



Press Release
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COPANT GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2017

Vancouver hosted a week for regional collaboration in a global environment

The week of April 30 to May 5, 2017 were held jointly and simultaneously, the annual meetings of the Pan American Standards Commission ([COPANT](#)) and the Pacific Area Standards Congress ([PASC](#)).

This is the second time, after 10 years, that both regional organizations hold their joint annual meetings.



COPANT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

It was a week full of activities, beginning with the General Assembly of COPANT, which was attended by 112 delegates, representing 21 active members, 7 adherent members, 9 regional and international organizations, and 5 guest bodies.

This was the last Assembly in which Joe Bhatia (ANSI) chaired the meeting, as he culminated his two consecutive terms in which he served our organization, in his opening address he recounted the progress and achievements of the last four years, of which we can mention: greater involvement of members, training programs, promoting greater participation of members in international processes and better representation of the organization in regional and international forums.

During the first day, the four working groups on COPANT's strategic priorities met and then presented their reports regarding current progress and future work plans. The four working groups are: Capacity Building, International Participation, Conformity Assessment, and Regional Cooperation.



Participants of the COPANT-PASC joint meeting, Vancouver, Canada - May 3, 2017

We had the pleasant presence of two representatives of cooperation agencies, Niklas Cramer of [PTB](#) (Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt), who presented the progress of the two regional projects that we are carrying out together with IAAC (Inter American Accreditation Cooperation) and SIM (Inter-American System of Metrology), on quality infrastructure for Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency and for Biodiversity and Climate Change

Likewise, Juan Pablo Dávila, representative of [UNIDO](#) (United Nations Industrial Development Organization), presented the activities that they are developing in the region and the support that they are offering to the Quality Infrastructure Council of the Americas ([QICA](#)).

With regard to COPANT's training programs, these have increased with permanent courses for members on topics such as: standardization; conformity assessment; participation in international standardization; IT tools for standardization; participation in committees of ISO on conformity assessment, environmental management, energy management; improve participation in IEC; and a new course to be developed on market access and technical regulation.

To conclude the COPANT assembly meeting, two discussion sessions were held. One session was devoted to standardization for the service economy, in which members shared their experiences and successful cases in their countries. This discussion will lead to future actions to be developed in the region, it is noteworthy that one of the topics of greatest interest to members in the area of services is tourism. The need for greater communication and education in this area was emphasized, as well as training for service providers, consumers and users.

The other discussion session allowed to define the work program to promote greater participation of COPANT members in IEC activities, through a coordinated work plan between COPANT, FINCA (the Forum of IEC National Committees of the Americas) and IEC LARC (IEC Latin America Office).

During this meeting the new COPANT authorities were elected, assuming the Presidency of our organization [Ricardo Fragoso](#) (ABNT), the Vice-presidency is now in charge of Jesús Lucatero (DGN) and the Treasury remains in charge of Osvaldo Petroni (IRAM).

NETWORKING

For the second consecutive year a Speed Networking was organized during our week of activities, an opportunity for members to conduct their bilateral business meetings, in an environment suitable for it. The Speed Networking this year was held on Tuesday, May 2 during the afternoon, and more than 80 individual meetings were held.

COPANT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The COPANT Board of Directors meeting was held on May 2 in the afternoon, this time the meeting was chaired by Ricardo Fragoso (ABNT) as the new president, who was accompanied by the officers Jesús Lucatero (DGN) as vice president and Osvaldo Petroni (IRAM), as treasurer.

The members of the Board of Directors are: ANSI (United States) and DGN (Mexico), representing North America; OSN (El Salvador), SLBS (Santa Lucia) and NC (Cuba), representing Central America and the Caribbean; and IRAM (Argentina), ABNT (Brazil), INN (Chile), ICONTEC (Colombia) and INEN (Ecuador), representing South America.

Some of the topics discussed during this meeting were to rethink the structure of the week of COPANT to be of greater benefit to members and establish performance indicators, among others.

COPANT-PASC JOINT SESSION

On Wednesday, 3 May, a joint full-day session was held between COPANT and PASC, in which **a panel was organized for international organizations** such as [ISO](#), [IEC](#), [ITU](#) (International Telecommunication Union) and [WTO](#) (World Trade Organization), to share an update on the activities developed and to be developed, highlighting the emphasis given to both regions.

