

## From the Secretariat



**Registrations for the APLAC MRA Council meeting, to be held in Auckland, New Zealand in May 2011 will open shortly. Please note that completed registration forms for the MRA Council meeting should be sent to the Secretariat. Further advice will follow regarding hotel registrations.**

Members are advised when new or revised APLAC documents are placed on the APLAC web site. Updates since December include:

- One report on completed APLAC PT programs (in the 'members only' area)
- Final Minutes and other associated papers of the December 2010 meeting of the Technical Committee
- Draft Minutes and other associated papers of the December 2010 meeting of the Public Information Committee (both in the 'members only' area)

APLAC MR 001 issue 19, MR 004 issue 12, MR 007 issue 3, MR 008 issue 6, MR 009 issue 4 and TC 013 issue 1 will be sent out shortly for a 30 day Postal Ballot. Please ensure that you or your economy vote on the changes before the due date in order for the revised documents to be issued in a timely manner.

Members are encouraged to send suggestions for improving APLAC's

processes, procedures, etc. to the Secretariat.

As advised in APLAC News Notes December 2010 Mr Alan Patterson has resigned as Chief Executive of NATA and as such, also as Chair of the PIC. All members were sent an email in early January with a request in relation to appointing Roger Muse as Acting Chair until an election can be held at the General Assembly in September 2011.

We thank our members who have replied to this email and would be grateful if those members that have not yet responded to the email please do so as soon as possible.

### 17th General Assembly

The APLAC 2011 Technical Meetings and 17th General Assembly will be held from 10-16 September 2011 at The Peninsula Hotel, Manila, The Philippines. This event is being hosted by PAO.

These meetings are only open to APLAC member organisations and their staff, and invited observers.

Members will be advised when registration opens.

Michael Fraser and Janet Clark  
APLAC Secretariat

## APLAC News Notes

APLAC is an organisation of accreditation bodies in the Asia Pacific area that have expressed a desire to cooperate in fostering the development of competent laboratories, inspection bodies and reference material producers in member economies.

Cooperation is to include:

- Exchange of information
- Joint training programs
- Proficiency testing
- Harmonisation of requirements
- Mutual recognition of systems meeting harmonised requirements

APLAC News Notes is published four times a year to facilitate the exchange of information among members and interested parties. It may be reproduced in full and excerpts should reference APLAC News Notes specifically. Wide copying and distribution are encouraged.

APLAC also maintains a web site at:  
[www.aplac.org](http://www.aplac.org)

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The next edition of APLAC News Notes (no. 107) will be produced by IA Japan.

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# EMA – Mexican Accreditation Entity EMA CONDUCTS NATIONAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

In October 2010 the Mexican Accreditation Entity (ema) launched a media campaign in the national press that highlights the importance of compliance with standards.

The campaign focuses on creating awareness of the Mexican System of Metrology, Standardization and Conformity Assessment ('SISMENEC' for its acronym in Spanish), and how this structure gives benefits to different sectors of the economy.

The advertisements have been created on such topics as rules in the construction industry, benefits of accredited laboratories, electrical accident prevention, actions to save energy, health and safety in workplaces, and sanitation and food hygiene.

To date, 16 advertisements have been published and Ema will continue to develop more issues related to compliance with standards.

**¿Por qué confiar en los LABORATORIOS acreditados?**

Los requisitos que deben cumplir los laboratorios para realizar análisis y mediciones confiables se encuentran establecidos en la Norma Mexicana NMX-SC-17025-2004 equivalente a la norma internacional por la Organización Internacional de Normalización, ISO/IEC 17025, que define los procedimientos para evaluar sus capacidades técnicas y de gestión mediante certificaciones.

Los laboratorios son evaluados por organismos certificados del Instituto Mexicano de Normalización y Certificación de acuerdo con la estructura del sistema de metrología, estandarización y evaluación de la Conformidad SISMENEC por medio de sus ORGANISMOS DE CERTIFICACIÓN.

