

Compulsory Standards News



"With Your Safety in Mind"

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An official publication of the Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA)



INSIDE:

**ZCSA Wins 2nd
Most e-Transformed,
Innovative Award**

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EDITORIAL CORNER...

Welcome to the Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) Special Newsletter Edition for the year 2023.

This Special Newsletter Edition has mainly covered key activities of the Agency undertaken from March 2023 to December 2023.

As you are aware, ZCSA was established by the Compulsory Standards Act No. 3 of 2017 to administer, maintain and enforce compulsory standards for the purpose of public safety, health, consumer and environmental protection.

Under Section 5 of the Compulsory Standards Act No. 3 of 2017, the specific functions of ZCSA are to:

- Administer, maintain and ensure compliance with compulsory standards;
- Give premarket approval of high-risk commodities falling within the scope of compulsory standards;
- Conduct market surveillance for products falling within the scope of compulsory standards in order to monitor post market compliance of commodities with compulsory standards;
- Educate the public on compulsory standards and provide public information for the protection of the consumers on products and services which do not comply with the Act;
- Cooperate with Ministries and other State institutions and international organisations in enforcing compulsory standards; and
- Do all such things related to, or incidental to the functions of the Agency under the Act.

Zeroing on the Agency's function of educating the public with Compulsory Standards, the Agency performed very well this year.

Specifically, ZCSA intensified its Public Education using different platforms in a bid to protect consumers and the environment from potentially unsafe products which are covered by Compulsory Standards.

The platforms used include Market Surveillance Inspections, Roadshows, Exhibitions, Trade Fairs, tailor-made Stakeholder Engagement workshops, Mainstream and Digital Media, among others.

For example, ZCSA hosted a Stakeholder Engagement workshop in Lusaka early this year for close to 40 Journalists coming from 10 provinces of Zambia.

This was in a bid to build capacity in journalists so that they effectively educate the public on Compulsory Standards and ZCSA's mandate in general.

So far, journalists across Zambia have responded positively going by the many stories which were published and aired in the Mainstream Media (i.e. Television (TV), Radio and Newspaper) as well as Digital media platforms (i.e. online and social media).

More than 58 stories and nine documentaries have been aired on different TV stations across Zambia on the subject of Compulsory Standards and ZCSA's mandate in general between March and November 2023.

Further, more than 62 stories were aired on different commercial, community and Christian radio stations in all provinces of Zambia while more than 55 articles were published in different newspapers during the period under review.

More than 53 articles were published by different online and social media platforms while ZCSA responded to more than 25 press or media queries from journalists across Zambia on the subject of Compulsory Standards.

The frequently reported Compulsory Standard in the media was the **Zambian Standard (ZS) 559: Inspection and Acceptance Criteria for Used Textile (Salaula)**.

This standard was declared compulsory by Statutory Instrument No. 120 of 2006 thereby making the importation and sale of used textile products containing undergarments illegal.

ZS 559 prohibits the importation and sale of used textile products containing undergarments and night wear like pyjamas, night gowns, ladies and gents' briefs, brassieres camisoles and vests, among others.

This standard was declared compulsory to protect the safety of consumers because used textile products that are worn in very close contact with the skin may cause ailments or transmit ailments to secondary users of the textile products.

During the year 2023, ZCSA seized more than 40 Bales of used undergarments valued at more than K180,000.

With intensified Public Education and Enforcement activities, the compliance rate on regulated imported and locally manufactured products increased to 89 percent in 2023 compared to 85 per cent in 2022 according to the Agency's survey.

ZCSA will create more awareness on its mandate in 2024 and beyond in a quest to protect consumers and the environment.

EDITORIAL TEAM



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Editor



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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CORNER...



Further, it is ZCSA's hope that the Strategic Plan will serve as a blueprint for the execution of the Agency's programmes during the period 2022-2026 and ultimately contribute to the realisation of Zambia's development outcomes espoused by the Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP).

As Management and staff of ZCSA, we would like to reemphasise our commitment to ensuring that the Agency operates within the guidelines provided by the Strategic Plan.

Management further commits to ensuring all available resources are channelled to ensure the effective, consistent and sustained implementation of the strategic plan.

We pledge to seize every opportunity to improve the way we conduct our activities and to evolve with evolving technology and regulation techniques.

ZCSA has committed itself to observing the following Core Values, namely: integrity, teamwork, hard work, innovation, confidentiality and accountability.

To ZCSA members of staff, I urge you to take full ownership in the implementation of the Strategic Plan. It is one thing to have a good document and another thing to implement the same document.

We all have a significant role to play in Zambia's development by regulating products through robust, impactful frameworks that benefit consumers in respect of the safety of products.

I wish to assure you that ZCSA remains committed to its vision of being a credible and efficient compulsory standards regulator.

The Agency will also live by its mission of efficiently administering and maintaining Compulsory Standards for public health and safety and consumer and environmental protection.

Enjoy the Newsletter.
God bless you all.

GERALD CHIZINGA
Executive Director

Compliments of the Season to all.
In this edition of the Newsletter, I will focus my attention on the launch of Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) Strategic Plan for the period of 2022 to 2026 which took place at Hilton Hotel in Lusaka on October 31, 2023.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all of you internal and external stakeholders who generously helped us make it this far in our journey.

The Strategic Plan is our guiding light which aims at enhancing the implementation of the Agency's mandate as provided for under the Compulsory Standards Act No. 3 of 2017 which is to administer, maintain and enforce compulsory standards for the purpose of public safety and health, consumer and environmental protection.

It is also expected to make it easier for our stakeholders to understand the role they can play in contributing to the attainment of the Agency's objectives.

The Strategic Plan has identified two (2) thematic areas of focus and their related strategic results as follows:

- a) Compulsory standards regulatory efficiency resulting in optimal public health and safety, consumer and environmental protection; and
- b) Operational excellence resulting in efficient and effective service delivery

Further, the Strategic Plan has the following seven Strategic Objectives:

- 1. Improve enforcement and monitoring of Compulsory Standards;
- 2. Promote Small to Medium Enterprises (SME)'s compliance capacity to Compulsory Standards;
- 3. Improve Stakeholder collaboration;
- 4. Improve Financial Management;
- 5. Enhance digitalisation of operational processes;
- 6. Improve Human Capital Productivity and Culture; and
- 7. Improve Institutional Infrastructure and Logistical Services.

