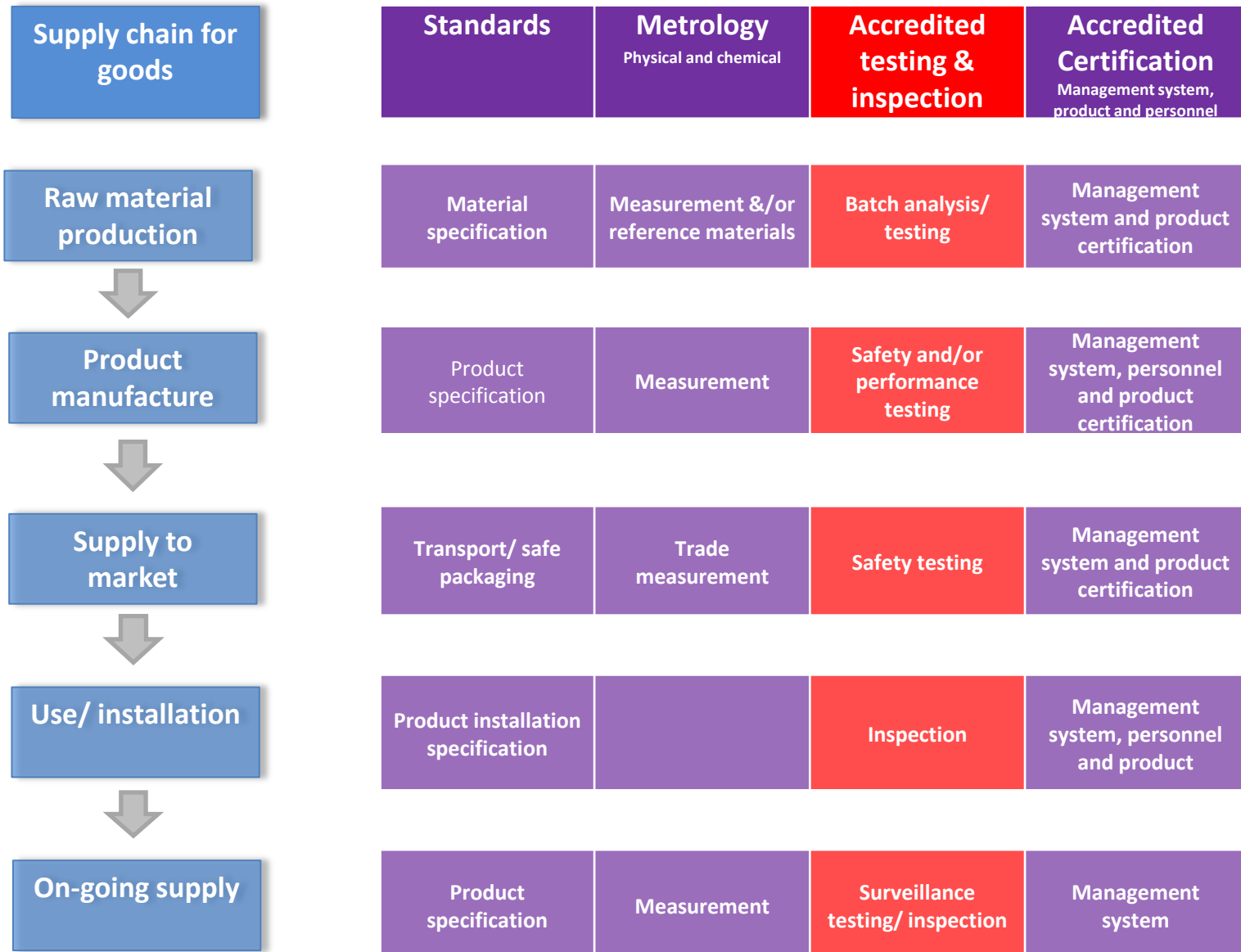# Accreditation – building capacity and confidence

Integration Partnership Forum
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Overview

- The practical role of standards & conformance bodies

- NATA Accreditation in Australia

- Why it works

- Australian regulatory and industry recognition

- Why it may not

- Key points

The practical role of standards & conformance bodies

Supply chain for goods	Standards	Metrology Physical and chemical	Accredited testing & inspection	Accredited Certification Management system, product and personnel
Raw material production	Material specification	Measurement &/or reference materials	Batch analysis/ testing	Management system and product certification
Product manufacture	Product specification	Measurement	Safety and/or performance testing	Management system, personnel and product certification
Supply to market	Transport/ safe packaging	Trade measurement	Safety testing	Management system and product certification
Use/ installation	Product installation specification		Inspection	Management system, personnel and product
On-going supply	Product specification	Measurement	Surveillance testing/ inspection	Management system

Use of NATA Accreditation in Australia

A (not-exhaustive) list of sectors supported by NATA accreditation:

