

New Pact to Cut Cost and Time for Exporters

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Exporters of electrical and electronic products could be saving up to 50 per cent on certification costs as well as slashing the time to get to their markets under a new agreement that will be signed today.

Singapore will join the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Mexico, Taiwan and South Korea in inking the pact on product certification.

Singapore actually qualified for the process last December and has been reaping the benefits since.

Today's signing ceremony is merely the official confirmation.

The agreement has meant that companies may need to have their products certified only once in Singapore before they are exported to a member country.

The new arrangement means Singapore's product certification process is now recognized in a total of 26 countries.

The arrangement will be signed by the Singapore Accreditation Council (SAC), the authority that determines which local bodies can issue certification.

These bodies test products to ensure they meet production standards in the importing country.

Mr. Richard Hong, the senior vice-president of certification at TUV SUD PSB, one of the bodies that issue product certification here, said exporters may be able to save between 30 and 50 per cent in costs.

Mr. Joe Cheu, the sales and marketing director at InfoWave, which exports vehicle-based electronic products to Europe and Australia, said: "Previously, we would send our products to another country to have tests run on them before getting certification."

"Now, we can use the local certification body, which offers flexibility and convenience and... allows us to achieve certification for our products more efficiently and cost-effectively than before."

Mr. Loh Khum Yean, the chief executive of Spring Singapore, which manages SAC, said the agreement "comes at a time when access to global markets is becoming increasingly important and the ability to tap markets competitively in terms of costs and time to market is needed".

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