The Agency's mandate entails the implementation of Compulsory Standards so that all Zambians consume safe products.

It is our responsibility, as a regulator of products covered by Compulsory Standards, to ensure that such products are safe for the benefit of consumers and the environment.

We pledge to seize every opportunity to improve the way we conduct our activities and to evolve with evolving technology and regulation techniques."



Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) staff display the second Most electronic (e)-Transformed and Innovative Institution award. ZCSA won the Award during the 2023 African Public Service Day in Lusaka on June 23, 2023.

ZCSA Wins 2nd Most e-Transformed, Innovative Award

The Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) has won the second prize for the 2023 African Public Service Day under the Category of Most electronic (e)-Transformed and Innovative Institution.

ZCSA Inspector under Domestic Quality Monitoring Department, Mitolo Musuumba and the Agency's Head of Communications Brian Hatyoka received the award from Commerce, Trade and Industry Minister, Chipoka Mulenga, in Lusaka on June 23, 2023.

This year's African Public Service Exhibition and Day were held at Arcades Shopping Mall under the theme "Transforming the Public Service for Excellence and Realisation of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)".

Over the years, ZCSA has been transforming for Excellence and Realisation of the AfCFTA in many ways.

In 2022, ZCSA was accredited by the Southern African Development Community Accreditation Services (SADCAS) in a bid to promote economic integration on the African continent.

Accreditation was awarded by SADCAS following an assessment of the Agency's quality management to the requirements of the ISO/IC 17020.

The scope of the Accreditation is Inspection of Bottled Water and Maize Meal, i.e. two key products which attract both local and regional consumers.

This attainment of accreditation has enhanced recognition of Zambian products and protection of consumers.

ZCSA has further transformed the Public Service for Excellence and realization of the AfCFTA by helping local

industries to improve on quality of locally manufactured products subject to compulsory standards.

In addition, ZCSA interacts with local manufactures and assist to promote quality and value addition in the industry.

By improving quality of products, local manufacturers drive many benefits for their products covered by compulsory including access to regional and international markets.

This has helped manufactures to access regional and international markets.

ZCSA is among few Gov't Agencies connected to Zambia Electronic Single Window(ZESW)!

Currently, ZCSA is one of the few Government Agencies that are connected to the Zambia Electronic Single Window(ZESW).

This move has helped the Agency to intervene in real time on all submitted consignments of goods.

ZCSA's clients are informed via the system on the requirements in the clearance process.

This connectivity has definitely improved the way business is conducted by reducing time our clients spend at the borders.

The ZESW is a good tool for trade facilitation and ZCSA is riding on this system to facilitate trade in

Zambia and in the region through quick and effective border clearance of goods.

Further, ZCSA has computerized most of its internal processes to enhance operational efficiency and service delivery.

To reinforce this new way of service provision, ZCSA introduced services on the Government Service Bus (GSB). This was preceded by training of stakeholders, including clients.

The Agency's clients have since started accessing the services through the GSB, which has increased efficiency.

In addition, ZCSA has effectively coordinated the collection of Non-Tax Revenue (NTR) using the GSB and the Single Payment Point (SPP) on the ZESW.

Being digital platforms, the GSB and SPP have helped ZCSA to reduce the cost of doing business through the provision of effective and efficient services to the general public.

This has also helped to realise Government's vision of modernising all services provided by Government institutions.

The services integrated on the GSB and payment platform are clearance of used motor vehicles, foreign road tank vehicle inspection, issuance of batch certificate, local road tank vehicle inspections, issuance of Annual Import Quality certificates, and permit to supply products and timber inspections.

This migration onto the digital platform has enabled Zambian and other users access the current ZCSA services from any location remotely and reduce queues for people seeking these services.

Hon. Mulenga Counsels ZCSA Board Members



Commerce, Trade and Industry Minister, Chipoka Mulenga (right) with ZCSA Board Chairperson, Ian Mupeta.

Commerce, Trade and Industry Minister, Chipoka Mulenga has urged the Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) Board to supplement Government efforts in revamping the economy by supporting businesses and industries in the country.

Mr Mulenga said the new dawn administration under the leadership of President Hakainde Hichilema was working hard to revamp the economy, hence the ZCSA Board must help the industry and businesses to thrive.

The Minister was speaking at his office on May 3, 2023 when ZCSA Board members paid a courtesy call on him.

He said Board members, who were appointed in April 2023, should use their positions to support the business community.

"You must help the businesses to thrive. As you interact with companies and business owners, get to a point where they support economic growth," he said.

Mr Mulenga added, "As you regulate the industry, guide industry players for them to do the right things. In an event you find a company that is producing many products and one product is found wanting, isolate the defective product and let the business continue."

He said the ZCSA Board should act differently by doing something unique that would raise the Agency's profile by the end of 2023.

The Minister further challenged the board members to get best practices from other similar regulating agencies beyond Zambia.

Speaking at the same event, ZCSA Board Chairperson Ian Mupeta assured the Minister that the Board would hit the ground running in a quest to deliver its mandate.

"Honorable Minister, we are hitting the ground running. From here, we will get a briefing from ZCSA Management. We take our assignment seriously. Our appointment to the Board shows the confidence you have in us. We are very thankful. We will serve to the best of our abilities," he said.

ZCSA, a statutory body under the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry (MCTI) established by the Compulsory Standards Act No. 3 of 2017, to administer, maintain and enforce compulsory standards for the purpose of public safety and health and consumer and environmental protection.



Commerce, Trade and Industry Minister Chipoka Mulenga (middle) interacts with ZCSA Board Chairperson Ian Mupeta (left) as other ZCSA Board members look on. This was in May 2023 at the Minister's Office when the Board members paid a courtesy call on Mr Mulenga.

Picture by MOSES SAKAPI/ ZCSA Communications Unit



Benchmarking in South Africa.

ZCSA, Others Undertake Benchmarking Visits to Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa

The Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) Board and Boards of other National Quality Institutions (NQI) under the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry (MCTI) have concluded their benchmarking visits of similar institutions in the region.

These visits, which have been undertaken in Ethiopia, Kenya and South Africa, were aimed at picking vital lessons on how similar institutions operate elsewhere and identify best practices which could be implemented in Zambia.

In December 2023, the ZCSA Board Chairperson led a delegation of Board members from other statutory bodies under MCTI to South Africa.