Sectors	Relevant supporting accreditation disciplines
Agriculture	Chemical analysis, Genetic testing, Meat inspection, Microbiology, Pesticide residue testing, Plant pathology, Veterinary pathology
Aviation	Calibration/ testing of instrument landing systems, Calibration of test and measurement equipment, Fire extinguishing equipment performance, Non-destructive testing, Workplace drug testing
Communications	Electromagnetic compatibility testing, Radiocommunications product testing, Radio frequency radiation exposure, Telecommunications product testing
Consumer protection	Consumer product safety testing (incl. chemical analysis, mechanical and flammability testing)
Defence	Asbestos testing, Chemical analysis, Electromagnetic compatibility testing, Environmental testing, Instrument calibrations, Medical testing, Research and Development, Software and IT security testing, Textile testing, Vehicle testing
Energy	Electrical product safety testing, Gas product safety testing, Chemical analysis, Energy efficiency testing (electrical), Oil and gas metering
Environment	Air monitoring, Calibration of test and measurement instrumentation, Contaminated site inspection, Contaminated soils testing, Fuel analysis, Insulation testing (R value), Water efficiency testing, Water meter pattern approval testing, Water quality monitoring
Health and public safety	Audiometric testing equipment calibration, Chemical analysis, ICT and data security testing, Medical Imaging, Microbiology, Pathology, Radiation measurement instrument calibration, Radiation dose monitoring' Radio-pharmaceuticals testing, Sports drug testing
Legal	Breathalyser pattern approval testing, Breathalyser calibration, Drug confirmatory testing, Electronic evidence, Forensic science Parentage and next-of-kin testing, Speed detector calibration
Manufacturing	Building materials testing, Calibration (across most disciplines), Emissions monitoring, Instrument calibration, Plumbing product testing, Reference material producers/certifiers, Research and Development, Trade measurement
Transport	Automotive testing, Building materials testing, Road construction materials testing, Workplace drug testing
Workplace Health and Safety	Asbestos inspection/site surveys, Asbestos testing, Audiometry, Calibration of equipment, Design verification, Fabrication inspection, Lifting gear testing, Non-destructive testing, Packaging tests, Safety tests on electrical equipment, Safety tests on plant and equipment

Use of NATA Accreditation in Australia

Specific examples of regulatory recognition –

Australian Communications and Media Authority

- Telecommunications equipment (higher risk categories)

Federal Department of Agriculture

- Meat export testing and inspection

- Food import surveillance testing

Federal Department of Health

- Medical testing subject to rebates

State and Territory workplace health and safety authorities

- Asbestos testing

Why it works for Australia and New Zealand

Despite their differences in size, structure and operations, IANZ and NATA:

– Have a close relationship and excellent cooperation with each other and with the other standards and conformance bodies

– Both have strong government and industry endorsement

– Have access to highly competent scientific/technical specialists who act as assessors

– Are effective in engaging with stakeholders – government, industry and professional bodies

– Have an approach to accreditation assessments that seeks to continuously improve the standard of operation of laboratories and inspection bodies

The two critical elements for effectiveness

Relevance

Accreditation bodies must deliver accreditation services that meet the needs of government, the economy and the broader population

➤ NATA and IANZ work hard to make sure that their accreditation services meet current needs and can be responsive to economic, social and technological changes.

Balance

Accreditation systems need to be rigorous and robust enough to ensure an appropriate level of confidence in test, measurement and inspection data

BUT

It is possible to make achieving accreditation technically/financially impossible

➤ A systematic approach by IANZ and NATA to engagement with government, industry, professional bodies and the accredited laboratories/inspection bodies ensures the correct balance between domestic and trade needs vs commercial reality.

Australian regulatory and industry recognition

A focus on relevance and balance leads to the majority of regulatory authorities and industry groups identifying NATA accreditation with credibility and confidence.

As such, using NATA accredited services is:

- recognised as a means of satisfying a requirement; or

- actively encouraged as best practice in satisfying a requirement; or

- mandated in order to meet a requirement.

Additionally, because NATA accreditation is identified with credibility and confidence, IANZ accreditation is also regarded in the same way by Australian regulators and industry.

Why it might not work …

Lack of local accredited infrastructure in specific sectors

- – Unavailability of technical capability and/or peer-assessor expertise
- – Size of conformity assessment market not sufficient to drive business case

Possible solutions – investment in capacity building or using neighbouring economies' infrastructure

Inadequate transparency and interpretive issues around technical regulations

- – Regulatory interpretations of published standards (local knowledge)
- – International variation in "common" terms – e.g. "Asbestos free" may not mean zero asbestos!

Possible solutions – Collaborative development of efficient information sharing systems

Key points

1. Well designed accreditation systems help in building domestic testing, measurement and inspection capability in support of the domestic economy.

2. Confidence in your own accreditation system is a pre-requisite for having confidence in that of your trading partners.

3. Focus needs to be on reliability of the outcomes of accreditation, not details of the process.

4. Effective stakeholder communication is critical to ensuring relevance and balance in accreditation systems, thereby delivering confidence domestically and with trading partners.

5. Governments and industry should view the standards and conformance infrastructure bodies as resources, not overheads.

Thank you

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