Welcome

The Standard newsletter aims to:

- Raise awareness about the necessity for Standards
- Inform the Standards Bureaux and the Member States about the activities of CROSQ projects

The Standard is published four times a year, and is distributed to National Standards Bodies throughout the region. All are encouraged to send articles, photos and updates on their activities, relating to the SME project’s implementation and the development of standards.

If you wish to join the distribution list or to submit articles, please send your request and submission to newsletter@crosq.org.

Editions of The Standard can be viewed on the CROSQ website. http://www.crosq.org

In this Issue

- About CROSQ
- CROSQ Council Members
- SME Project
- Project Updates
- CROSQ & CAHFS
- Updates on New Projects
- Headquarters Agreement Signed
- SVGBS Officially Opened
- CROSQ TMC
- Stages of Standards Development
- Photo Gallery of Events
- Standards in Development

Message from the Chair

Most people believe that standards do not benefit and are not applicable to micro, small and medium sized enterprises. However, it is the SMEs that benefit most from incorporating standards in their business practices. The application of quality systems and practices by the SMEs ensures the consistent production of goods and services that are acceptable to their consuming publics. The implementation of quality management systems (QMS) further supports continuous improvement.

Specifically in the Region, it is shown that a significantly higher percentage of businesses are micro, small and medium sized, with hard-working managers and owners sharply focused on the survival of their enterprise. The CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ), with a mandate to harmonise and implement standards in order to facilitate international competitiveness and to increase regional and international trade, is strategically placed to empower small business through the development of standards and standards related activities.

As a result, CROSQ has implemented a four-year project, “Promoting SME Competitiveness in the Caribbean through Technical Standards”, which will build on the existing infrastructure of regional standardization to improve the competitiveness of SMEs in the CARICOM region. This is achieved through the establishment and implementation of regional technical standards, in order to increase trade in goods and services and promote regional, hemispheric and global integration. The project specifically targets the SMEs in the region and establishes a sustainable model to increase SME participation, not only in the creation of national and regional technical standards, but also to augment their level of implementation of these standards to increase and facilitate trade. A vital component of the project will be to raise awareness of the benefits of the regional standardization process, and the role of SMEs in developing standards. The project will also establish a process for providing technical training, and create an information and consulting system to involve the SMEs in standardization at the national and regional levels.

CROSQ, through collaboration with other regional standards and quality organizations, is able to harmonise the region’s practices with international standards and related practices, procedures and systems, in order to ensure acceptance of the region’s goods and services by the international community. All CROSQ initiatives are based on a regional model which is enabled through intergovernmental support with implementation at the level of the Member States. Collaboration with stakeholders at all levels is a necessary element for achieving the optimal results and promoting economic growth and overall development of all nations within our Region.

With this first edition of the CROSQ newsletter, which focuses as an introduction to CROSQ and its current programmes and projects, we aim to provide a means of updating the regional public on the development of Regional Standards. We welcome you to CROSQ and look forward to our future publications of our newsletters.
About CROSQ

The CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ) was created by the Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in Belize on the 4th day of February 2002 as an Inter-Governmental Organisation.

The mandate of CROSQ is to harmonise and implement standards, to facilitate international competitiveness, and to increase regional and international trade; for the sustainable production of goods and services in the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), and the enhancement of social and economic development.

The primary objectives of CROSQ are the establishment and harmonization of standards for the enhanced efficiency and improved quality in the production of goods and services in the Community, thereby facilitating consumer and environmental protection and improved trade within the Community and with third states.

These include:
- Promoting the development of standards and the recognition of technical regulations.
- Encouraging the recognition of internationally accredited certification systems.
- Facilitating the achievement of international competitiveness of regional goods and services by fostering a culture of quality in regional enterprises.
- Contributing, through its operations, to the preservation of the environment and conservation of the national resources of the CARICOM Single Market Economy (CSME).
- Providing guidance to Organs and Bodies of the CSME including, but not limited to disputes settlement.
- Promoting and protecting the interests of States, Parties and Associate Members in regional and international standardisation fora.
- Promoting the awareness of standards-related matters including technical regulations, conformity assessment procedures and metrology.