This was on a benchmarking study visit to National Quality Institutions of South Africa to understand, appreciate, and draw lessons on the level of development of the National Quality Infrastructure and Governance of institutions.

ZCSA Board Chairperson Ian Mupeta said the benchmarking study visit to South Africa's National Quality Infrastructure Institutions enhanced collaboration between the two countries in the area of standards.

Speaking when his delegation paid a courtesy call on Zambia High Commissioner to South Africa Mazuba Monze, Mr Mupeta said the study visit created a platform for the delegation to meet relevant institutions, share knowledge, and learn from each other on best practices aimed at improving standards and identify areas of collaboration between the two countries.

This is according to a press statement issued by First Secretary for Press and Public Relations at the Zambia High Commission South Africa, Tamara Nyirenda.

Mr Mupeta said the visit gave insights to the Zambian delegation on how best National Quality Institutions could contribute to national development as well as interfacing with South African institutions.

He said the idea was to pick vital lessons on how similar institutions operate and identify best practices which can be implemented in Zambia.

Mr Mupeta said the Zambian Government established the National Quality Policy (NQP) to align the National Quality Infrastructure Institutions with international best



Benchmarking in Ethiopia.

practice and that the policy provided for the restructuring of the National Quality Infrastructure Institutions by reorganizing and establishing new ones.

He said the reforms included restructuring of the Zambia Bureau of Standards (ZABS) to hive off the regulatory functions of enforcing standards, establishment of ZSCA to be responsible for the enforcement of mandatory standards and the Zambia Metrology Agency (ZMA) formerly the Zambian Weights and Measures Agency (ZWMA) to be responsible for national measurement standards.

He thanked the Zambia High Commission in South Africa for facilitating the visit and for the support rendered to the delegation.

Speaking at the same event, Ms Monze said such engagements between Zambia and other countries in the region were important as they enhance knowledge and understanding between countries.

Ms Monze said the benchmarking visit benefited the nation as it provided a platform for establishing areas of collaboration and partnerships.

The Zambian delegation concluded its study tour of National Quality Infrastructure Institutions in South Africa on December 8, 2023.

The benchmarking included various programs such as consultative meetings and tours such as visiting the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, South African National Accreditation System (SANAS), National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS), and the National Metrology Institute of South Africa (NMISA), among others.

In September 2023, ZCSA Board members alongside ZMA and ZABS Board Members conducted a benchmarking visit of Ethiopian Conformity Assessment Enterprise (ECAE), among other institutions.

Another delegation of Board members for National Quality Infrastructure institutions visited the Kenya Accreditation Service (KENAS), Kenya Bureau of Standards, among other institutions in September 2023.



Benchmarking in Kenya.



Commerce, Trade and Industry Permanent Secretary (second from left) and ZCSA Board Chairperson Ian Mupeta (second from right) display the Strategic Plan.

ZCSA Launches 2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan

The Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) has launched its Strategic Plan for the period 2022 to 2026.

The launch of the 2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan for the Agency was necessitated by the expiry of the 2019-2021 Strategic Plan and the need to align programmes to key priorities areas in the Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP).

This is in accordance with the National Planning and Budgeting Act no. 1 of 2020 which requires an institution to prepare its Strategic Plan in line with the National Development Plan (NDP).

The purpose for the development of the Strategic Plan and Balanced Score Card was to establish an operational and performance assessment framework which will provide strategic direction to the Agency during the period 2022 – 2026.

Commerce, Trade and Industry Minister Chipoka Mulenga commended ZCSA for the launch of the Strategic Plan.

Mr Mulenga also applauded the Agency for its continued efforts in administering, maintaining and ensuring compliance with compulsory standards for the purpose of public safety and health, consumer and environmental protection.

He said this recently in a speech read for him by Commerce, Trade and Industry Permanent Secretary (PS) John Mulongoti during the launch of ZCSA's Strategic Plan for 2022 – 2026.

Mr Mulenga commended the Agency for the gains attained so far in ensuring that products being sold on the market comply with compulsory standards.

"As you may be aware, Zambia will soon begin trading under the framework establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area. As we position

ourselves to enhance our exports both in the region and beyond, the Agency should continue to play a supportive role by ensuring that the manufactured products meet the technical requirements of both local and international markets and are also protected from unfair competition that may be posed by foreign manufactured products. This will eventually, help support the growth of the Zambian industry," he said.

ZCSA Board Chairperson, Ian Besa Mupeta, said the Board would monitor and evaluate the performance of the Agency against budgets and the Plan.

...all available resources are channelled to ensure the effective, consistent and sustained implementation of the Strategic Plan!"

Mr Mupeta said ZCSA was committed to enhancing effective enforcement and public education on products covered by Compulsory Standards in a bid to instill confidence in products available on the market.

He said Compulsory Standards played an



Mr John Mulongoti.

important role in the economy by supporting growth of industry through the production of good quality, safe, reliable and competitive products.

"It is worth noting that unsafe products can lead to loss of life and property, cause harm to the environment and create barriers to legitimate trade," Mr Mupeta said.

ZCSA Executive Director, Gerald Chizinga, said the Strategic Plan was expected to make it easier for stakeholders to understand the role they could play in contributing to the attainment of the Agency's objectives.

Mr Chizinga commended stakeholders, clients, Management Development Division (MDD) of Cabinet Office and Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry for their input and guidance during the preparation of the strategic plan.

"As Management and staff of ZCSA, we would like to re-emphasise our commitment to ensuring that the Agency operates within the guidelines provided by the strategic plan. Management further commits to ensuring all available resources are channelled to ensure the effective, consistent and sustained implementation of the Strategic Plan," he said.

Stop Cheating, Fertilizer Traders Warned

The Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) has warned traders to stop the practice of illegal repackaging and mixing of chemical fertilizer with unknown substances with a view of deceiving consumers.

ZCSA Head of Communications, Brian Hatyoka, said traders must avoid supplying substandard fertilizer on the market as such illegal practices might harm consumers and the environment.

He said the Agency would not hesitate to seize compromised fertilizer products from erring traders and prosecute them for adulterating the commodity on the market.

This is according to a press statement Mr Hatyoka issued recently following laboratory results which confirmed that some bags of sampled fertilizer brands were not compliant with prescribed standards due to adulteration.

In October 2023, a combined team of ZCSA officials and other state institutions quarantined bags of different fertilizer brands in some parts of the Copperbelt and Northern Provinces.

