



In this edition of the IANZ Argus, we look at closer links with China, update you on the recent ILAC meeting in Frankfurt, discuss IANZ's role in the 1080 scare earlier in the year and meet one of our Building Consent Authority clients.

1. IANZ forges closer links with China

Economic and trade development between New Zealand and China is set to improve further following a new arrangement between the two countries' accreditation organisations.



Dr Llew Richards, the chief executive of International Accreditation NZ (IANZ), and Mr Xiao Jianhua, the chief executive of the China National Accreditation Service (CNAS), signed the deal at a meeting in Frankfurt recently.

Dr Richards says having robust and widely-accepted accreditation offers significant economic benefits for trade between New Zealand and China and gives assurance of market access for exporters.

"We have been working on this for some time and are very pleased to have now finalised the arrangement," says Dr Richards. "There are many advantages for both New Zealand and China in the development of strong links between our organisations. A closer, long-term relationship and greater technical co-operation will make trade easier in both directions."

New Zealand and China already have a Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) in place, which was originally signed in 1999.

"That means we accept reports from their accredited laboratories and vice versa," says Dr Richards. "However, this latest signing goes much deeper than that. It will help eliminate technical barriers to trade, boost awareness and confidence in accreditation amongst regulators and exporters and ensure the MRA is working as effectively as possible."

“Using cross-country accreditation provides cost-effective solutions for regulators and exporters. It means more robust systems for checking goods and it minimises liability for all parties. In addition, greater collaboration will bring benefits like staff training and interaction, improved information exchange and co-operative assessments.”

2. Worldwide accreditation bodies look at changing global standard

As international trade gathers pace, the global accreditation standard ISO/IEC 17011 is being reviewed.

At the recent ILAC mid-term meeting in Frankfurt, delegates heard changes are in the wind for the global standard which all accreditation bodies must meet.



IANZ CEO Dr Llew Richards, who attended the meeting, said the proposed changes include:

- widening the scope of the standard, including how management system requirements will be met
- whether or not accreditation bodies should be able to provide proficiency testing programmes
- strengthening of the impartiality requirements
- removing the maximum accreditation cycle. Currently in Europe the maximum term is fixed at five years while in New Zealand it is generally three or four years depending on the accreditation programme

The ILAC meeting discussed the potential changes and how it would respond to the ISO, which is based in Geneva.

Dr Richards says a number of meetings will be held in Geneva to refine the proposal, with the new standard expected to be in place before the end of 2016.

The ILAC meeting also discussed the use of Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRA) by regulators and major specifiers around the world, such as the aerospace industry.

“While ILAC signatories are obliged to accept test reports from accredited labs, in other countries there is no obligation by regulators or specifiers to use the accreditation process.

“Here in New Zealand, we use accreditation to a significant extent because we recognise the cost-effectiveness of the accreditation approach and the rigour and robustness that a full technical peer assessment can provide.

“In other places, including some of our major trading partners, accreditation is used far less so ILAC is looking at ways to increase its use by both regulators and industry specifiers.”

Following Frankfurt, Dr Richards attended a meeting of ILAC’s promotions committee in Washington, in advance of World Accreditation Day on June 9. This year’s theme is how accreditation can support the delivery of health and social care

Dr Richards said the committee was active in promoting ILAC and the worldwide goal of “tested once, accepted everywhere”.

3. IANZ worked closely with MPI during 1080 milk powder scare

The “1080 in milk powder” scare earlier in the year saw IANZ working closely with the Ministry of Primary Industries to make sure laboratories were accredited to do the necessary testing.



IANZ has been providing MPI and its predecessors with assurance of competence for dairy testing labs since 1990.

“New overseas market access requirements are being brought in all the time with different countries having specific issues for which they need testing,” says Dr Richards.

“It’s vital our export markets have assurance that NZ dairy products are free from contamination. That’s why IANZ has been working with the ministry recently to ensure laboratories testing dairy products are able to test for the presence of sodium monofluoroacetate, commonly known as 1080.”

4. IANZ CEO available to speak at events

If your team or clients would like to know more accreditation, the chief executive of IANZ, Dr Llew Richards, is available to speak at events.

Whether you want to know more about accreditation for laboratory testing, building consents or electronic goods for export, Dr Richards has the inside knowledge.

To book him in for your next event, please contact Dian Wilkinson on dwilkinson@ianz.govt.nz or call her on 09 525 6655

