

2000 Archives

APEC MRA Signed

June 15, 1998 - On Friday, June 5 in Singapore, the Trade Ministers from eighteen Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) economies endorsed the completion of a mutual recognition arrangement (MRA) for telecommunications equipment conformity assessment covering nearly \$24 billion in trans-Pacific trade.

ACIL, the national trade association representing independent scientific and engineering laboratory, testing, and research firms, welcomed the conclusion of the APEC MRA. Executive Director, Joseph O'Neil stated, "ACIL supports the adoption of the MRA which will significantly diminish the time it takes new telecommunications products to reach the market and lower costs to consumers, while continuing to ensure the safety of users and the integrity of the international telecommunications network."

The APEC MRA, like the telecommunications chapter of the multi-sectoral U.S.-EU MRA signed on May 18, is intended to streamline the conformity assessment procedures for a wide range of telecommunications and telecommunications-related equipment, and thereby, facilitate trade among the participating economies. The Arrangement provides a mechanism whereby the exporting party may designate Conformity Assessment Bodies to test and/or certify telecommunications equipment to the mandatory telecommunications requirements of the importing party and a framework for confidence in the integrity of testing and certification of equipment undertaken in other economies. It also provides remedies for any deficiencies that are discovered.

[Note APEC economies include: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, People's Republic of China, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong China, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and the United States. In November 1998, Peru, Russian Federation, and Vietnam will join as new APEC members.]

ASTM and APJGP Reach Initial Agreement on Caveat Language

June 15, 1998 - ACIL is indebted to the ACEC leadership for designing and hosting a June 1 meeting of APJGP and ASTM leaders, main purpose of which was to craft mutually acceptable caveat language that would be included with prescriptive standard guides and practices. The goal of the meeting was achieved!

The Caveat Language agreed to is:

"This guide offers an organized collection of information or a series of options and does not recommend a specific course of action. This document cannot replace education and experience and should be used in conjunction with professional judgment. Not all aspects of this guide may be applicable in all circumstances. This ASTM standard is not intended to represent or replace the standard of care by which the adequacy of a given professional service must be judged, nor should this

document be applied without consideration of a project's many unique aspects. The word 'Standard' in the title means only that the document has been approved through the ASTM consensus process."

The key to meeting's success was an effective professional mediator/facilitator, Dr. Gary D'Angelo, from Washington State. He made sure the dialogue was civil throughout and kept it moving forward toward the day's objective.

Next Steps:

Once it's been approved by both APJGP and ASTM, a joint news release about the success of the meeting will be distributed to the media and to respective constituencies. The caveat language will be presented to the Executive Committee of ASTM Committee D18, when it meets mid-June in Atlanta. Expectation is that D18 will put the language in the appropriate standards. ASTM's Chair-Elect Jim Pierce expressed optimism that the ASTM Board would approve the caveat language for wider use within ASTM. The APJGP-ASTM Joint Task Force will resume its operations and look for additional ways to alleviate engineers' concerns - including the use of new nomenclature for these prescriptive documents (other than "standard").

CA Referendum Defeated

June 15, 1998 - ACIL is pleased to report that California voters overwhelmingly turned thumbs down on Proposition 224 when they cast their ballots on June 2. As you know the proposal advanced by the state employees union would have given state employees a near monopoly on the state's engineering, architectural, surveying and environmental work. Prop. 224 was defeated by a nearly 2-to-1 vote.

Conference to Open National Dialogue on Combinational Methods

Research scientists, process engineers, R&D managers, representatives from federal funding agencies, and academics are invited to participate in a broad, open dialogue on their roles in forging the future of chemical and materials sciences through combinatorial methods. A wide variety of exciting technology platforms will be discussed, and opportunities for networking with technologists and business people will be available. The workshop will be held at the NIST headquarters in Gaithersburg, Md., May 31 to June 1, 2000.

Combinatorial methodology is a set of tools and techniques the chemical and materials science communities will use in the future to accelerate discovery and development of new materials to meet 21st century needs. Combinatorial methods, which use a large number of carefully designed, multi-dimensional experiments that may be performed rapidly or in parallel on a miniaturized scale with automated instrumentation, have revolutionized the R&D process in drug development. Most major chemical manufacturers and several start-up companies have initiated programs within the past two years to exploit combinatorial methods and accelerate

the discovery of advanced materials (catalysts, electronic and optical materials, polymers, metal alloys and ceramics) and process optimization.

