

## **Qualstar Corporation**

### **AUDIT COMMITTEE CHARTER**

**Adopted by the Board of Directors of Qualstar Corporation  
March 21, 2016**

This Audit Committee Charter was adopted by the Board of Directors (the “Board”) of Qualstar Corporation (the “Company”) on March 21, 2016.

#### **I. General Scope**

##### **1.1 Purpose of Audit Committee**

- The purpose of the Audit Committee (the “Committee”) is to oversee the accounting and financial reporting processes of the Company and the audits of the financial statements of the Company.
- In addition to the powers and responsibilities expressly delegated to the Committee in this Charter, the Committee may exercise any other powers and carry out any other responsibilities delegated to it by the Board from time to time consistent with the Company’s bylaws.
- The powers and responsibilities delegated by the Board to the Committee in this Charter or otherwise shall be exercised and carried out by the Committee as it deems appropriate without requirement of Board approval, and any decision made by the Committee (including any decision to exercise or refrain from exercising any of the powers delegated to the Committee hereunder) shall be at the Committee’s sole discretion.
- While acting within the scope of the powers and responsibilities delegated to it, the Committee shall have and may exercise all the powers and authority of the Board. To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Committee shall have the power to determine which matters are within the scope of the powers and responsibilities delegated to it.

##### **1.2 Scope of Responsibilities**

- Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Committee’s responsibilities are limited to oversight.
- Management of the Company is responsible for the preparation, presentation and integrity of the Company’s financial statements as well as the Company’s financial reporting process, accounting policies, internal controls and disclosure controls and procedures.
- The independent auditor (defined below) is responsible for performing an audit of the Company’s annual financial statements, expressing an opinion as to the conformity of

such annual financial statements with generally accepted accounting principles and reviewing the Company's quarterly financial statements.

- Each member of the Committee shall be entitled to rely on the integrity of those persons within the Company and of the professionals and experts from which the Committee receives information and, absent actual knowledge to the contrary, the accuracy of the financial and other information provided to the Committee by such persons, professionals or experts. The members of the Committee are not employees of the Company or the independent auditor, and it is not the responsibility of the Committee to plan or conduct audits or to determine that the Company's financial statements and disclosure are complete and accurate and in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and applicable laws, rules and regulations.

## **II. Membership**

- 2.1 The Committee shall consist of at least three members of the Board; provided, that if at any time there is one vacancy on the Committee and the remaining members meet all membership requirements, then the Committee may consist of two members until the earlier of the Company's next annual stockholders meeting or one year from the occurrence of the vacancy; *provided, however*, that if the annual stockholders meeting occurs no later than 180 days following the event that caused the vacancy, the Committee may consist of two members until 180 days from such event.
- 2.2 Each Committee member must be able to read and understand fundamental financial statements, including a company's balance sheet, income statement and cash flow statement.
- 2.3 Members of the Committee are not required to be engaged in the accounting and auditing profession and, consequently, subject to the requirements set forth in Sections 2.4 and 2.5, some members may not be expert in financial matters, or in matters involving auditing or accounting.
- 2.4 At least one member of the Committee shall have past employment experience in finance or accounting, requisite professional certification in accounting, or any other comparable experience or background that results in the individual's financial sophistication, including being or having been a chief executive officer, chief financial officer or other senior officer with financial oversight responsibilities.
- 2.5 At least one member of the Committee shall be an "audit committee financial expert" within the definition adopted by the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") or the Company shall disclose in its filings required pursuant to the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act") the reasons why at least one member of the Committee is not an "audit committee financial expert."
- 2.6 Each Committee member shall satisfy the independence requirements of the Nasdaq Stock Market and Rule 10A-3(b)(1) under the Exchange Act; provided, that if a member of the Committee ceases to be independent for reasons outside the member's reasonable control, then the member may remain on the Committee until the earlier of the

Company's next annual stockholders meeting or one year from the occurrence of the event that caused the member to cease to be independent.

2.7 No member of the Committee may have participated in the preparation of the financial statements of the Company or any current subsidiary of the Company at any time during the three years prior to such member's appointment to the Committee.

2.8 The members of the Committee, including the Chair of the Committee, shall be appointed by the Board. Committee members may be removed from the Committee, with or without cause, by the Board.

### **III. Meetings and Procedures**

3.1 The Chair (or in his or her absence, a member designated by the Chair) shall preside at each meeting of the Committee and set the agendas for Committee meetings. The Committee shall have the authority to establish its own rules and procedures for notice and conduct of its meetings so long as they are not inconsistent with any provisions of the Company's bylaws that are applicable to the Committee.

3.2 The Committee shall meet at least once during each fiscal quarter and more frequently as the Committee deems desirable. The Committee shall meet periodically and separately with management and with the independent auditor.