1457 Laboratorios acreditados por ema

415 Instituciones de certificación acreditadas

ema

# NATA Accreditation and quality boost meat exports

One of NATA's newest members in the field of biological testing is South Australian Laboratory Services Pty Ltd (SAALS) of Athol Park, S.A.

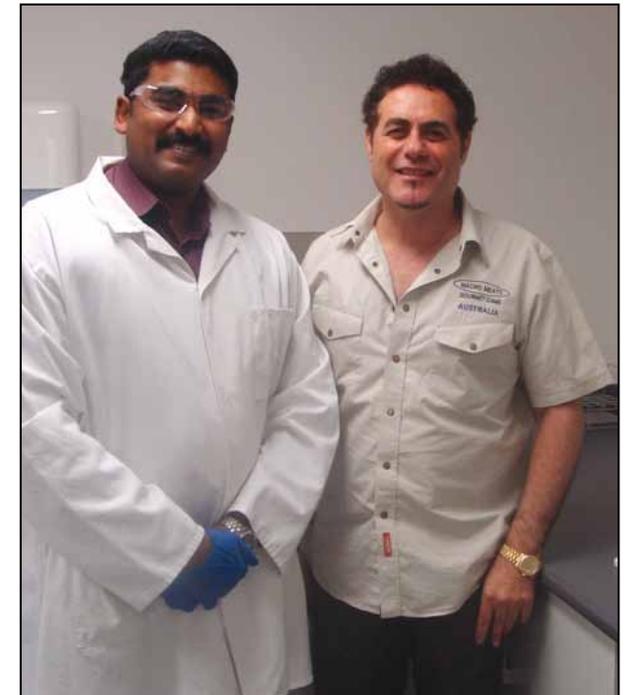
SAALS is a state-of-the-art food microbiology laboratory, located within the premises of Macro Investments Pty Ltd, Australia's largest supplier of kangaroo meat to the food service industry.

Ray Borda, Director and founder of Macro Investments, says that increasing demand for quality in the meat industry motivated the company to take the initiative to start a fully-fledged food laboratory with highly qualified and experienced technical and management staff.

"Our aim is to meet all the testing criteria of the food industry," he said, "and to reduce turnaround time to provide a valuable service to our customers.

"NATA accreditation is a major milestone on this path to service excellence."

Neil Shepherd, NATA's Manager, Biological Testing says that the company sought Biological Testing accreditation because it helps ensure the laboratory's technical



Laboratory Manager Sam Shyamal (left) with director Ray Borda

results are accurate and reliable.

"Overseas buyers are demanding and insist on having proof of product quality when purchasing from Australian producers.

"Testing by a NATA-accredited laboratory is internationally accepted. The results can show that a company's products are safe to eat and comply with strict Australian and export standards."

Macro Investments Pty Ltd is registered with the Australian Quarantine Inspection Services (AQIS) and operates on an approved Meat Safety Quality Assurance (MSQA) program.

SAALS is a public testing facility and is planning to extend its services to other food production facilities around the state.

# TAF – Taiwan Accreditation Foundation

## TAF'S RMP ACCREDITATION SERVICE IS COMING SOON

BY WANJI YANG

**Taiwan Accreditation Foundation (TAF) is launching its accreditation service for reference material producers (RMP) this month.**

TAF currently provides accreditation services for laboratory testing, laboratory calibration, laboratory medical testing, inspection body, PTP, MS certification body, product certification body and personnel certification body, as well as compliance monitoring program registration for GLP testing facilities.

TAF started its study on RMP since 2006. So far six TAF staff members have participated in RMP related training courses, and a number of seminars and workshops have been held for the establishment of the RMP accreditation program.

To better understand the market's needs and its actual operation, in 2010 TAF conducted a survey on the use of reference materials and the market size for RMP accreditation.

Currently, most reference materials used in

Taiwan are imported. However, some 350 returned questionnaires showed that 67% of potential RMP accreditation applicants were interested in applying for TAF accreditation, and 93% of laboratories would purchase reference materials from TAF accredited RMPs.

The survey also showed that RMP is a relatively small market that definitely needs regulatory support. Therefore TAF plans to communicate with regulators to seek support and to promote TAF accreditation for RMP.