CROSQ is composed of The Council, Special Committees and The Secretariat. The Council consists of the Executive Heads of the national standards bodies of the State Parties. From the Council, a Chairman and Vice-Chairman is elected for two years to lead ordinary Council meetings. It exercises powers to meet at least twice every calendar year. The Council reports annually to the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) which determines the policy of CROSQ, agrees on its budget and contributions and in particular the establishment or adoption of regional standards and technical regulations.

The Special Committees consist of the nominees of the State Parties and Associate Members drawn from the public and private sectors. The Special Committees meet as often as necessary to perform their functions efficiently and expeditiously. The Secretariat is led by the Executive Secretary, who is appointed by the CROSQ Council and includes professional and support staff from the member states of CARICOM subject to the directive of the Council.

CROSQ membership consists of member states of the CARICOM Community. Associate membership is also accorded to Associate Members of the Community, states and political entities of the Association of Caribbean States, who are willing and able to enjoy rights and assume the obligations of membership, set out in the Agreement. The members of CROSQ are: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

CROSQ Council Members

- Mr. Prem Nandlal, Chairman (Trinidad)
- Ms. Dianne Lalla-Rodrigues, Vice-Chairman (Antigua)
- The Hon. V. Alfred Gray (Bahamas)
- Ms. Anthea Ishmael (Barbados)
- Ms. Helen Reynolds-Arana (Belize)
- Dr. Steve John (Dominica)
- Mr. L. Simeon Collins (Grenada)
- Dr. Chatterpaul Ramcharran (Guyana)
- Dr. Camella Rhone (Jamaica)
- Mr. Rudolph Christopher (Montserrat)
- Dr. Milton Whittaker (St. Kitts and Nevis)
- Mr. Julius James (St. Lucia)
- Mr. Ezra Ledger (St. Vincent and the Grenadines)
- Mr. Mauro Tuur (Suriname)
The main objective of the project entitled ‘Promoting SME Competitiveness In The Caribbean through Technical Standards’, is to boost the competitiveness of Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) within CARICOM. The aim is to facilitate the export of goods and services and the process of integration in the region, the hemisphere and the world.

The SME project supports CROSQ in its regional role in standardization and in the promotion and dissemination of standards at the regional level. It will strengthen the Organisation as well as the national standards bodies that develop technical standards in the CARICOM region. CROSQ is theExecuting Agency for the project and is being assisted by the four Standards Bureaus of Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago.

By virtue of their membership to CROSQ, all CARICOM Member States benefit from the project through the awareness and information sharing activities.

The project builds on the existing infrastructure of regional standardization to improve the competitiveness of SMEs in the CARICOM region. A sustainable model is being established to increase SME participation in the creation of national and regional technical standards and to increase their level of implementation of these standards in order to facilitate and increase trade. The project is raising the awareness of the benefits of the regional standardization process while emphasizing the role of SMEs in developing standards. It is also establishing a process for providing technical training and creating an information and consulting system to involve the SMEs in standardization at the national and regional levels.

This project underscores and builds awareness of the importance of standardization and conformity assessment to SMEs among interested private sector and regional stakeholders. The proposed model will be used to develop a body of standards in each country in targeted exporting industries that generate foreign exchange. The project will reinforce the institutional framework for technical standardization at the regional level while at the same time strengthening the CROSQ Secretariat to serve as the system administrator.

Over 500 business owners, government officials and experts in the public and private sectors in the region will benefit from this project as they will be made aware of the importance of developing technical standards for directly or indirectly exportable goods and inputs for their production chain.

The expected outcomes of the project include:

- Improved knowledge and awareness of the benefits of technical standardization among SMEs and the public sector,
- Increased levels of implementation of technical standards among SMEs
- Development of conformity assessment guidelines and implementation of conformity assessment procedures, based on standards and assessment guidelines.
- Training of specialists in SMEs, national standards bureaus, government and trade associations in standards enforcement, technical requirements. Conformity assessment and cross-industry issues such as social and environmental responsibility and
- A fully operational web-based information system accessible to all CARICOM states.