Registration and program information for the workshop is available at www.nist.gov/combi on the World Wide Web. Information is also available by calling Alamgir Karim at (301) 975-6588. The registration fee is \$150.

Meeting with DOD on data integrity

June 2, 1998 - On June 16, ACIL-IAETL representatives will meet with the DOD's Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Environmental Quality, Mr. Bruce de Grazia. ACIL-IAETL will discuss the current problems with the department's auditing program and concerns over DOD handling of instances where a laboratory's data is called into question. Representatives from military departments, including the Air Force, and DOD's cleanup office will also participate.

Domich to Oversee NIST Boulder Labs.

Paul Domich, an information technology executive, has been named acting director of the NIST Boulder, Colo., Laboratories. Domich succeeds David W. Norcross who resigned from NIST to take a management position with Harvard University. Domich has served as the assistant director in Boulder for NIST's Information Technology Laboratory since 1994. From June 1998 until September 1999, he served as acting deputy director of ITL's operations both at NIST headquarters in Gaithersburg, Md., and in Boulder. He recently was selected to lead an institute-wide team to develop a new strategic IT plan to prepare NIST for the future.

As acting director, Domich will oversee the day-to-day operations and planning for NIST Boulder's 430 scientists, engineers, technicians and support staff. The Colorado labs conduct far-ranging research in electronics, chemical science and technology, materials, information sciences and physics. The labs have strong ties with U.S. industry, other government agencies and universities.

Support for E-Commerce by the European Commission.

The European Commission is continuing to support the development of standards for the interchange of product information by extending these to encourage the implementation of E-Commerce standards. The Commission has funded a project called ProcatGen whose goal is to create standards & guidelines (and demonstrator systems) that will support information exchange across supply chains. These standards, specifications and prototype software tools will help in the creation and exchange of product data (and product catalogues) and ease access to this product information by end-users. This project is about to publish both a white paper (for comment) and an XML based DTD that defines products, attributes, relationships, and classifications. The project which is due for completion in June 2000 has partners

WTCM, in Belgium, Pindar Systems in the UK, Fimet in Finland, and German companies, Siemens, C-Lab and Unity. The Commission has now sponsored a 'follow on' project called B2B-Ecom, which aims to innovate and improve the delivery of personalised content for intelligent catalogues, and to demonstrate and enhance the integration of emerging E-commerce standards with the content delivery.

The initial demonstrators will be within the electrical equipment supply market; some of the features B2B-Ecom will implement include personalisation via activity, clusters and questionnaires, rules based product relationships, change management across the supply chain, integration of E-commerce and E-purchasing standards and links to ERP systems.

PROJECT PARTNERS

WTCM (Wetenschappelijk en Technisch Centrum voor de Metaalverwerkende Nijverheid) is the project manager - WTCM is a trade association based in Belgium

Pindar Systems plc is the leading supplier of product management and multi channel publishing solutions

CommerceNet is the leading consortium for Internet Commerce - and providing co-ordination with USA based standards initiatives {based in UK}

Siemens is a manufacturer of large range of industrial and technical products, global IT organisation based in Munich/Paderborn

Philips Lighting employs some 50,000 people on a world wide basis operating from the HQ in the Netherlands

Alcatel Cable is an international manufacturer of electrical supply products, with HQ in France

Weidmuller is a multi-national manufacture of service and interface based solutions for the electrical industry

Sonepar is a wholesaler of electrical components part of Sonepar Distribution with over 900 branches in 20 countries based out of France/Belgium

Unity AG - Aktiengesellschaft fur unternehmensfuhrung und informationstechnologie is a software developer with web based solutions branded as "MyView technologies", specialising in personalised delivery of www information, based in Paderborn Germany

Riverland - Next Generation Developer with specialist skills in multimedia, language and agent based technology, based in Belgium

ALPI is a developer specialising in configuration and calculation software for the electrical industry based in France.

