QICA

Quality Infrastructure Council for the Americas

QICA OUTREACH EVENT WITH REGULATORS

Montego Bay, Jamaica, August 27, 2018

The QICA outreach event to Jamaican regulators and government officials took place on Tuesday, August 27, 2018 at the Hilton Rose Hall Hotel, where the IAAC General Assembly meetings were being held.

This event is part of a QICA initiative to organize outreach meetings with regulators and other interested parties to promote the value of accredited conformity assessment services. The events are usually organized in conjunction with the General Assemblies of the QICA members, namely COPANT, IAAC and SIM and feature representatives of the three regional organizations.

For this event, JANAAC, the Jamaican accreditation body, was the host.

The agenda included an introductory welcome by the CEO of JANAAC, Ms. Sharonmae Shirley, and by the Chief Technical Director of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries (MICAF), Ms. Andrene Collings.

Ileana Martinez provided an overview of QICA and the event objectives. The chair of IAAC, Randy Dougherty, and COPANT and SIM representatives, Stephen Wedderburn and Richard Lawrence respectively, spoke. Successful cases studies on the use of the QI were presented as a way to show practical ways that it can contribute to regulatory solutions.

A question and answer period followed, with a very lively exchange of ideas. The audience was engaged, with great participation and very insightful comments and discussions. The participants gained a deeper understanding of the value of standards, measurements and accreditation and how the services of the national bodies can provide support for the work of government regulators.

The presentations are available on request.

Participants of the IAAC General Assembly 2018, Jamaica

REVISION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM OF UNITS (SI)

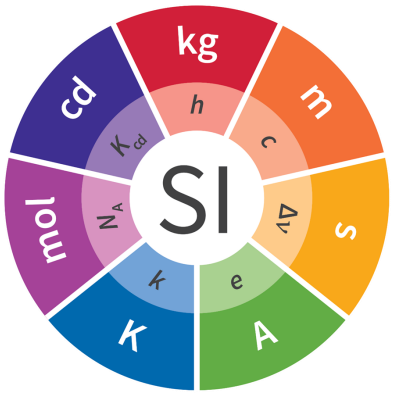
In November 2018, the largest revision of the International System of Units (SI) since its inception (1960) was approved. The General Conference on Weights and Measures (GFCM), the international body that approves the SI, redefined four base units: the ampere, the kilogram, the kelvin and the mole; and reformulated the meter, the second and the candela. The changes will enter into force on May 20, 2019.

All the new definitions are based on constants of nature, instead of artifacts, properties of materials or unachievable theoretical experiments, as was the case until now. This will allow scientists working with the highest level of accuracy to perform units at different places or times, with any appropriate experiment and scale value. In addition, it opens up great technological possibilities, such as shortening the chain of traceability in industry.

It is important to note that the changes will not affect the results of measurements in everyday life, but will have a great impact on the requirements for greater accuracy in science and technology.

Units, constants and experiments

The kilogram (unit of mass) was defined since 1889 by the mass of a platinum-Iridium cylinder deposited at the Bureau International des Poids et Mesures (BIPM) in the French city of Sèvres, implying that all countries had to base mass measurements on a single artifact. In addition to the logistical problems this generated, it was impossible to determine its temporal stability. The new kilogram definition is based on the assignment of a fixed numerical value to the Planck constant (h= 6,626 070 15 × 10-34 kg m2 s-1) and will allow its practical implementation with any experiment linking mass measurement with this constant.



The ampere (unit of electric current), which was defined by an imaginary experiment that relates the force between two infinite cables with the current circulating between them, was redefined by assigning a value to the charge of the electron (e= 1,602 176 634 × 10-1 A s). Like the kilogram, its practical realization can be carried out in different ways.

The kelvin (unit of temperature) was defined in terms of the temperatura at which water, ice and equilibrium steam coexist - a process known as the "triple water point".

Its new definition does not depend on the properties of a material, but is a function of Boltzmann's constant (k= 1,380 649 × 10-23 J K-1), opening the door to several possible experimental realizations.

The mole (unit of matter quantity) was redefined by assigning a value to the Avogadro constant (NA= 6,022 140 76 × 1023 mole-1). At present, its best practice is based on counting the number of atoms in a monocrystalline sphere of silicon.

