

HK's testing and certification industry to play bigger role

By YUAN SHENGAO

The testing and certification industry in Hong Kong will embrace new opportunities for ever-closer collaboration with the Chinese mainland after measures to further open up the mainland T&C market are introduced.

Signed in June 2017 under the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement framework, the Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation introduces two new initiatives to the T&C industry in the city. One is to actively consider recommending an eligible certification body located in Hong Kong to join the International Electrotechnical Commission System of Conformity Assessment Schemes for Electrotechnical Equipment and Components as a National Certification Body in China. The other is to consider applications of eligible certification bodies set up by Hong Kong enterprises on the mainland to become designated certification bodies under the China Compulsory Certification system.

Promulgated in September 2017 to provide implementation details for the new mutual recognition arrangement covered in the CEPA Agreement on Trade in Services, the Implementation Guide for the Articles Relating to Certification and Accreditation in the CEPA Agreement on Trade in Services, also known as Implementation Guide, further introduces new measures that allow local industry players to have a more proactive role in the mainland T&C market.

Under the Implementation Guide, the scope of testing that may be undertaken by testing organizations in Hong Kong has been extended to cover products that are processed or manufactured in the China (Guangdong) Pilot Free Trade Zone in the cities of Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Zhuhai. The updated policy has removed the previous restriction regarding where the products are designed or prototyped. Interested testing firms in Hong Kong should obtain



Guests and speakers at the Seminar on the Latest Development of Testing and Certification under the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement held in January. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



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accreditation from the Hong Kong Accreditation Service as competent to perform relevant tests.

Hong Kong certification bodies may now cooperate with their mainland peers to deploy inspection on product manufacturers in the China (Guangdong) Pilot Free Trade Zone. The factory inspectors should have acquired China Compulsory Certification registration as product certification inspectors under the China Certification & Accreditation Association.

The new liberalization measures would provide a platform for closer collaboration between the complementary T&C industries of Hong Kong and the mainland, allowing both sides to seize the opportunities brought by the Belt and Road Initiative and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area development, experts envisioned in a seminar held in January.

Jointly organized by the Hong Kong Council for Testing and Certification, the Hong Kong Accreditation Service and the Trade and Industry Department, the Seminar on the Latest Development of Testing and Certification under CEPA attracted leaders and experts from the local T&C industry. The seminar featured speakers from the Certification and Accreditation Administration of China, also known as CNCA, and the China Quality Certification Center. They shared details of the new liberalization measures and discussed further collaboration opportunities between Hong Kong and the mainland.

“The T&C industries of Hong Kong and the mainland have maintained a stable relationship,” said Chen Haiyang, director-general of the Department for International Cooperation of CNCA.

“Through closer collaboration, the advantages of Hong Kong’s T&C industry will be further utilized,” added Chen.

Wang Yali from the Department for Certification Supervision of CNCA drew the audiences’ attention to the implementation details of the new measures covered in the CEPA Agreement on Trade in Services, which was signed in November 2015. The agree-

ment introduces, on a pilot basis, a mutual recognition arrangement of certification and relevant testing business among Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao in the China (Guangdong) Pilot Free Trade Zone, with a view to carrying out “certified once, tested once, and results accepted by three places”.

As the Hong Kong T&C industry players could now partake in China Compulsory Certification testing and factory inspection in designated areas on the mainland, Wang said that Hong Kong and the mainland should deepen their cooperation ties to achieve mutual benefits.

“The T&C industry of Hong Kong has amassed rich experience from the past, and the quality of service and technical competency has achieved international standards. If the industry seizes the opportunities in the mainland market, it will be able to grow alongside the rapid development of the country, while acting as a role model for the industry on the mainland to enhance its standard and quality of services it provides, eventually facilitating the mainland T&C organizations to go global,” Wang said.

“The newly introduced liberalization measures will serve as a great opportunity for Hong Kong’s T&C organizations to exhibit their well-established reputation to various manufacturers in the mainland,” said Liu Xin, deputy director of the Department for International Cooperation of the China Quality Certification Center.

“It will help organizations explore the business opportunities in the mainland, while injecting new impetus in the mainland market by helping manufacturers elevate their management and production skills to an international level,” Liu said.

Liu also stressed that the new measures will be valuable experience that can be applied to facilitate future expansion of T&C policies in terms of their scope and area.

Wang and Liu anticipated that T&C industries across the boundary would cooperate more closely and frequently amid the rising opportunities presented by the Belt and Road Initiative and the Greater Bay Area development.