



# STANDARDS AND CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT

## Excerpt from 2010 Country Commercial Guide

### **Doing Business in the United Arab Emirates: 2010 Country Commercial Guide for U.S. Companies**

#### **Overview**

The UAE has established a standards organization responsible for formulating and enforcing UAE/GCC standards. This organization, the Emirates Authority for Standardization and Metrology (ESMA), is an independent entity. However, the national and emirate governments, as well as professional associations, are constantly reviewing standards requirements.

Currently, government agencies and private firms stipulate the standards on a project-by-project basis. This allows for a wide range of acceptable product performance, makes health and safety monitoring difficult, and permits the use of low quality products and manipulation of tender specifications. ISO 9000 certification was first introduced and granted to a UAE company in 1993. Since then, more have received the certification, and the EU is funding a standards center in the UAE to implement ISO 9000 certification.

#### **Standards Organizations**

ESMA is headquartered in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the UAE, and maintains a branch office in Dubai. ESMA has recently formed four major divisions/departments within its organization including standards, accreditation, conformity and metrology. Lists of standards are available at ESMA's head office in Abu Dhabi and branch office in Dubai. Following is the contact address of ESMA's head office and the various divisions within the organization:

Emirates Authority for Standardization and Metrology (ESMA)  
P.O. Box 2166  
Abu Dhabi, UAE  
Phone: +971 2 671 1110  
Fax: +971 2 671 0999  
Website: [www.esma.ae](http://www.esma.ae)  
P.O. Box 48666  
Dubai, UAE  
Phone: +971 4 294 9909  
Fax: +971 4 294 4112  
Email: [esma@esma.ae](mailto:esma@esma.ae)  
Contact: Eng. Mohamed M. Saleh Badri, Acting Director General

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Emirates National Accreditation System (ENAS)  
P.O. Box 48666  
Dubai, UAE  
Phone: +971 4 294 4434  
Fax: +971 4 294 4428  
Email: [accreditation@esma.ae](mailto:accreditation@esma.ae)  
Contact: Ms. Amina Hassan, Deputy Director

Emirates Conformity & Assessment Scheme  
P.O. Box 48666  
Dubai, UAE  
Phone: +971 4 295 1626  
Fax: +971 4 294 4428  
Email: [confirmity@esma.ae](mailto:confirmity@esma.ae)  
Contact: Mr. Abdulla Abdul Khader, Director

Emirates Metrology Department  
P.O. Box 48666  
Dubai, UAE  
Phone: +971 4 294 4434  
Fax: +971 4 294 4428  
Email: [metrology@esma.ae](mailto:metrology@esma.ae)  
Contact: Eng. Mohammad Al Mulla, Director

### Conformity Assessment

ESMA's conformity department is responsible for implementing specialized programs such as Quality and Conformity Marks, Conformity Certification according to Internationally approved methods. Conformity assures compliance to either national or internationally approved standards. Compliant products are issued with Certificates. These Certificates increase the level of trustworthiness in national products, and accordingly raise their ability to compete in the foreign markets. The Conformity department builds databases for products and companies that deal with conforming products. In addition, conformity personnel participate in conferences, organizations, authorities and committees and meetings for activities related to conformity. The Conformity Department consists of three main sections: local conformity section, international conformity section and inspection.

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### **Product Certification**

ESMA practices its authority and responsibility to ensure safety, health, economical and environmental protection by ensuring that services and consumer commodities are of quality and in conformity with the National standards. Whenever National or Gulf Standards are not available, ESMA uses international or foreign standards suitable to the UAE environment and conditions, in terms of health and safety requirements.

The Emirates Authority for Standardization & Metrology (ESMA) implemented the Emirates Conformity Assessment Scheme (ECAS), as a system combining conformity assessment and certification for products in the local market. In addition, exporters of regulated products may choose to obtain a certificate of conformity for their exported shipments. Certificates of Conformity are issued for products that comply with National or Gulf Standards. Whenever these standards are unavailable, other approved standards such as international, or foreign can alternatively be used.

### **Accreditation**

Test reports from any accredited or approved laboratory shall be submitted to ESMA. These reports shall be reviewed and the compliance level to standards is assessed. If all the essential requirements are not fulfilled, the applicant will be informed of the relevant standards and/or the steps needed to meet these essential requirements. These steps could include type testing or modification of the product according to the observed discrepancy.

### **Publication of Technical Regulations**

Currently, Emirates Conformity Assessment Scheme (ECAS) applies to five product categories (toys; automotive car batteries; paints; automotive lubricating oils; and synthetic detergents – household synthetic powdered detergents for household use). The list is not intended to be comprehensive and more products may be added at a future date. The addition of more products is based on assessment of consumer exposure to hazards as well as the extent to which such products comply with the national standards on a voluntary basis.

Products added to the regulated products list will be advertised at least two months prior to implementation, in order to allow sufficient time to assess such products and demonstrate compliance. The ECAS procedures and guidelines provide comprehensive information on the requirements of the Emirates Conformity Assessment Scheme (ECAS). It explains the steps required for compliance and how Certificates of Conformity can be obtained. These guidelines also contain the requirements related to the self-declaration and registration processes.

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Regulated Products under this Scheme are listed on ESMA's web site. Any clarifications can be obtained by contacting the authority. The Authority can provide comprehensive details on the scope of products regulated under the Scheme. The Authority can be contacted for any clarification concerning regulated products. In addition, the Authority can issue a formal Clarification Letter to illuminate whether the product is regulated or not. This letter is valid for a period of one year from its date of issue to prove the status of the products, subject to no alterations or changes to the regulated products list.

E-mail: [minila.mathews@mail.doc.gov](mailto:minila.mathews@mail.doc.gov) for additional information from the U.S. Commercial Service for the UAE.

### **Labeling and Marking**

The Emirates Authority for Standardization and Metrology is currently developing packaging and product labeling standards. Please visit ESMA web site or contact the Conformity Department directly at the following address:

Conformity Department  
Emirates Authority for Standardization & Metrology  
P.O. Box: 48666  
Dubai - United Arab Emirates  
Telephone: + 971 4 295 1626  
Fax: + 971 4 295 1898  
E-mail on: [conformity@esma.ae](mailto:conformity@esma.ae)  
Web site: <http://www.esma.ae>

### **Contacts**

E-mail: [minila.mathews@mail.doc.gov](mailto:minila.mathews@mail.doc.gov) for additional information from the U.S. Commercial Service for the UAE.

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