



ANNUAL TECHNICAL REPORT 2022

Main Achievements:

BBS Celebrates 30 Years

On 16th May 2022 the Belize Bureau of Standards (BBS) celebrated its 30th Anniversary as the National Standards Body of Belize empowered to improve the quality of products, services and systems through the development and promotion of standards and quality. The celebration included an official ceremony with celebratory key note remarks from Minister Jose Abelardo Mai from the Ministry of Agriculture Food Security and Enterprise, past Director of the BBS Helen Reynolds Arana along with special remarks from ISO Secretary General Sergio Mujica and a combination of congratulatory remarks from national, regional and international stakeholders.

The ceremony was streamed via Zoom and Facebook for national and regional participation.



Key Note Address by Minister Jose Abelardo Mai, Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise

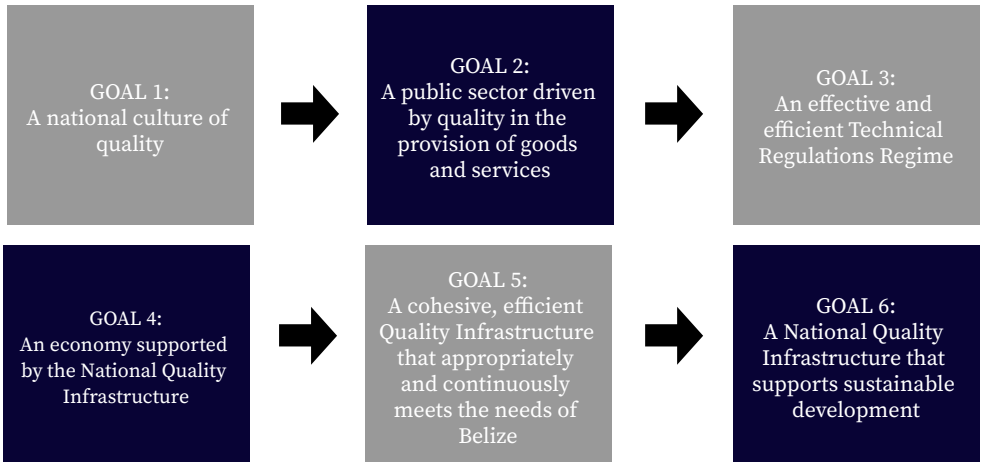
Endorsement of Belize's NQP

A National Quality Policy (NQP) is the basic government instrument that outlines what a country's objectives and strategies are in relation to the development of a quality infrastructure. On 16th June 2022, the Cabinet endorsed the establishment of a NQP for Belize. This policy provides for the cooperation and collaboration across a network of quality infrastructure institutions that serve alongside the BBS to protect the interest of the citizenry of Belize. The NQP will also serve to strengthen existing quality infrastructure institutions to

improve the competitiveness of Belizean products and services creating greater integration opportunities in regional and international markets.

This being another milestone for the BBS triggered the need to promote a public-private partnership approach in implementing the NQP, as well as establish an effective coordination and collaboration mechanism with various stakeholder grouping.

NATIONAL QUALITY POLICY GOALS:



BBS Signs Cooperation Agreement with ANCE

In 2018, Belize became one of the piloting countries for the CARICOM Regional Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme, an initiative birthed from CARICOM's Strategic Plan which advocated for the mitigation and prevention of climate change by focusing on energy efficiency and renewable energy sources. This initiative, funded through a 1 million Euro investment by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Federal Republic of Germany (BMZ), was administered by the German National Metrology Institute (PTB), with implementation by the CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards & Quality (CROSQ) Network, led by the CROSQ Secretariat and the Dominican Institute for Quality (INDOCAL) of the Dominican Republic.

As BBS commenced the development of its national system for the implementation of an Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme, it was necessary to engage with the Mexican Association of Normalization and Certification (ANCE) to garner support in the

area of capacity building.

This engagement led to the signing of a cooperation agreement on 21st July 2022 between BBS and ANCE. This cooperation agreement seeks to garner support in capacity building for BBS staff to carry out conformity assessment for EE appliances, a critical component in ensuring the effective implementation of the program.



