



PRESS RELEASE

NIKKO MATERIALS USA ATTAINS HIGHEST LEVEL OF ISO 9001 CERTIFICATION

CHANDLER, Ariz., January 20, 2004 Nikko Materials USA, Inc., the leading supplier of consumable electronic materials such as high purity metals and wafers used in the microelectronics and communications industries, today announced it has been certified to the highest level of International Standard ISO 9001:2000 for its quality management system. This latest certification for the Chandler-based semiconductor materials supplier comes just a year after achieving ISO 9002:1994 standards and represents Nikko Materials USA's commitment to continually enhancing customer satisfaction.

"ISO 9001:2000 was the next logical step for Nikko Materials USA after achieving 1994 certification and is a more systems-based approach to quality," said Robert Moring, quality systems administrator for Nikko Materials USA. "During the certification process, we demonstrated that we not only meet but exceed our customers' expectations. With 2000, our clients have the confidence of knowing their products are manufactured under the highest standards."

According to Moring, Nikko Materials USA prepared for the 2000 process while still in the midst of 1994 certification by constantly keeping 2000 standards in the forefront and laying a foundation for the quality management system. To quickly achieve the 2000 standard, Nikko Materials USA assembled a cross-functional team with representatives from each department within the company and reported progress to management on a continual basis in order to seek strategic direction efficiently and promptly.

"ISO 2000 is a much more process-oriented certification and requires a great deal of commitment from a company's management team to achieve this level of quality standards," said Melissa Johnson, account manager for Bureau Veritas Quality International, North America "The quality management system at Nikko Materials USA continues to mature and improve and overall, there was clear evidence of effectiveness in meeting the company objectives."

Bureau Veritas Quality International (BVQI) was chosen as Nikko Materials USA partner in the ISO certification process. BVQI has registered over 30,000 companies around the world and stresses the need for continuous improvement as well as their commitment to adding value through the process.

During the audit process, BVQI noted the many strengths of the Nikko Materials USA quality management system including the high level of employee participation in the certification program and its internal Enterprise Interface systems, noting it was an excellent tool for managing several of the processes in the organization.

About Nikko Materials USA, Inc.

Nikko Materials USA, Inc., a recognized leader in the field of high purity metals and wafers used in the microelectronics and communications industries, offers a wide variety of sputtering targets for the manufacture of semiconductors, data storage devices and optical films. In addition to these products, Nikko Materials USA offers ACROTEC InP and CdZnTe wafers widely used for compound semiconductor and IR sensor applications. Nikko Materials USA operates under parent company Nikko Materials Company Ltd., a Nippon Mining Company headquartered in Tokyo, Japan.