After conducting a series of activities such as technical meetings, market surveys, seminars and workshops, the establishment of TAF's RMP accreditation programme is now complete.

TAF will hold training courses for Assessors, laboratory heads, signatory approvals, etc in the near future. The TAF RMP accreditation service will be launched in late March 2011.

## MOU SIGNING BETWEEN TAF AND TSMM

BY WANJI YANG

During the 10-year anniversary celebration seminar for Taiwan Accreditation Foundation (TAF) accreditation in the medical testing field held on 30 December 2010, TAF and Taiwan Society of Molecular Medicine (TSMM) signed an MOU for closer cooperation on issues of mutual interest, such as co-sponsoring workshops and training, co-planning PT programs, co-establishing accreditation

criteria for medical testing labs, participating in each other's working groups and committees and increasing mutual communications.

Currently TAF has signed MOUs with two medical related societies and eight regulatory medical agencies. The ultimate goal of the MOUs is to promote adoption of accreditation results and eventually improve public health.



Dr Jay-San Chen, President of TAF and Mr Chin-Yuan Tzen MD, Chairman of TSMM at the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding.



NATA Director, Matt Callanan (left) signs the MOU with SANAS Chief Executive Officer, Ron Josias

## New NATA MOU with South Africa's SANAS ACCREDITATION BOOSTS SOUTH AFRICA'S INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**The South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) is recognised by the South African Government as the National Accreditation Body that gives formal recognition that Laboratories, Certification Bodies, Inspection Bodies, Proficiency Testing Scheme Providers and Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) test facilities are competent to carry out specific tasks.**

SANAS is responsible for the accreditation of Medical Laboratories to ISO/IEC 17025 or ISO 15189, Certification bodies to ISO/IEC 17021, ISO/IEC 17024 and 65 (and the IAF interpretation thereof), and Laboratories (testing and calibration) to ISO/IEC 17025. Inspection Bodies are accredited to ISO/IEC 17020. GLP facilities are inspected for compliance to OECD GLP principles.

In 2009 an agreement was reached between NATA and SANAS to review their longstanding

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), reflecting the growing importance of accreditation to South Africa's international trade.

Prags Govender, Chairperson of the SANAS Board of Directors, said of his organisation's MOU with NATA: "These relationships are crucial to the international acceptance of South Africa's test/inspection/certification results that underpins acceptance of South African produced goods and services globally."

The review was successfully concluded in time for a new MOU between NATA and SANAS to be signed on 25 October, 2010 during the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) annual general assembly and associated committee meetings.

The new MOU was signed by SANAS Chief Executive Officer, Ron Josias, and NATA Director, Matt Callanan.

## BAB – Bangladesh Accreditation Board BAB IS MOVING FORWARD

**Fifteen officers and supporting staff joined the Bangladesh Accreditation Board (BAB) in November, 2010.**

BAB has organised an experience sharing program with existing staff of BAB. They also exchanged views with the members of Bangladesh Association of Certification Bodies (BACB) and are planning to meet all qualified assessors in the country soon.

Six BAB officers attended training programs such as the nine day 'Laboratory Management and Assessment as per ISO/IEC 17025' course at the Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) and the five day 'Implementing ISO 9001: 2008 Quality Management System' course at the Bangladesh Institute of Management (BIM).

A three day training program on ISO/IEC 17011 and ISO/IEC 17025 was organised by BAB with the technical co-operation of Standards Malaysia from 28 February to 2 March 2011 for BAB officials and other technical managers. The 6 BAB officials also attended a training Programme and Laboratory attachment in VIMTA, India from 7 - 11 March 2011.

BAB has developed a comprehensive work plan to strengthen its capacity by incorporating national technical experts in accreditation, organising practical training on assessment, boosting promotional activities among potential clients and by formulating BAB policies, guidelines and rules.

BAB is also working closely with a UNIDO-funded project entitled 'Better work and Standard Programme' (BEST) for strengthening its capabilities.

