

[Received by email 31/8/06]

Response to Productivity Commission's Draft Report on Standard Setting and Laboratory Accreditation (July 2006)

Australian manufacturers use the testing and certification services provided by CSIRO to enable them to comply with Australian building regulatory requirements. CSIRO does undertake testing in accordance with international standards (ISO, American, British CEN, Singapore etc.) A significant number of Australian manufacturers use this service so that their goods can be exported to other countries. The reason they can export is that the testing undertaken by CSIRO is accepted in these other countries. The reason why these tests are accepted is because of the work of NATA at ILAC, APLAC, and ISO.

I am concerned that if the Commonwealth Government reduces its funding to NATA for its attendance at meetings of these international groups, NATA's capacity to influence the decisions made could be compromised. I also believe that this could lead to a significant detrimental impact on the cost of negotiating mutual recognition arrangements that benefit Australian exporters, and hence reduce the capacity of Australian manufacturers to export.

The work of NATA to the Australian Industry and Community is fundamentally important. Their work provides reassurance, certainty and safety to the industry and community through:

- * Confidence of measurement and testing results.
- * Benchmarking, uniformity and scrutiny of testing methodology and procedures.
- * Confidence for Australian international trade partners
- * Protection of, and confidence by, the Australian community of products used, manufactured and imported in Australia.

I am perfectly happy to discuss examples of these if requested.

Regards

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