Cooperation Agreement between BBS and ANCE with
Director of BBS, Jose Trejo and President of ANCE
Juan Rosales

Soft Launch of Belize's EELS



In commemoration of Energy Month 2022, the Belize Bureau of Standards made its mark within the sustainable energy global movement by hosting a soft launch of its Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme (EELS) piloting project. The launch took place the morning of 22nd November 2022 followed by a workshop for importers of refrigerators, light bulbs and air conditioners. The workshop was facilitated by the Association of Normalization and Certification (ANCE) of Mexico. These events were cofounded by the European Union through the LAIT Up Belize Project.



Lloyd Orellano, Standards Officer of BBS presenting on EELS Roadmap



BBS Signs MOU with PROFECO

The Government of the United Mexican States, through the Federal Consumer Protection Agency (PROFECO), and the Government of Belize through the Belize Bureau of Standards renewed their Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the 28th September 2022.

This MOU is to establish and develop cooperation activities with respect to guiding policies, protection, and defense of consumers, through the following modalities:

- a) exchange of information on initiatives and legal and regulatory frameworks on consumer protection issues;
- b) assessment and exchange of information and/or documentation on issues of collective actions or popular actions according to the designation of each Participant;
- c) exchange of personnel and organization of training activities;
- d) exchange of information on the safety of the products from the consumer's

perspective, including results of activities carried out by laboratories, studies and any useful information that support

e) production and exchange of information material, campaigns and/or communication programmes with respect to alternative means of consumer-related dispute settlement in each of the Participants' countries.

f) development of research programmes or projects specifically on the topic of consumption, and

g) any other modality of cooperation agreed upon by the Participants.



BBS Signs MOU to Develop Quality Standards for Honey



The Ministry of Economic Development (MED) and the Belize Bureau of Standards, on 15th November 2022 signed a memorandum of understanding to incorporate standards and quality in the development of eight commodities, commencing with honey.

This MOU is being implemented through the Resilient Rural Belize (RRB) project with financing from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Green Climate Fund (GCCF) with a total budget of US\$21,750.00. The program aims to minimize the impacts of climate and economic events on smallholder farmers while supporting sustainable market access

for their produce.

Through this MOU, the BBS agrees to apply the Calidena Methodology in conducting a value chain analysis for honey; and to conduct capacity building/sensitization workshops for key stakeholders and farmers on standards and quality.



BBS Strategic Planning Session

On the 22, 23 & 24 February 2022, the Belize Bureau of Standards hosted a three-day strategic planning session with technical officers. This activity involved reviewing its existing vision & mission statements; reviewing and amending where necessary the strategic goals of the department to reflect current environmental situation and developing key performance indicators for standards development, industrial metrology, compliance, and awareness. This strategic session also focused on identifying current and potential risk of the department and developing risk management plans to monitor, minimize or mitigate the probability or impact of occurrence.

The output of these discussions are being used for the development of a three-year Strategic Plan that will assist the department in communicating its overall vision, mission and goals to its internal and external stakeholders.



Technical Achievements:

Standards Developments

Stage 30



Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG):

The Technical Committee (TC) for LPG was re-constituted and is currently in the revision of the first of 4 LPG standards: CD BZS201X LPG Specs.



Medical and Industrial Gases:

Ongoing development and revision of standards for Specification for marking and labelling of medical gas cylinders. Both standards are expected to be submitted to Standards Advisory Council (SAC) by March 2023.

Stage 20



Processed Foods:

The TC for Processed Foods has been established with responsibility to revise outdated food product standards, adoption of relevant regional and international standards and developing new standards that address current and emerging needs.

The committee is comprised of BAHA (both SPS and Food Safety Departments); Ministry of Health; Ministry of Agriculture: Agro-processing Unit; Marie Sharp's Fine Foods Ltd; James Brodies Ltd; Grace Kennedy Ltd; Pan American Health Organization (PAHO); BELTRAIDE; Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI); and the Belize Agro-Productive Sector Group (BAS).

Stage 20



Agricultural Commodities (Onion; Tomato; Carrots, Sweet Peppers, Hot Peppers; Pineapple; Cabbage and Honey):

The TC for Agriculture and Agricultural Products has been established with responsibility to revise outdated agricultural product standards, adoption of relevant regional and international standards and developing new standards that address current and emerging needs.