GAO releases scathing report on FDA food import procedures

June 2, 1998 - In a report extremely critical of FDA oversight of food imports, the Government Accounting Office (GAO) said that current import rules are rife with abuse by unscrupulous importers. The report noted that port shopping is common and that FDA sets unrealistic goals for its inspectors. The Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations held hearings on the report and chair Susan Collins (R-Maine) stated that she would be considering legislation fixes to the current system.

May Conference to Teach Effective Use of Common Criteria

The three-day First International Common Criteria Conference will take place at the Baltimore Convention Center on May 23-25, 2000. Executives from information technology companies will learn about the international computer security arrangement that makes it easier for American companies to sell their products in other countries. Vance Johnson, vice president for security at Visa International Inc., will be the keynote speaker.

The International Common Criteria Mutual Recognition Arrangement is a pact that establishes a concise but common language specifying security requirements in information technology products and systems. Seven nations, including some of the world's largest markets, now participate in the Common Criteria (also known as ISO/IEC 15408). They are Australia, Canada, France, Germany, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

In the United States the evaluation and validation program is managed jointly by NIST and the National Security Agency. The signatory nations recognize the results of security evaluations conducted by each other's accredited testing laboratories. This eliminates the need for costly and time-consuming testing by different countries. As the arrangement creates a standardized evaluation process across borders, it fosters a barrier-free, worldwide market for IT security products.

Directors of NIST's Technology Services Unit and Information Technology Laboratory named.

Richard F. Kayser and William O. Mehuron have been named directors of NIST's Technology Services Unit and Information Technology Laboratory, respectively. Both men have been acting directors of their organizational units since last year; Kayser since August and Mehuron since April.

As head of Technology Services, Kayser leads the unit whose components include the Standard Reference Materials Program, Standard Reference Data Program, the Office of Weights and Measures, the National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program, the NIST Calibration Program, the Office of Technology Partnerships, NIST's Small

Business Innovation Research Program and the Metric Program. He started at NIST's predecessor, the National Bureau of Standards, in 1976 as a National Science Foundation Fellow and joined the Thermophysics Division as a staff member the following year. He became the division's chief in 1989 and chief of the Physical and Chemical Properties Division in 1996.

Mehuron joined NIST in 1999 to direct the information technology portion of the Advanced Technology Program. Previously, he had served since 1995 as director of the Systems Acquisition Office (and as acting deputy undersecretary from 1997-1998) for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Earlier in his career, Mehuron was deputy director for research and engineering at the National Security Agency and held senior management positions with several private-sector technology organizations. As ITL director, he is responsible for the laboratory whose programs for industry include high performance computing and communications systems; emerging network technologies; access to, exchange, and retrieval of complex information; computational and statistical methods; information security; and testing tools and methods to improve the quality of software.

Kistner wins Truesdail Award

September 17, 1998 - Richard W. Kistner, P.E., will receive ACIL's Roger Truesdail Award for Outstanding Service to Independent Laboratories at an Awards Luncheon to be held during ACIL's Annual Meeting, Oct. 4 to 7, at San Francisco's Fairmont Hotel.

Mr. Kistner is Vice Chairman of the Board of Raba-Kistner Consultants, San Antonio, TX.

He is a graduate of Texas A&M University. Following graduation, he worked for the Texas Dept. of Transportation, Prestressing Industries, and the Prescon Corp., before joining Raba & Associates, in 1974.

The Truesdail Award is one of ACIL's most prestigious honors. It recognizes significant contributions to the betterment of the independent scientific, engineering, and testing community.

Mr. Kistner earned the award by two decades of distinguished service to ACIL and the engineering profession. Within ACIL, he has held offices in the Southern Division and represented the Division on the ACIL Board of Directors. He has also been active in the CME Committee and the Civil Engineering Section, where he chairs the AASHTO Committee.

His additional professional and association involvements have been many. He has been President of the Texas Council of Engineering Laboratories, President of the San Antonio Branch of the American Society of Civil Engineers, President of the Bexar Chapter of the Texas Society of Professional Engineers, and a Director of the Builders Exchange of Texas, the Associated Builders and Contractors, the Construction Specification Institute and the American Concrete Institute. He currently serves on the Board of the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation.

