



APEC Business Advisory Council



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# **REPORT ON RESPONSES TO SURVEY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS BODIES**

Presentation to Pacific Area Standards Congress

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by Colin Blair

# Survey Responses .....

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Responses received from 18 of the 21 Member Economies  
of APEC

# Survey Questions...

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- 22 questions asked
- Topics covered issues of:
  - Industry and government involvement
  - Funding
  - Barriers to alignment with international standards
  - Priority areas for international alignment
  - Assistance required to strengthen the organisational skills base
  - Extent of collaboration between national standards bodies
  - APEC assistance
  - Conformance assessment.

# Organizational...

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## Number of standards in economy

41 and 25,654 with the mean number being 7505

## Organization responsible for all Standards Development in Economy?

The organization was responsible for the development of all national standards

The organization accredits Standards Development Organizations

The organization was not responsible for development of all national standards, and the areas not covered include medicines, agricultural chemicals, chemical fertilizers, silk yarn, foodstuffs, agricultural and forest products

# Organizational (cont'd)...

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## **Total number of staff involved in standards development**

staff varies between 2 and 250, with a mean of 70 and a median of 40

# Alignment with International Standards...

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## Percentage of National standards based on or aligned with international standards

percentage varies between 7.4% to 94%, with a mean of 52%.

## Does your economy have a target to align national standards to international standards

- Three economies responded in the negative.
- Other economies responded in the positive with the target varying between 100% (absolute)  
100% (where there is an international standard on the subject)  
95%  
60 to 70%  
increase by 3.4% per annum  
increase from 95% to 100% in five years  
40 % aligned with International standards by 2010.

# Alignment with International Standards (cont'd)...

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**How many years does your economy expect it to take to reach the target**

varies between 'indeterminate', to

where a period is given it varies between 2 and 8-10 years with a mean of 5 years.

# Alignment with International Standards (cont'd)...

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## List the three most important barriers to alignment of national standards with international standards?

lack of international in key areas like building construction and engineering,  
international standards with low levels of safety and performance,  
low interest in some areas covered by international standards,  
upgrade of technical facilities, e.g. new testing equipment/machinery relating to testing,  
training of personnel to understand the related international standards,  
relevance of the international standards to national activities  
legacy infrastructure,  
not politically required (although encouraged),  
markets lead standards issues,  
the lack of stakeholder participations in national/international TC .  
no acceptance from the draft of international standards,  
no channel to express our needs to international standards,  
where international standards are not available or applicable, prevailing overseas standards are adopted,  
lack of stakeholder participations in national/international TC,  
lack of awareness of the importance of using harmonized standards in trade,  
ISO standard is technically outdated,  
difference of technical infrastructures (e.g. voltage of power supply system),  
the relevant ISO standards use environmentally regulated substances,  
existing legal infrastructure,  
some international standards are not suitable with national conditions;



# Alignment with International Standards (cont'd)...

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## List the three most important barriers to alignment of national standards with international standards?

no international standards available in certain products,  
international standards not specific enough,  
national differences,  
regulators moving towards wanting free-to-air documents,  
electrical/electronic, food, health & safety, construction, building and engineering standards  
products which are ethnic or peculiar to the country cannot be aligned to international standards,  
economic implications due to retooling of existing production facilities to adapt to new technology corresponding to international standards,  
change of existing technical infrastructure to adopt to the requirements of international standards,  
technical infrastructure and tropical climate can affect alignment of national standards to international standards,  
language difficulties,  
limited involvement and contribution of industry.  
different circumstances (ex) different level of technology development  
different product safety regulations  
exact translation  
lack of general and specific awareness about benefits  
lack of participation in international standardization due to lack of expertise, experience and infrastructure as well as lack of human and financial resources available to national body  
lack of language skills.  
to what extent a particular draft standard should be harmonized is decided in course of its development and discussion with the industry  
in some sectors, manufacturers are not capable to comply with relevant international standards  
lack of testing equipments specified by international standards  
international standards do not respond to market needs.  
there exists no formal international or APEC definition of the term "international standard"

# Priority areas for international alignment ...

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building & construction

services

customer service

food

electric/ electronics equipment

energy

information and communication

environment management

quality control

automobile

agriculture

wood-based

rubber-based

information technology

chemical

emerging technologies (biotechnology, nanotechnology etc)

supply chain security & management (people and goods movement)

primary produce and tourism

security

production safety

rubber products

health and safety

# Industry involvement...

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**In your organization what percentage of committees does industry actively participate in for the development of standards?**

percentage varies between 25% and 100%, with a mean of 75%

**Is it difficult to attract industry support and technical expertise to standardization activities**

Response varies between never and occasionally.

Statements include -

“industry must see the benefits of participating in standardisation activities”, and  
“it is an ongoing effort to make the business community aware of the value of standardization to industry”.

# Industry involvement (cont'd)...

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**Do you have sufficient involvement by industry in the development of your economy's national standards?**

Eight replied Yes, and seven replied No.

Specific responses include,

better information on the value and impacts of standardization for industry would be useful;

enhance linkages and interactions with industry associations to increase participation in standards development activities;

by effecting state procurement based on national standards

# Government involvement...

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**In your organization what percentage of committees does Government actively participate in the standards development process?**

The percentage ranges between 40% and 100% with a mean of 75%

**What proportion of your standards is developed to meet Government requirements**

The percentage ranges between 0% and 50%, with a mean of 30%

**What are the main sectors in which this occurs**

The main sectors identified were building; electrical/electronics; food; health; automobiles; Occupational Health & Safety; Consumer safety; agriculture; environmental protection; fire service safety; water supply; gas; education; energy; security.

