



STANDARDS AND CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT

Excerpt from 2010 Country Commercial Guide

Doing Business in Kazakhstan: 2010 Country Commercial Guide for U.S. Companies

Overview

Certification and/or conformity assessment procedures are part of the national system of technical regulation. Kazakhstan is striving to join the World Trade Organization (WTO), thus, much work has been done to harmonize its legal base with international standards.

To implement international standards, in 2007 Kazakhstan adopted a number of laws and amendments to the existing Law on Technical Regulations including such laws as Safety of Chemical Products, Safety of Food Products, Safety of Toys, and Safety of Equipment and Machinery. The national file of standards now includes 41,000 rules and norms, of which only 4,000 represent international standards and are applied in all economic sectors. Legislation enables the country to initiate other reforms in the system of technical regulation, which will last until 2010 -- the date defined by the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Interstate Council on Standardization, Metrology, and Certification, of which Kazakhstan is a member.

Under the current regulations, safety standards acquire the status of normative documents, mandatory for consideration, while quality standards will gradually become voluntary. The functions of governmental bodies will be limited to dealing with safety control issues. Technical regulations will acquire the status of laws and will be intended to ensure the safety of life and health of consumers. Other standards relating to quality of goods will be given a voluntary status, and manufacturers will no longer be forced to follow outdated requirements dictating a shape, or color of goods as it was under the old legislation.

Standards Organizations

The [Committee on Technical Regulation and Metrology \(Gosstandart\)](#), under the Ministry of Industry and Trade, is the national agency regulating technical regulation issues in Kazakhstan. Gosstandart is subdivided into two subordinate enterprises: the Kazakh Institute for Standardization and Certification and the Kazakh Institute of Metrology.

Conformity Assessment

The implementation of a number of international standards in Kazakhstan represents a problem. The existing procedure of conformity assessment applied in Kazakhstan does not allow for 100% application of international standards due to legal and technical inconsistencies. The fact that Kazakhstan lacks full membership in ILAC and IAF does not allow Kazakhstan to recognize foreign certificates other than those issued in the CIS, nor does it permit certificates issued in Kazakhstan to be recognized worldwide. In 2008, the government of Kazakhstan announced its intention to enter the ILAC and IAF in 2010 and 2012 respectively.

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Any goods imported into Kazakhstan and included on the mandatory list of goods are subject to the mandatory procedure of certification under national requirements. The list includes machines, cars, agricultural and telecommunication equipment, construction materials, fuel, clothes, toys, food and drugs. Contracts for goods delivery should be accompanied by the following documents: product description, country of origin certificate, name of producer, customs declaration, expiration date, storage requirements, and user manuals printed in Kazakh and Russian. Foreign certificates, testing protocols and compliance indicators of imported products should correspond to appropriate international treaties.

The foreign system of standardization differs entirely from Kazakhstan's procedures. In Kazakhstan, as well as in other CIS countries, mandatory requirements in respect to goods are set out in standards and legal documents regulating sanitary, environmental, veterinary and other issues, thus requiring further harmonization efforts.

The existing system of conformity assessment represents an onerous set of procedures that includes, among others: state control over conformity with mandatory standard requirements, mandatory certification and examination, obtaining a conclusion, and registration. All of these factors are considered as serious non-tariff administrative barriers to trade, and prevent competition and free market circulation of goods.

Product Certification

The law on certification establishes the legal foundations of product certification and quality systems in manufacturing, operations and services, as well as regulating relationships in the field of certification and establishing rights, commitments and responsibilities of certifying parties. The government owned [National Center of Expertise and Certification](#) manages certification. In order to increase protection against fake or falsified certificates of conformity, the government has introduced a hologram for additional protection, which has the mark of conformity and inscription "Memstandard."

Accreditation

Kazakhstan is a member of the ISO, but it does not have a full membership in the international organizations dealing with accreditation (ILAC and IAF). National mechanisms for the adoption of international standards are in place. This process stipulates a gradual, but complete, transition to international standards. Kazakhstan has already adopted some of the international standards in the sphere of quality assessment, including ISO/IEC 17025 General Requirements in Terms of Competence of Testing and Calibrating Laboratories, and these standards are considered as the national ones.

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In August of 2008 the new Law on Accreditation in Conformity Assessment and a number of appropriate amendments to current legislation came into force. According the law, accreditation in conformity assessment becomes voluntary and validity of accreditation certificate is increased to five years. National Center for Accreditation (NCA) of the Committee on Technical Regulation and Metrology is an authorized state organization for accreditation.

Publication of Technical Regulations

A basic outline of Kazakh standards can be found at [Gosstandart's](#) website. Additionally, firms can subscribe to [SNIP](#), which publishes monthly updates to technical regulations and standards in use in Kazakhstan.

Labeling and Marking

According to Kazakhstani legislation, most products imported into the country should be labeled in Kazakh and Russian languages. Product labels should include names, manufacturer, country of origin, and information on date of production, period of validity, storage conditions and usage. Product manufacturers or sellers obtaining certificate of conformity have a right to use a mark of conformity by all means established by the state system of technical regulation.

Contacts

Committee on Technical Regulation and Metrology - www.memst.kz
Kazakhstan Institute of Standards and Certification - www.kazinst.kz/
National Center of Expertise and Certification - <http://www.naceks.kz>
National Center of Accreditation <http://www.nca.kz/>
Notify US: www.nist.gov/notifyus/
Russian Certification Services - www.rcsint.com/
SNIP: www.snip.com/index.php?Page=Kazakhstan

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