

QICA



Quality Infrastructure Council for the Americas

QICA ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT IN 2019

- Workshop on ISO/IEC 17025, Asunción, July 2019.
- Awareness activities with regulators. IAAC, Mexico City, August 2019.
- Participation at the WTO TBT Thematic Session on National Quality Infrastructure. Geneva, November 2019.
- Participation at Ninth Meeting of COMCyT-OAS. Washington, December 2019.

QICA FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- Workshop on ISO/IEC 17025, May 2020
- QICA event with local regulators on the margins of COPANT General Assembly, Rio de Janeiro, April 2020.
- Participation in a panel on cases of good practices of Quality Infrastructure participation in the establishment of public policies related to the Objectives for Sustainable Development -SDGs- of the United Nations. COPANT General Assembly, Rio de Janeiro, April 2020.

Workshop on ISO/IEC 17025:2017

The Workshop on ISO/IEC 17025:2017 was organized with the support of PTB, in Asunción, Paraguay on July 25 & 26, 2019.

NIST expert Warren Merkel was the instructor and 30 representatives from National Metrological Institutes and Accreditation Bodies participated.



Participants of the Workshop on ISO 17025

The objective was to provide training on the new requirements of the standard and to harmonize concepts for testing and calibration laboratories. Peer evaluators and internal and external auditors from SIM member bodies and evaluators from IAAC accreditation bodies were trained.

One result appreciated by the participants was training on risk analysis, a new topic in the revised standard. It was concluded that a new activity on "Sharing experience in implementing and evaluating ISO/IEC 17025:2017"

QICA meets Mexican regulators

The Quality Infrastructure Council of the Americas, QICA, held an outreach event with Mexican regulators and government officials on August 16, 2019 in Mexico City, on the margins of the IAAC General Assembly. It was hosted by ema, the Mexican Accreditation Body.

QICA is implementing an initiative to hold outreach meetings with regulators and other interested parties to promote the value of the services of the quality infrastructure. The outreach events are organized in conjunction with other relevant activities such as the General Assemblies of its members. They are usually relatively small events where participants are free to interact with QICA principals and engage in a frank dialogue. The result is an interactive exchange of great value.



The agenda for the August meeting in Mexico included introductory remarks by the Executive Director of ema, Ms. Maribel Lopez. Ileana Martinez provided an overview of QICA and the event objectives. The chair of IAAC, Liliane Somma, the Executive Secretary of COPANT, Kory Eguino and the SIM Chair, Claire Saundry, presented their respective organizations and the benefits of the services of their national members. Successful cases studies on the use of the Quality Infrastructure were presented as a way to show practical ways that the quality infrastructure can contribute to regulatory solutions.



The event was attended by about 21 persons. The exchange of information was lively with issues raised on various topics such as risk assessment and how new technologies impact conformity assessment services. It was a successful event and accomplished its goal. The participants went away with a deeper understanding of the value that standards, measurements and accreditation, their synergy and how the three pillars of the quality infrastructure can support the work of government regulators.

QICA at the Ninth Meeting of COMCyT

QICA was invited to participate in the Ninth Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Science and Technology (COMCyT) held at the headquarters of the Organization of American States (OAS) in Washington, D.C. from December 10 to 12, 2019.

This meeting was organized by the OAS to facilitate the exchange of ideas and experiences among Member States in the context of the role and impact of transformative technologies in

addressing challenges such as: equitable access to technologies; inclusive education in science and technology, engineering and mathematics; the generation of high value-added goods and services and the creation of quality jobs. QICA was invited to contribute to a session on Regional Experiences and Collaborative Projects in National Quality Infrastructure.



QICA representatives at COMCyT

The presenters included:

- Mexico: The Role of the Quality Infrastructure in the New Industrial Policy of Mexico and the impact of Quality Infrastructure on Mexican Industrial Policy, Salvador Echeverría, General Director of Physical Metrology, CENAM, Mexico
- Efforts to create a Global Index of Quality Infrastructure on Quality Infrastructure development and performance, with data from 70 countries.: Ulrich Harmes-Liedtke, International Consultant, Mesopartner
- Quality Infrastructure Council for the Americas (QICA), how the three Quality Infrastructure pillars work together in the Americas through the Quality Infrastructure Council of the Americas, with specific examples of recent cooperative activities: Ileana Martinez, IAAC representative to QICA

- Recent Developments in Metrology in the Americas from the perspective of the regional metrology organization, SIM: Claire Saundry, President, SIM

This event provided Quality Infrastructure experts the opportunity to share information with the COMCyT delegates on the importance of quality infrastructure in economic development, and the specific roles of the three pillars of Quality Infrastructure: metrology, standards and accreditation.

The presentations were well received and generated a lot of questions and discussions. In follow-up, QICA expects that Quality Infrastructure will be a topic for discussion at the Science and Technology Ministerial scheduled for November 2020 in Jamaica.

Training on the International System of Units

On August 16, 2019, SIM conducted a training for the IAAC Sub-Committee on Laboratories on the International System of Units modified in 2018.

The presentation was made by Dr. Ismael Castelazo, Director of Technological Services of the National Center of Metrology of Mexico. The presentation was very well received by the 50 participants.

