



ASIA-PACIFIC LEGAL METROLOGY FORUM

REPORT BY THE CONVENOR MR JOHN BIRCH AM TO DELEGATES TO THE SIXTH ASIA-PACIFIC LEGAL METROLOGY FORUM MEETING

The Forum is now approaching its fifth anniversary and this provides an opportunity to review the progress that has been made in achieving the objectives of the Forum. The principal objectives of the Forum are:

1. To develop mutual confidence between members.
2. Remove technical barriers to trade.
3. Promote mutual recognition arrangements.
4. Cooperate with OIML.

Mutual confidence has developed as a result of personal contact at Forum meetings and information provided about legal metrology in each economy. The publication of the Directory of Legal Metrology in the Asia-Pacific (First Edition March 1995, Second Edition 1998), Forum Bulletins, establishment of the Forum web site (www.aplmf.org), the Technical Infrastructure Needs Study conducted by Dr K Birkeland and a wide range of surveys conducted by the Forum have all contributed to greater understanding of the structure and capability of legal metrology systems in the region.

The removal of technical barriers to trade has been promoted through the workshop on Modernisation of Legislative and Administrative Structures, by the intercomparisons on testing of non-automatic weighing instruments and load cells and by a wide range of training courses aimed at harmonising testing procedures in the region.

The Forum has actively supported the initiatives in OIML in developing a mutual recognition arrangement on pattern approval tests and has proposed also mutual recognition on prepacked label measures, measurement of bulk commodity exports and measurements used to show compliance with international obligations.

The Director of the BIML, Mr Bernard Athane, has attended all of the Forum meetings and responded very positively and actively to recommendations from the Forum to the CIML.

Finally, mention should be made about the development of training programs based on OIML recommendations (R76, R117). Whilst Australia has taken the lead in this activity, significant

contributions have been made to these courses by Measurement Canada and China State Bureau of Technical Supervision.

To a large extent much of the Forum work program developed in 1996 and subsequently added to, has been or is being achieved and a major task for this Sixth Forum meeting will be to develop program priorities for the next few years. These priorities need to arise from the needs of Forum members and more broadly the need for development and harmonisation of legal metrology in the region.

All Forum members have been requested to prepare a submission on the future program and in this Convenor's Report I would also like to suggest a number of areas that could be considered.

Our current program has been directed at the needs of members in traditional trade measurement. I believe we should now consider extending the scope of the Forum program to other areas of legal metrology such as environment, health and safety. In many cases these areas of legal metrology will not be the responsibility of Forum members and there will be a need to look at ways to promote both national coordination of legal metrology and the involvement of other legal metrology authorities in Forum work programs.

Dr Birkeland in his study prepared for CIML on "Legal Metrology at the Dawn of the 21st Century" highlighted the importance of this coordination role (see pages 20-22) and discussion in the Forum of this issue would be a natural extension of the 1997 Workshop on Legislation and Administration.

The proposal by our host, the Direktorat Metrologi, to discuss the issue of bulk commodity exports by draft survey will also allow a discussion on the economic impact of improved measurement and the issues of globalisation and mutual recognition of measurement results.

Another topic which could become an important component of the Forum's future program is the effective collection and collation of verification, reverification and prepackage test data. If we are able to achieve harmonisation of requirements in the region then this would provide the opportunity to develop data collection systems that could be used throughout the region.

Development of new Recommendations by OIML could also provide stimulus for future work in the region. In particular:

- Voting on a new Water Meter Recommendation at CIML in October this year and commencement of work on electricity meter recommendations should stimulate the Forum's utility meter program.
- Establishment by CIML of a technical committee on statistical sampling will be important to the Forum's program on harmonisation of prepacked goods requirements.
- Comment by OIML on the development of a recommendation on compressed natural gas dispensers, highlights an emerging trade measurement technology that is being

driven by urban air quality concerns. CNG dispensers are currently being introduced in a number of member economies and there will be a need for workshops and training courses in this technology.

- The finalisation of OIML and ISO of a joint international standard on automobile emission measurement would have important applications in the region and provide the beginning of a Forum program on environmental measurements.

I am sure that there are many other topics the Forum's members are being faced with in their own economies and I look forward to a stimulating and productive discussion on future directives at Nusa Dua.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation for the cooperation and support that I have received from Forum members over the last five years. My contribution to the Forum as Convenor would also not have been possible without the excellent support I have received from the Forum secretary, Mrs Loon Khoo.