Dear readers,

We are pleased to send you the TIC Council newsletter.

March 2020 was an unprecedented yet proactive month for TIC Council, which culminated with a complete digital transformation of our operations to comply with the current governmental working restrictions. As organizations and employees around the globe began working from home, TIC Council was determined to provide all vital information on COVID-19’s impact on the Testing, Inspection and Certification industry.

Our first point of action was the creation of the specific information page on our website, providing all latest vital data and information related to the testing, inspection and certification industry’s adaptation to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. This included our TIC Council COVID-19 statement and letter to the authorities as well as other resources deemed useful for member companies and relevant stakeholders.

In addition, TIC Council is delighted to announce the introduction of a series of webinars available to members and relevant stakeholders during the current lockdown. These webinars will address the needs and concerns of the TIC industry, including the current market challenges and trends during the containment of COVID-19. In addition, the webinar series will tackle a wide variety of topics to stress the importance of how planning is now critical to adjust to the deep structural shifts that are likely to be accelerated as we emerge from COVID-19 crisis.

We hope these webinars will be of value to you and look forward to working together with all the TIC Council members towards a strong representation of the industry worldwide.

Best regards,
Hanane Taidi
Director General,
TIC Council
TIC Council Members helping to fight COVID-19

- AmSpec has published the position paper on their actions in the times of the COVID-19. Read more
- Applus+ has been working with manufacturers and the Spanish Agency of Medicines and Medical Devices (AEMPS) to test the respirators that are ever so essential for those most affected by the Coronavirus. Read more
- Bureau Veritas has deployed remote inspection, remote supervision and augmented inspection services in multiple use cases and business units around the world. Read more
- Certispec has been closely monitoring the ongoing Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and has taken a robust approach to managing the potential health and business risks across international operations. Read more
- CGI (Coastal Gulf & International) has launched a campaign to honor front line health care Workers by accepting nominations from their valuable clients on individuals and their health care teams who could benefit from a catered breakfast, lunch, or dinner as they continue navigating through these difficult times. Read more
- Cotecna has launched the Customer Portal, which is designed to give our current customers a quicker access to place requests for Verification of Conformity services. Read more
- DEKRA has provided a free and comprehensive resource center, where companies can find many different tools and information related to crisis management, personal protection, social distancing, working from home, and new cybersecurity aspects arising from the new normal. Read more
- Eurofins Technologies has launched GeneScan VIRSeek SARS-CoV-2 RT-PCR, an integrated solution including RNA extraction and test kits based on real-time RT-PCR (Reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction) for the detection of SARS-CoV-2 in swabs of environmental surfaces. Read more
- HQTS has published tips for finding trustworthy medical suppliers during Covid-19. Read more
- Kiwa Primara GmbH (part of Kiwa Germany) has expanded its capacities regarding testing of medical devices and components. Read more
- Liftinsituut has prepared the list of all the possible questions and answers regarding the COVID-19. Read more
- QIMA has been offering free quality inspection services in China for the production of masks and protective medical gear during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Read more
- QISJ assured their customers that even as preventive measures and caution have been implemented in the organization, their services would still be provided normally and in timely manner. Read more
- SGS has launched a complimentary AI platform, which screens scientific papers to support medical research teams in their effort to combat the current coronavirus pandemic. Read more
- SOEX experts has started to advise businesses on loss assessment and contract liability reduction. Read more
- TÜV AUSTRIA Group has been committed to providing advice and assistance in all technical safety-related matters in the COVID-19 crisis. Read more
- TÜV Rheinland Group India has offered the ‘No Cost’ Safety Critical type tests on Ventilator Systems which are produced at its Bangalore laboratory till 30th April 2020. Read more
- TÜV SÜD North Asia team has sent the first batch of medical face masks to colleagues and clients around the world. Read more
- TÜV SÜD has prepared the article with answers to 4 commonly asked questions about masks. Read more
- UL has launched the page with all the response guides and services they provide. Read more
- Vallis has been monitoring the COVID-19 situation very closely and is taking continuous action to manage potential health and business risks within their operations across 45 countries in the Middle East and Africa. Read more
In March 2020, to help support the fight against COVID-19, the TIC Council China Steering Committee agreed that the members, who wish to, would start offering free pre-shipment inspection to governments and NGOs when they purchase supplies such as masks, test kits and personal protective equipment from China.

Following the announcement in the Chinese media as well as on the TIC Council’s social media channels, many requests for support were received from NGOs based in e.g. the Netherlands and Switzerland, and dealt with as efficiently as possible.

The Committee is also currently in the process of reaching out to Chinese customs authorities to express their willingness to support the Chinese Government when it comes to epidemic prevention product quality control.

Overall, in recent months, members of the TIC Council China Steering Committee are making significant efforts to help governments, hospitals and companies in sourcing and ensuring the quality compliance of medical supplies.
COVID-19 Statement by TIC Council

The current COVID-19 situation is causing unprecedented levels of uncertainty for consumers, businesses, regulators and governments.

TIC Council members provide assurance through testing, inspections and certifications that products and services offered by their customers meet fundamental safety and health requirements.

It is critically important to recognize that conformity assessment bodies have a significant role to play for the continued assurance of safe products and services, in particular in safe medical products and services, personal protective equipment, food supply as well as the critical infrastructure. It is crucial that their operations be maintained.

TIC Council members are committed to protect the health and safety of all those involved in the delivery of the assurance services they provide, whether customers or employees.

TIC Council members will continue to provide the best quality of service possible, helping its customers maintain their operations and delivering assurance with the same rigor and confidence they always have.

The industry welcomes the guidance and communications issued by the international accreditation organizations, IAF and ILAC, as follows:

A rapid response mechanism has been created at the Executive Committee level, in the form of the IAF EC Task Force which is tasked with developing IAF FAQs in response to general enquiries regarding the COVID-19 crisis. The Task Force has finalized a second set of FAQs and will continue to update it as needed.

The IAF Statement on COVID-19 was published on the IAF web-site on March 4 2019, regarding how IAF member ABs and their accredited CABs are to respond to this situation, i.e. the general mechanism established by IAF in IAF 1D3 to respond to extraordinary circumstances affecting ABs, CABs, and Certified Organizations has been activated and the use of IAF MD4:2018.

Backing up the wide range of other standards and policies, these documents help ensure the robustness of the alternative methods that might need to be used by TIC Council members under these exceptional circumstances.

In addition, a joint IAF/ILAC statement on 'Possible delayed peer evaluations and impact on transition to ISO/IEC 17011:2017' due to COVID-19 was developed under the leadership of the JMC Co-Chairs and is available in both the ILAC and IAF sites. It was published on the IAF website on March 11 2019.

Our fundamental commitment remains strong in maintaining health & safety of those involved in delivering these assurance services and maintaining the levels of rigor and confidence all customers and stakeholders demand.