# NATA Hosts Bangladeshi Delegation

FIVE DAY  
WORKSHOP  
FOR TECHNICAL  
DISCUSSIONS



*Mr David Holbourne (left) and Mr K H Masud Siddiqui during their time at NATA*

**NATA (Sydney) recently hosted a visit from the Honourable Secretary, Ministry of Industries of the Government of Bangladesh, Mr K H Masud Siddiqui, and Mr David Holbourne, Chief Technical Advisor, Better Work and Standards Programme (BEST), United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO).**

The purpose of the visit was for technical discussions on the overall system of Standards, Metrology, Testing, Quality (SMTQ) Accreditation and on current national, regional and international practices to facilitate trade, sustainable industrialisation, economic growth and poverty reduction.

NATA arranged meetings for the delegation in Sydney with ILAC, the National Measurement Institute (NMI)

and Standards Australia (SA). In Canberra meetings were held with the Commonwealth Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR) and with the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ).

The delegation's visit was structured as a 5-day workshop. It began with a meeting at the Sydney office of Standards Australia for an introduction to Standards, Quality, Accreditation and Metrology (SQAM) including how these interrelate within an economy.

The principles of good standards development were covered, followed by an overview of the history and scope of Standards Australia.

The delegation's second day began at NATA's office in Rhodes NSW with a presentation on technical regulations in the Technical Infrastructure.

The delegation then travelled to the National Measurement Institute (NMI) for an introduction to metrology and measurement, including trade (legal) measurement, and traceable measurements to SI units.

The third day was held at NATA where the delegation enjoyed a session on the history, scope and operation of NATA, followed by a presentation on conformity assessment. The delegation also received an overview of ILAC and APLAC.

On day four the delegation travelled to Canberra where it first visited the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR) and received an overview of the history, scope and operations of the Department in relation to SQAM policy and interaction with industrial and trade policy.

A meeting at the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) followed where the delegation was given a presentation on the scope and operation of JAS-ANZ including its organisational structure and business model, and on its international participation and linkages.

The final day began with a return to NATA at Rhodes where a discussion was held that reviewed examples of SQAM development in Hong Kong, Singapore, South Africa and the Middle East.

The workshop concluded with an open discussion and debrief on the week's activities including the next steps for Bangladesh.

# PNAC – Pakistan National Accreditation Council

## TRAINING COURSE ON PERSONNEL CERTIFICATION – ISO/IEC 17024



Participants with Secretary Ministry of Science & Technology on the closing day

### Training Course on Personnel Certification – ISO/IEC 17024

Pakistan National Accreditation Council (PNAC) conducted a three day lead assessor training course on ISO/IEC 17024 from 3-5 January 2010 in Islamabad.

Dr Khalid Saeed from Norwegian Accreditation conducted the course along with a co-trainer from PNAC. Participants from the certification bodies, experts and professionals from both the public and

private sectors attended the training course.

The course will help PNAC in launching the accreditation scheme and raising awareness about personnel certification in Pakistan.

Following that course, a two day awareness course on personnel certification was conducted from 7-8 January 2011 in Islamabad to raise awareness about requirements of the standard among management system consultants, quality managers and professionals from the private sector.

### COLLABORATION WITH UNIDO

International experts from UNIDO on conformity assessment, Mr Anwar El-Tawil and Mr Upali Samarajeewa, held detailed meetings with PNAC. Future activities and the action plan for support to PNAC under TRTA-II were discussed and finalised.

NA (Norwegian Accreditation) and PNAC conducted joint assessments of eleven testing labs in Pakistan during August and September, 2010.

### STAFF TRAINING

PNAC is focused on the training and capacity building of its staff. The following training has recently been undertaken by PNAC assessors:

Mr Muhammad Sulaiman, Head of the Certification Section, attended a training program on Halal Standards and Conformity Infrastructure for OIC Countries in Malaysia from 21 – 30 July 2010.

Mr Pervaiz Ahmed Gill, Director (IL) attended a training course on ISO/IEC 17011 & ISO/IEC Guide 65 hosted by KAS (Korean Accreditation system) in Seoul from 9 – 13 August 2010.

