Plans are continuously reviewed and evaluated to assure that our Processes and Procedures integrate the "Best in Class" practices and policies available in the industry.

Key Elements of the QCP include the following:

- Testing and Inspection Procedure
- Verification and Validation of Test Results
- Managing Quality Deficiencies
- Compliance with Base Policies
- Safety Management
- Environmental Considerations

It is our experience that compliance with sound Safety practices and Environmental Policies contribute to on time projects, completed in a quality manner within budget.

Testing and Inspection Procedure

Qwest utilizes Best in Class test methodology and equipment specific to the particular type of facility, software, and/or performance characteristics required. These processes and associated test equipment can be reviewed and discussed with GSA National Capital personnel as appropriate. Standard Operating Practices (SOP) are utilized in the field to provide replicable processes and quality service.

Verification and Validation of Test Results

The Project Manager will be responsible for assuring that monitoring of the testing and installation process is accomplished on a continuing basis. The monitoring will involve verification of test procedures to ensure they include specific test objectives, adequate test steps, and specific evaluation criteria. Verification will include evaluation of test

results on a sample basis, and as part of the QCP's quality improvement processes.

The Program Management Office (PMO) periodically monitors actual test performance to validate that test procedures are being followed and test reports accurately reflect test results.

Processes for certifying test results and reports, and the length of time that test data will be retained exist. Based on the criticality of the test being performed, the process identifies the procedure for ensuring that test data is secured.

Quality Evaluations and Inspections

Qwest PMO Field Managers and Construction Project Management will perform quality evaluations and job inspections consisting of both scheduled and unannounced activities to include audits, reviews and on-the-job observations. These evaluations include assessment of the work itself, quality and timeliness of the work performed, safety processes, equipment condition and records management. The results are used in association with quality process indicator analyses to enable early identification and correction of deficiencies in the work itself, work methods, and service delivery processes.

Quality Deficiencies

Quality Assurance Evaluator (QAE) Reports

Qwest utilizes its first and second level management team to function as QAE personnel.

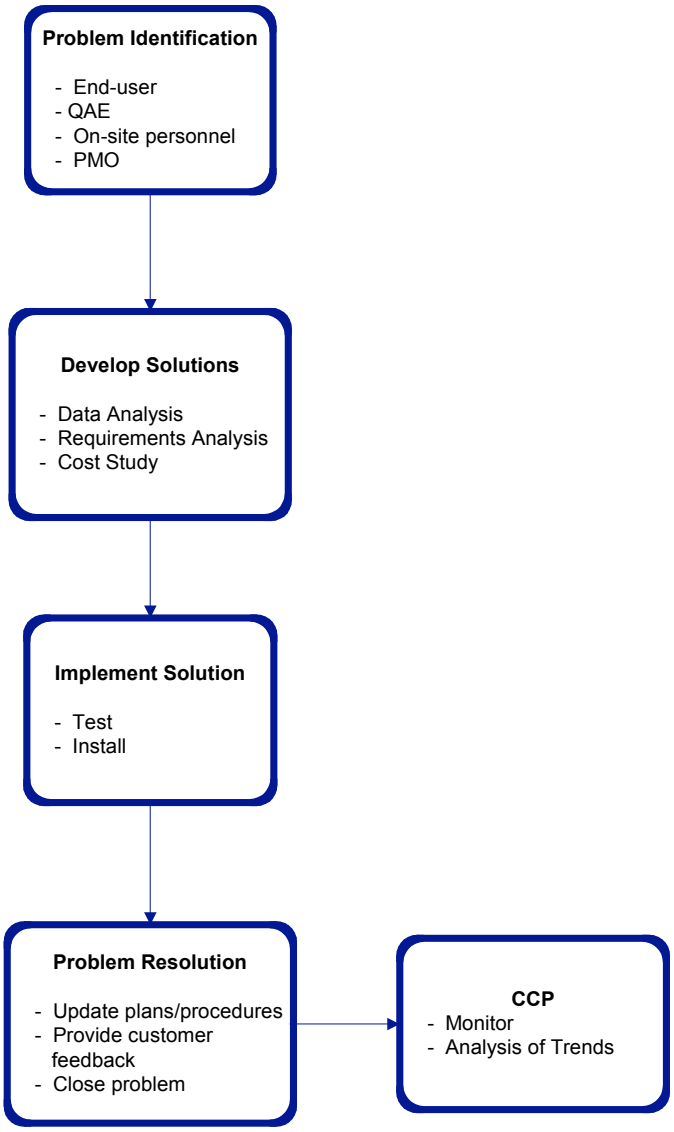
All QAE deficiency reports will be immediately recorded, and reported to the Program and Project Managers. The responsible manager will determine if immediate action is appropriate and available. If the corrective action can be immediately implemented, it will be done. If the problem is systemic, or one requiring special team attention, a status and action plan will be provided to the Program Office. If necessary to effect a process improvement, appropriate Program Management participation with the Qwest quality team will be requested.

Correcting Quality Deficiencies

Consistent with Qwest policy, processes that deliver products and services to a project are continually monitored. Although Qwest's quality processes are in place to quickly identify and prevent any deficiencies, there are occasions when corrective and preventive actions are required. Corrective and preventive actions will be implemented to preclude potential nonconformity, as well as eliminate actual occurrences. To the extent practicable, existing documented processes are used to direct corrective action for noncompliance. All noncompliance issues and customer complaints will be reviewed in light of specifications and required performance parameters. Disposition and corrective action will be influenced by business risk, cost effectiveness, and status, relative to contractual requirements. Corrective action will be taken by Qwest; however, should urgency and risk dictate, Qwest may enlist corporate support from vendor or subcontractor organizations.

Managers and teams from additional resources may be required in extreme cases. When warranted by the gravity of the problem, a quick-reaction team will be formed to expediently implement a solution to minimize negative impact on a program.

An overview of the Corrective Action Process is shown in the figure below.



Corrective Action Process

The corrective action process is an effective tool for preventing and resolving problems.