



## **WORLD FEDERATION OF TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT ORGANISATIONS**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

#### **WORLD FEDERATION OF TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT ORGANISATIONS MOVING TO WORLD TECHNICAL ASSESSMENTS**

**... Federation Planning Far-Reaching Benefits  
To Manufacturers of Innovative Construction Products...**

Washington, D.C., U.S.A. -- The World Federation of Technical Assessment Organisations (WFTAO) met 16 – 18 August 2000 to tackle matters of critical importance to exporters of innovative and non-standardized construction products worldwide.

The federation now comprises 25 organisations from 21 nations, including assessment agencies within the three major trading areas: the Americas, Europe, and the Pacific Rim. The fifth gathering since its launch in 1996, this assembly was hosted and chaired by the Civil Engineering Research Foundation (CERF), in co-operation with the two other U.S. members of WFTAO; the National Evaluation Service and the International Conference of Building Officials Evaluation Service.

Members agreed in principle to a first draft of a process for developing a World Technical Assessment (WTA). When finalized, the approach would allow proponents of new products to gain simultaneous assessments in two or more countries. Common assessment requirements would be established to avoid duplicate testing. National variations, required to satisfy country-specific needs, would be addressed separately. Ultimately, each participating organization would publish a formal report that documents the product's performance, with a WFTAO cover page followed by the national assessment.

Other highlights of the meeting:

- A new WFTAO web site ([www.wftao.com](http://www.wftao.com)) to facilitate the ready exchange of information among member organisations and serve as the foundation for promoting the Federation.
- The creation of a task group to consider the expansion of the scope of the WFTAO to include environmental assessment.
- A decision to investigate the need for accredited internal quality control programs for members balanced against the credibility already established within WFTAO.

Initiatives planned for next year include the creation of a new business case for the Federation and renewed promotion to the global community, including potential member countries and related organizations such as the World Trade Organization. Priorities for the 2001 meeting will be the continuation of work to make a World Technical Assessment a reality and a strategic planning session to support enhancements of WFTAO.

For more information on the World Federation of Technical Assessment Organisations, visit <http://www.wftao.com> or contact:

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