

PRESS RELEASE

Paris, France, October, 1997

The World Federation of Technical Assessment Organizations (WFTAO), is an independent organization dedicated “to exchange and promote the role of Technical Assessments of innovative and non standardized systems and products in the construction field world wide”.

It has been created in September 1996 in South Africa and held its second meeting in September 1997 in Ottawa (Canada) at the invitation of the Institute for Research in Construction’s (IRC’S) Canadian Construction Materials Centre (CCMC) which hosted and chaired the meeting.

Let us recall that the term technical assessment means an authoritative favourable declaration of technical fitness for an intended use of an innovative or non standardized construction product serves or process. And the aim of WFTAO is to promote the role of Technical Assessment and facilitate the transfer of national construction industry products to the global marketplace. This implies an awareness and understanding of Technical Assessment by public authorities, regulators, manufacturers, constructors, designers and others.

WFTAO had already set up in the past :

- a WFTAO mission statement, vision and objectives
- Statutes.

And it was originally created by 18 Institutes representing 14 countries located in the five continents.

At the above Ottawa WFTAO meeting, great progress has been made in the setting up of the organization.

- The following documents related to Technical Assessments for the file of the organization were finalized :
 - “Format for exchange of Technical Assessment”
 - Questionnaire for proposed way of assessment
 - Operational procedural rules to the Statutes
 - Questionnaire for membership nominations
 - Model liaison agreement for mutual recognition or consideration
- A communication plan has been presented internal to the organization and for public purposes for the future, .. among the more sooner actions which will be undertaken :

- creation of web sites and home pages on the organization
- workshops which broad local attendance after an WFTAO meeting
- Press Release

This meeting was followed by a workshop organized by CCMC to disseminate information to stockholders in the local industry which draw more than 100 participants and featured speakers from six nations.

The purpose of the workshop was to permit attendees to hear about assessment practices in key foreign markets identified as such by CCMC for Canada – knowledge critical to exporters of innovative construction products.

The next WFTAO meeting will take place in Melbourne, Australia in August 1998.

On the Agenda of this meeting issues of substance have been agreed. Among them :

- a case study relating to a Technical Assessment provided by a member and reaction of the other Institutes if they have to face recognition of it
- aspects of environmental and health in the Technical Assessment
- development of new Assessment schedules in roads and bridges
- durability in Technical Assessment.

A workshop of local people gathering mainly regulators, manufacturers, constructors and designers will follow the meeting.

WFTAO is expanding. It comprises now 25 Institutes representing 21 countries quoted in the Appendix.

And new requests for membership are on the way.

For more information on WFTAO contact :

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