NIST Building and Fire Research Laboratory Update.

Demolished wood frame houses left in the wake of earthquakes, hurricanes and tornados should become a less frequent sight if NIST testing of housing system components helps builders create more disaster-resistant homes. That's the goal of structural engineers in the agency's Building and Fire Research Laboratory who are developing three-dimensional computer models to illustrate the behavior of a complete house--including wall-to-roof, wall-to-foundation and wall-to-wall connections--under varying seismic and windstorm conditions. Data acquired from these models could lead to improved construction standards for wood frame houses planned for disaster-prone areas.

The researchers are building their computer models by subjecting a full-scale section of a wood frame house to simulated earthquakes and windstorms. By pushing such wall-to-roof connectors as hurricane clips (sheet metal devices designed to hold the structure's roof and wall connections together) to their breaking point, researchers will determine their "real-life" tolerances. Similar experiments also will be performed on simple nailed connections and connectors such as framing anchors and hanger nails. Later, the researchers will test the performance of these connectors when used to join walls to foundations and other walls.

Data for all of the connections will be integrated into computer programs to establish baseline performance criteria.

Implementing PBMS: A Cooperative Agreement Between GIES and USEPA

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Global Institute of Environmental Scientists (GIES) are pleased to announce a series of Regional Workshops on Implementing Performance-Based Measurement Systems (PBMS). These Workshops are designed to provide laboratories, regulated industry, state accrediting agencies and other stakeholders the latest information on EPA's plans to provide a simple, straightforward way for the regulatory community to respond to specific measurement needs with reliable, cost-effective, methods.

Participants will obtain:

current information on the status of EPA's efforts, an understanding of how PBMS can provide scientific and legally defensible data, including the role of Daubert principles, detailed technical training on concepts of method validation, on-going quality control and documentation processes under PBMS, detailed training on the measurement quality objective (MQO) process that will be used to identify method and data quality needs, information of how EPA will conduct facility compliance audits under the PBMS system, and information of how to perform audit laboratories who have implemented PBMS.

Five Regional Workshops will be held. The first is scheduled for Philadelphia, May 6, 1999 at the Holiday Inn Stadium location. In June, four more workshops will be held in the following cities, Atlanta, Kansas City, Las Vegas Vegas, and Portland.

CONTACT: Workshop arrangements are being arranged by GIES. For information on registration, and hotel rates call the GIES coordinator, Sheila Way, at (202) 887-0457

GIES is a research and education institute focused on the improvement of environmental data quality. For more information about GIES, please call 202-887-0457

Poggi to be Installed as Chairman

September 17, 1998 - Walter A. Poggi will be installed as the 32nd President of ACIL during the ACIL Annual Meeting, to be held on October 4 to 7, 1998, at the Fairmont Hotel, in San Francisco.

Mr. Poggi is the founder and President of Retlif Testing Laboratories, Ronkonkoma, NY, an independent testing firm that provides services to government and industry in the areas of electromagnetic compatibility, telecommunications, environmental simulation and product safety.

Mr. Poggi has held many positions of responsibility within ACIL over the past 15 years: Chair of the Government Relations Committee; Membership Committee Chair; Vice Chair of the Conformity Assessment Section; Chair of the Eastern Division; and Vice Chair of the Board of Directors. In recognition of his distinguished service to the independent laboratory industry, he was presented the ACIL Truesdail Service Award, in 1994.

He is also active in the American Electronics Association, the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, and the McArthur Business Alliance, of which he is current President.

Get Your Quality Journey on the Road.

Thousands of organizations use the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence to help assess and improve their organization. Vicki Spagnol, principal, Management Insights, New York, N.Y., says, "The Baldrige criteria provide a proven road map for performance improvement--one that will enable your organization to be more successful than you ever imagined."

But, say you've looked at the criteria and are still uncertain about how to begin. To help you get started, NIST's Baldrige National Quality Program has developed a new brochure, Getting Started-A Guide to

Self-Assessment and Action. The guide will walk you through a 10-step approach to assessing your organization's strengths and developing and implementing a plan for improvement.