Sustainable Development Goals and Quality Infrastructure

Summary of UNIDO's publication:

« [Quality infrastructure for sustainable development](#) »

OVERVIEW

The achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires a radical change of economic activities, social practices and human behavior. The quality infrastructure (QI) systems with all the building blocks in place – standardization, metrology, accreditation and conformity assessment, in particular, testing, certification and inspection services, play a fundamental in supporting this transformation. QI can help consumers make informed choices, encourage innovation, lead businesses and industries to take up appropriate new technologies and organization methods improving current practices, and support public authorities in designing and implementing public policies aligned with the SDGs. Robust QI systems better position developing economies to achieve sustainable development, through building prosperity, meeting the needs of people, and protecting the planet.

QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE IN SUPPORT OF THE SDGs

The establishment of an appropriate QI system can substantially assist a nation in positioning their economy to seize the many opportunities available through appropriate implementation of the SDGs. QI supports governmental policy objectives in areas including: industrial development; trade competitiveness in global markets; the efficient use of natural and human resources; food safety; health; the environment and climate change. All component parts of the QI system act synergistically with each other and provide a valuable tool for defining, developing and verifying quality requirements for products and services. The system components assist in the verification and demonstration that products and services actually meet specified requirements.

BUILDING PROSPERITY

SDGs: This theme of the SDGs relates to economic development. The economic goals direct attention towards industry, innovation and infrastructure, and decent work and economic growth.

QI: supports effective domestic markets, facilitates access to foreign markets, and helps to promote sustainable economic development. Prosperity is to a significant extent related to economic development. The economic success and prosperity of nations is inextricably linked to their ability to manufacture and trade precisely made and tested products and components



and meet destination market and consumer requirements.

Manufacturers need to ensure that their products are of consistent quality, comply with relevant regulations and standards, and meet the necessary requirements and specifications.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE

SDGs: This theme of the SDGs addresses societal issues with the aim of improving wellbeing for people. Goals on zero hunger, clean and affordable energy, and good health are key in ensuring that people have dignified lives.

QI: ensures that peoples' needs are being met. For example, metrology provides trusted measurement data that ensures that people and consumers are protected. Demonstrated compliance with the requirements contained in standards also ensure that consumer and product quality expectations are met, including usability, price and reliability.

PROTECTING THE PLANET

SDGs: This pillar of the SDGs addresses the protection of the biosphere, which is an essential precondition for everything else, including economic development and the wellbeing of all people. The activities of production, transportation, trade and the consumption of goods and services depend and have a direct impact on the biosphere, through the depletion of finite natural resources, emissions to air and discharges to sea and land.

QI: The impact of human activity on the planet has reached dangerous levels, threatening the sustainability and management of natural resources, and the protection of the biosphere. QI contributes to the protection of the planet and biosphere by assisting in the responsible consumption of scarce resources.

QICA participates in the WTO TBT Thematic Session on National Quality Infrastructure

The Quality Infrastructure Council of the Americas, QICA, was honored to be invited to present its work at the WTO TBT Thematic Session held on November 12-13, 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland.

As background for the event, we are reminded that the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade Committee has been conducting reviews of the operations and implementation of the WTO TBT Agreement since its inception. In November 2018, at the end of the 8th Triennial Review, the Committee agreed to initiate work on several issues including on conformity assessment procedures. In support of several specific initiatives that the Committee is undertaking, a Thematic Session on National Quality Infrastructure and its use by regulators was organized.

The Thematic Session consisted of 6 panels, on accreditation, metrology, standardization, conformity assessment procedures, NQI systems and regional approaches to QI. For Panel 1 on accreditation, Indonesia, the European Union and Egypt explained their systems. Then, the role of metrology was very clearly presented by BIPM in Panel 2. During Panel 3 on standardization, Japan, the European Union and the United States elaborated on their approaches to developing and using standards.

New Zealand, Australia and Brazil participated in Panel 4 on conformity assessment. Australia recounted a particularly interesting experience when the government decided, about 15 years ago, to regulate energy efficiency of products with a view to reduce greenhouse gases and consumer costs, focusing on stand-by power that was purported to be 10% of consumption. The standard developed soon proved inadequate, the equipment included in the standard was not able to do the job, the accreditation body did not have knowledgeable assessors, and appropriate equipment was virtually non-existing in Australia. The metrology institute did not have the necessary measurement capability. The lesson Australia learned was how invaluable the quality infrastructure components are and, more importantly, that it needs to be consulted often and early. ANATEL, Brazil, presented on its new approach - approved in October 2019 - introducing a risk-based conformity assessment model for telecom products.

For Panel 5, Trinidad and Tobago, China, Turkey, the United States, Mozambique and Brazil described their quality infrastructure systems. The delegate from Mozambique focused on technical assistance needs providing very specific details on areas of training they require and number of people to be trained.

For the last panel on regional approaches to QI, South Africa, Vanuatu and QICA were on the agenda. South Africa described the SADC efforts to create a common framework for regulations, standards and conformity assessment. Vanuatu, on behalf of the Pacific islands, explained the overwhelming challenges they encounter. The QICA presentation stood out for describing a different approach to fostering the quality infrastructure regionally – the creation of an organization grouping the 3 pillars of the QI that aims to strengthen the NQI at the national level, promote the value of the services of its members, collaborate among peers and provide training, among other goals. None of the countries present mentioned a similar effort in their countries and regions.

One positive outcome of QICA's participation in this event was that the delegates from countries of the Americas present, mostly from trade ministries, were not aware of the work of QICA and expressed their appreciation for this very interesting initiative.

The webcast of the Thematic Session is available at https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/webcas_e/webcas_video_e.htm?webcast_id=117&subject_code=TBT

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