It also includes the hosting of National and Regional conferences to demonstrate the strategic importance of technical standardization as a way of facilitating trade. Training activities will improve skills and expertise at the country level, in priority areas on issues such as management, technical requirements and related conformity assessment mechanisms.

The SME project is supported by a Project Execution Unit, run by a Project Coordinator, Ms. Deborah Nurse, and an Administrative Assistant, Ms. Andrea Applewhaite.

The project which is being executed over 48 months became effective from January 2006.

**Project Updates**

- The four sub-executing agencies have each held a successful National conference in 2006. The seminars were open to the public and catered for approximately 100 attendees each, with titles such as:
  1. ‘The Involvement of Small and Medium Size Enterprises in the Standardisation Process’, held in Trinidad and Tobago in September;
  2. ‘Accessing the CARICOM Single Market and Economy through the Implementation of Management Systems’, held in Guyana in October;
  3. ‘Awareness of the Importance of Standards for CSME competitiveness’, held in Jamaica in November; and

- The first Regional Conference on ‘Enhancing Trade Competitiveness through Standardisation and Conformity Assessment’ will be held in Trinidad at the Auditorium of the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards on July 17-18 2007.
CROSQ and CAHFSA

The issue of the establishment of CAHFSA has been on the Regional agenda for several years. The legal framework for its establishment has been completed and it is currently projected that it should become operational in June, 2007. The 17th Meeting of COTED made the decision that CAHFSA should be hosted by CARDI. The only outstanding matter to be resolved is the issue of financial support for the organization through Member State contributions. At the most recent (22nd) Meeting of COTED, it was revealed that, up to that time, the only Member State to have made a commitment to contribute to CAHFSA was Barbados.

The discussions on contributions to CAHFSA took place against the backdrop of one of the pervasive themes of the COTED meeting, the ongoing establishment of new Regional Agencies and Member States’ concerns about the spiraling costs of contributing to their operating budgets. While there seemed to be ready acceptance of the need for the functions being assigned to these agencies, there was far less enthusiasm for establishing new agencies to perform these functions, especially when agencies already exist which could absorb these functions. Indeed, there seemed to be a consensus emerging that there is a need for a review and rationalization of the institutional framework being developed within the Region for performing the functions associated with the establishment of the CSM(E). There were some indications from the CARICOM Secretariat that this rationalization may be imminent.

CROSQ has more than a casual interest in the establishment of CAHFSA. There are obvious extensive areas of potential overlap between CROSQ activities and those identified for CAHFSA. CROSQ at times faces challenges in getting Member States’ contributions in a timely manner and experiences difficulties with cash flow management as a result. It is unlikely that the experience of CAHFSA would be any different. Indeed access to sustainable funding, for both agencies, is likely to be problematic at best. Ongoing competition among regional agencies for Member States’ funding seems certain, with potentially serious consequences for both organizations in being able to fulfill their mandates.

CROSQ has been given the mandate of promoting the establishment of the Regional quality infrastructure through the MSTQ system. There are strong arguments for consolidating SPS systems on the MSTQ platform. The International Trade Centre Executive Forum on “Innovations in Export Strategy – A strategic approach to the quality assurance challenge” (Geneva 2005) makes this statement:

As is the case for technical regulations, it makes good economic sense to use the same quality infrastructure established for the voluntary domain (standards, metrology, accreditation, testing, etc.) for the SPS measures. This calls for a holistic approach that will only be followed if a policy and strategy have been agreed to at a high political level to be implemented by the relevant organizations. Developing countries with limited resources simply cannot afford to have separate systems for the voluntary domain and the technical regulation and SPS domains.

