

National Standards Authority of Ireland End of Year Statement 2018

SETTING THE STANDARD FOR
BUSINESS SUCCESS

A YEAR IN REVIEW

2018 was another defining year for NSAI. Since its inception 21 years ago, the number of standards available to business has increased to over 24,000 and the organisation is positioned at the forefront of management systems and product certification services to Irish business.

With the evolving global environment, the importance of standards and certification to business and trade has never been higher. Access to the standards development, metrology and certification services provided by NSAI has assisted Irish business, in key sectors such as services, construction, medical devices and automotive to develop and compete on both national and international markets.

NSAI saw increasing demand for services during 2018 against a backdrop of a strong performance by the Irish economy. It is encouraging to see that a growing number of businesses are recognising that the services provided by NSAI can offer them a competitive edge and can help them overcome potential barriers to trade.

During the year NSAI's Brexit unit was established as part of the government's "Getting Ireland Brexit Ready" campaign. The unit has undertaken a review of potential risks to businesses relying on UK notified bodies for certification and embarked on a campaign of briefing seminars to support Irish business and provide guidance on specific industry queries

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of our staff whose dedication and expertise has been central to the achievements of 2018.

2018 also saw the appointment of James Kennedy as Chairperson of the Board at a time when the organisation adapts to the the evolving national and international trade environment and prepares to embark on a strategic planning process following the end of the current plan in 2019. I look forward to working with James and the Board as we look to 2019 and beyond.

Geraldine Larkin

NSAI CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Pictured below (L-R): James Kennedy, Chairperson to the Board of NSAI; Minister of State, Pat Breen TD and Geraldine Larkin, NSAI Chief Executive.



STANDARDS

Standards are fundamental to facilitating international trade and help businesses and organisations grow, innovate and compete in the global market place. Standards can also be referenced by government when formulating legislation.

There are now more than 24,000 standards in the NSAI catalogue, with 1,318 standards published in 2018.

There are over 1,600 subject matter experts sitting on more than 200 standards committees, on topics as varied as artificial intelligence, electrical installations, and children's toys.

NSAI has positioned itself, and Ireland, as a leader in the artificial intelligence standardization arena, and will, this year, host a plenary meeting of global experts who will discuss the development of the world's first 'AI standards'.

Pyrite and Mica Protocol Published

This year NSAI published a standard protocol I.S. 465, which will be used to assess homes suspected of being affected by pyrite or mica. It will be referenced by engineers, geologists and laboratories to assess, test and categorise the damage in properties negatively affected by defective concrete blocks, due to excessive free muscovite mica and pyrite.

Draft National Rules for Electrical Installations Published

In December, the draft national rules for electrical installations was published for public consultation. This is the first major revision to the rules in over a decade. Important changes have been made in many areas related to the safety and energy efficiency of electrical installations. The revision, when published, will improve safeguards and bring industry requirements in line with technical developments and best practice in Europe. The public consultation period ends on March 15th, 2019.

New Standards Structure

A comprehensive review into NSAI's Standards division was conducted in 2018. Ten key areas of sectoral focus were identified, these include ICT, food and agriculture, energy and the environment, healthcare and life sciences, building and civil engineering, electrical/electronic, general standards, manufacturing and machinery, consumer products/services, and health and safety.

Pictured below: The NSAI Electro Technical Committee (ETC) in September 2018.



CERTIFICATION

NSAI Certification creates, maintains and promotes accredited certification of products, services and organisations for compliance with recognised standards, from business management systems to product approvals. For some industries certification may be legal or contractual requirement.

Certification can be a useful business tool to add confidence in your organisation. NSAI services encompass several areas including Business Excellence, Sustainability and the Built Environment, Medical Devices and Market and Regulatory Support approvals.

1,327 organisations were certified to management systems in 2018. Over 7,000 motor vehicles approvals were issued and 240 medical device products were certified.

ISO 45001

In March, the NSAI launched the ISO 45001 certification scheme for Occupational Health and Safety. It gives organisations a framework to increase safety, reduce workplace risks and enhance health and well-being at work. More than fifty Irish companies were among the first organisations in the world to achieve certification to the new global health and safety standard, which sets standards of practice to protect employees internationally.

Medical Devices

NSAI has been confirmed as a recognised Auditing Organisation for the Medical Device Single Audit Programme (MDSAP) a global certification scheme for Medical Devices.

NSAI is one of only 15 organisations worldwide with this status and confirms the organisations standing as a leading body in the medical devices sector and enhances Ireland's credential as a centre of excellence for the medical devices industry.

Migration to New Standards

In 2018, the quality standard ISO 9000 and the environmental standard ISO 14001 were dated. The standard provided for a transition period ending in September, requiring all the certified organisations to transition to the new standard. Working with our client base, NSAI ensured that all client organisations successfully made the changeover by the 15th of September deadline.

Pictured below: Representatives from Colleen Construction and NSAI at the launch of ISO 45001 for Occupational Health and Safety.



NATIONAL METROLOGY LABORATORY

The National Metrology Laboratory (NML) is the national metrology institute for Ireland and is responsible for establishing, maintaining and developing the national measurement standards for physical quantities.

NML provides services in 14 fields and provides traceability for measurement standards for physical quantities such as mass, length, temperature, pressure, voltage, resistance, time intervals and sound levels. The NML also provides training and calibration services.

In 2018, NML calibrated around 4,500 instruments, delivered 24 training courses.

SI Redefinition

History was made on Friday November 16th, as leading figures in metrology from 60 nations voted to change one of the pillars of science, the kilogram. Since 1889, the kilogram has been defined by a piece of metal held in a triple-locked vault in the International Bureau of Weights and Measures laboratory in France. It is the one true kilogram in the world.

Up to 2018, several exact copies were made and placed in national metrology laboratories, including the National Metrology Laboratory in Glasnevin. With the new definition an 'electronic kilogram' will be the new baseline measure of mass.

EMPIR Projects

NML is an active partner in the European Metrology Programme for Innovation and Research (EMPIR), which coordinates research projects to address large scale challenges in health, energy, environment and industry.

In 2018, NML was co-author on two scientific papers that were presented at the IMEKO (International Measurement Confederation) world congress on metrology held in Belfast in September. The papers related to EMPIR research projects on radiation thermometry and humidity measurement.



LEGAL METROLOGY

NSAI Legal Metrology uphold and enforce accuracy and transparency in trade measures by inspecting and verifying measuring instruments used by traders and by inspecting pre-packaged goods to ensure correct/average quantity.

In order to provide an assurance on measurement compliance, the service adopts a risk-based inspection approach model covering 40,000 traders and 75,000 measuring instruments throughout the country.

Legal Metrology inspectors visit thousands of premises each year, inspecting measuring instruments used in trade and has the power to investigate and prosecute those who do not comply with the legislation.

Changes to The Maximum Taxi Fare

In 2018, the National Transport Authority approved the proposed increase in the maximum taxi fare by an average of 3.22%. The change took effect on the 1st February 2018.

Consequently, 13,400 taximeters were calibrated and verified with the new fare, to ensure taxi operators could continue to operate.

Compliance

Based on a risk based inspection, Legal Metrology made more than 15,000 instrument inspections in 2018, and visited over 4,000 premises. For 2018, the average compliance rate across the areas inspected was 88%.

Joint Inspections

NSAI also carried out joint inspections with the Sea Fisheries Protection Agency at fish processing plants and with the National Transport Authority when inspecting taxis.

