



WORLD FEDERATION OF TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT ORGANISATIONS

PRESS RELEASE

WORLD FEDERATION OF TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT ORGANISATIONS ONE STEP CLOSER TO WORLD TECHNICAL ASSESSMENTS

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

Windsor, United Kingdom – Within sight of Windsor castle and in the home of one of Europe's famous architect-engineers, Sir Christopher Wren, the World Federation of Technical Assessment Organisations (WFTAO) met 11 - 13 September 2002 to further its objective of facilitating the transfer of national products to the global marketplace.

The federation comprises 25 organisations from 21 nations, including assessment agencies within the three major trading areas: the Americas, Europe, and the Pacific Rim. Other organizations involved in the technical assessment of innovative and non-standardized products for the construction industry are encouraged to join. The seventh gathering since its launch in 1996, this assembly was hosted and chaired by the British Board of Agrément (BBA).

On the path to developing a world-wide technical assessment approach, members agreed to a guideline for bi-lateral and multi-lateral evaluations among members of the federation. The goal is to facilitate 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.

In the spirit of cooperation, the U.S. International Conference of Building Officials Evaluations Service (ICBO-ES) and France's Centre scientifique et technique du bâtiment (CSTB) signed an agreement at the

meeting to further transatlantic trade. ICBO ES and CSTB will provide the information needed for their clients use to gain acceptance, recognition or approval of their products in the US and European markets.

Other highlights of the meeting:

- Confirmed need to promote the role of technical assessment and the WFTAO to others, such as the World Trade Organization and the CIB Task Group 37 on Performance Codes.
- Approved updates to the WFTAO Statutes and Policies and Procedures
- Re-initiated a questionnaire to determine the need for accreditation of technical assessment organizations and the test laboratories that they rely on.

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

Mr. John Berndt
General Secretary, WFTAO
Canadian Construction Materials Centre
Institute for Research on Construction
National Research Council
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada
K1A 0R6

E-mail john.berndt@nrc.ca
Phone 613-993-5353
Facsimile 613-952-0268