This followed reports of illegal repackaging and mixing of fertilizer with unknown substances with a view of deceiving consumers by some traders.

The bags were quarantined pending analysis of the samples collected.

Preliminary results indicated that the quality of fertilizer in some bags was compromised by the alleged illegal mixing with unknown substances thereby making the product non-compliant with relevant compulsory standards.

Mr Hatyoka said the compromised product would be disposed of in line with the provisions of the Compulsory Standards Act No. 3 of 2017 once all the samples collected were analysed.

He said ZCSA would consider all the available options including prosecution of the culprits for adulterating the commodity on the market.

To prevent recurrence of such cases, ZCSA and other state institutions will intensify its monitoring activities such as market surveillance inspections and spot checks on the product especially as we approach the planting season.

"The Agency will continue to create awareness among consumers on the need to buy fertilizer only from reputable suppliers to avoid falling prey to acts of deception by some unscrupulous traders," Mr Hatyoka said.

He said the Agency was committed to ensuring that fertilizer is supplied in compliance with compulsory standards in a quest to protect consumers and the environment.

ZCSA is a statutory body established by the Compulsory Standards Act No. 3 of 2017 to Administer, maintain and ensure compliance with compulsory standards for public health and safety, consumer and environmental protection.

The Agency's mandate is implemented by inspection and testing of products covered by compulsory standards, market surveillance inspections and public education on compulsory standards, among other functions.

ZCSA regulates fertilizer by administering the following compulsory standards:

- ZS 327 Blended (physical mixture) Fertilizers
- ZS 431 Compound Fertilizers
- ZS 605 Fertilizers - Urea
- ZS 606 Fertilizers – Ammonia Nitrate
- ZS 607 Fertilizers- Calcium Ammonia Nitrate
- ZS 608 Fertilizers- Ammonia Sulphate



Fertilizer sample taken for laboratory analysis.

"The Agency will continue to create awareness among consumers on the need to buy fertilizer only from reputable suppliers to avoid falling prey to acts of deception by some unscrupulous traders," Mr Hatyoka said.

ZCSA Meets 3 Agents in Japan

The Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) has met three Japanese appointed agents who conduct pre-inspections of used motor vehicles which are meant for export to Zambia.

The three appointed agents are EAA Company Limited, Auto Terminals Japan and Quality Inspections Services of Japan.

Speaking during the 2023 Annual Review meeting of the Roadworthiness Inspection (RWI) in Japan, Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry Permanent Secretary (PS) John Mulongoti said the three agents were expected to deliver their mandate effectively to promote public safety and environmental protection.

In a statement issued by Zambia's First Secretary for Press and Public Relations in Japan, Faith Chilube, Mr Mulongoti said the three agents had been tasked to follow the agreed standards as they conduct the pre-inspections.

"We have to ensure that before the vehicles are allowed to be driven on the Zambian roads, they need to be fully pre-inspected. we have also learnt that some of the vehicles are accident damaged which poses a threat to the safety of our people," Mulongoti said.

The PS said Government was committed to the protection of consumers and the environment by ensuring that all used motor vehicles exported to the country were roadworthy.

ZCSA Executive Director, Gerald Chizinga, said the Agency was going to continue on its mandate of enforcing compulsory standards to protect the consumers through inspection of

used motor vehicles meant for use on Zambian Roads.

"The Compulsory Standards Act 3 of 2017 empowers the Agency to appoint agents to conduct inspections on behalf of the Agency hence the three appointed Japanese companies," Mr Chizinga said.

He added that ZCSA would ensure all motor vehicles being exported to Zambia were compliant with the Zambian Standards so that consumers were protected from potentially unsafe motor vehicles.

Zambia's Ambassador to Japan, Tobias Mulimbika, explained that the Annual Review Meeting was key in promoting increased trade and cooperation with the Japanese business sector.

Mr Mulimbika noted that the Embassy in Tokyo would continue to engage the three appointed agents to ensure compliance to inspections on the motor vehicles exported to Zambia.

For the promotion of public safety, the Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry in December 2006 declared Zambian Standard **ZS 560-Code of practice for inspection and testing of used motor vehicles for road worthiness.**

The declaration of the standard as compulsory was also in recognition that Zambia imports a lot of used motor vehicles.

ZCSA implements this compulsory standard through a pre-shipment inspection scheme.

Pre-shipment inspections for roadworthiness inspection of all used motor vehicles destined for use within Zambia is

done by ZCSA's appointed agents in Japan, South Africa, Singapore, United Kingdom, United States of America and United Arab Emirates.

The inspection was initiated to minimise the risk of unsafe motor vehicles entering the Zambian market, thus ensuring public health and safety and environmental protection.

The roadworthiness inspection is meant to benefit the users of the motor vehicles as it contributes to prevention of unnecessary accidents and loss of lives.

Some of the benefits of motor vehicle inspection include;

i. Safety

RWI will enable detection of any safety concerns on the used motor vehicle before it is exported.

ii. Confidence

It gives a great sense of confidence and assurance that your vehicle was inspected for roadworthiness by an independent company.

iii. Cost Saving

RWI helps detect and ascertain any mechanical defects on the vehicle before it is shipped. This helps importers of used motor vehicles to avoid unnecessary costs of repair.

iv. Environmental

The vehicle is inspected to ensure that it does not excessively pollute the environment.

v. Legality

RWI will protect importers from any consequences of purchasing stolen motor vehicles or motor vehicles that could have been used for illegal activities.



Commerce, Trade and Industry Permanent Secretary John Mulongoti (seated second from left) with officials from ZCSA and appointed agents in Japan.



ZCSA Board touring Katima Mulimo Border facilities in Sesheke in September 2023.

ZCSA Board members with Western Province Deputy Permanent Secretary, Richard Mulwanda (left) at Country Millers Limited's Rice Plant in Mongu.

Engage Us Early, ZCSA Tells Manufacturers

The Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) has appealed to manufacturers of local products covered by Compulsory Standards to engage the Agency early so that they are properly guided with necessary requirements.

ZCSA Board Chairperson, Ian Mupeta, said there was need for manufacturers to interact with the Agency at an early stage as opposed to engaging the institution late after commencing their production of goods.

Mr Mupeta said the Agency stands ready to support producers in complying with the relevant compulsory standards for them to not only access local markets but also penetrate the markets beyond Zambia's borders.

