

ANSI Briefing Paper for NCAPEC and ABAC regarding Asia Pacific Standards and Conformance in support of APEC

Top things the U.S. ABAC representatives should know:

Background

- 1) The interest of high level business leaders in the APEC region as represented by the ABAC in the area of standards and conformance is encouraging and welcomed by the Asia Pacific standards and conformance community.
- 2) Many of the concerns of the ABAC are currently being addressed in the APEC Subcommittee for Standards and Conformance (SCSC) which reports to the APEC Committee for Trade and Investment (CTI). The SCSC is a logical first stop for such issues within the APEC structure to avoid duplicative efforts.
- 3) The APEC Specialist Regional Bodies (SRBs) have just submitted to the SCSC for its consideration and comment, a draft ***Strategic Plan for Technical Infrastructure Development on Support of Trade Facilitation for and in APEC Economies***. At a high level, this plan is aimed at constructing a mechanism to convert the concerns of the business and government interests of the APEC region into solutions fully leveraging the APEC SRB standards and conformance infrastructure.
- 4) The scheduled April 26th, 2007 meeting between representatives of the ABAC and the Pacific Area Standards Congress (PASC) in Cartagena, Colombia is an excellent opportunity to establish an ongoing dialogue that can improve communications and networking between the high-level business and standards communities in the APEC region.
- 5) The APEC standards and conformance community have the specialized expertise **today** to overcome many of the trade and market access obstacles in the Asia Pacific region and to reduce business transaction costs. However high-level specifics are needed.

Recommended ABAC Actions

- 6) **Encourage and support the dialogue between the ABAC, the SCSC, and the SRBs to better define the optimal mechanisms to identify and articulate specific standards and conformance problems.**
- 7) **Utilizing these mechanisms, the ABAC should begin providing a list of specific real-world business issues which can be sent to the APEC/CTI-SCSC and the five Specialist Regional Bodies (SRBs) to enable them to begin focused work toward resolution.**

Cautions

- 8) The ABAC should be careful not to fixate on standards harmonization (which is one tool among many) and should avoid recommending implementation of a top-down European standards model into the bottom-up Asia Pacific cooperation. High level goals should be passed by the ABAC to the experts in the SCSC and SRBs who can most appropriately route them to resolution within the APEC plumbing.
- 9) As is noted in the current edition of the Economist, the goal of the European single market was market unification, not market opening; it was about harmonization, not deregulation. Jobs and innovation come disproportionately from small firms, especially from letting small firms grow big. Market entry matters more than market harmonization and excessive regulation damages growth. The cost of complying with EU red tape (€600 billion / \$787 billion) annually – outweighs the single market benefits.

ABOUT ANSI and the Specialist Regional Bodies

- Since November 2006, the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) has been working with NCAPEC to build and coordinate support of the U.S. standards and conformance community for the high-level goals and frameworks of APEC including the Bogor goals, the Osaka Action Agenda, and the Busan Roadmap.
- ANSI is the coordinator of the U.S. standards and conformance community representing 125,000 company interests, 200+ standards and code developing organizations, test labs, certifiers, and federal, state and local government standards developers.
- ANSI is the national standards body for the United States. It is the U.S. member to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), the Pacific Area Standards Congress (PASC), the Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (PAC) and equivalent bodies in the Americas.
- ANSI currently holds the chair of the PASC Standing [Executive] Committee. Standards New Zealand (SNZ) currently provides the PASC Secretary. Both ANSI and SNZ represent PASC at the APEC Subcommittee for Standards and Conformance (SCSC) which reports to the APEC Committee for Trade and Investment (CTI).
- The five APEC-SCSC recognized Specialist Regional Bodies (SRBs) are:
 - [Pacific Area Standards Congress \(PASC\)](#)
 - [Pacific Accreditation Cooperation \(PAC\)](#)
 - [Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation \(APLAC\)](#)
 - [Asia-Pacific Legal Metrology Forum \(APLMF\)](#)
 - [Asia-Pacific Metrology Programme \(APMP\)](#)