



Implementation of the

Inter-American MRA

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What is the Purpose of an MRA?



- To facilitate trade by promoting acceptance of the results of each party's conformity assessment procedures
- To reduce time to market
- To reduce costs
- To increase transparency

MRA Participation



Participation in an MRA is voluntary

However, if a country agrees to participate in either Phase I and/or Phase II, certain rights and obligations in accordance with the terms of the MRA apply.

- ✓ The easiest way to understand the MRA is to have an understanding of the functions of the various stakeholders and players.

Who are the Players?



- **Regulatory Authority (RA)** Responsible for telecom systems and products within its territory
- **Designating Authority (DA)** Government entity responsible for designating competent CABs in accordance with procedures
- **Accrediting Body (AB)** Responsible for accrediting competent CABs in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025 and/or Guide 65 to the importing party's technical requirements
- **Conformity Assessment Body (CAB)** Responsible for testing and/or certifying products to the importing party's technical requirements
- **Manufacturers of Regulated Products**

MRA Functions: Regulatory



- **The Telecom Regulatory Authority may be one or more governmental agencies, who**
 - ✓ **Develop and publish technical regulations, including conformity assessment requirements, in the public interest**
 - ✓ **Utilize SDoC procedure for certain products, when appropriate, and certification for products when necessary**
 - ✓ **Change regulations to permit recognition of test results and product certifications submitted by private sector entities**
(Note: Additional legislative authority may be required.)
 - ✓ **Recognize CABs (Test Laboratories and/or Certification Bodies) that have been appropriately accredited and designated in accordance with the terms of the MRA**
(Note: The recognition function may be performed by either the DA or RA, depending upon the country.)
 - ✓ **Accept the test results performed by a recognized CABs (test reports (Phase I) and certifications (Phase II) and permit the product to be sold without further testing or certification.**

MRA Function: Recognition



- The **recognition function** may be performed by the Regulatory Authority (RA) or Designation Authority of the importing party.
 - ✓ The Authority must establish a process to recognize both domestic and foreign accredited test laboratories (Phase I) and/or certification bodies (Phase II) designated by the exporting party.
 - ✓ The Authority must also have a procedure in place to recognize the conformity assessment results of recognized CABs.

MRA Functions: Designation



The **designation function** is performed by a governmental entity, that has the authority and competence to:

- ✓ Verify Competence
- ✓ Nominate
- ✓ Designate
- ✓ List
- ✓ Limit Designation
- ✓ Withdraw Designation

Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) within their jurisdiction for Phase I and Phase II.

This function may be performed by a Regulatory Authority or an entity defined as a “Designating Authority” under the MRA

MRA Functions: Accreditation



- The **accreditation function** can be performed by one or more approved private sector entities or by the government

Phase I

- Assess a prospective Testing Laboratory using procedures outlined in ISO/IEC 17025, which determines competence to test products to the applicable Technical Regulations. (Note: The Accreditation Body must be capable of meeting ISO/IEC Guide 58.)

Note: Some countries may use an agreement such as the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) arrangement as a means of determining competence of each other's laboratories.

How is the MRA Implemented?



Different countries have different schemes for performing the above mentioned functions, which is permitted under the terms of the Inter-American MRA.

Country A (Canada)

RA

DA

AB

CAB

Country C (Brazil)

RA

DA

AB

CAB

Country B (USA)

RA

DA

AB

CAB

RA -- Regulatory Authority

DA -- Designating Authority

AB -- Accrediting Body

CAB -- Conformity Assessment Body

What are the steps for implementing the Inter-American MRA?



- 1. Obtain necessary regulatory authority**
- 2. Institute rule changes to privatize current conformity assessment program following Appendix A of the Inter-American MRA**
- 3. Notify CITEC Secretariat and start process for an exchange of letters between MRA participants**
- 4. Develop procedures for private sector entities to test and/or certify equipment** (Accreditation Bodies from other countries may be used when necessary)
- 5. Develop training program to transfer knowledge**
- 6. Work with Accreditation Bodies and technical assessors to ensure competence of CABs**
- 7. Monitor and enforce program**
- 8. The RA should develop a process to audit products tested and/or certified by CABs to ensure consistency in the application of technical requirements**

Identification of Players



US and Canadian Players

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Regulatory Authority (RA) | Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Industry Canada (IC) | www.fcc.gov www.ic.gc.ca |
| Designating Authority (DA) | National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Industry Canada | www.nist.gov |
| Accreditation Body (Phase I) | National Voluntary Lab Accreditation Program (NVLAP) & American Association of Lab Accreditation (A2LA) IC & Standards Council of Canada | www.nist.gov www.a2la.org www.scc.ca |
| AB (Phase II) | American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Standards Council of Canada | www.ansi.org |

Conclusions/Summary



- **Countries should seriously consider what type of conformity assessment scheme is appropriate considering the costs and benefits**
- **SDoC** (with or without Lab accreditation) **should be considered as an alternative to third party product certification**
- **For the equipment where certification is deemed necessary, the MRA offers benefits and facilitates trade, but also has obligations and responsibilities**
- **To understand the MRA, look at the functions and players**
- **The Regulatory Authority has the primary responsibility for implementing the MRA**
- **Discussions among the stakeholders is key to implementing the MRA**



Questions and Answers

Thank you for your attention!