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BHUTAN STANDARDS BUREAU

The National Standards Body of Bhutan



BSB/DG-04/2016-17/44

11th July 2016

FORWARD

As per concept note approval accorded by the Cabinet during the 116th Lhengye Zhungtshog session of 28th October 2016, Bhutan Standards Bureau (BSB) is once again submitting the draft National Quality policy and Comment Template by email and on its web-site respectively for all the government and private organizations/entities to kindly review and send comments.

As one national level consultation workshop was convened on 25th August 2016, it is expected that all government and private entities will exercise their due diligence in reviewing and sending their well-considered comments. However, in the event if any organization or entity wishing to review and discuss the draft policy collectively, BSB will be pleased to participate either as a facilitator or in any other role on a convenient time, date and venue suggested for the purpose.

Notwithstanding the bilateral review and discussion, all proposals for changing any provision of the draft policy will be considered only on the basis of written comments provided in the prescribed template before 1st March 2017. On the basis of the written comments received, BSB shall appoint an independent Review Committee to examine all the comments for possible incorporation into the draft policy and finalize the same for submission to the Royal Government for approval by mid March 2017.

All written comments may be sent to the Director General, BSB, Post Box 171, Thimphu, or the e-mail address: bsb@bsb.gov.bt or fax number 02-323712.

Soliciting your kind review and well-considered comments on the draft policy.

Sonam Phuntsho, Director General

Copies to:

Heads of Ministries, Dzongkhags, Agencies and organizations as per the attached list.



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SUMMARY

1. Why a National Quality Policy?

The RGOB recognizes that quality is a vital element of the four pillars of GNH including the good governance, preservation and promotion of culture, environment conservation and sustainable economic development including promotion of trade vital for Bhutan's economic growth. The RGOB also recognizes that a National Quality Policy is necessary to develop an effective National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) capable of providing an enabling environment for economic growth and the realization of the GNH.

2. What constitutes National Quality Infrastructure?

NQI is constituted by the national quality system including internationally recognized and accepted standards, metrology, conformity assessment and accreditation (SMCA) practices.

Standards provide requirements, specifications, guidelines or characteristics that can be used consistently to ensure that materials, products, processes and services are fit for their purpose. Standards are developed by experts and represent best practice to ensure that products and services are safe, reliable and of good quality. Standards save costs, enhances customers' satisfaction, provides access to new markets, and protects environment.

Metrology, science of measurement establishes chain of traceability to international standards vital for maintaining precision and quality of products or services.

Conformity Assessment provides assessment to ensure that specified requirement relating to a product, process, system, person or body is fulfilled. Laboratories, inspection and certification bodies provide conformity assessment services.

Accreditation provides third party attestation on the competence of a conformity assessment body, their competence to carry out conformity task.



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3. How does the National Quality Infrastructure support economic growth and development?

The NQI embedded in the work process of organizations ensures overall country's development and serves as the vital link to global trade, market access and export competitiveness. NQI ensures the confidence of the consumer on the quality of products and services. They also ensure protection of environment vital for the sustainability of the products and services thereby realizing our development philosophy of happiness for all.

4. What is the main economic benefit of an effective NQI promoted by this policy?

One of the main challenges facing the international trading system is the variation in certification, testing, inspection practices, and standards used by different countries. This has obliged trade partners to use similar or equivalent standards and conformity assessment procedures and recognize each other's conformity assessment results as reliable and avoid the costly path of discriminatory, non-transparent, and unnecessary obstacles to trade. Consistent with the best international practices, Bhutan should also establish institutions and systems to develop and manage its NQI capable of implementing the policy.

5. Who should coordinate the implementation of the policy?

While BSB may be entrusted with the coordination responsibility to develop and manage the NQI, all public and private entities shall be obliged implement the quality policy and share the resulting benefits.