3.3 The Committee may retain any independent counsel, experts or advisors (accounting, financial or otherwise) that the Committee believes to be necessary or appropriate. The Committee may also utilize the services of the Company's regular legal counsel or other advisors to the Company. The Company shall provide for appropriate funding, as determined by the Committee, for payment of compensation to the independent auditor for the purpose of rendering or issuing an audit report or performing other audit, review or attest services, for payment of compensation to any advisors employed by the Committee and for ordinary administrative expenses of the Committee that are necessary or appropriate in carrying out its duties.

3.4 The Committee may conduct or authorize investigations into any matters within the scope of the powers and responsibilities delegated to the Committee.

### **IV. Powers and Responsibilities**

#### **4.1 Interaction with the Independent Auditor**

(1) **Appointment and Oversight.** The Committee shall be directly responsible for the appointment, compensation, retention, oversight and termination, if necessary, of the work of an independent registered public accounting firm to act as the Company's independent auditor (the "independent auditor") (including resolution of any disagreements between Company management and the independent auditor regarding financial reporting) for the purpose of preparing or issuing an audit report or related work or performing other audit, review or attest services for the Company, and the independent auditor shall report directly to the Committee. The

Committee may also select, retain, compensate, oversee and terminate, if necessary, any other registered public accounting firm engaged for the purpose of preparing or issuing an audit report or performing other audit, review or attest services for the Company.

- (2) **Pre-Approval of Services.** Before the independent auditor is engaged by the Company or its subsidiaries to render audit or non-audit services, the Committee shall pre-approve the engagement. Committee pre-approval of audit and non-audit services will not be required if the engagement for the services is entered into pursuant to pre-approval policies and procedures established by the Committee regarding the Company's engagement of the independent auditor, provided the policies and procedures are detailed as to the particular service, the Committee is informed of each service provided and such policies and procedures do not include delegation of the Committee's responsibilities under the Exchange Act to the Company's management. The Committee may delegate to one or more designated members of the Committee the authority to grant pre-approvals, provided such approvals are presented to the Committee at a subsequent meeting. If the Committee elects to establish pre-approval policies and procedures regarding non-audit services, the Committee must be informed of each non-audit service provided by the independent auditor. Committee pre-approval of non-audit services (other than review and attest services) also will not be required if such services fall within available exceptions established by the SEC.
- (3) **Independence of Independent Auditor.** The Committee shall, at least annually, review the independence and quality control procedures of the independent auditor and the experience and qualifications of the independent auditor's senior personnel that are providing audit services to the Company. In conducting its review:
  - (i) The Committee shall obtain and review a report prepared by the independent auditor describing (a) the auditing firm's internal quality-control procedures and (b) any material issues raised by the most recent internal quality-control review, peer review or Public Company Accounting Oversight Board ("PCAOB") review or inspection of the auditing firm, or by any other inquiry or investigation by governmental or professional authorities, within the preceding five years, respecting one or more independent audits carried out by the auditing firm, and any steps taken to deal with any such issues.
  - (ii) The Committee shall ensure that the independent auditor prepare and deliver, at least annually, a written statement delineating all relationships between the independent auditor and the Company, consistent with PCAOB rules and other applicable laws, regulations or standards. The Committee shall actively engage in a dialogue with the independent auditor with respect to any disclosed relationships or services that, in the view of the Committee, may impact the objectivity and independence of the independent auditor. If the Committee determines that further inquiry is advisable, the Committee shall take

appropriate action in response to the independent auditor's report to satisfy itself of the auditor's independence.

- (iii) The Committee shall confirm with the independent auditor that the independent auditor is in compliance with the partner rotation requirements established by the SEC.
- (iv) The Committee shall, if applicable, consider whether the independent auditor's provision of any permitted information technology services or other non-audit services to the Company is compatible with maintaining the independence of the independent auditor.

#### 4.2 Annual Financial Statements and Annual Audit

- (1) Meetings with Management and the Independent Auditor.
  - (i) The Committee shall meet with management and the independent auditor in connection with each annual audit to discuss the scope of the audit, the procedures to be followed and the staffing of the audit.
  - (ii) The Committee shall review and discuss with management and the independent auditor: (A) major issues regarding accounting principles and financial statement presentations, including any significant changes in the Company's selection or application of accounting principles, and major issues as to the adequacy of the Company's internal controls, including any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in the design or operation of internal control over financial reporting or any fraud that involves management or other employees who have a significant role in the Company's internal controls, and any special audit steps adopted in light of material control deficiencies; (B) any analyses prepared by management or the independent auditor setting forth significant financial reporting issues and judgments made in connection with the preparation of the Company's financial statements, including analyses of the effects of alternative GAAP methods on the Company's financial statements; and (C) the effect of regulatory and accounting initiatives, as well as off-balance sheet structures, on the Company's financial statements.
  - (iii) The Committee shall review and discuss the annual audited financial statements with management and the independent auditor, including the Company's disclosures under "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations."
- (2) Separate Meetings with the Independent Auditor.
  - (i) The Committee shall review with the independent auditor any problems or difficulties the independent auditor may have encountered during the course of the audit work, including any restrictions on the scope of activities or access to required information or any significant disagreements with management and management's responses to such matters. Among the items that the Committee

should consider reviewing with the independent auditor are: (A) any accounting adjustments that were noted or proposed by the auditor but were “passed” (as immaterial or otherwise); (B) any communications between the audit team and the independent auditor’s national office respecting auditing or accounting issues presented by the engagement; and (C) any “management” or “internal control” letter issued, or proposed to be issued, by the independent auditor to the Company. The Committee shall obtain from the independent auditor assurances that Section 10A(b) of the Exchange Act has not been implicated.

