

APPENDIX 6

The Asia Pacific Legal Metrology Forum

The Asia-Pacific Legal Metrology Forum (APLMF) was established in 1994 on the initiative of the Australian National Standards Commission. The forum has developed an active program that supports the APEC agenda. It seeks to establish the requirements for mutual recognition of measurements and test results and harmonising legislative and technical requirements. The APLMF attends the APEC Standards and Conformance Sub Committee meetings and is recognised by that Committee as the Specialist Regional Body (SRB) for trade and legal metrology.¹

The Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation

The Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC) was established, also as an Australian initiative, to enable laboratory accreditation organisations in the region to harmonise practices and to provide assistance to each other. The majority of APEC economies are also members of APLAC.

APLAC's major aim is to provide for a multilateral mutual recognition agreement between all those accreditation bodies which can demonstrate to their peers that they meet world class standards of operation. This demonstration of competency by the accreditation bodies, according to NATA, is essential for the development of confidence in the laboratories that they accredit, and thus, confidence in the test data accompanying traded products.²

As part of an overall development plan to support the Bogor objectives to promote market access, the SCSC set an objective to establish a multilateral mutual recognition agreement within APLAC by the year 2000, with a membership of accreditation bodies in at least six, and ideally nine, member economies.³ The first step toward this goal was taken last year when five APEC countries were among the signatories to the Asia-Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Conference Mutual Recognition Arrangement. This landmark agreement was achieved largely through the leadership provided by NATA and made possible by the funding support provided by the Australian government (through DIST and AusAID).⁴ At the 1997 Ministers' Meeting in Vancouver, ministers urged additional members to participate in APLAC.

1 National Standards Commission, submission no. 9, p. 2.

2 NATA, submission no. 23, p. 4.

3 *ibid.*, p. 8.

4 *ibid.*