Representing [ISO](#), Nicolas Fleury, Acting Secretary-General, highlighted the selection of the new Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Mujica, who will take office on July 17. On the other hand, he commented that an IT strategy for ISO was approved, which includes a collaborative platform, data and interfaces, improved XML capabilities, comments and feedback, and relevant and related search results. He mentioned that the Council approved the new version of ISO POCOSA, the trade and copyright policy of ISO, which will come into force in January 2018. This new version gives more responsibility to members in distributing ISO publications, including national adoptions, and contains more requirements for members regarding their commercial distributors. He said that during the September General Assembly in Berlin, discussions will continue on the regional strategy approach that ISO will take with each region, in an exclusive workshop and a discussion session. Finally, he mentioned the activities planned to be carried out in both regions during this year.

In his presentation, James Shannon, President of [IEC](#), emphasized the following: for the revision of the new Master Plan, which is expected to be approved before the annual meeting in October, the comments received from both regions are being taken into account, the four themes that will reflect this plan will be a relevant ecosystem, a sustainable business model, a flexible organization, and agile operations. He stressed the work being done on LVDC, which is probably the most important technology to be addressed by IEC for many years. It is a low-cost, simple but high-level technology that offers many promises, including bringing energy to millions of people who do not have it and increasing energy efficiency in high-consumption environments such as data centers, hospitals or commercial buildings, Mr. Vimal Mahendru provided a presentation on this subject. He mentioned that in November there will be a forum on smart cities in Barcelona, on the other hand, many Technical Committees support the Internet of Things and intelligent manufacturing bringing their essential knowledge and experience.

Alexandra Gaspari, [ITU](#) Project Coordinator, introduced her presentation in the new vision of that organization to increase collaboration and regional cooperation. She mentioned the current activities of this organization with regard to standardization in areas such as international mobile security and telecommunications, as well as events organized for digital financial services, security in blocking aspects, ecological standards, IoT week and Kaleidoscope (ICTs for a sustainable world).

The [WTO](#) sent a recorded message by Hoe Lim, Director of Trade and Environment Division, in which he stressed that international standards are increasingly helping to connect products with markets, reducing transaction costs, productivity and interconnectivity in global supply chains; given that the average tariff on imports of industrial products has fallen from about 40% to 4%; there is a demand for more standards to address the concerns of industry and consumers regarding health, safety, environmental quality; and that global value chains rely heavily on compatible standards. However, according to a survey conducted by the International Trade Center, it has been found that conformity assessment procedures are the non-tariff measure most commonly applied by trading partners, creating unnecessary barriers to trade.

These procedures represent a particular challenge for developing countries and SMEs and it is important to promote further discussion on the issue of developing standards and guidelines on conformity assessment to reduce transaction costs, increase productivity and facilitate international trade.

Next, the **Workshop on Enabling Innovation through Standardization** was carried out, whose main themes were keynote presentations on What is innovation? by Sorin Cohn (BD Cohnsulting), presentations on How to enable your organization to innovative solutions by Sauw Kook Choy of SPRING Singapore and Leopoldo Colombo from IRAM, and finally two presentations on Marketing of innovative solutions through standardization by Dustin Tessier (Tesco Group) and Dustin Olender (AML Oceanographic). Breakout sessions to discuss these topics were then held.

The workshop focused on the relationship between standardization and innovation as an engine of economic growth, exploring the best practices for the development of international standards for new and emerging technologies that enable faster commercialization and market access. It helped participants to better understand how to identify and support innovation by guiding stakeholders through the international standardization system; how member organizations can position innovation and standardization as key factors in their national economic priorities; how to reach out to key innovators and stakeholders; and how to mobilize innovators to participate in the standardization system to compete and have greater market access on the world stage.

This workshop supported the strengthening of relationships and linkages between COPANT and PASC members to lead to greater collaboration in ISO and IEC; and to increase cooperation within regional organizations to meet the priorities set out in their respective Strategic Plans, specifically to develop and share communication materials for capacity development; and enhance the capacity of member countries to participate in international standardization.

PASC GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The highlights of the annual meeting of PASC that took place on May 4 and 5 were the presentation of the progress and plans of the Working Groups on Priority Projects, which deal with PASC 2020 and Communication; Partnership and Stakeholder Participation; and Capacity Building and Trade Facilitation.

On the other hand, there were two interesting presentations on the work of the regional offices of ISO and IEC in the Asia region.

PASC members then propose projects of potential interest to be presented on platforms such as ISO, IEC and APEC. Some of the topics presented are: ISO (IWA) Workshop on Resource-Driven Sanitation Systems, new project proposals for door-to-door refrigerated package delivery services, High-quality thermal energy infrastructure, Services Citizens for Continuity against disasters, Particular requirements for semi-integrated organic light emitting diode (OLED) modules (IEC TC34A (lamps)), among others.