For a free copy of the new brochure and the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence, contact the Baldrige National Quality Program, (301) 975-2036; fax, (301) 948-3716; nqp@nist.gov. Both publications also are available on the Baldrige web site at www.quality.nist.gov.

SAR/MPE Requirements and Testing Workshop

A 2-day comprehensive workshop is being held May 22-23, 2000 University Park Marriott Salt Lake City, Utah, to provide key regulatory training in topics associated with the scopes of the new Telecommunication Certification Body (TCB) Program of the FCC.

This workshop will emphasize the latest information on Specific Absorption Rate (SAR) and Maximum Permissible Exposure (MPE) testing and evaluation procedures. The course will include witnessing the actual tests used on cellular phones near a phantom simulating a human head. The notes and handouts will focus on all aspects of the SAR certification and MPE processes.

The workshop will cover the information TCBs must know to be designated by the FCC to certify products subject to the SAR/MPE requirements including: 1) introduction to RF hazards and the basis for limits, 2) SAR computational and measurement procedures, 3) actual laboratory testing indicating critical aspects, and 4) current measurement standardization activity, and the applicable Parts of the FCC Rules.

The views given by FCC Laboratory personnel on the role of TCBs will be presented. These include distinctions between portable and mobile applications, differences in application to unlicensed and licensed transmitters, possible exceptions in the 900 MHz to 6 GHz range, and progress in the FCC's updates of its own documentation and testing procedures.

Staff from the University of Utah will also conduct a thorough review of the test results witnessed at the U of U test laboratory.

United States and Republic of Korea Sign Standards Agreement to Enhance Trade and Commerce.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 9, 2000

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United States and Republic of Korea Sign Standards Agreement to Enhance Trade and Commerce

Commerce Secretary William M. Daley and Republic of Korea Minister of Commerce, Industry and Energy Kim Young-ho today signed an agreement that will establish a new cooperative relationship between the two nations a relationship that will help harmonize standards and reduce redundant product testing and other technical obstacles that can impede trade.

The memorandum of understanding between the National Institute of Standards and Technology, an agency of the Commerce Department's Technology Administration, and the Korean Agency for Technology and Standards will pave the way for closer technical cooperation in three key areas: documentary standards, conformity assessment (the procedures required to show that products meet the standards and regulations of an export market) and measurements all of which influence market access and flows of imports and exports.

"This memorandum of understanding will foster cooperation in the private and public sectors of both the United States and the Republic of Korea that will ensure that the door of commerce between our two nations stays wide open," said Daley.

America, Daley noted, was South Korea's number one trading partner as recently as 1998, when 22 percent of its imports were from and 17 percent of its exports went to the United States.

The signers of today's MOU hope that the cooperative efforts fostered will improve an already strong relationship. Among the planned activities are:

joint or cooperative programs and projects of mutual benefit, such as visits and exchange of scientists;

mutual cooperation in international and regional organizations on matters in the three key areas;

freer exchange of technical data and information in the three key areas;

organization of and participation in conferences, symposia, workshops and other joint meetings of mutual interest; and operation of joint training/education programs to raise competency in the three key areas.

As members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, the United States and Korea have committed to creating a free and open trading system that will encompass all 21 APEC member nations by 2020.

In meetings beginning on May 10, 2000, NIST and KATS representatives will identify priorities for exchanges of technical data, training and other activities of mutual interest. Conformity assessment is expected to be a major topic of discussion.

Industry groups in many nations and regions have cited duplicative or conflicting conformity assessment requirements as hindering global trade.

The United States and Korea already have taken steps to simplify these requirements. Accrediting bodies in both countries are members of the Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation. Established in 1992, APLAC aims to create a framework that will enable laboratory test data and inspection reports produced in one APEC nation to be accepted by all trading partners in the region.

As a non-regulatory agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce's Technology Administration, NIST strengthens the U.S. economy and improves the quality of life by working with industry to develop and apply technology, measurements and standards through four partnerships: the Measurement and Standards Laboratories, the Advanced Technology Program, the Manufacturing Extension Partnership and the Baldrige National Quality Program.

For more information, see our web site at www.nist.ta.gov.