# Industry and Government involvement...

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**Some national standards bodies receive little or no funding from their respective governments but rely on links to industry and society. Is this applicable to you?**

Fourteen responses were no  
Two responses were yes.

**Are you constrained by a lack of industry or government funding?**

Six responses were no  
Eleven responses were yes.

# Assistance required to strengthen the organisational skills base ...

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**What assistance would be most valuable to your organization in strengthening the skill base of your organization and committees?**

training

education

financial support

more industry and government participation

increased visibility of the value of standardization to business leaders and government regulators

interchange with other standards development organisations in the region to identify best practice

capacity development and technical assistance

# Collaboration between national standards bodies ...

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**How often would you be involved with, or contribute to, an informal collaboration network between national standardization bodies of other economies, particularly the smaller national standards bodies**

Five responses were regularly

Eight responses were as needed

Two responses were frequently

Two responses were rarely

**Would you like to see additional opportunities for collaboration between national standards bodies**

All responses were yes



# Collaboration between national standards bodies (cont'd) ...

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## **What form should this collaboration take**

exchanging views on best practice for standards development;  
network of National Standards Body, e.g. PASC;  
high-level MoUs between National Standards Bodies;  
through participation in activities of international or regional fora on standards and conformance;  
in developing joint positions for international standards development;  
in twinning arrangements for handling the national secretariat for TC/MC;  
exchanging information with regard to own national standard;  
information exchange meeting (dialogue);  
capacity building in standardisation with specific sectors especially in emerging technologies;  
training of trainers;  
information exchange;  
increase liaison with ABAC & PASC (& ISO/IEC) SRBs & ABAC in APEC SCSC;  
attachment training with the main infrastructure national standards bodies;  
exchange missions among Standards Development offices in the APEC region;  
increased linkage between the business community and standardizers at both the regional and individual economy level;  
through bilateral and multilateral cooperation.  
training in international standardization and mirror committees coordination  
exchange of information and mutual recognition including standard equivalence and conformity assessment to reduce barriers to trade.

# Conformance assessment ...

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**In order to assess conformity against standards, our economy has an adequate number of fully trained auditors across all sectors**

two strongly agree

eight agree

five disagree

one no view

one needs more information to properly respond

**Our economy has laboratories capable of testing to all relevant standards**

three strongly agree

seven agree

six disagree

one no view

one needs more information to properly respond.

# Conformance assessment ...

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**Imported products are required to be retested or re-certified to enter our economy**

one strongly agree

nine disagree

two agree

three no view

one not applicable

one needs more information to properly respond.

# APEC assistance ...

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## **Do you have any other comments on how APEC can assist your organization in harmonizing to international standards**

training on application of new international standards of relevance to our industry;

interpretation of relevant international standards especially the implementation of technical requirements of identified standards;

harmonize to international standards through facilitating a greater amount of trade amongst the APEC members based on compliance to international standards;

cooperation between NSBs especially in facilitating attachment training for gaining on the job experience;  
resources,

need to get participation from industry in standards development at national, regional and international level;

promote value of standards to industry and to government as a viable alternative to regulation;

technical assistance to training our staff to gain more experience and develop skills to better handle the standards and conformance actions;

provision of technical experts on areas which are covered by APEC Mutual Recognition Arrangements;

improvement of existing technical infrastructure will be of help in the implementation of standards to bring it up to the level of other APEC member economies;

harmonizing to international standards is but one of hundreds of specialized areas in which the APEC Specialist Regional Bodies including PASC can help the APEC economies achieve the overarching APEC goals;

ABAC could survey its business constituencies to identify specific standards and conformance related issues it wishes the SCSC and the SRBs to address and resolve,

a critical and unique role that the ABAC can fill in APEC is to provide this specific market data to the standards and conformance experts for resolution.

the sharing of information regarding adoption of international standards as well as of the justifications for these adoptions would be very useful

to provide capacity building fund to facilitate a higher level of participation in international standards preparation such as more active participation in ISO/IEC SC, TC WG.

# APEC assistance ...

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## **Do you have any other comments on how APEC can assist your economy in harmonizing to international standards**

training on application of new international standards of relevance to our industry, this includes relevant product specific international standards

interpretation of relevant international standards especially the implementation of technical requirements of identified standards

harmonize to international standards through increasing the awareness at the executive level of both business and government (national and sub-national) of the critical role standards play in either facilitating or impeding international trade, and the need to put measures in place and provide adequate resources to facilitate the national adoption of international standards

providing the opportunity to participate in international standard development

ABAC increase its support of the existing APEC standards and conformance infrastructure embodied in the SCSC and SRBs including PASC

assistance could be very useful in some areas like training for TC/SC Secretaries in technical works

capacity building for the staff in the priorities areas of standardization (including conformity assessment like auditor, lead auditor training)

organize forum where developing economies and developed could have more possibility to share experiences and information on ongoing activities in standardization that impact the business and trade facilitation in the region

to provide assistance to upgrade manufacturers' capacity to comply with international standards for instance, to modernize laboratories and to facilitate better understanding of procedures and process specified by international standards

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Thank you