This approach is being pursued in the international arena, as can be seen from the development of the new ISO 22000 Quality Management system, which incorporates HACCP principles, dealing with food safety, onto a quality assurance framework to provide a comprehensive quality management system for the food industry. Similarly, the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission encompasses both standards components and codes of hygienic practice and certification regimes, which are SPS measures.

Clearly, the guidance being provided by the international community is towards integration of functions and not separation, as currently envisaged in the CARICOM regime. Interestingly, within some Member States, the integrated approach is being adopted. For example, Barbados is promoting an agency (National Agricultural Health and Food Control Agency – NAHFC), which integrates food standards with veterinary public health and plant health into one regulatory agency.

There are convincing arguments for the Region to have another close look at the proposal to establish CAHFSA as an independent agency, in the first place, and, even more troubling, to link it to a research organization. There are considerable synergies to be derived by linking CAHFSA with CROSQ through providing for CAHFSA activities in a “division” of CROSQ. The cost of the establishment of CAHFSA would be substantially less and the standards development infrastructure already existing at CROSQ would expedite the elaboration of regional standards and codes of practice for Agricultural Health. Available resources could be used to strengthen a single regional quality management agency, with advantages accruing to all the stakeholders. In this way we could maximize the use of scarce resources with increased benefits for both organizations.

Updates On New Projects In The Works

- CROSQ has received a Technical Assistance Grant from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) to assist in financing the cost of developing Regional Building Standards (RBS) in the Caribbean. The activities involved include a review of the base codes, preparation of Caribbean Application Documents (CAD), training of potential users, strengthening of building control agencies and consensus building activities among key stakeholders. We are currently at the stage of hiring the Project Coordinator for the project, and establishing the Regional Technical Committee and National Technical Sub-Committees.

- The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has agreed to the merging of the management and administration of the two projects Promoting SME Competitiveness In The Caribbean Through Technical Standards and Harmonized Regional Quality Infrastructure For Improving Market Access And Competitiveness. We are in the process of recruiting a Project Manager and Accounts Clerk/ Administrative Assistant for the joint Project Execution Unit (PEU) of the two projects.
Headquarters Agreement Signed

For CARICOM countries to have a chance of holding their own globally they must produce quality goods and provide quality service.

That is the advice from the Senior Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Dame Billie Miller, who was speaking during the signing of a Headquarters Agreement between the Government of Barbados and the CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ). The ceremony took place at the Ministry’s Headquarters, Culloden Road.

The agreement, which will govern the operation of the organisation and its staff in Barbados and their relationship with the Government of Barbados, will also seek to promote the development of standards and the recognition of technical regulations; encourage the recognition of internationally accredited certification systems; facilitate the achievement of international competitiveness of regional goods and services by fostering a culture of quality in regional enterprises; as well as contribute, through its operations, to the preservation of the environment and conservation of the national resources of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).

According to the Senior Minister: “CROSQ is a significant step in the region’s long march towards a Single Market and Single Economy.” She added, “…that we need to develop and apply regional harmonised standards and technical regulations to the production of our goods, our assessment procedures must also conform across the region to facilitate the smooth operation of the Single Market.”

The Minister also expressed concern that as a region we are vulnerable to sub-standard goods, entering the market, and that government was aware of this.

She said CROSQ would play a vital role in identifying such products in an effort to protect the welfare of our consumers and the integrity of the regional environment.

The agreement was signed on 18 January 2007 by Dame Billie Miller and Vice Chair of the Council of CROSQ, Dianne Lalla-Rodrigues, who acknowledged the support of the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Business Development, Senator Lynnette Eastmond, and the Barbados National Standards Institution (BNSI).

SVGBS Officially Opened

The St. Vincent and the Grenadines Bureau of Standards (SVGBS) Offices and Laboratories were officially opened at a Ceremony held on Monday 19 March 2007 at its upgraded and expanded premises at Campden Park.