The committee is comprised of BAHA (SPS; Plant Health and Food Safety Departments); Ministry of Health; Ministry of Agriculture: (Non-Traditional Fruit Tree Program; Research Unit; Extensions); University of Belize - Central Farm Campus; Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI); Belize Marketing and Development Cooperation (BMDC); Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA); Pan American Health Organization (PAHO); BELTRAIDE; Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI); Belize Agro-Productive Sector Group (BAS).



Industrial Metrology

CALIBRATIONS:

2022 saw an increase in the number of sectors requesting calibration services from the BBS. Sectors requesting calibration services for mass standards, volumetric test measures, and non-automatic weighing instruments include aqua culture, food safety, testing laboratories, construction, academia, food processing, air transportation and industrial (Cement block production).

A Total of 26 calibration certificates have been issued in 2022 representing 57 calibrations (NAWI, MASS, VOLUME).

Compliance

MARKET SURVEILLANCE:

Continuous monitoring of the marketplace for compliance to the Metrology & Standards Acts safeguard the interest of consumers in Belize. This included the verification of scales used in trade, verification of industrial scales, verification of fuel pumps and LPG meters and verification of pre-packaged goods. Updated KPI's are as follows:

Activity	Target KPI's	YTD
Verification of Fuel Pumps	1400 Pumps	1080 Pumps
Verification of Commercial Scales	800 Scales	209 Scales
Verification of Industrial Scales	150 Scales	105 Scales
Verification of Net Content	1300 Items	335 Items
Verification of LPG Meters	150 Meters	Awaiting calibration of flow meter to carry out verifications.

Lessons Learnt:

1. Prioritization is extremely important in standards development given the impracticality of addressing the increasing demand for standards with the current resources. Interest has been expressed for the development of standards in the areas of Agriculture; Medical Gases; Processed Foods; Biodegradable Products; Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG); and Energy Efficiency.
2. Collaboration with key actors in the quality infrastructure framework is key to the execution of our mandates given the limited human and capital resources.
3. Continuous sensitization of stakeholders on standards, metrology and conformity assessment helps to improve the demand for BBS services.

Future Priority Areas:

1. National Quality Policy: BBS seeks to establish a National Quality Council (NQC), through endorsement from Cabinet. The NQC will serve as an apex body to oversee the promotion and implementation of programmes and strategies to operationalize the NQP.

2. Promulgation and Application of Food Related/Agriculture Standards: Application of the CALIDENA methodology to honey and onion sectors to foster quality in these value chains. This will result in the development of an implementation plan to address quality gaps in relation to standards. Standardization of other commodities namely cabbage, carrots, hot peppers, sweet peppers, tomato, and pineapple, will also be carried out.

3. Promulgation and Implementation of other Standards (Non-food): These include:

- **Fuels (2 standards):** Diesel and Gasoline - major stakeholders have been engaged to address a way forward for implementation of the standards by March 2023.
- **Biodegradable Products (2 standards) - Specification and labelling:** registration of biodegradable products through the Environmental (Pollution of Plastics) Regulations 2021 by the Department of the Environment. The Bureau is responsible for evaluation of conformity assessment documents submitted by importers/producers to determine compliance against the standards.

- **Energy Efficiency (3 standards):** Refrigeration, Lighting & Air Conditioning: implementation through the Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme (EELS).

4. Consumer Protection Policy:

Endorsement of a Consumer Protection Policy to guide the legal framework for combating fraudulent and deceptive commercial practices. The CARICOM Competition Commission (CCC), through the Ministry of Trade, is supporting Belize in vetting its draft policy and seeking to obtain endorsement from Cabinet. There is a drive in CARICOM to ensure that all member states finalize its Consumer Protection legal structure. Therefore, once Belize's Consumer Protection Policy is endorsed by Cabinet drafting instructions will be issued for the commencement of the legislation for Consumer Protection.

5. Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme (EELS):

During January to March of 2023, the BBS commence the pilot phase of the EELS with focus on refrigerators and freezers. During this quarter, stock keeping units (SKU's) information and declaration will be obtained from voluntary importers who have expressed interest in participating in the scheme. Thereafter, products that complies with the EE standards will be registered to BBS database. Once a product has been registered, the Importer can apply for the affixing of the EE labels to that product upon importation.