The meter, the second and the candle will only undergo changes in the way of expressing their definitions, since they were already based on constants of nature, namely: the speed of light for the meter, the transition frequency between two energy levels of the Cesium atom for the second and the luminous efficiency of a monochromatic radiation for the candle.

QICA ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

- Awareness activities with regulators. IAAC, Montego Bay, August 2018.
- Presentation in a panel on "Shared use of Quality Infrastructure". Montego Bay, May 2018. COPANT
- Website and preparation of 3 institutional brochures of QICA (2017, 2018 and 2019).

QICA FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- Workshop on ISO/IEC 17025. Date and place to be determined.
- QICA event with local regulators on the margins of IAAC assembly. Mexico, August 2019
- SIM expert to present an introduction to the redefinition of the SI to the IAAC Laboratory Subcommittee at its next meeting in Mexico
- Workshop on ISO/IEC 17011. Place and date to be determined. Conditioned by financing constraints.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE IN STANDARDISATION AND REGULATION: TOURISM SECTOR

SAFE ADVENTURE PROGRAM IN BRAZIL

In 2006, the Safe Adventure Program - PAS was created, resulting from an alliance between ABETA (Brazilian Association of Ecotourism and Adventure Tourism Companies), the Ministry of Tourism, SEBRAE (Brazilian Service to Support Micro and Small Enterprises) and ABNT (Brazilian Association of Technical Standards). This program contributed to the development of ecotourism and adventure tourism in 17 tourist destinations, in 13 different states of 5 regions of the country, with the certification of 96 safety management systems of adventure tourism companies.

The program was based on the development and implementation of Standards for the segments of ecotourism and adventure tourism - currently 38 Brazilian ABNT standards of quality and safety for the supply of activities. The program also promoted assistance for the implementation of standards, especially the former standard ABNT NBR 15331, Adventure Tourism - Safety Management System - Requirements - today the ABNT NBR ISO 21101, an international standard, based on the Brazilian standard, as well as training consultants, auditors and distance and face-to-face courses of operators.

Brazilian technical standards were developed on topics such as safety management systems, personal competencies of leaders (guides) and operators, products such as hiking, cycling, vertical techniques, bungee jump, classification of trails for hiking, cycle tourism and horseback riding, etc.

The Standards are inserted in the General Act of Tourism, which defines that companies must implement the security management system to allow consumers to enjoy services with fun and safety in various destinations.

Since 2015, the first phase of the work has been completed internationally and three Brazilian standards were used as the initial basis for work in the Technical Committee of Tourism ISO/TC228 (WG/7 - Adventure Tourism), the standards ISO 21101 (Security Management System), ISO 21103 (Information to Participants) and ISO/TR 21102 (Leader of Adventure Tourism), providing the country's leadership in the international arena. ISO 20611 (Good Practices of Sustainability in Adventure Tourism) was also developed, proposed by Portugal and supported by Brazil. Currently, the convenor of ISO/TC228 - WG7 is the Brazilian Leonardo Persi.

(Source ABNT and ABETA)

TOURIST QUALITY LABEL IN CHILE

The quality system in tourist service in Chile, is a process by which a service provider can demonstrate to its customers, suppliers and the environment in general, that it meets quality standards, recognized nationally and internationally, by obtaining a Tourism Quality Label. This system is recognized by Tourism Act 20.423 and is currently administered by the National Tourism Service (SERNATUR).

The Tourism Quality Label is a distinction granted to all tourism service providers that are certified in any of the 49 tourism quality standards, developed by the National Standards Institute of Chile (INN).

The Chilean tourism standards used in this tourist quality system are divided into 4 sectors:

- tourist accommodation (organization, services, infrastructure and staff skills),
- travel agency and tour operators (organization, services, infrastructure and staff skills),
- tourist guides (knowledge, experience and technical skills) and
- adventure tourism activities (organization, services, equipment, procedures for accidents or incidents and requirements of the specialized guide).

Upon obtaining the Quality Label, the tourist service provider will have the right to be incorporated in the public promotional strategies and appear in a privileged place in the search engine of certified services, in addition to other benefits and incentives. Also, the service provider may incorporate the Quality Mark in advertising or own promotional material.

(Source SERNATUR)

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