



**Brief Introduction  
to  
Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation  
Mutual Recognition Arrangement for  
Conformity Assessment of Telecommunications Equipment  
(APEC Tel MRA)**

Introduction

The APEC Mutual Recognition Arrangement for Conformity Assessment of Telecommunications Equipment (APEC Tel MRA) was endorsed by the APEC Telecommunications and Information Industry Ministers in June 1998 and commenced in July 1999. APEC Tel MRA is a voluntary arrangement intended to streamline the conformity assessment procedures for a wide range of telecommunications and telecommunications-related equipment and thereby facilitate trade among the APEC economies<sup>1</sup>. It provides for mutual recognition by the importing economies of Conformity Assessment Bodies and mutual acceptance of the results of testing and equipment certification procedures undertaken by those Bodies in assessing the conformity of equipment to the Technical Regulations of importing economies.

Procedures of the APEC Tel MRA

2. There are two different sets of procedures for the implementation of APEC Tel MRA. The first set of procedures is referred as the Phase I procedures while the second set is referred as the Phase II procedures. In essence, these two sets of procedures can be described as follows: -

- Phase I Procedures – mutual recognition of testing laboratories as Conformity Assessment Bodies and mutual acceptance of test reports
- Phase II Procedures – mutual recognition of certification bodies as Conformity Assessment Bodies and mutual acceptance of equipment certifications.

3. According to the official definition of APEC, Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) is a testing body, which may include a third party or a supplier's

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<sup>1</sup> As of March 2007, there are 21 APEC Member Economies including Australia; Brunei Darrussalam; Chile; Canada; China; Hong Kong, China; Indonesia; Japan; Republic of Korea; Malaysia; Mexico; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; Peru; The Philippines; Russia; Singapore; Chinese Taipei; Thailand; United States and Vietnam.

testing laboratory or a certification body that performs conformity assessment to the Technical Regulations of an importing economy.

#### Scope of the APEC Tel MRA

4. Pursuant to the requirement of APEC Tel MRA, each participating economy is required to specify its Technical Regulations and make them publicly available so that the recognized CAB of other APEC economies can follow in conducting testing or certification of telecommunications equipment to be marketed in the importing economy. Specifically, Technical Regulations are those technical requirements, legislative and regulatory provisions, and administrative arrangements that a participating economy has specified with respect to which compliance is mandatory. The APEC Tel MRA applies to the Technical Regulations specified separately by each participating APEC economy relating to conformity assessment, including electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) and electrical safety.

5. The scope of equipment covers network terminal equipment or other equipment subject to telecommunications regulation of each participating economy, including wire and wireless equipment, and terrestrial and satellite equipment, whether or not connected to a public telecommunications network.

#### Implementation of APEC Tel MRA

6. Basically, APEC Tel MRA is a voluntary scheme. Any member economy intending to participate in the scheme is only required to notify the APEC Tel Working Group Chair at any time it is prepared to do so. Once the APEC Tel Working Group Chair has identified the voluntary participation of a member economy, it will notify all other member economies so that any two participating economies can contact each other for the exchange of detailed information necessary for the implementation of Phase I/II procedures.

7. Hong Kong is one of the APEC economies that have notified the APEC Tel WG Chair their readiness for participation in the Phase I Procedures since the commencement of APEC Tel MRA in July 1999. By that time, Hong Kong also made arrangements with Australia, Singapore and Chinese Taipei for the implementation of Phase I Procedures of APEC Tel MRA and entered into Phase I MRA with Canada in 2002. In April 2005, Hong Kong and the US reached MRA for the implementation of Phase I and II procedures. The US is the first partner with which Hong Kong implements the Phase II procedures of APEC Tel MRA.

8. To further facilitate the trade in telecommunications goods in the Asia Pacific region, OFTA will continue its effort in reaching MRA with more APEC economies for the implementation of Phase I / II procedures.

## Designation of CAB

9. Any party interested in becoming CAB designated by OFTA should refer to the document “Criteria and Procedures for the Designation of Hong Kong Testing Laboratories and Certification Bodies by OFTA as Conformity Assessment Bodies” at OFTA website at [http://www.ofta.gov.hk/en/tec/apectel\\_mra.html](http://www.ofta.gov.hk/en/tec/apectel_mra.html). To become a CAB designated by OFTA, the pre-requisite is that a testing laboratory or certification body must be located in Hong Kong and accredited by Hong Kong Accreditation Service (HKAS) which is the accreditation body in Hong Kong. Upon designation by OFTA and subsequent recognition by APEC economy, a CAB is authorized to undertake testing and/or certification of equipment to the technical requirements of the APEC economy concerned. The scope of designation of a CAB is limited to the scope of accreditation.

10. Designation of CAB will be recognised only when the arrangement with the relevant participating economy is still valid and in force.

11. Local manufacturers, suppliers or vendors of telecommunications products planning to develop their market in APEC economies may approach the designated CABs for equipment testing or certification. They are advised to refer to the list of designated CABs maintained by OFTA to select a CAB suitable for them.

## Recognition of CAB

12. Any testing laboratory or certification body in APEC economies may seek OFTA’s recognition as CAB to perform testing / certification of equipment to the technical regulations of Hong Kong. They have to be properly accredited by accreditation body and apply to OFTA through the designating authority of their countries. Particularly, any party interested in becoming a certification body recognised by OFTA should refer to the documents “Procedures for the Recognition of Foreign Testing Laboratories and Certification Bodies by OFTA as Conformity Assessment Bodies” and “Criteria and Requirements Applicable to Foreign Testing Laboratories and Certification Bodies Seeking Recognition by OFTA as Conformity Assessment Bodies” at OFTA website at [http://www.ofta.gov.hk/en/tec/apectel\\_mra.html](http://www.ofta.gov.hk/en/tec/apectel_mra.html).

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