

CIPM MRA Case Study

Singapore has established a reputation for having the region's most comprehensive suite of aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) capabilities. It was estimated that the local aerospace industry employs over 1000 new workers each year. According to a report, the industry contributed about US\$ 4.3 billion in 2007.

In early 2008, one of the Singapore aerospace companies launched its new multi-million dollar engine test facility that was designed to test the next generation commercial and military engines. The local company provides a comprehensive range of aircraft engineering services, covering heavy maintenance, interior modification and cockpit upgrades of wide bodied aircrafts. They are also approved as a repair station by the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS), the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and other airworthiness authorities.

In September of 2008, the company was audited by an FAA auditor from the US. When going through the documentation, the auditor asked about the traceability of their pressure gauge calibration. Since their instruments were sent to the National Metrology Centre (NMC), A*STAR, for calibration, the company contacted the NMC as well as the BIPM to verify that NMC's calibration certificates are equivalent to the ones issued by NIST. The BIPM answered in the affirmative - that both NIST and NMC are recognised under the CIPM MRA. NMC also followed up on the matter with the local company. The FAA auditor understood and accepted the explanation, and the company cleared the audit.

The above case attests to the importance of the CIPM MRA. In Singapore, about 60 accredited calibration laboratories and 190 private testing laboratories as well as businesses benefit from the formal recognition – in terms of tangible cost savings, unnecessary delays and transportation risks in having to send instruments overseas for calibration. In addition, the CIPM MRA also serves to provide the technical basis for other wider agreements, such as government-to-government Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) aimed at lowering trade barriers.

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