Addresses were given by: Dr The Hon Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister; The Hon Dr Jerrol Thompson, Minister with responsibility for the Bureau of Standards; Hon Renee Baptiste, Minister of Culture; Mrs. L. Yvonne Holder, Technical Coordinator, TASU/ CARICOM; Mr. Kenneth Mullin, Executive Secretary, CROSQ; as well as the Director of SVGBS, Mr. Ezra D. Ledger; and Mr. Lennox Lampkin, Chairperson, National Standards Council.

Also taking place during the opening ceremony was a mini-exhibition held at the Bureau’s compound showcasing local products by the Bureau’s stakeholders and clients.

The upgraded Bureau of Standards now offers the following services:
- Standardization
- Conformity Assessment and Compliance
- Laboratory Services – Chemistry and Microbiology
- Metrology – Weights and Measures
- Technical Assistance (Standards, Quality Assurance and Metrology)

The St. Vincent and the Grenadines Bureau of Standards was legally established by the Standards Act No. 70 of 1992, (amended by Act No. 28 of 2001) which gives the Bureau the authority, inter alia, “…to prepare and promote standards relating to goods, services, processes and practices produced and/or used in SVG, to ensure industrial efficiency and to assist in industrial development as well as to promote public and industrial welfare, health, safety and to safeguard against negative effects to the environment”.

Additionally, the Bureau of Standards is responsible for the administration of the Weights and Measures Act No. 16 of 2003.

Mr. Ezra D. Ledger, Director of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Bureau of Standards

Senior Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Dame Billie Miller, and Vice Chair of CROSQ, Dianne Lalla-Rodrigues, signing the Headquarters Agreement

The Address Panel for the Opening Ceremony of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Bureau of Standards. From left: Mr. Lennox Lampkin, Chairperson, National Standards Council; Hon Renee Baptiste, Minister of Culture; Hon. Dr. Jerrol Thompson, Minister with responsibility of the Bureau of Standards; Dr. The Hon. Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines; Mrs. L. Yvonne Holder, Technical Coordinator, TASU/ CARICOM; Mr. Kenneth Mullin, Executive Secretary of CROSQ
The CROSQ Technical Management Committee (TMC) is a Special Committee of the CROSQ Council which was established in 2005 at the Sixth Meeting of the CROSQ Council. Its mandate and responsibility was for the overall Management of the Technical Work of CROSQ, as defined in the Statutes of the TMC.

The CROSQ Technical Management Committee, in carrying out that mandate:

- Reports to and advises the CROSQ Council on all matters concerning the organization, coordination, strategic planning, and programming of the technical work of CROSQ
- Acts on the decisions of the CROSQ Council and its Executive Committee in respect of that mandate
- Monitors the progress of the technical work of CROSQ and takes appropriate actions to ensure the efficient and effective advancement of that technical work
- Keeps the CROSQ Directives for CROSQ technical work under review, by examining and coordinating all proposals for amendments, and preparing appropriate revisions with recommendations to the CROSQ Executive Committee for approval by the CROSQ Council
- Examines proposals for technical activity in new sectors and decides on matters concerning the establishment and dissolution of regional technical committees
- Acts, within the framework of established policies relating to the technical work, to:
  - Monitor the work of regional technical committees and project management requirements;
  - Approve titles, scopes and Programmes of work of individual regional technical committees;
  - Allocate or reallocate secretariats of regional technical committee or subcommittees;
  - Appoint or endorse chairmen of technical committees;
  - Consider and make recommendations to the CROSQ Council, on matters of principle raised by national and regional stakeholders and in respect of appeals concerning the work of technical committees and subcommittees
- Reviews and endorses draft standards and draft Technical Regulations prior to their submission to the CROSQ Executive Committee, with a recommendation for approval by the CROSQ Council
- Recommends Standards for adoption as Regional Standards to the CROSQ Executive Committee, for approval by the CROSQ Council

The work of the TMC is meant to facilitate and assist with the execution of CROSQ’s overall mission.

The TMC proposal is to review Caribbean Community Standards every five (5) years.

Standards with mandatory or compulsory status must receive COTED approval prior to implementation or enforcement within Member States. Voluntary standards may be adopted by any Member State desirous of so doing.