Mr Atteq-ur-Rehman, Director (ML) attended the ISQua (International Society for Quality in Health Care Ltd., Ireland) International Conference on “Quality Outcomes / Achieving Patient Improvement” in Paris from 10 – 13 October 2010.

## AUSTRALIA REVIEWS RULES FOR DNA TESTING

**Jane’s Police Review Community, a national UK law enforcement information service, recently quoted the chief executive of the National Policing Improvement Agency who said that a suspect is now five times more likely to be identified by a DNA match than a fingerprint.**

“Peter Neyroud said genetic fingerprinting is now a ‘critical and integral’ part of police investigations and if DNA evidence linking a suspect to a crime is not available, it puts a successful prosecution at risk.” (‘Jane’s Police Review Community’, 9 September 2009)

However, members of the judiciary as well as people serving on juries are understandably cautious about the risks of convicting someone accused of a crime on the basis of evidence based solely on DNA testing.

As with all evidence, there are questions about the reliability and accuracy of DNA evidence, and whether a particular piece of DNA-based evidence will be admissible in proceedings.

Questions have been raised about the risks of contamination. Contamination issues were at the centre of a case in Victoria in early 2010 in which a man was wrongly convicted of rape because of contaminated DNA evidence.

The case prompted a review of DNA collection and analysis that was supported by all state and territory Attorneys-General. The review was undertaken by a committee that included representatives of the Ombudsman’s office and federal agencies responsible for law enforcement and privacy.

The review developed a reform plan which covers the regulation of DNA forensic testing procedures including access to samples and greater oversight of DNA testing facilities.

If the review’s recommendations are implemented, forensic analysis of DNA samples would be conducted only by NATA-accredited laboratories.

The Commonwealth government is now consulting with stakeholders about the review’s recommendations.

# NATA Plays a Part in Abu Dhabi's Economic Growth



From left to right) John Widdowson, Manager – Chemical Testing, NATA; Graeme Drake, GED Consultancy; Abdulla Al Muaini, Quality and Conformity Council (Abu Dhabi); Alex Ezrakhovich, SAI-Global; Peter Davis, Cardno; John Gilmour; Anas Al Bargouthi, Quality and Conformity Council (Abu Dhabi); Frank Griffiths; Ron Cook, Metrology Training International; Cassian Drew, Quality and Conformity Council (Abu Dhabi); Gunter Theisz; and John McKenna.

**In September 2010 NATA was awarded the contract for a substantial project to assist the Abu Dhabi Government Department of Economic Development (DED) in the establishment of its Quality and Conformance Council (QCC), Metrology Center (MC) and Central Testing Laboratory (CTL).**

The QCC has been established to provide a focus in Abu Dhabi for a quality infrastructure, consumer protection and promotion of a culture of quality in the Emirate. As a key enabler for economic growth, it will contribute to the achievement of Abu Dhabi's 2030 Vision – a roadmap for the Emirates' economic progress by assisting in the diversification of what is currently an oil based economy.

NATA's success in winning the project to establish the QCC came largely because of the association's international reputation for excellence and its ability to

access some of the best technical expertise in Australia, which possesses a recognised world class technical infrastructure.

NATA's partners in the project are National Measurement Institute, Australia (NMI), Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ), Standards Australia and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO). This project provides Australia's technical infrastructure with a unique opportunity to work together with inputs to be drawn from across all the organisations, including NATA's unique pool of technical assessors.

The project will enable many of Australia's scientific personnel to gain invaluable experience in a fast-developing part of the world, and to interact with others in their fields to establish best-practice facilities.

## Background

Abu Dhabi has set ambitious targets in its efforts to achieve sustainable economic growth. The Department of Economic Development (DED) fulfils a key role in meeting these targets by developing economic policies that act as a catalyst for such growth.

The DED acknowledges that Abu Dhabi's Quality Infrastructure requires development and that the level of awareness and adherence to standards can be improved.

QCC commenced operations in August 2010 and is actively recruiting both Emirati and foreign staff needed to address these challenges. The goal is a world class infrastructure that will meet all international benchmarks and provide leadership to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and other members of Gulf States Cooperation Council (GCC).