As progress is made in the piloting phase, ACs and lights (LEDs and CFL's) will be incorporated. The scheme is expected to become mandatory by April 2025 at which time the CARICOM Energy Efficiency Standards will be adopted as Belize National Standards.

Critical to this scheme is the awareness component which includes ensuring that key stakeholders such as importer, retailers and consumers understands the benefits of the EELS and can interpret the information on the EE labels when making purchasing decisions for any of these particular product classes. Training of sales representatives will be trained in March 2023 on the interpretation of the labels.

6. **Market Surveillance:** Continuous enforcement of Standards and Metrology Acts. This include the achievement of the following KPI's for market surveillance:

- Verification of 1,400 Fuel Pumps
- Verification of 150 Industrial Scales
- Verification of 800 Commercial Scales in Supermarkets
- Verification of 1,300 Pre-packaged Goods
- Verification of 100 LPG Meters

Recommendations and Conclusion:

Recommendation #1: Identify areas for collaboration and coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture's priority plan for effective and efficient utilization of financial, technical and human resources in order to maximize synergies in addressing quality issues in the agriculture, food security and enterprise portfolio.

Recommendation #2: Support to BBS implementation of Belize's National Quality Policy.

Recommendation #3: To promote and encourage the application of standards and use of measurement and conformity assessment services to improve the quality of Belize's products/services in both domestic and international markets.

Recommendation #4: Support the legal and regulatory framework review .

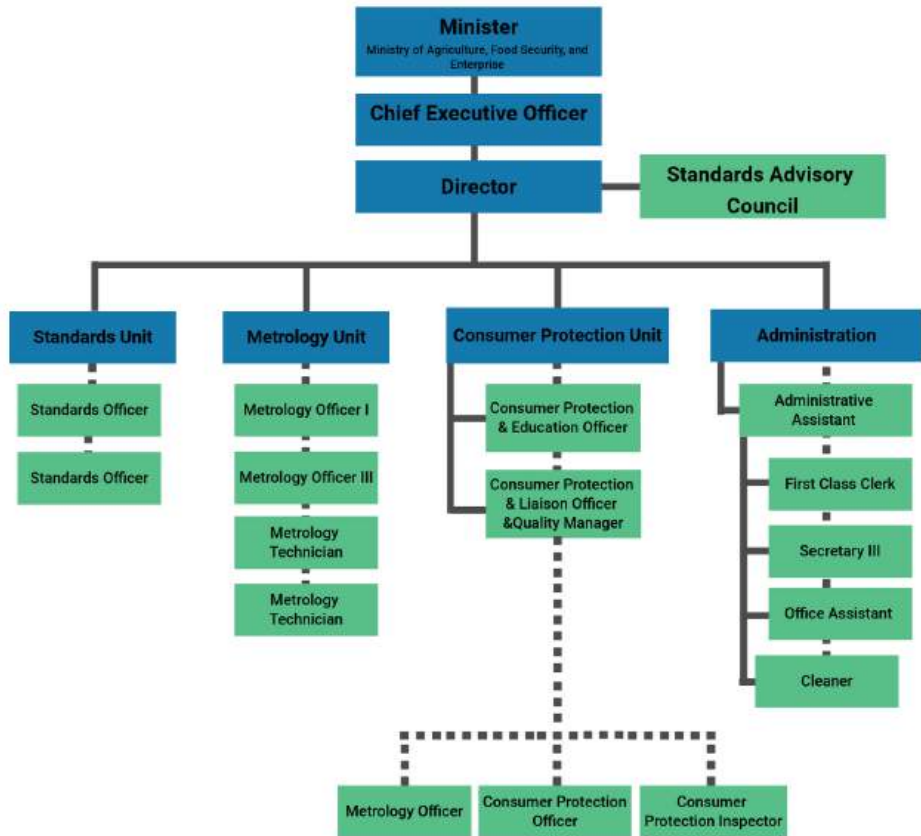
Recommendation #5: Institute fee structure for services provided by BBS.

Recommendation #6: Increase in human and capital resources to improve the delivery of BBS mandate under the Standards and Metrology Legislations.

Projecting forward, the Bureau foresees continuous growth and development through the implementation of its National Quality Policy. Implementation of the NQP will create a system where public and private sector institutions can coherently work towards the development of Belize's National Quality Infrastructure.

Annex:

Current Organizational Structure:





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