



## **MEDIA RELEASE - FINAL**

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# **Missing link in supply chains solved**

## **New report proposes ways to link supply chains and product conformance information in Australian first**

Three of Australia's leading quality and standardisation bodies have released a report that proposes to simplify the way product conformance information (including testing and certification) is managed by government and industry, to improve national productivity and Australia's international competitiveness.

The National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA), the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) and GS1 Australia (GS1) have called for bi-partisan support of governments (federal and state), as well as peak industry bodies, to modernise national product conformity infrastructure by leveraging digital technology to enhance supply chain performance.

To support their case NATA, JAS-ANZ and GS1 have published a report titled '**Digitalisation of Conformance and Accreditation Processes**', outlining its proposed framework. The framework is based on compatible and existing ISO/IEC global standards to achieve traceability of product conformity certificates, business entities, products, test samples and more.

The report looks at how the rapid transition of global supply chains and the use of data-driven, digital systems, has resulted in a growing gap between digital product traceability and the traceability of associated product conformity and credentialing information.

And that efforts to simplify trade systems require the national product conformity infrastructure and supporting systems to be

responsive and of high integrity, enabling rapid verification of credentials and detection of fraudulent or erroneous claims.

To further encourage discussion, NATA, JAS-ANZ and GS1 Australia are holding a webinar with the support of the National GS1 Traceability Advisory Group (NGTAG) on Tuesday February 22nd, to explore the challenges of existing analogue system, the benefits of digitalisation and review developments across industry and government.

The **'Digitalisation of Conformance and Accreditation Processes'** report's proposed objectives include:

- Deliver international alignment on product conformity claims by leveraging existing data standards currently used by industry for physical tracking of goods
- Eliminate ways in which the compliance status, place of origin and other assurance claims can become falsely associated with a product
- Use of open attestation systems giving credential holders greater control over information disclosures than is currently possible
- Adopting data exchange standardisation for conformance and accreditation processes to align Australia with evolving supply chain traceability systems around the world; and
- Enable Accreditation Bodies (ABs), Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) and others to innovate without compromising the integrity of product conformity systems.

The framework is not intended as a replacement or alternative for any existing conformity or approval schemes and strengthens and simplifies the integrity of existing programs. It leverages an established system of global data standards used extensively by Australian industry and internationally for identifying, capturing, and sharing information through international supply chains.

Jennifer Evans, NATA Chief Executive Officer, said: "NATA is proud to be involved in this ground-breaking initiative to modernise Australia's product conformity infrastructure, leveraging digital technology that provides assurance for all Australians.

"Australian businesses, especially, stand to benefit from the confidence and transparency of product conformity information delivered by these innovative systems."

James Galloway, JAS-ANZ Chief Executive Officer, said: "JAS-ANZ sees enormous value to industry and government in bringing

conformity information that is the foundation of trust and confidence in trade into an open and inter-operable digital environment.

“This framework leverages the use of international digital standards and existing conformity information to ensure Australia’s product certification and accreditation systems remain relevant in a technology driven future.

“Digital conformity information across the supply chain greatly enhances efficiency and traceability of traded goods, ensuring that businesses and consumers are able to engage and verify information about product safety, quality and authenticity.”

Maria Palazzolo, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of GS1 Australia, said: “Having trust in traded products is foundational for efficient commerce. Our supply chains and channels to market are increasingly global, and customers need to effectively validate product safety, quality and fit-for-purpose claims.

“Having a common framework to capture and share product conformity information is vital. GS1 is committed to working with the public and private sectors, as well as standards and conformity bodies to digitalise supply chains and build trust and confidence in domestic and global trade systems.”

The report has already received favourable comments from industry leaders.

Ian Watt, Vice Chair UN/CEFACT Bureau for Program Development Areas says ‘the report is compelling – it provides a roadmap to simplify the way product conformance systems work. Standardising the way we share information that supports the brand promise of Australian businesses is critical for industry competitiveness.”

The proposed approach enables a system of interoperability and data exchange benefiting all manufacturers, exporters, importers, distributors, retailers, consumers and regulatory bodies.

Download the ‘Digitalisation of Conformance and Accreditation Processes’ [report here](#).

Register to attend the Product Conformity and Credentialing webinar here [webinar here](#).

## About NATA

National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) provides accreditation for laboratories to ensure testing results can be relied on and trusted. As Australia's sole internationally recognised accreditation authority, NATA's role is to uphold the national standards of technical competence for those delivering products or services to the general public. Through its extensive network, NATA provides assessment, accreditation and training services to laboratories and technical facilities.

## About JAS-ANZ

The Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) is an independent, third-party accreditation body that provides internationally recognised accreditation services. JAS-ANZ was established in 1991 through an agreement (JAS-ANZ Treaty) between the Australian and New Zealand Governments to facilitate the exchange of goods and services and strengthen the trading relationship between the two countries. At JAS-ANZ we accredit the bodies that certify or inspect organisations, products, or people. We do so by developing the assessment criteria certifiers and inspectors must meet to become accredited.

## About GS1 Australia

GS1 Australia is the Australian arm of the neutral, not-for-profit organisation that develops and maintains the most widely used global standards for efficient business communication. We are best known for the barcode, named by the BBC as one of "the 50 things that made the world economy". GS1 standards and services improve the efficiency, safety and visibility of supply chains across physical and digital channels in 25 sectors. With local Member Organisations in 115 countries, 2 million user companies (over 22,000 in Australia) and 6 billion transactions every day, GS1 standards create a common language that supports systems and processes across the globe. For more information visit the [GS1 Australia website](#).

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## For further information

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