The work of the TMC is executed through various Regional Technical Committees and Sub-Committees in different Member States.

### Stages Of Standards Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>00</td>
<td>Preliminary Stage: New work item proposal received for new project (NP) with justification</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Proposal Stage: Proposal for NP evaluated and recommendation made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>Assignment to a Regional Technical Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>Assignment of Chair of Regional Technical Subcommittee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Preparatory Stage: Preparation of Draft CARICOM Standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>Proposal Draft developed/agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>Preparation of Working Draft / Revised Drafts (as required)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Committee Stage: Consensus building among committee on working draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Enquiry Stage: Enquiry Draft circulated to Member States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Approval Stage: Submission of final draft CARICOM standard to Council for approval (this version has considered Public Comments from all Member States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.1</td>
<td>Submitted to and approved by COTED as a CARICOM Standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Publication Stage: Publication of approved CARICOM standard (CCS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>Review Stage: CCS reviewed and recommendation(s) made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>Confirmation Stage: CCS confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>Revision Stage: CCS under revision/superseded/amended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>Withdrawal Stage: CCS withdrawn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Photo Gallery Of Events

Launch of SME project

Signing of Headquarters Agreement

E-book Launch

TTBS Conference

BNSI Conference
## STANDARDS IN DEVELOPMENT 2007-2008

### Labelling
- Labelling of Tobacco Products
- Labelling of Pre-packaged Goods
- Care Labelling of Textiles
- Labelling of Aerosol Insecticides
- Labelling (Marking) of Gold Articles
- Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods
- Labelling of Garments
- Labelling of Retail Packages of Cigarettes
- Labelling & Advertising of Textiles

### Conformity Assessment
- Certification Procedures for Goods and Services Covered by Regional Standards
- Good Management Practices (GMP’s) for SMEs

### Food Products
- Sugars - Specification, Sampling and Methods of Analysis
- Margarine and Cooking Margarine, Shortening
- Coconut Oil
- Canned Sausages
- Poultry Products and Table Eggs
- Poultry Feeds
- Fresh Fruits and Vegetables
- Ketchup
- Rice
- Pasta Products
- Rum and Brewery Products
- Juices and Beverages
- Spices and Sauces
- (Packaged) Water
- Wheat Flour and Biscuits
- Packaged Coconut Water

### Petroleum Products
- Aerosol Propellant Gases
- Diesel Specifications
- Gasoline Specifications
- Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)

### Chemicals
- Laundry Detergent
- Dishwashing Detergent
- QAC Based Aromatic Disinfectants
- Paints and Varnishes
- Gold Articles – Manufacturing, Alloying and Testing
- Polyethylene Garbage Bags

### Personal Care Products
- Paper Products for Personal Cleansing
- Toilet Tissue
- Toilet Soap and Laundry Soap

### Services
- Tourism
- Tourism – Hospitality Assured Program
- Advertising – General
- Advertising to Children

### Construction Codes and Building Materials
- Regional Building Standards
- Carbon Steel Bars
- Steel Nails
- Contents of Pipes & Conduits – Identification
- Portland Cement
- Profiled Sheeting (AluZinc) for Roofing & General Purposes

## 2007 EVENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 17-18</td>
<td>Regional Conference on ‘Enhancing Trade Competitiveness through Standardisation and Conformity Assessment’</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 11-12</td>
<td>Eleventh Meeting of the Council of CROSQ</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 27-30</td>
<td>Caribbean Gift and Craft Show 2007</td>
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## CROSQ’S MISSION

The promotion and development of standards and standards related activities to facilitate international competitiveness and the sustainable production of goods and services within the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) for the enhancement of social and economic development.

For further information, please contact: CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality “The Heritage”, 35 Pine Road, Belleville, St. Michael, Barbados BB11113 Tel: 246.437.8146 | Fax: 246.437.4569 Email: crosq.caricom@crosq.org

Please visit our website: www.crosq.org