He was speaking in Mongu on September 28, 2023 when the ZCSA Board paid a courtesy call on Western Province Permanent Secretary, Simomo Akapelwa and Provincial Deputy Permanent Secretary Richard Mulwanda.

This was part of the ZCSA Board's familiarisation tour of the Agency's offices in provincial centres and Border posts across Zambia.

In July 2023, the board commenced a familiarisation tour of selected ZCSA offices across the country.

So far, the ZCSA Board has visited offices in Southern, Eastern, Western and Central Provinces.

This exercise is aimed at gathering first hand information from all ZCSA offices and meeting stakeholders in a bid to inform effective policy direction for the Agency.

Mr Mupeta, whose delegation also visited Country Millers in Mongu and later the ZCSA office at Katima Mulilo border in Sesheke, appealed to the provincial administration to support the Agency in educating the public on the importance of producing safe products to safeguard the safety of consumers.

He said there was need to raise awareness on compulsory standards among citizens and on the need to be quality conscious as people buy products.

Western Province, being mainly an agricultural inclined region, presents many opportunities for growth of agro-processing enterprises for products like peanut butter, maize meal, crude and refined edible vegetable oil, poultry feed, among others which ZCSA regulates.

At Katima Mulilo border in Western Province, some of the notable products ZCSAs regulate include timber, clear beer and fuel, amongst others.

Speaking at the same meeting, Mr Akapelwa commended ZCSA for ensuring that regulated products on the market were of good quality.

Mr Akapelwa pledged to work closely with the Agency to ensure consumers and the environment were protected from unsafe products.



ZCSA Board members with Chirundu Border Office members of staff in July 2023.

1. ZCSA Senior Inspector Mumba Ngosa (left), Executive Director Gerald Chizinga (c), board chairperson Ian Mupeta (right) at Kazungula border.

2. ZCSA Board touring the Mwami Border in Chipata in August 2023.

ZCSA, Namibia Standards Body Sign MoU

The Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) and Namibia Standards Institution have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Collaboration on Standards by the two National Quality Institutions.

ZCSA Executive Director, Gerald Chizinga, signed the agreement in Lusaka on September 5, 2023 on behalf of the Agency while Namibia Standards Institution Chief Executive Officer, Eino Mvula signed on behalf of his institution.

Mr Chizinga was accompanied by ZCSA Acting Inspections Manager - Import Quality Monitoring Department, Kasuba Kasengele.

In a bid to enhance collaboration amongst Government Agencies to strengthen trade and investment relations, Zambia's Acting Commerce, Trade and Industry Minister Rodney Sikumba, and the Namibia Minister of Industrialisation and Trade, Lucia Lipumbu, signed the MoU on Industrial Development Cooperation.

This was in a quest to promote investment, industry and private sector development cooperation between the Parties on equitable terms by setting tasks to be performed by either Party in order to facilitate increased flow of trade and investments and the enhancement of industries and institutional cooperation.

WHAT IS ZCSA?

The Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) is a statutory body under the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry (MCTI) which commenced operations on 1st January 2018.

The Agency was established by the Compulsory Standards Act No. 3 of 2017 to administer, maintain and enforce compulsory standards for the purpose of public safety and health, consumer and environmental protection.

VISION

A credible and efficient compulsory standards Regulator.

MISSION

To efficiently administer and maintain compulsory standards for public health and safety, consumer and environmental protection.

WHAT IS NAMIBIAN STANDARDS INSTITUTION?

The Namibian Standards Institution (NSI) is one of the key performance indicators (KPI) of the country's national quality infrastructure. The first is the National Quality Policy (NQP) adopted by the cabinet. The other KPI is the Legal Infrastructure consisting of the Standards Act No 18 of 2005, the Metrology Amendment Act No 17 of 2005 and the Accreditation Board of Namibia Act No 8 of 2005.

VISION

To be a reliable service provider of standards' based solutions that creates confidence and improves quality of life.

MISSION

Providing standardization and conformity assessment services to ensure the health and safety of consumers, protection of the environment and promotion of trade.

ZCSA Executive Director Gerald Chizinga (right) and Namibia Standards Institution Chief Executive Officer, Eino Mvula signing an MoU as Ministers look on.



Acting Commerce, Trade and Industry Minister Rodney Sikumba (right) with Namibian Minister of Industrialisation and Trade, Lucia Lipumbu.

The Chief Executive Officers exchanging the signed MoUs.





ZCSA Nakonde members of staff on International Women's Day.



ZCSA Ndola members of staff participating on international Women's Day.

Be Innovative, Embrace Technology, ZCSA Women Counsellled

Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) Executive Director, Gerald Chizinga, has urged women working for the Agency to be innovative and embrace technology in their quest to improve in their provision of services to the public.

Mr Chizinga said it was important for ZCSA women to embrace technology so that they serve their clients better.

He said Information and Communication Technology (ICT) was an essential tool to enhance the social and economic development of the country.

Mr Chizinga was speaking in Lusaka during the commemoration of this year's International Women's Day (IWD) held on March 8, 2023 under the theme "Digital Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality".

He said there was need for ZCSA women to reach out to fellow women particularly Small to Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs), cooperatives among others who produce products covered by the Compulsory Standards.

"As ZCSA, our regulatory specialization is in the field of Commerce, Trade and Industry so there are online sites which we can use to get useful information to enhance our skills. It is from enhancing our skills that we can service our clients better. Use technology so that you serve the public more efficiently," he said.

Mr Chizinga said ZCSA was using the Government Service Bus (GSB) for online transactions in a bid to serve the public better.

He said there was need to assist women groups particularly those who were producing products which were covered by Compulsory Standards.

"As ZCSA, we should innovate and look for better ways of providing services to the public. Talking about innovation, it is not just about technology. There is a lot we can do to act differently in our work as opposed to doing same things year in and out," he said.

ZCSA Import Quality Monitoring (IQM) Inspector Samantha Phiri thanked Mr Chizinga and Management for supporting women.

Ms Phiri said some of the services ZCSA offers were accessible online and therefore it was important for women to embrace innovation and technology.

The United Nations Observance of IWD recognizes and celebrates the women and girls who are championing the advancement of transformative technology and digital education.

IWD 2023 explored the impact of the digital gender gap on widening economic and social inequalities.

The event also highlighted the importance of protecting the rights of women and girls in digital spaces and addressing online and ICT-facilitated gender-based violence.

