



Joint Statement



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Accreditation: Delivering a Safer World

World Accreditation Day 2018 focuses on how accreditation delivers a safer world.



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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 analysing the rates of workplace accidents between organisations 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 will be considerably expanded in March 2018 with the publication of the first ISO Health & Safety management system standard, ISO 45001, designed to improve organisations' health & safety performance by recognising the risks and developing objectives, policies, processes and controls to minimise 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 recognised 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.

Major events, press and television coverage, workshops and seminars will take place in conjunction with the celebration of World Accreditation Day in over 100 countries to raise awareness of the value that accreditation plays in supporting a safer world. For further details, contact your local accreditation body using ILAC's MRA signatory search at <http://ilac.org/signatory-search/> and the IAFs' directory at: http://www.iaf.nu//articles/IAF_MEMBERS_SIGNATORIES/4

Additional case studies, research and support material is available at <http://www.publicsectorassurance.org/topic-areas/health-safety/>

