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Bureau of Standards hosts 3-day accreditation workshop

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From left, TTBS executive director José E. Trejo, TTBS chairman Lawford Dupres, Trade and Industry Minister Paula Gopee-Scoon, UK High Commissioner Harriet Cross and TT's country representative to the Inter-American Development Bank Carina Cockburn, at the opening of the TTBS three-day workshop on Wednesday at the Hyatt Regency in Port of Spain. PHOTO COURTESY TT BUREAU OF STANDARDS - ttbs

THE TT Bureau of Standards (TTBS) is hosting a three-day workshop in collaboration with the TT Laboratory Accreditation Service (TTLABS), where accreditation as a tool for growing national trade competitiveness was discussed.

The workshop is being held at the Hyatt Regency in Port of Spain and began on Wednesday and runs until Friday. It aims to shed light on the crucial role of accreditation and accredited conformity assessment services in bolstering trade competitiveness.



A TTBS release on Wednesday said the workshop will identify areas for improvement in the trade framework, support exporters, and contribute to development of a sustainable and diversified economy.

Participants are expected to engage in discussions to review successes and challenges from the perspectives of various stakeholders in fulfilling accreditation requirements. Delivering the feature address at the opening ceremony, Trade and Industry Minister Paula Gopee-Scoon underscored the importance of creating a “culture of accreditation” which would aid in strengthening trade and investment deals.

She also highlighted the accreditation of public laboratories programme to improve the competencies and reliability of the testing and calibration services of public labs.

“To date, two public laboratories have been accredited under this initiative. An additional three labs have been selected and are currently developing their quality management systems for accreditation. The intention is to have all local public labs accredited by 2030,” she said.

Gopee-Scoon also spoke on the transition of TTLABS saying, “another transformative programme is the accreditation of Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs). To this end, the ministry in collaboration with the bureau, is currently establishing the TT Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment, TTASCA.” TTLABS is the existing national accreditation body responsible for accrediting testing, calibration and medical laboratories in accordance with International Standards. To ensure international recognition of this service, the accreditation body is required to be an independent entity. Government is on a project to transition TTLABS to TTASCA with the technical co-operation of the Compete Caribbean Partnership Facility.

So far, there has been:



- Training of local personnel to meet requirements of international standards for the operation of TTASCA;
- Development of change management and communication plans for TTASCA.”

Also speaking at the opening ceremony was TTBS chairman Lawford Dupres who said, “This workshop, which brings stakeholders with varying interests, perspectives and experiences in trade together to discuss the effectiveness of the national trade framework, is a good example of the National Quality Policy in action.”

He highlighted the critical roles both the TTBS and TTLABS play including facilitating trade through inspection and product certification, supporting local manufacturers in quality control and assurance, developing or adopting standards to support industries, and providing measurement traceability recognised by international trading partners.

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