Bringing women and other marginalized groups into technology results in more creative solutions and has greater potential for innovations that meet



ZCSA staff marching on International Women's Day in Lusaka.

women's needs and promote gender equality.

Their lack of inclusion, by contrast, comes with massive costs: as per UN Women's Gender Snapshot 2022 report, women's exclusion from the digital world has shaved US\$1 trillion from the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of low- and middle-income countries in the last decade—a loss that will grow to \$1.5 trillion by 2025 without action.

Reversing this trend will require tackling the problem of online violence, which a study of 51 countries revealed 38 per cent of women had personally experienced.

A gender-responsive approach to innovation, technology and digital education can increase the awareness of women and girls regarding their rights and civic engagement.

Advancements in digital technology offer immense opportunities to address development and humanitarian challenges, and to achieve the 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals.

Unfortunately, the opportunities of the digital revolution also present a risk of perpetuating existing patterns of gender inequality.

Growing inequalities are becoming increasingly evident in the context of digital skills and access to technologies, with women being left behind as the result of this digital gender divide. The need for inclusive and transformative technology and digital education is therefore crucial for a sustainable future.

1



ZCSA Executive Director Gerald Chizinga (right) and Matero Aftercare's Rita Kalebi (left) push inmates in donated wheelchairs.

2



Mr Chizinga (right) and ZCSA's Brian Hatyoka (left) handover mealie meal to Matero Aftercare's Rita Kalebi.

ZCSA Donates Wheelchairs, Foodstuff to Matero Aftercare Centre

Zambians must develop a habit of supporting the elderly in society to alleviate suffering among vulnerable people, Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) Executive Director Gerald Chizinga has said.

Mr Chizinga said elderly people were a source of wisdom and part of the greater community, hence they must be supported.

He was speaking in Lusaka on October 27, 2023 when ZCSA donated wheelchairs, foodstuffs and other items to old people at Matero Aftercare Centre valued at K7, 000.

This was part of ZCSA's commemoration of Zambia's 59th independence anniversary which fell on October 24, 2023.

The theme of this year's independence was **"Accelerating National Development through Equitable Distribution of Resources"**.

He further appealed to other entities to come on board and assist the old people at Matero After Care Centre.

"Together, we can alleviate the suffering of people that have contributed greatly to the development of our country, in different ways," Mr Chizinga said.

Ministry of Community Development and Social Services Matero Aftercare Assistant Social Welfare Officer, Rita Kalebi, commended ZCSA for assisting vulnerable people at the Centre.

Ms Kalebi said Matero Aftercare Centre provided care services to senior and vulnerable citizens, both male and female.

She said the centre had a caseload of 43 inmates consisting of 13 females and 30 males respectively.

Among the 43 inmates, 25 were chronically ill and needed constant medical checkups at medical facilities.

Ms Kalebi urged well-wishers and organizations to voluntarily come on board and help to sensitize the community on helping the needy in order to avoid negligence and stigmatisation of the senior

and vulnerable citizens.

"It takes the community for Matero Aftercare to help sustain senior and vulnerable citizens' livelihoods", Ms Kalebi said.

Matero After Care Centre inmate Bernadette Mwansa thanked ZCSA for donating wheelchairs, foodstuffs and other items to the Centre.

Ms Mwansa, who appreciated the donation through dancing, commended the Zambian Government for maintaining peace and unity from the time the country attained its independence in 1964.

Matero After-Care Centre is a transit home being managed by the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, under the Department of Social Welfare.

The Centre provides care and support to vulnerable persons in order to avoid destitution through feeding, clothing, shelter, beddings and health care.

Vulnerable persons that the Centre provides for include the elderly, unsupported women, chronically ill patients, stranded persons awaiting repatriation, ex-prisoners, mental health users, visual impaired, speech and hearing impaired as well as people living with physical disabilities.

Being a transit home, inmates at the Centre are expected to be resident for a temporal period of time.

However due to various factors such as failure to trace families, some have lived at the Centre longer than expected.



ZCSA Office Assistant Agness Phiri gives a drink to an inmate at Matero Aftercare Centre.

ZCSA to Host Inaugural Media Awards in 2024

The Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) will host its inaugural Media Awards during the first quarter of 2024 to celebrate journalism excellence in reporting on Compulsory Standards in the country.

ZCSA Executive Director, Gerald Chizinga, encouraged journalists in Zambia to submit well researched, captivating and life-changing articles on Compulsory Standards and the Agency's mandate in general so that the scribes stand a chance of being awarded.

Mr Chizinga said ZCSA recognises the important role the media plays in educating the masses on different subjects including products which are covered by compulsory standards.

He was speaking in Lusaka on May 26, 2023 during a Media Engagement workshop for about 40 journalists from 10 provinces of Zambia.

The journalists were trained in Compulsory Standards, ZCSA's mandate in general, Business Reporting and Trade matters in a quest to enhance their reporting.

"The media is successful in setting a public agenda in terms of what people should think about and therefore I appeal to journalists to set an agenda on compulsory standards to enhance consumer protection," he said.

Journalists submitted their entries for the awards between November 3, 2023 and December 22, 2023.

As a guiding principle, articles should reflect the impact of adhering to prescribed Compulsory Standards and ultimate contribution to the overall social-economic development of Zambia.

The objectives of the ZCSA Annual Media awards are:

- To promote innovative and consistent media coverage of activities relating to Compulsory Standards;
- To recognise and motivate outstanding media personnel from television, radio, newspaper and online publication based on best evaluated articles; and,
- To strengthen networking with the media fraternity on future publicity and education activities.

The entry categories are as follows:

- Best Compulsory Standards Article - Print Media (Newspaper) Award
- Best Compulsory Standards Article - Electronic Media (Radio) Award

- Best Compulsory Standards Article - Electronic Media (Television) Award
- Best Compulsory Standards Article - Digital Media (online/social media) Award

- General Award for being most consistent in covering Compulsory Standards

All the Awards shall attract a First and Second Prize for each category.

Mr Chizinga also appealed to the media and the public to expose any suspected illegal production of beverages and other substandard products covered by compulsory standards for appropriate actions to be taken.

Workshop facilitator, Nancy Mwape, said it was important for journalists to appreciate Trade as countries usually depended on imports and exports, alongside locally manufactured products, to support their economies.

Ms Mwape, a seasoned Business Reporter who previously worked for the Zambia Daily Mail's Business Desk, said trade was an important source of foreign exchange earnings for many countries.

