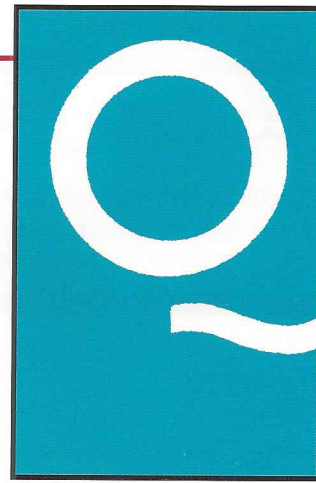

Study Looks at Quality Around the World

It took over 500 companies from four industries in four countries to provide the answers, but a recent study is hoping to define quality on a universal basis. The result will be an important benchmark for all companies as they examine and develop their own quality management programs.

The six-year International Quality Study is a collaborative effort between the American Quality Foundation and Ernst & Young, a leading international professional services firm. Questions were based on Malcolm Baldrige criteria, the Deming Prize and ISO-9000.

GenCorp Automotive participated by providing its own perspective on the topic of quality. An executive committee answered questions covering over 102 management items.

“The study gave us the opportunity to provide input to an international database of information,” says Dana Cound, vice president of quality and productivity for GenCorp Automotive and vice president



American Quality Foundation

of quality management for GenCorp corporate-wide. “In return, we have a way to gauge differences in our approach to global competitors and OEMs.”

Initial results of the study have been released with a comprehensive report to follow. A series of conferences and seminars will be conducted to look at the findings of the study.

According to Josh Hammond, president of the American Quality Foundation, “Everyone knows the ABCs of quality; this study is about the XYZs of business.”

Sealing Systems Use New Technologies

A unique, low-friction material, designed to increase durability and reduce door and window closing efforts, is being used on various parts that make up GenCorp Automotive’s new vehicle sealing systems.

Another new technology, GenCorp’s patented flush glassrun, is part of the vehicle sealing system for the new N-body cars — the Pontiac Grand Am, Buick Skylark and Oldsmobile Achieva.

The flush glassrun combines appearance with function. For the N-body cars, the glassruns have a matte black coating for a sleek and high-tech look.

Also, for the first time, the below-belt retainer in the glassrun is plastic instead of metal. This was a joint engineering project between General Motors and GenCorp Automotive.

“We replaced metal with plastic for a reduction in weight and a savings in cost,” says John Walters, a senior account executive at GenCorp Automotive.

The result shows how technology is constantly improving the systems for vehicle sealing.