

Y2K Readiness Update

By Paula Barker

In our May, 1999 issue, we discussed packages that were to be sent to our customers regarding EMC's Y2K test findings. As promised, the packages were mailed out in mid-June. The packages consisted of the summary of Air Liquide's Y2K readiness plan, including the steps involved, milestone schedule, readiness status and the *Sematech Year 2000 Readiness Testing Scenarios*, with test results specific to EMC. Also helpful, was a list of often-asked questions with answers. Following are some examples:

What is the company's definition of Y2K and do all your business units/sites use the same definition?

Air Liquide uses the British Standard Definition of Y2K and we use the following categories to define readiness:

<i>Compliant</i>	<i>System/device is Y2K ready, Y2K compliant, No Y2K failure</i>
<i>Compliant with Issues</i>	<i>Awareness of date issues, sliding windows, 2-digit dates</i>
<i>No-Issues</i>	<i>No date function, routine or clock</i>
<i>Unknown</i>	<i>Uncertain, probability of failure</i>
<i>Not Compliant</i>	<i>Will Fail, Requires Upgrade/Retirement/Replacement</i>

What dates are you testing as part of your testing plan?

Air Liquide tests 7 key dates at a minimum, and other dates depending on the systems/components

<i>Dec 31, 1998-Jan 1, 1999</i>	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Sep 8, 1999-Sep 9, 1999</i>	<i>Program</i>
<i>Dec 31, 1999-Jan 1, 2000</i>	<i>Millennium</i>	<i>Feb 28, 2000-Feb 29, 2000</i>	<i>Leap Year</i>
<i>Feb 29, 2000-Mar 1, 2000</i>	<i>Day of week test</i>	<i>Dec 30, 2000-Dec 31, 2000</i>	<i>366th day</i>
<i>Dec 31, 2000-Jan 1, 2001</i>	<i>End Baseline/Real Millennium</i>		

How many suppliers does the company have and how many are critical?

15,900 suppliers and 550 are critical

Have you prioritized your suppliers in terms of criticality; define critical supplier?

Suppliers were prioritized based on their potential impact on our process; we rank safety and environment first then customer impact.

Is there anything that will adversely effect the normal business activities between your company and your customers?

Our goal is Zero product interruption, our approach is professional and our performance is accurate—we believe our goal can be reached.

Air Liquide Y2K contacts:

Electronics: Robert Olds
Air Liquide America: Paul Jaeger

Y2K Legislation Update



Last issue, we discussed legislation before the House and Senate to protect defendants from lawsuits associated with Year 2000 problems.* At that time, H.R. 775 had passed the House.

Since then, Senate Bill S.96 overwhelmingly passed the Senate, and on Friday, July 2nd, a compromise on two bills that are quite different passed both the House and Senate. The resulting legislation, retaining the House number H.R. 775, still awaits the President's signature.

The compromise legislation preserves the 90-day *cooling off* period, liability limits and capped punitive damages for small businesses.** Plaintiffs may recover economic losses only when the losses result from damage to tangible property. Proportionate liability among defendants is the general rule—this had been a point of contention between the two previous bills.

*The principal threat to products is their potential incapacity to correctly process, provide and/or receive date data within and between the 20th and 21st centuries.

**Defined as a business with 50 or fewer employees.