Another facilitator, Chiwoyo Sinyangwe, urged journalists to embrace investigative reporting and ultimately expose cheating and other tricks among business entities.

Mr Sinyangwe, another seasoned Business Reporter who previously worked for the Business News Desk of the defunct Post Newspapers, said journalists should report beyond official press statements so that they provide the masses with quality information.

In a vote of thanks, Solwezi's Beats FM

Radio journalist Clozzen Bikale said the training came at an appropriate time when Zambia was restructuring its economy.

Mr Bikale said the one-day training had rekindled the skills of journalists in business reporting and matters of trade in general.

He challenged fellow journalists to go out and help ZCSA to disseminate critical information on Compulsory Standards using different media platforms in a bid to enhance consumer protection.

ZCSA Inspections Manager for Domestic Quality Monitoring (DQM) Department, Francis Mwelwa, acting Inspections Manager for Import Quality Monitoring (IQM) Department, Kasuba Kasengele as well as Legal Counsel, Mutumu Nzala Mwape, interacted with journalists on the roles of their respective Departments during the workshop.

As a guiding principle, articles should reflect the impact of adhering to prescribed Compulsory Standards and ultimate contribution to the overall social-economic development of Zambia.



ZCSA management and other officials (seated) with journalists from 10 Provinces of Zambia during a Media Engagement training in Lusaka on May 26, 2023

Battling With Used Undergarments in Zambia

For many years, the country has been battling to enforce the ban on used undergarments in Zambia.

In 2006, which is 17 years ago, the Zambian Government outlawed the sale of secondhand undergarments because of safety concerns.

The Zambian Standard **ZS 559: Inspection and Acceptance Criteria for Used Textile Products (Salaula)** prohibits the importation and sale of used textile products containing undergarments such as night wear pyjamas, night gowns, ladies and gents' briefs, vests, brassieres, camisoles and tights, among others.

This standard was declared compulsory by Statutory Instrument (SI) No. 120 of 2006 to protect the safety of consumers because used textile products that are worn in very close contact with the skin may cause ailments such as skin rash.

Sadly, used undergarments still illegally find themselves on the market in Zambia irrespective of the ban effected many years ago.

Some critics are of the view that the ban is aimed at punishing the people who cannot afford to buy brand new undergarments.

Compulsory Standards are standards with which compliance is mandatory by law and the Agency does not negotiate when it comes to enforcement.

Further, the declaration of ZS 559 as a Compulsory Standard was informed by scientific research on the potential implications of non-compliance of a product with the compulsory standard on the safety of consumers.

More than 40 bales of used undergarments were seized from January to December 2023 at a cost of more than K180,000.

According to Zambia Compulsory Standards (ZCSA) Executive Director, Gerald Chizinga, the Agency suspects the banned products find themselves into Zambia through smuggling and other illegal means.

This is because ZCSA, a statutory body mandated by Compulsory Standards Act No. 3 of 2017, has officers in all major border entry points into Zambia and all the provincial centres to prevent importation and sale of used undergarments in the country.

Mr Chizinga added that ZCSA staff were alert in ensuring that imported Bales containing undergarments and night gowns were not allowed into the country.

Mr Chizinga appealed to the public to alert ZCSA so that such importers and traders involved in the illegality are penalised.

"ZCSA will continue sensitizing importers and traders so that they don't engage in the said illegality," he said.

The ZCSA Executive Director implored consumers to consider buying safer alternatives that were available on

the market.

Ministry of Health Spokesperson, Kalangwa Kalangwa, says potential public health impacts and dangers associated with the use of used undergarments vary depending on various factors such as the condition of the undergarment, the presence of pathogens (germs) and personal hygiene practices.

This is because there are a number of pathogens (germs) that could be present on used underwear for a long period of time without dying.

In terms of Hygiene and Personal Health, Dr Kalangwa stressed that used undergarments might carry bacteria, viruses, fungi, or other pathogens (germs), which could pose a risk to the wearer's health, leading to bacterial and fungal infections.

Further, due to associated poor personal hygiene practices, such as inadequate washing or sharing, Dr Kalangwa emphasised that used undergarments could increase the risk of transmitting pathogens (germs) from first-hand users to the second-hand users.

More than 40 bales of used undergarments were seized from January to December 2023...

Dr Kalangwa noted that used undergarments might potentially carry Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), if the previous owner had an infection and the garments were not properly cleaned.

Regarding Allergic Reactions and Skin Conditions, in certain cases, Dr Kalangwa said wearing of used undergarments that have not been properly cleaned, might cause allergic reactions or irritate the skin, particularly for individuals with sensitive skin or pre-existing skin conditions.

"Additionally, irritation and itching that results, can lead to discomfort and, in some cases, secondary infections due to skin scratching," he said in an interview.

Dr Kalangwa added that individuals should prioritise using their new and clean undergarments to reduce the potential health risks associated with wearing of used undergarments.

Proudly Zambian Campaign Chairperson, who is also a Zambian manufacturer of garments and textiles, Mercy Chewetu Mukupa, fully supported the ban on the importation and sale of used textile products containing undergarments.

Ms Mukupa, the Chief Executive Officer and founder of Queen of Chitenge Fashion Limited, was of the view that the ZS 559 was a crucial regulation, as it was aimed at safeguarding the health of the public.

"The health and safety of our citizens must always come first, and it is our duty to ensure that the products sold in our country meet the necessary safety standards," says Ms Mukupa, who is also Zambia Association of Manufacturers (ZAM) Trustee and Zambia Leather Industry Association chairperson.

Ms Mukupa urged ZCSA and other relevant authorities to continue enforcing the ban on used undergarments and take appropriate action against those who flout it.

"I recommend that the Government and relevant agencies like ZCSA should enforce the ban more strictly by increasing surveillance at the country's borders to prevent the importation of these products. At the same time, I encourage local manufacturers to take advantage of this opportunity to produce high-quality, locally made alternatives to the banned products," she said.

As the Chairperson of the Proudly Zambian Campaign, Ms Mukupa believed that the ban presented a unique opportunity to promote the production and consumption of locally made textiles and garments.