The QCC will have five main roles:

1. Regulate and coordinate quality control;
2. Enhance overall quality of products;
3. Promote a favourable environment;
4. Enhance public awareness; and
5. Review and improve standards.

The QCC's core function areas include:

- Advise on standardisation and conformity assessment policy;
- Conduct quality-related promotion activities;
- Develop legal metrology services including an inspectorate and an instrument verification function;
- Develop consumer safety policies and regulations and conduct related market surveillance;
- Provide conformity assessment services; and
- Develop metrology policy and provide calibration services.

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# NATA Plays a Part in Abu Dhabi's Economic Growth

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## **Metrology Center**

The mandate and key functions of the Metrology Center include:

- Supporting UAE federal initiatives to develop and seek primary metrology services;
- Supporting the role of ESMA and federal entities within the GCC regional metrology framework;
- Hosting a secondary metrology laboratory and seeking accreditation; and
- Providing legal and scientific calibration services to various users.

The Metrology Centre will have a high level calibration capability in all areas of physical metrology. Its expansion into other activities, such as chemical metrology, will depend on need. It will be owned and operated by the QCC.

Construction of a sophisticated metrology laboratory in a difficult environment such as Abu Dhabi will require expert and experienced input. The consortium is well placed in this regard and its capacity to provide high level training will also be invaluable.

## **Central Testing Laboratory**

It has also been decided to bring together most of the existing government laboratories in Abu Dhabi into a Central Testing Laboratory. This new institution will be required to operate at a high technical level across a range of disciplines and technologies – chemistry, biology, engineering and construction materials. The decision to amalgamate existing testing laboratories into a Central Testing Laboratory is widely supported within the Emirate.

It will be owned by the Government through QCC but will be managed under contract by a yet to be chosen international organisation.

## **An Important Project**

Led by NATA, the Abu Dhabi project will run for a total of 15 months.

The principal Australian contribution has been to provide technical advice on all elements of QCC's mandate. The first phase of the project, now completed, was to evaluate existing arrangements compared to international best practice and make recommendations for future development.



The proposed Metrology Centre will provide greatly enhanced arrangements for measurement traceability that will be internationally compatible and recognised.



Future involvement from Australia, NATA and NMIA in particular, is concerned with advice for the establishment of the Metrology Center and providing ongoing advice to the principal management consultants, McKinsey and Company, and the human resources consultants, Mercer Consulting.

## **Conclusions**

The decision to establish a modern measurement, testing and quality infrastructure will facilitate industrial development, provide a more orderly and transparent market and enhance consumer safety and protection of the environment in Abu Dhabi.

It will also provide the Emirate with an infrastructure that will support testing and measurement for other purposes such as healthcare, defence, construction, government procurement and general regulatory enforcement.

The proposed Metrology Centre will provide greatly enhanced arrangements for measurement traceability that will be internationally compatible and recognised.

The Central Testing Laboratory's multidisciplinary facilities will provide comprehensive testing services to meet foreseeable needs and permit expansion where necessary.

A formal approach to trade measurement and its supervision and the development of more rigorous market surveillance systems will have multiple benefits for business and consumers through a more transparent market place.

It is intended that the QCC will facilitate and encourage a quality culture within the Emirate through promotional activities, policy development, establishing a family of quality and conformity marks, and other initiatives. This will include the establishment of a certification capability, perhaps through CTL, and encourage other authorities to upgrade inspection and other surveillance regimes.

Except for accreditation which is a federal responsibility, the QCC has the authority to do everything that is necessary to establish a modern system that will underpin technical activities within the Emirate. Proposals to establish a regional (GCC wide) accreditation body are currently under consideration.

The QCC's leadership role for Abu Dhabi in all matters related to quality promotion and awareness and for policy leadership in regulation provides professional development opportunities for NATA staff while generating substantial export earnings.

This will, in turn, enable greater investment in services and facilities for members as well as promoting Australia's technical competence in what is potentially a very important market.