

BELIZE BUREAU OF STANDARDS (BBS)

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY &
ENTERPRISE - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
29TH APRIL 2021**



Outline of Presentation

Introduction to the BBS

2020 Accomplishments

2021/2022 Expectations

Introduction to BBS



The Belize Bureau of Standards (BBS) is the national standards body (NSB) responsible for promoting efficiency and competitive production in goods and services, with Quality Infrastructure (QI) serving as the foundation in achieving this objective. The pillars of Standardization, Metrology, Conformity Assessment and Accreditation combined, serve to ensure that goods and services, whether produced domestically or imported, meet established regulatory requirements, such as those relating to the health and safety of consumers and the environment. The BBS is essentially responsible to protect, secure and safeguard the welfare of the country, a function carried out through the Supplies Control and Consumer Protection Units.

Vision:

To become Belize's premiere service institution for standards and quality.

Mission:

To facilitate, promote and encourage the use of quality services in Metrology, Standardization and Conformity Assessment thereby contributing to competitiveness of goods and services, facilitation of trade and the protection of consumers.

2020/2021 Accomplishments

Standards:

Standards development across national and regional projects included:

1. The **Environment: finalization** of the specification and labelling for biodegradable products;
2. In **Manufacturing: revision** of regional standards for sodium hypochlorite solutions (liquid chlorine bleach) and toilet tissue;
3. In **Agriculture: development** and **revision** of standards for packaged coconut water, wheat flour and white sugar; and
4. In **Merchandise Trade: labelling** of pre-packaged foods – front of package warning labelling and nutrition labelling.

Metrology:

Operationalization of three metrology laboratories (Grand Mass, Fine Mass and Volume). First time offer at the national level for **traceable calibration services** as follows:

1. Mass standards (1 mg to 1,000 kg)
2. Non-Automatic Weighing instruments (NAWI) (Class I, II, III, IIII)
3. Volumetric measuring instruments (10 ml L to 18.92 L - 5 gallons)

This institutional competence allowed the BBS to support BAHA in attaining accreditation of its PCR laboratory specific to NAWI.

2020/2021 Accomplishments

Supplies Control:

The BBS expanded and fine-tuned Regulations under the Supplies Control Act. These amendments included:

1. Expanding the **Price Regulated Goods** list (list requiring a maximum (%) markup) to include general sanitizers/cleaners for domestic and commercial application.
2. Expanding the list of goods requiring **import license** to support the conservation of foreign exchange, this included: fish; cheese, ice cream, toilet paper and flour.
3. Increased targeted inspections to determine compliance.

Compliance:

Maintained vigilance through monitoring and surveillance in the marketplace for compliance to the Supplies Control Act, Metrology Act & Standards Act. This included the following:

1. Price Controlled Goods – 853 items
2. Price Regulated Goods – 304 items
3. Industrial Scales – 111 scales
4. Fuel Pumps – 1,164 pumps
5. Commercial Scales in Supermarket – 369 scales
6. Verification of Net Content – 604 items

Awareness Initiatives

Biodegradable & Compostable Workshop

World Consumer Rights Day 2020 – Sustainability Fair

World Standards Day 2020 – Protecting the Planet with Standards – Poster Competition

Stakeholder Consultation on Belize's Draft National Quality Policy (NQP)



2021/2022 Expectations

National Quality Policy:

Pursue the endorsement of Belize's National Quality Policy and Implementation Plan. This policy serves as the basic government instrument that sets out the objectives of the Quality Infrastructure system in relation to Metrology, Standardization, Accreditation and Conformity Assessment, to build the foundation for the facilitation of effective trade. (Final draft was completed with Technical Assistance from the British Standards Institution (BS) through the Commonwealth Standards Network (CSN)).

Promulgation and Application of Food Related/Agriculture Standards:

Prioritization of food related/agriculture standards across production and processes mainly among Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (MSMEs). This includes the revision of: Honey; Onion; Potato; Rice; Dairy (Whole Milk) Standards; the establishment of new standards: such as pre-packaged Coconut Water and Coconut Oil. As a result, the uptake of these standards is expected to improve food safety, the quality of food products and strengthened partnership in the development and application of standards and conformity assessment systems.

Consumer Protection Policy:

Pursue the approval of the Consumer Protection Policy Paper. With the pandemic the cost of living has skyrocket making it more important now more than ever to ensure that Consumers are properly protected in the marketplace. The draft policy requires approval from Cabinet, then drafting instructions will be issued for work to commence on the legislation.

Promulgation of other Standards (Non-food):

These include:

- Fuels (2 standards): Diesel and Gasoline;
- Tires (4 standards): New and Used Tires;
- Biodegradable Products (2 standards): Specification and labelling;
- Energy Efficiency (3 standards): Refrigeration, Lighting & Air Conditioning;
- Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) (4 standards up for revision); specification for LPG; marking and labelling of cylinders; testing and requalification of portable cylinders
- Manufacturing (2 standards): specification for toilet tissue; liquid chlorine bleach.
- Medical Gases (2 standards): specification and labelling of medical gases (oxygen; medical air; carbon dioxide; nitrogen and nitrous oxide)

2021/2022 Expectations

National Measurement System:

Improve the national measurement system of Belize by:

- Revision of the National Metrology Act
- Provision of mass and volume calibration services (pilot program)
- Strengthening of the physical traceability structure (E1 Mass standards)

Metrology Laboratories:

Continuous development of the BBS' quality management system as it seek to attain international recognition of its metrology laboratories.

- ISO/IEC 17025:2017 gap analysis
- Mass interlaboratory comparisons

Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme:

Belize was selected by CARICOM as one of the piloting countries to implement a regional energy efficiency labelling scheme on selected appliances namely lighting, refrigerators and air conditioners. To date Belize has partnered with three importers across the three product classes to implement the scheme in a voluntary phase, procured a specialized printer to print EE labels, procured EE labels and developed a procedural manual to assist in implementation. The scheme will be piloted as a voluntary program thereafter upon adoption of the standards nationally, develop into a mandatory program. The BBS expects to generate revenue for its sustainability. (This initiative is being executed regionally by the CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ) under the Quality for Sustainable Energy in the Caribbean (QSEC) Project.)

2021/2022 Expectations

Market Surveillance:

The BBS will continue enforcing its legal mandates in 2021. This include KPI's for market surveillance activities namely:

- Price Controlled Good's – 560 Items
- Price Regulated Good's – 560 Items
- Verification of Fuel Pumps – 1,400 Fuel Dispensers
- Verification of Industrial Scales – 100 scales
- Verification of Commercial Scales in Supermarkets – 600 scales
- Verification of Pre-packaged Goods – 1,230 pre-packaged goods
- Port Inspections – To confirm compliance with import/export licenses.
- Compliance Program for New Tyres

Belize Electronic Licensing & Permit System:

Launch and full utilization of the new online licensing portal designed to facilitate business and trade by allowing companies/individual to apply for items requiring import/export license from one single window portal. (Designed by Central Information Technology Office (CITO) through funding from Hyweb.)

Projects

- 11th EDF-TBT Component
 - Calibration Laboratories: Repair and upgrade of BBS air handling unit
 - Calidena Value Chain: Quality in the LPG Sector
 - Quality for Sustainable Energy in the Caribbean (QSEC) Project: Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme
- IX Technical and Scientific Bilateral Program between Mexico and Belize
 - Attachment training and virtual training
 - Standards and Conformity Assessment
- CDB Standby Facility
 - Mass standards and handling equipment; and Trainings
- SIM Membership
 - Trainings
 - NMI networking



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