

**OEM Website Audit Steering Committee
Conference Call Notes
November 22, 2005**

A meeting of the OEM Website Audit Steering Committee took place by conference call on November 22, 2005. Participants on the call included Holly Pugliese (US EPA), John Daley, and Donnie Seyfer. Monika Chandra and Twohy Murray, from Perrin Quarles Associates, Inc., were also on the call.

A. Introduction

During the previous steering committee conference call, two members, John Daley and Donnie Seyfer, volunteered to help EPA and PQA assign auditors to each of the twenty-six OEM websites. Prior to the conference call, PQA and EPA created a first draft of the website assignments.

B. Website Assignments

The conference call began with an explanation by EPA and PQA of how auditors were assigned. Generally, PQA and EPA assigned applicants based on the website that they applied to audit. However, some websites were overloaded with applicants, and as a result, PQA and EPA selected auditors based on other criteria. Applicants that volunteered to audit multiple websites or indicated that they had experience with other websites were assigned to one of these websites. Although the steering committee had discussed limiting the number of auditors per website to ten, EPA and PQA assigned more than ten auditors to the BMW (14 auditors), Chrysler (23 auditors), Ford (22 auditors), General Motors (22 auditors), and Mercedes Benz (12 auditors) websites due to the overwhelming interest in these sites.

As a result, many of the other OEM websites lack the minimum of eight auditors that the steering committee initially discussed. Mr. Daley noted that Mitchell 1 could provide additional auditors if necessary. As an alternative, EPA suggested contacting the applicants that were assigned to the Ford, Chrysler, and General Motors websites and offering these applicants the opportunity to audit a different website. Mr. Daley agreed and believed that it would be beneficial to have applicants audit websites that they were not necessarily familiar with. EPA supported the idea of assigning extra Ford, Chrysler, and General Motors technicians to websites that lacked sufficient auditors. EPA also noted that based on the survey results, none of the current applicants appeared to be subscribers to OEM websites. EPA worried that this might indicate a lack of experience with the websites.

Mr. Daley responded that randomly assigning extra technicians to certain websites would not only increase the average number of auditors per website but would also benefit the audit by providing unbiased results from auditors with little or no experience with their

assigned website. He again noted that Mitchell 1 could provide additional technicians if necessary. EPA noted that most Mitchell 1 technicians do not actively work on vehicles. Mr. Daley agreed but commented that nearly all of Mitchell 1's technicians worked on vehicles at some point in their career. Before contacting Mitchell 1's technicians, EPA suggested sending an email to the current list of auditor applicants and requesting additional auditors for specific websites.

Mr. Seyfer noted that he was aware of a technician interested in auditing the Land Rover website. EPA requested that Mr. Seyfer ask the technician to apply. EPA also planned to contact a technician interested in auditing the Porsche website, which currently has only eight assigned auditors. The Land Rover website only has four assigned auditors.

Mr. Seyfer indicated that overall he was satisfied with the assignments by EPA and PQA. However, he was also concerned that the current list of applicants did not include any active website subscribers. He believed this was partially due to how the auditor application question was phrased. The question should have stated, "Have you ever subscribed to the OEM website that you would like to audit?" EPA agreed and noted that the goal of the question was to determine the number of passwords that various OEMs would be required to supply. Mr. Daley also agreed and commented that some applicants may have felt that answering "yes" to the question could disqualify them from the audit. Based on comments from both EPA and Mr. Seyfer, some applicants appear to be concerned about the steering committee's selection process. EPA noted that all applicants would be selected for a website.

PQA turned the discussion toward the auditor assignments by PQA and EPA and asked the two steering committee members for comments. PQA again noted that over twenty auditors had been assigned to the Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler OEM website, and was particularly interested in the steering committee's response to these assignments. Mr. Seyfer agreed that it was justified to assign a greater number of auditors to Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler, since American technicians rely on these websites most frequently. PQA noted that three new applicants had applied since the website assignments were originally made. EPA asked PQA to assign the new applicants and noted that PQA should continue to assign applicants as they apply. Mr. Seyfer noted that one of the applicants currently assigned to Volvo might also be qualified to audit other European OEM websites.

EPA noted that Volvo was only one of the many websites that still lacks ten auditors. EPA suggested emailing the current applicants and requesting additional volunteers for websites with six or fewer applicants. These include: Hyundai, Infiniti, Isuzu, Jaguar, Kia, Land Rover, Lexus, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Saab, and Suzuki. Applicants that choose to audit one of these websites will also be asked to audit the website to which they were already assigned. The email should also ask interested applicants to reply directly to EPA or PQA rather than submit a new online application. Passwords will be distributed one to two weeks after the final OEM website assignments are made. Mr.

Seyfer noted that applicants should only volunteer to audit one of the websites above if they plan to have access to one of the OEM's vehicles. EPA agreed with Mr. Seyfer's suggestion. Mr. Daley also agreed that this would likely be an effective way to fill gaps in the website assignments. Some OEM websites, he explained, are very similar to others, which would benefit auditors reviewing both sites. For example, the Toyota and Lexus OEM websites both provide essentially the same information in the same way. Mr. Daley suggested asking auditors of overlapping websites to audit both sites. EPA agreed with the suggestion and will draft the email to the volunteers.

C. Action Items

- (1) All current OEM website assignments are considered final.
- (2) EPA will draft an email to send to the current volunteers. The email will request additional auditors for the Hyundai, Infiniti, Isuzu, Jaguar, Kia, Land Rover, Lexus, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Saab, and Suzuki OEM websites.
- (3) PQA will continue to assign applicants as they apply. These applicants will be assigned based on the applicant's preference to audit specific OEM websites. Applicants may also be assigned to websites that they have experience with.
- (4) PQA will send an updated list of applicants and website assignments to the steering committee.