

Background paper- NSB- India

THE ROLE, STRUCTURE AND SCOPE OF THE ORGANIZATION

□ Describe briefly the function/structure of the organization, notably in terms of services to enterprises at three levels:

- At the supply-side to enhance the productive capacities of exporters;
- At the business environment to reduce internal barriers to trade that result from inefficient national business operating environments, high non-tradeable costs (e.g. costs of obtaining certification), and weak support structures - physical, institutional and legal; and
- At market entry to assist exporters to understand and meet international market requirements.

Ans Bureau of Indian Standards is the National Standards Body of India and has been representing India in ISO and IEC in preparation of International Standards. It is a statutory organization under Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Government of India. BIS has published more than 18000 Indian Standards covering various industrial sectors.

BIS also operates third party product certification scheme in line with International Guide 65. More than 21000 licences have been granted. With a view to protect common consumers from health and safety of the products, the Central Government of India has notified 76 products for mandatory compliance to the requirements of the relevant Indian Standards and also have to obtain a licence for using Standard Mark on the products from BIS.

BIS also operates TBT inquiry point.

To what extent are the quality management needs of exporters addressed by your organization in the areas of:

- Preparation and dissemination of information;
- Capacity-building and advisory services;
- Services to obtain/demonstrate compliance; and
- Referral services.

Ans BIS has prepared IS/ISO 9001:2008 which is identical to ISO 9001:2008. BIS actively participates in the development of ISO 9000 standards at international level with the help of industry including exporters. The comments are sought from them at the different stages of formulation of standards and steps are taken to ensure that India's view points are suitably incorporated in the development of ISO 9000 standards.

The awareness programmes on QMS and related fields are also organized by BIS through its Training Institute for capacity building and advisory services. BIS also operates certification for QMS as per IS/ISO 9001.

What facilities/guidance/training services are provided to exporters? What is the strategic vision of your organization over the next three years? Is this strategic vision aligned to the national development priorities (sectoral and market) of your country?

Ans: No specific guidance/training services are exclusively provided to the exporters. But through the generic training programmes on ISO 9001, internal quality audits, lead auditor programmes etc., the exporters are helped to bring their systems in line with ISO 9001 so as to facilitate their exports as well as continually improve the quality of their products.

Are there any sectors which the organization is particularly targeting? How? Or are the services offered of a generic nature?

What are the most significant gaps in service delivery that exporters have to contend with?

BIS is now targeting the service sector, particularly those coming from public utility organizations. Number of the standards have been published in this regard and certification schemes launched.

III. THE EXISTING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NSBs AND TPOs

What relationship, if any, does your organization have with the counterpart NSB/TPO? How was this relationship established and how is it maintained? If not, then why not? What relationships with other (e.g. sector associations) organizations exist?

What are the principal constraints that the organization faces in terms of linking up with the counterpart NSB/TPO? How do these constraints impact the overall effectiveness of the organization?

The TPO are the members of various technical committees responsible for preparation of national standards. They are also requested to participate in the National Quality Awards of India. There seems to be no constraint. But the effective feedback from the export organizations would definitely help in bringing more useful national standards as well as conformity to such standards in terms of certification.

IV. THE POTENTIAL FUTURE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NSBs AND TPOs

What should be done in order to overcome the current challenges and to establish an effective working relationship with the counterpart organization?

Ans: Effective communication is required, the difficulties being faced by either organizations with the counter part organizations should be brought out at the highest level to resolve and take corrective actions.

In what areas (e.g. sectors, service areas) is there the most potential for cooperation between the NSB and TPO?

Ans: Particularly in sectors where the TPOs have scope for exports but are facing problems in terms of TBTs.

What value-added could your organization offer to the counterpart NSB/TPO?

In intimating to TPOs what are the draft TBTs of various other countries and also trying to resolve such TBTs in line with WTO/TBT Agreement.

What mechanism should be employed to establish an effective cooperation and working relationship with the NSB/TPO? Should the relationship be a formal or informal arrangement? Why? What are the benefits to your organization, to the counterpart, to the exporter, and to the potential buyer/investor?

Committee can be formed with regular agenda and meetings and to ensure that whatever decisions are taken are implemented by both the parties.

What are the implications in terms of getting the required:

- Endorsement (e.g. by the Ministry); and
- Resources (financial, human, and institutional)