- (ii) The Committee shall discuss with the independent auditor the report that such auditor is required to make to the Committee regarding: (A) all accounting policies and practices to be used that the independent auditor identifies as critical; (B) all alternative treatments within GAAP for policies and practices related to material items that have been discussed among management and the independent auditor, including the ramifications of the use of such alternative disclosures and treatments, and the treatment preferred by the independent auditor; and (C) all other material written communications between the independent auditor and management of the Company, such as any management letter, management representation letter, reports on observations and recommendations on internal controls, independent auditor’s engagement letter, independent auditor’s independence letter, schedule of unadjusted audit differences and a listing of adjustments and reclassifications not recorded, if any.
  - (iii) The Committee shall review and discuss with management and the independent auditor matters related to the conduct of the audit which are to be communicated to the Committee under the auditing standards of the PCAOB, including PCAOB AS 1301, *Communications with Audit Committees* and AS 1305, *Communications About Control Deficiencies in an Audit of Financial Statements*, as then in effect.
- (3) Recommendation to Include Financial Statements in Annual Report. The Committee shall, based on the review and discussions referred to in paragraphs 4.2(1) and 4.2(2) above, and based on the disclosures received from the independent auditor regarding its independence and discussions with the independent auditor regarding such independence pursuant to subparagraph 4.1(3) above, determine whether to recommend to the Board that the audited financial statements be included in the Company’s Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year subject to the audit.

### 4.3 Quarterly Financial Statements and Quarterly Review

- (1) Meetings with Management and the Independent Auditor.
  - (i) The Committee shall meet with management and the independent auditor in connection with each quarterly review to review and discuss the quarterly financial statements.
  - (ii) The Committee shall discuss the same items referred to in paragraph 4.2(1) and 4.2(2) above for the annual audited financial statements as appropriate for the quarterly reviewed financial statements.
- (2) Recommendation to Include Financial Statements in Quarterly Report. The Committee shall, based on the review and discussions referred to in paragraph 4.3(1) above, and based on the disclosures received from the independent auditor regarding its independence and discussions with the independent auditor regarding such independence pursuant to subparagraph 4.1(3) above, determine whether to recommend to the Board that the reviewed financial statements be included in the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the fiscal quarter subject to the review.

### 4.4 Other Powers and Responsibilities

- (1) The Committee shall discuss with management and the independent auditor the Company's earnings press releases and earnings guidance. The Committee's discussion in this regard may be general in nature (i.e., discussion of the types of information to be disclosed and the type of presentation to be made) and need not take place in advance of each earnings release or each instance in which the Company may provide earnings guidance.
- (2) The Committee shall review all related party transactions on an ongoing basis, and all such transactions must be approved by the Committee.
- (3) The Committee shall discuss with management and the independent auditor any correspondence from or with regulators or governmental agencies, any employee complaints or any published reports that raise material issues regarding the Company's financial statements, financial reporting process and accounting policies.
- (4) The Committee shall discuss with the Company's outside counsel any legal matters brought to the Committee's attention that could reasonably be expected to have a material impact on the Company's financial statements.
- (5) The Committee shall discuss with management the Company's policies with respect to risk assessment and risk management. The Committee shall discuss with management the Company's significant financial risk exposures and the actions management has taken to limit, monitor or control such exposures.

- (6) The Committee shall set clear hiring policies for employees or former employees of the Company's independent auditor.
- (7) The Committee shall establish procedures for the receipt, retention and treatment of complaints received by the Company regarding accounting, internal accounting controls or auditing matters. The Committee shall also establish procedures for the confidential and anonymous submission by employees regarding questionable accounting or auditing matters.
- (8) The Committee shall provide the Company with the report of the Committee with respect to the audited financial statements required by Item 306 of Regulation S-K, for inclusion in the Company's annual proxy statement.
- (9) The Committee, through its Chair, shall report regularly to, and review with, the Board any issues that arise with respect to the quality or integrity of the Company's financial statements, the Company's compliance with legal or regulatory requirements, the performance and independence of the Company's independent auditor or any other matter the Committee determines is necessary or advisable to report to the Board.
- (10) The Committee shall at least annually perform an evaluation of the performance of the Committee and its members, including a review of the Committee's compliance with this Charter.
- (11) The Committee shall at least annually review and reassess this Charter and submit any recommended changes to the Board for its consideration.