A new National Standards Body joins COPANT

THE BUREAU HAÏTIEN DE NORMALISATION (BHN)

The Haiti Bureau of Standards, that recently joins COPANT as an Active member, was established by the Ministry for Trade and Industry in December 2012. The bill establishing the BHN, which was presented to the Haitian parliament on 19 July 2012, specifies its composition and how it is to operate. Among the Bureau’s various management and coordination bodies, the bill provides for the establishment of a National Standards and Quality Council, composed of representatives from public institutions and the private sector. The Council defines and guides the general policy on quality, which is implemented by its executive body, the Haiti Bureau of Standards (BHN by its French acronym).

The BHN is a public body and is responsible for:

- coordination of all standardization efforts undertaken in Haiti
- elaboration, adoption, publication and dissemination of Haitian standards
- developing, conserving and making available documentation about standards and related activities
- adoption of marks of conformity with Haitian standards and quality labels as well as issuing authority for their use and control over their use within the limits of the law
- representing the country on regional and international standards bodies; what is more,
- it takes part in all research and development programs aimed at supporting the standards policy
- it acts as the secretariat for the National Council for Standards and Quality (Conseil national de la Normalisation et de la Qualité)
- it acts as the Haitian focal point for information regarding technical barriers to trade (TBT) in accordance with the World Trade Organization’s TBT agreement.

Mission

BHN’s mission is to organize and manage activities related to standardization, certification, industrial metrology, promotion of quality and to provide technical support for all efforts undertaken in pursuit of these objectives.

Vision

The Haiti Bureau of Standards’ vision is to allow the Haitian quality infrastructure system (standardization, certification, conformity assessment and metrology) to play its full role in the country’s social and economic development and to accompany economic actors in their steps towards progress.
Technical activities

As it currently operates, the Haiti Bureau of Standards carries out activities related to the fundamentals of Quality Infrastructure, as a service to businesses and the country as a whole. These activities are:

Standardization

- Elaboration of guides and procedures for the development of standardization activities
- Coordination of national standardization activities with a view to the adoption and/or elaboration of standards
- Establishing technical committees, ensuring that all relevant parties are represented
- Preparation of meetings of the technical standards committees
- Definition of standardization priorities

Certification

- Developing procedures for conformity assessment
- Administering the process of compulsory and voluntary certification
- Management and awarding of the national badge for conformity with Haitian standards
- Provision, on request, of technical support to trial and analytical laboratories and other bodies with an interest in certification
- National Focal Point for the Caribbean Cooperation for Accreditation (CCA) network

Industrial metrology

- Regular inventories of businesses’ metrology needs
- Provision of calibration services to industry
- Sharing of knowledge and skills about metrology

Information and Training

- Responds to requests for information about standards, technical rules, and conformity assessment procedures
- Raises awareness about issues related to quality in order to promote a culture of quality
- Training in standardization and related activities, quality management systems, etc
- Management of documentation on standards and other documents about related subjects
Participation in regional and international standardization activities

Haiti is a member of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ). It is also an affiliate member of the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC).

Future development

The BHN has an action plan that will allow it to develop its technical activities effectively. The plan’s key points are:

- Elaboration and validation of the national quality policy
- Establishing and coordinating technical standards committees for priority industries
- Adoption of regional and international standards
- Strengthening HSB’s participation in regional and international activities for standards development (joining COPANT and ISO)
- Participation in the activities of organizations working in the field of quality (RNF)
- Developing a certification system for products in priority industries
- Certification in QMS (quality management systems)
- Organization of HSB’s documentation center
- Training auditors for the national quality badge, etc.
- Organization of the National Information Point on Technical Barriers to Trade

Source: BHN