

**Report of the APEC Informal Meeting on
Standards and Conformance
Yogyakarta, 8 September 1994**

1. The Informal Meeting on Standards and Conformance was held on 8 September 1994 prior to the Third Meeting of the Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI) in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The meeting was chaired by Indonesia and co-chaired by Australia and attended by the representatives of Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, the United States of America and the APEC Secretariat. Chile was also present as a guest.
2. The proposed agenda was adopted without amendment. (Document III.6.2.1)
3. The Informal Meeting considered the following papers :
 - Selection of Priority Areas toward the Alignment of APEC Members' standards with the International Standards (Japan);
 - Relationships with Regional Bodies (New Zealand);
 - Mutual Recognition Arrangements in the Voluntary Sector (New Zealand);
 - Development of a Model Mutual Recognition Agreement on Conformity Assessment (Australia);
 - Possible Priority Sectors for the development of Mutual Recognition Arrangements on Conformity Assessment (Australia);
 - Draft Terms of Reference for Proposed APEC Standards and Conformance Sub-Committee (Australia);
 - Updating the APEC Standards and Conformance Survey (Australia).

Progress reports were made on the following:

- Proposal for an APEC Standards and Conformance Guide (USA);
- Ad-Hoc Task Force on Technical Infrastructure (Australia).

Selection of Priority Areas toward the Alignment of APEC Members' Standards with the International Standards

4. The Informal Meeting discussed the Japanese interim report on the priority areas for closer alignment with international standards (Document III.6.3.3). According to the survey results so far submitted by Japan, several sectors could be nominated as possible candidates for priority considerations. APEC members who have not responded to the survey are requested to complete the survey and all members need to inform Japan of the

detailed reasons for identifying individual sectors or item as priority areas by 7 October 1994. Japan will propose priority areas and circulate them for comments prior to the next meeting in November 1994.

Closer Cooperation with Specialist Regional Bodies

5. The Informal Meeting considered the paper (Document III.6.3.2.1) and agreed to the recommendations, which are summarized as follows:
 - a. agree that APLAC (Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation), APMP (Asia Pacific Metrology Programme), PAC (Pacific Accreditation Cooperation), PASC (Pacific Area Standards Congress) all have important roles to play in achieving APEC objectives in relation to Standard and Conformance and should be involved as appropriate in APEC work programmes;
 - b. encourage APLAC, APMP, PAC and PASC to cooperate in the promotion of regional interests in Standards and Conformance;
 - c. agree that opportunities for closer cooperation between APEC and PASC in the development of the work programme on international standards should be examined prior to the November Meeting;
 - d. support the initiative taken to establish the Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (PAC);
 - e. explore opportunities for regional cooperation in legal metrology;
6. The Informal Meeting agreed that the Ad-Hoc Task Force on Technical Infrastructure be asked to give consideration to ways in which its recommendations could most appropriately be progressed by regional bodies.
7. The Informal Meeting agreed that a further report should be provided to the November meeting on progress in relation to the matters raised in this report.

Mutual Recognition Arrangements in the Voluntary Sector

8. The Informal Meeting considered paper (Document III.6.3.2.2) presented by New Zealand and agreed to the recommendations, which are summarized as follows :
 - a. that APEC encourages the following specialist regional bodies to develop mutual recognition arrangements in the area of conformity assessment: APLAC, APMP, PAC, PASC and the emerging legal metrology group;

- b. that APEC encourages these specialist regional bodies to cooperate to ensure a coordinated approach to developing mutual recognition agreements in the region;
- c. that APEC encourages these specialist regional bodies to work towards achieving recognition with other regional multilateral agreement groups as well as with other appropriate international organizations or multilateral agreement groups;
- d. that a further report be provided in November 1994 which identifies a set of specific recommendations on the future work programmes of the specialist regional bodies as they relate to mutual recognition in the voluntary sector.

