

**Report of the APEC Informal Meeting on
Standards and Conformance
Bali, 13 May 1994**

1. The Informal Meeting on Standards and Conformance was held on 13 May 1994 prior to the Second Meeting of the Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI) in Bali, Indonesia. The meeting was chaired by Indonesia and attended by the representatives of Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, the United States of America and the APEC Secretariat.
2. The proposed agenda was adopted without amendment. (see Document IIL6.A-BALI 040)
3. The Informal Meeting considered the following papers :
 - Report on the APEC Standard and Conformance Survey (Australia);
 - Proposed Declaration of APEC Standards and Conformance Framework (Australia);
 - Promoting Closer Alignment with International Standards (Japan);
 - Closer Cooperation with Appropriate International Bodies (New Zealand);
 - Progressing the Development of Mutual Recognition Arrangements on Conformity Assessment with APEC (Australia)

Report on the APEC Standard and Conformance Survey

4. The Informal Meeting reviewed the Report on the APEC Standard and Conformance Survey (see Document IIL6.3-BALI 029) as presented by Australia and agreed that it should be noted by the CTI. The meeting noted that Australia will continue to update as further information is received from member economies.

Proposed Declaration of APEC Standards and Conformance Framework

5. The Informal Meeting considered the Proposed Declaration of APEC Standards and Conformance Framework (see Document IIL6.5 Revised 2-BALI 082) submitted by Australia as an important guide on the principles, objectives and approaches for the future work on standards and conformance issues. The meeting agreed to recommend that it be accepted by the CTI.
6. The Informal Meeting noted the objective "to facilitate the further development of open regionalism and market driven economic interdependence in the Asia Pacific region", but considered that the Meeting did not have the expertise to comment on its appropriateness. It was agreed that CTI should give further consideration on this objective

7. There was in principle an agreement for the proposed establishment of an APEC Standards and Conformance Sub-Committee. The meeting noted that a decision on this issue was one to be made by the CTI and that if agreed, the proposal would be submitted to the Ministers for endorsement in November. The meeting also noted that further consideration would need to be given to the structure and method of operation of the proposed Sub-Committee.

Promoting Closer Alignment with International Standards

8. The Informal Meeting endorsed Japan's proposal on "Action Plan for Promoting Alignments with International Standards" (see Document IIL6.2 Revised-BALI 075) and recommended that a survey be conducted to determine the priority areas for further discussion at the next Standards and Conformance Expert Meeting in September 1994.
9. In furtherance of the proposal's component on transparency, the meeting received a draft list of contact points from the United States and agreed to provide similar lists to the United States for consideration at the next meeting.

Closer Cooperation with International Standards and Conformance Bodies

10. The Informal Meeting agreed with modified proposals in the paper prepared by New Zealand on "Closer Cooperation with International Standards and Conformance Bodies" (see Document IIL6-BALI 007), as follows:
 - a. advising PASC, APLAC, APMP that APEC considers that they have a potentially important role in relation to any APEC initiatives on standards and conformance, and;
 - b. it noted that consideration would be given by regional accreditation bodies to establish an Asian Pacific Accreditation Forum at a meeting in June 1994, and the informal group would welcome a report from those bodies on the merits on of establishing such a forum.
 - c. involving representatives of these forums in any further work undertaken by APEC on standards and conformance matters arising out of the papers prepared by Australia and Japan, with a view to obtaining the input of these forums into the planning process and gauging what role they might play in implementing actions agreed by APEC, and;
 - d. inviting these forums to give further consideration to possible programmes and activities to enhance closer cooperation with international bodies, and to provide this information to APEC, and;

- e. undertaking further work aimed at identifying other bodies with whom APEC might wish to enter into dialogue with a view to determining their capacity to contribute to the achievement of APEC's standards and conformance agenda.
11. New Zealand agreed to take responsibility for coordinating further work arising out of the proposals in the paper.

Progressing the Development of Mutual Recognition Arrangements on Conformity Assessment within APEC

12. The Informal Meeting endorsed the Australian paper proposing next steps for progressing the development of mutual recognition arrangements on conformity assessment within APEC (see Document IIL6.1-BALI 023). In particular, the Informal Meeting agreed:
- a. that an informal short-term ad hoc task force be established to identify the priority areas for technical infrastructure development in the region. The task force is expected to include representations of Australia (convener), Korea, Thailand, the United States, Japan and New Zealand. It will report to the Informal Standards and Conformance Group by 1 October 1994 with a view to recommendations being developed, through the proper APEC process, for consideration by Ministers in November.
 - b. that members explore options for greater cooperation among relevant agencies in their economies, including by mutual recognition arrangements in the non-regulated sectors, as a means of developing greater confidence and competence. In the first instance New Zealand, Thailand, Korea, Australia and Japan are to work with representatives of existing regional forums (PASC, APLAC, and APMP) to identify:
 - initiatives which existing regional forums could undertake with the goal of mutual recognition in the non-regulated sector, and ways in which APEC might assist that process; and
 - any areas where new forums or arrangements might be promoted.

New Zealand, in consultation with Thailand and Korea will report back to the Standards and Conformance Meeting in September 1994.

The Meeting noted that Korea will be holding a forum on ISO 9000 application, certification and accreditation in July 1994 to promote mutual recognition and agreed that it would be useful for APEC member economies to participate and to use the opportunity to meet and discuss future prospects for mutual recognition.

- c. that Australia, Canada, the United States, Japan , New Zealand and an ASEAN member (to be nominated) work on the development of a "model" mutual recognition agreement as a means of facilitating consistency and transparency of approach to mutual recognition arrangements in the region, taking into account of the situations in relevant sectors; and report progress to the meeting in September.
 - d. members identify any particular regulated sectors which they would regard as priorities for the development of mutual recognition arrangements with initial suggestions to be made to Australia by 1 August who will have responsibility for preparing a paper for consideration at the next meeting of the Standards and Conformance Group in September 1994.
13. The Informal Meeting also agreed that in conducting these tasks it was important that the members responsible for the work consult all APEC member economies.