

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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**Working Party on the
Accession of Saudi Arabia**

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ACCESSION OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

International Conformity Certification Program

The following information concerning the International Conformity Certification Program has been received from the Ministry of Commerce of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Important Announcement

26 July 1998

In the interest of safeguarding the health and safety of the consumer through the application of Saudi and international standards to goods and products imported into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; and

in view of the favourable results achieved by the International Conformity Certification Program (ICCP), according to which 66 regulated product categories are subject to inspection and/or testing and issuance of Certification of Conformity for consignments prior to their shipment to the Kingdom; and

in response to constructive comments raised by some of the Kingdom's trading partners, the Saudi Chambers of Commerce, the manufacturers and importers of such products in relation to the methods and procedures of implementation of the ICCP,

the Ministry of Commerce (MOC) and the Saudi Arabian Standards Organization (SASO) are pleased to announce the continued implementation of the ICCP with the introduction of several improvements which provide additional flexibility and simplification in the rules and procedures of the program as follows:

1. Assignment of four Program Management Companies in addition to the current Program Manager whereby each will be responsible for the execution of the Program for goods imported from specific geographic regions. These Program Managers are:

Program Manager	Region
Intertek Testing Services International Ltd.	North and South America, Middle East and any other countries not falling within the regional scope of the other Program Managers.
Swede Control Ltd.	Europe and Africa
Iten Engineering Private Ltd.	India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Singapore
Labtest Hong Kong Ltd.	China (including Hong Kong), Indonesia and the Philippines
Inteco Group Services Ltd.	Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand and Australia

These companies will be ready to assume their duties in implementing these arrangements after 60 days from the date of this announcement so as to ensure the continuity of current procedures and the smooth transition into this phase of the ICCP.

2. Addition of "Toys and Playground Equipment" to the list of ICCP regulated products in order to provide additional protection for the health and safety of children due to the hazards and many accidents caused by these products.
3. Annulment of the requirement for annual renewal of registration and the fees associated with it.
4. Progressive enhancement of testing facilities manifested by the addition of 60 independent approved laboratories globally in the past months, bringing the total laboratories approved to provide services to the Program to more than 180, distributed in various parts of the World.
5. Following recent agreements with the Saudi Arabian Customs, simplified procedures have been introduced to allow regulated goods accompanied by ICCP Certificates of Conformity to be cleared even more swiftly and with greater ease.
6. These improved regulations will be effectively implemented by the Program Managers indicated above after 60 days from the date of this announcement.
7. In light of the paramount importance given by the MOC and SASO to transparency of regulations and ease of obtaining full information concerning the ICCP, the "ICCP Comprehensive Procedures and Guidelines" will be distributed soon to reflect these improvements. The ICCP Website (<http://204.57.45.86/>) has been available for some time. In addition, a greater number of seminars and meetings will be held for importers, exporters, manufacturers and their representing organizations to shed more light on various aspects of the Program.

On this occasion, the MOC and SASO call upon all companies and organizations involved in the exporting or importing of regulated products to continue their cooperation and adhere to the requirements of the Program in order to ensure the quality and soundness of these products and hence provide protection for the health and safety of the consumer in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
