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NABCB gets recognition for occupational health and safety management systems

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The National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB), India's national accreditation body, has secured equivalence for its accreditation programme for Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems (OHSMS) Certification Bodies in Asia- Pacific region. It has signed the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) of the Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (PAC) to this effect on 19 Dec 2018.

The NABCB accreditation programme is based on international standards, ISO/IEC 17021-1 and ISO 45001, applicable for OHSMS. The recognition by PAC is based on demonstration by NABCB that it complies with international standard, ISO/IEC 17011, applicable to it and has competence in OHSMS to accredit certification bodies in this sector.

NABCB is the third accreditation body in the Asia Pacific Region to become internationally equivalent in the region, the other two being the accreditation bodies of Hong Kong and Mexico. The MLA with PAC would facilitate signing MLA with International Accreditation Forum (IAF) to secure full international equivalence. IAF signatory member status signifies that the accreditation of certification bodies by NABCB for Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems will be accepted as internationally equivalent.

NABCB, a constituent Board of the Quality Council of India, is responsible for accreditation of certification/inspection bodies as per applicable international standards under an international system of equivalence.

NABCB has already secured international equivalence for its accreditation programmes for ISO 9001 certification bodies in 2002 and ISO 14001 certification bodies in 2007, Product certification bodies based on ISO 17065 in 2013, Inspection Bodies based on ISO 17020 also in 2013, Global Gap in 2014, ISO 22000 certification bodies and ISMS certification bodies as per ISO 27001 in 2015 and Energy Management System as per ISO 50001 in 2018.

Accreditation reduces risk for business and its customers by assuring that accredited Certification Bodies (CBs) are competent to carry out the work they undertake within their scope of accreditation. Accreditation Bodies (ABs) that are members of PAC and the CBs they accredit are required to comply with appropriate international standards and the applicable PAC application documents for the consistent application of those standards.

ABs that is signatories to the PAC Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) are evaluated regularly by an appointed team of peers to provide confidence in the operation of their accreditation programs.

Accreditation has become an essential tool for getting acceptance of inspection, testing and certification done in India internationally and it is referenced in many bilateral Free Trade Agreements like the India – Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement in which NABCB accreditation is a requirement for certification of electrical/electronic and telecom products. Thus, accreditation eliminates technical barriers to trade and facilitates export of Indian products in world market.

NABCB has currently accredited 6 certification bodies for Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems

Now any industry carrying ISO 45001 certificate with NABCB logo will be recognized in the Asia Pacific region. The immediate beneficiary of this equivalence is the Indian Industry which is exporting products to various countries specially in the Asia Pacific region. It can also be used by regulators for establishing confidence in certified units as Goa Govt has done by accepting OHSMS certification under NABCB accreditation in lieu of annual audits under Factories' Act. With the above, NABCB hopes to facilitate export of Indian goods into the world market by attesting that these are certified as per international standards by competent certifying bodies.