The Development of a Model Mutual Recognition Agreements on Conformity Assessment

- 9. The Informal Meeting noted the paper (Document III.6.3.3.1) and agreed in general terms with the principles and key elements outlined in that paper. The meeting also agreed that Australia should bring forward for consideration at the November meeting, a revised paper reflecting the additional points raised during the discussion on this item such as the possibility of other options for developing confidence in conformity assessment processes.
- 10. The Informal Meeting agreed to recommend that there would be value in interested APEC members commencing exploratory discussions in 1995, with a view to developing both a network of broad, bilateral government to government mutual recognition agreements and, as a pilot project, multilateral mutual recognition agreements in two priority areas.

Possible Priority Sectors for the Development of Mutual Recognition Agreements on Conformity Assessment

- 11. The Informal Meeting considered the paper (Document III.6.3.3.2) containing the results of the survey and agreed to the following:
 - a. the selection of two clearly defined pilot projects, for the development of mutual recognition agreements in particular regulated areas, noting that the discussion on those agreements will be open to all on the basis of self-selection and willingness to undertake the obligations involved;
 - b. provision, by no later than October 7, of an indication of member economies' interest in those product areas already nominated by two or more members (toys, food technology, medical devices, electrical appliances, road equipment, food products), together with reasons and further information on the regulatory regimes

in those sectors. Such information will be incorporated in a paper to be prepared by Australia and circulated in advance of the next meeting so that the selection can be made in November.

Draft Terms of Reference for Establishment of APEC Standards and Conformance Sub-Committee

12. The Informal Meeting noted the paper (Document III.6.3.4) and the revised TOR (attached) which had been circulated. There was a general agreement to recommend to the CTI that an APEC Standards and Conformance Sub-Committee be established.
13. The Informal Meeting agreed to incorporate the revised TOR into the text of the proposed Standards and Conformance Framework.

Updating the APEC Standards and Conformance Survey

14. The Informal Meeting noted the updated survey report presented by Australia (Document III.6.3.5.1) and agreed that Australia continue to update the report as further information is received from member economies.

Proposal for an APEC Standards and Conformance Guide

15. The United States reported the results of the Survey of Contact Points to date, noting that some responses remained outstanding. The Informal Meeting agreed that members should respond by 7 October 1994 so that publication of a Standards and Conformance Guide foreseen by Ministers last year could be achieved by November. The APEC Secretariat informed the meeting that the budget procedures, which if followed, would not provide a budget allocation for printing until 1996.

Ad-Hoc Task Force on Technical Infrastructure

16. The Informal Meeting noted the progress report presented by Australia and noted that the Task Force is expected to deliver its report by 1 October 1994.

**APEC Standards and Conformance Sub-Committee : Proposed Terms of Reference :
(Revised)**

An APEC Standards and Conformance Sub-Committee will be established under the authority of the APEC Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI) to undertake work to further the objectives set out in this Framework and provide policy recommendations to the CTI on aspects of APEC's work on standards, testing and certification arrangements in the region

The Sub-Committee will be established for a period of three years after which its activities would be subject to review by the Committee on Trade and Investment.

The Sub-Committee will normally meet three times a year, where possible in conjunction with CTI meetings

The Sub-Committee shall operate on the basis of consensus, and in line with agreed APEC rules and guidelines.

Participation

The Sub-Committee shall be open to all APEC members.

The Sub-committee will be composed of representatives nominated by members drawn from agencies responsible for standards and conformance issues as well as trade policy matters.

The officers of the Sub-Committee shall comprise the Chair, and two Vice-Chairs.

The Chair of the Sub-Committee shall be a representative of the SOM Chair, unless otherwise determined by the Sub-Committee. The Chair shall be responsible for appointing two Vice-Chairs in consultation with members.

The Sub-Committee may invite representatives from PASC, APLAC, APMP and PAC and other international bodies, as appropriate, to attend meetings.

The Sub-Committee may, as appropriate and with the consensus of all members, establish ad hoc task forces or expert groups it considers necessary to assist the conduct of its work program

Co-ordination

The Sub-Committee will take account of the activities of the existing APEC Working Groups with which its work would be co-ordinated.