

Press Release



Accreditation: Delivering a safer world



World Accreditation Day

9 June 2018

(#WAD2018)

June 9, marks World Accreditation Day (WAD) as a global initiative jointly established by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) to raise awareness of the importance of accreditation-related activities. The inaugural WAD was celebrated in 2008.

The theme for 2018 World Accreditation Day is **“Accreditation: Delivering a Safer World”**. World Accreditation Day 2018 focuses on how accreditation delivers a safer world. The expectation of safe workplaces, safe products, safe transport, safe food, in fact all aspects of our lives is universally shared. Statistics however show that the expectation is not being matched by the reality. Closing this gap is a vital consideration for government, regulators and businesses, aiming to keep people safer in their work, their domestic life, their journeys and all other parts of their lives.

Standards, conformity assessment and accreditation are well-established and accepted tools that are used to help deliver a safer world. Examples of the use of these tools include: life guards having accredited certification in Dubai; asbestos testing at accredited laboratories in the UK; certification for adventure tourism activities in New Zealand; accredited certification in the Czech Republic for electronic tool workers; accredited inspection for public lifts in the Netherlands.

One of the most significant endorsements of the benefits of conformity assessment is with an Italian insurer. By analyzing the rates of workplace accidents between organizations who have certification to the OHSAS 18001: Health & Safety management system standard and those without it, the insurer offers significantly lower insurance premiums to those certified to the standard as they see those with the certification as a much lower risk.

The use of management systems to help reduce health & safety risks has considerably expanded since the publication of the first ISO Health & Safety management system standard, ISO 45001, designed to improve organizations' health & safety performance by recognizing the risks and developing objectives, policies, processes and controls to minimize these risks.

Another clear example of how accreditation delivers a safer world is through the Dutch criminal justice system, where DNA evidence will only be admissible if the DNA testing has been conducted by a laboratory accredited to ISO/IEC 17025. By having the DNA testing in a laboratory that is accredited by an ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) signatory, this ensures that the judicial system is upheld, and that citizens are consistently protected.

These examples provide a very brief introduction to the vast range of ways accreditation, conformity assessment and standards can deliver a safer world. Completed projects, raw materials, products, processes, services, management systems, and persons can be evaluated against a standard, code of practice, or regulatory requirement by testing and calibration laboratories, inspection bodies, certification bodies and validation & verification bodies (collectively known as Conformity Assessment Bodies). Conformity assessment bodies are used to check that products and services are safe for use. Accreditation is the independent evaluation of these conformity assessment bodies against recognized standards to carry out specific activities to ensure their integrity, impartiality and competence. Through the application of national and international standards, government, businesses and wider society can therefore have confidence in the calibration and test results, inspection reports and certifications provided, delivering both increased confidence and safer practices.

World Accreditation Day 2018 provides an excellent opportunity to explore how accreditation can deliver a safer world and for businesses, government and regulators to find standards, conformity assessment and accreditation tools to help them in this goal. A brochure giving more details of how accreditation delivers a safer world is available for download from the IAF and ILAC websites. Additional case studies, research and support material is available at <http://www.publicsectorassurance.org/topic-areas/health-safety/>

The Southern African Development Community Accreditation Services (SADCAS) is a multi-economy accreditation body established to meet the accreditation needs of SADC Member States especially those without own national accreditation bodies namely: Angola; Botswana; Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC); Lesotho; Madagascar; Malawi; Mozambique; Namibia; Seychelles; Swaziland; Tanzania; Zambia; and Zimbabwe. SADCAS' mission is to provide credible, cost effective, accreditation services for SADC Member States aimed at supporting trade, enhance the protection of consumers and the environment and improve the competitiveness of SADC products and services in both the voluntary and regulatory areas. SADCAS provides accreditation services and training on accreditation associated activities. SADCAS offers accreditation programs for calibration/testing /medical laboratories, and certification and inspection bodies. SADCAS is signatory to the ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) for testing and calibration (ISO/IEC 17025), medical (ISO 15189) and inspection (ISO/IEC 17020) thus the accreditation certificates issued by SADCAS on these accreditation programmes are internationally recognized.

To commemorate 2018 World Accreditation Day a number of activities are lined up in various SADC Countries serviced by SADCAS which include conferences, workshops and, press and television coverages. This press release is also part of efforts to raise awareness on the role of accreditation in delivering a safer world.

For more information please visit the SADCAS website www.sadcas.org

OR

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The National Accreditation Focal Point in your country