



Export Quality Management

Improving Market Access through Standards and Conformity Assessment

“The EQM (Export Quality Management) seminars help to enhance the knowledge and skills of Business Support Organisations to guide their members, the small and medium-sized enterprises to identify market requirements and comply with them.”

The quality requirements of international markets continue to grow as a result of advancing globalization and the increasing importance of consumer protection. The European Union alone has, for example, developed a large number of standards and technical regulations for the import of food products. Their conformity with the quality requirements of goods (short: conformity) has to be verified when they are imported. If the required product quality cannot be proven, an import barrier is imposed on these goods, often causing considerable economic hardship to the producer.

Especially for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from developing and emerging countries, it is frequently a challenge to know which standards and technical regulations are to be applied and how to prove the conformity of their products with these standards and regulations. In addition to the information deficit, conformity assessment also plays an important role, as quality assurance services of an internationally recognized quality infrastructure have to be offered in the country of production.

The term “quality infrastructure” refers to the network of metrology, standardization and conformity assessment (testing, certification, accreditation and inspection). However, in many developing and emerging countries, the quality infrastructure system is not sufficiently developed and also lacks of international recognition.

The training course

Within the framework of the two-day, practice-oriented EQM seminar, trade-promoting institutions based in developing and emerging countries improve their capabilities to advise local SMEs with regard to the requirements of international markets and to connect producers together with QI service providers. The content of the seminar’s eight modules, including basic knowledge on quality management, technical regulations and conformity assessment, are consolidated by means of practical exercises. The exercises facilitate the use of existing and specifically developed sources of information. The seminar is geared primarily towards the market access requirements for the textile and food sectors that bear special relevance for SMEs. It can be customized to most of the relevant export sectors/products. In addition, the participants are supported by recognized experts in the postprocessing of the seminar contents.

The workshop consists of eight 90-minute modules. The focus of Day 1 is on understanding the relevant standards and regulations and the key issues of quality management systems. Additionally, the ability to find relevant information on quality requirements of targeted markets and on using available tools and sources effectively and efficiently is enhanced.

Day 2 concentrates on conformity assessment, metrology and accreditation, the complete picture of the quality infrastructure and how business support organisations (BSOs) can support SMEs in the field of quality management by developing or optimizing specific services that are relevant to export.

Day 1:

- Session 1 Introduction
- Session 2 Technical requirements
- Session 3 Overview of management systems
- Session 4 Information sources

Day 2:

- Session 5 Conformity assessment, metrology and accreditation
- Session 6 The national quality infrastructure in host country
- Session 7 How can BSOs support SMEs?
- Session 8 Action plan

Knowledge objectives

After completing the seminar, the participants should be able to:

- I. List the most important market access requirements, and single out the prevailing standards and critical issues thereof for compliance
- II. List potential services that their BSO can offer to support SMEs in this area
- III. Refer SMEs to the most appropriate support institutions in the enabling environment for specific technical advice to help them to meet compliance criteria

PTB – the National Metrology Institute of Germany

As Germany’s National Metrology Institute, PTB has been Germany’s highest authority for over 125 years when it comes to correct and reliable measurements. It is the supreme technical authority of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy and employs a staff of approx. 1900.

International Cooperation of PTB

PTB supports developing and emerging economies in the comprehensive field of quality infrastructure and thereby contributes to sustainable economic, social and ecological development. It is committed to the development policy of the German government and pursues international goals (Sustainable Development Goals, Paris Declaration).

ITC – the International Trade Centre

The International Trade Centre is the joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations. ITC assists small and medium-sized enterprises in developing and transition economies to become more competitive in global markets, thereby contributing to sustainable economic development within the frameworks of the Aid-for-Trade agenda and the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals.

The International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB) have developed the seminar concept “Export Quality Management”. The idea of the concept is raising awareness and transferring knowledge on quality related technical requirements for export to BSOs. Through the chambers and associations, the knowledge about good practices reaches a large number of local enterprises and, hence, has a broad impact in the countries.

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