

Physical Performance Testing Summary of the 59th Accreditation Advisory Committee Meeting

The 59th meeting of the Physical Performance Testing (PPT) Accreditation Advisory Committee was held in-person at the NATA offices in Melbourne on the 23rd of May 2023.

Review of current membership and composition

The Committee discussed the breadth of testing covered by the current membership and future requirements for additional expertise. An Expression OF Interest (EOI) was published seeking applicants with experience in High Pressure Pipelines and plumbing and a suitable candidate has yet to be identified. Promotion of an EOI through NATA social networks was decided. The incumbent Chairperson's term end and succession was discussed. The nomination for a new Chair occurred and will be formalised by the NATA Board.

Reports from members

The Committee discussed the varied application and understanding of measurement uncertainty, proficiency testing requirements and validity in certain areas, and reporting issues encountered at assessments. Increasing engagement with various industry regulators to promote understanding of accreditation was also noted as an area of interest.

Review of relevant Accreditation Criteria

The current Criteria and Guidance documents applicable to PPT were reviewed. The Committee is finalising the process of reviewing the current suite of documents; once all comments and suggested amendments been incorporated the revised documents will be circulated for member comment before publication. The Guidance document relating to facilities engaging external resources to meet project requirements was voted to be withdrawn from circulation as the Committee felt the content was now adequately covered in ISO/IEC 17025.

Review of Scope of Accreditation descriptors

The Committee noted the current list of service descriptors and discussed the addition of the scope line for bioplastics, relating to the testing of biodegradable and compostable products.

Stakeholder engagement

Several laboratory forums have been held for facility engagement and information on the NCC changes to low lead content brass alloys in plumbing products, working group meetings for supply chain integrity and digitalisation in the steel industry, and most notably, technical updates from PIPA on criteria, interpretations, and guidance for regarding electrofusion welding testing on PE piping.

Assessors

The Committee discussed Technical Assessor usage, identification of disciplines requiring recruitment, new appointments, retirements, training programs and needs. Difficulty finding new assessors was noted as an increasing concern.

The next full meeting is tentatively set for the 4th quarter of 2024.