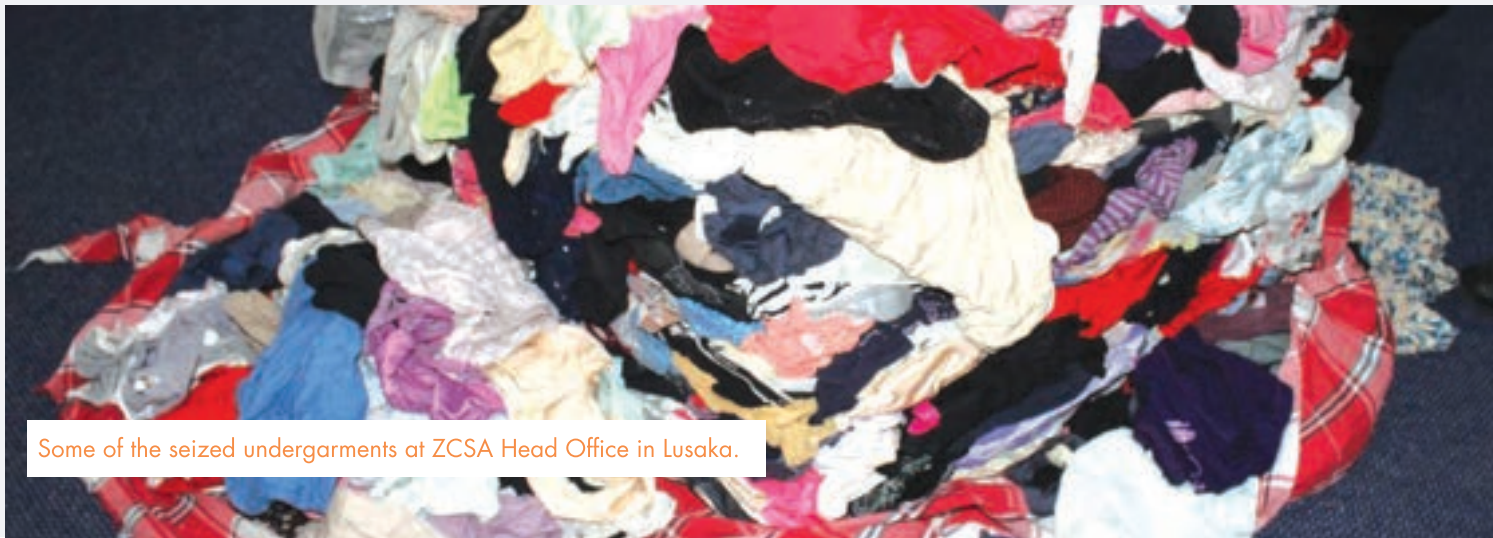
"By encouraging consumers to buy locally made products, we can create jobs, support our local industries, and contribute to the growth of our economy. We can use the ban on used textile products containing undergarments as an opportunity to promote the Proudly Zambian Campaign," she said.

In this regard, Ms Mukupa further stated that Zambia could encourage consumers to choose Proudly Zambian products over imported ones that might not meet the required standards by highlighting the health benefits of locally made products.

"I applaud the Government for taking this step to protect the health of our citizens, and I urge all stakeholders to work together to promote the production and consumption of locally made textiles and garments," Ms Mukupa said.

It is only hoped that citizens consider buying safer alternatives on the market as opposed to embracing used undergarments.

The Agency will continue enforcing this compulsory standard through continued import and market surveillance inspections to protect public safety and health.



Some of the seized undergarments at ZCSA Head Office in Lusaka.

ZCSA Builds Capacity in Soweto Market Peanut Butter Producers

Every day, food being consumed connects citizens to farmers, traders, food manufacturers, retailers, regulators and many other people involved in the value chain.

However, most people arguably simply consume food products and don't pause to think about different processes involved in coming up with quality products on the market such as growing of crops, harvesting, processing, storage, packaging and labelling, among others.

Farmers and food processors, for instance, face many difficulties in their quest to provide safe and nutritious food products on the market.

Lack of capital or equipment, failure to adhere to prescribed standards and inadequate access to lucrative markets for products, are some of the challenges food producers and processors face.

Some small-scale Peanut Butter producers from Lusaka's Soweto Market are currently experiencing difficulties in adhering to prescribed standards for their commodity.

These producers cannot find space for their products in major chain stores in Zambia as their commodities are poorly packed and not labelled.

The Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) regulates 61 products which are covered by Compulsory Standards and Peanut Butter is one of the regulated food products.

Peanut Butter is one of the food products covered by Compulsory Standards – i.e. **Zambian Standard (ZS) 723: Peanut Butter – Specification**.

Recently, ZCSA hosted a Stakeholder Engagement meeting with Soweto Market Peanut Butter producers in Lusaka to help them improve their production and ultimately adhere to the prescribed compulsory standard for their products.

The producers were trained in the areas of growing Peanuts, harvesting, processing, storage, packaging and labelling, among others.

The meeting was in line with one of ZCSA's functions of educating the public on Compulsory Standards and providing public information for the protection of the consumers on products and services which do not comply with the Compulsory Standards Act No. 3 of 2023.

One of the key take-home lessons during the meeting was that producers must pay attention to aflatoxin contamination in their peanuts or groundnuts.

According to experts, aflatoxin contamination is one of the most serious threats to food safety and human health.

Azriel Miselo, one of the Peanut Butter producers from Soweto market, says the training was an eye-opener on the safety measures that needed to be applied in the production of peanut butter.

"We have learnt that peanuts or grounds are healthy products but they can also be harmful and can cause liver cancer and kidney failure if they contain aflatoxins," Mr Miselo said.

He pledged to share the knowledge which he acquired with other players in the industry especially on the importance of adhering to the prescribed

Compulsory Standard for Peanut Butter.

"I will advise my colleagues on the need to ensure that their Peanut Butter meets the safety requirements. We also need to obtain permits from the ZCSA to supply these products on the market," he said.

Randy Mvula, another Peanut Butter producer from Soweto Market, says he has gained knowledge on better ways of managing Peanut Butter.

Going forward, Mr Mvula said he would be more conscious when ordering peanuts or groundnuts from suppliers.

Mr Mvula said the key highlight from the training was on aflatoxins contamination and how it affects the quality of peanuts.

"I will use this knowledge in the selection process when buying groundnuts from now onwards. I will be more selective when buying from vendors," he said.

While most small scale Peanut Butter producers are aware of the need to adhere to Compulsory Standards which include proper packaging and labelling of their products, one of the challenges they face is lack of financing for their business.

Mr Mvula was happy that ZCSA had advised

"We have learnt quite a number of lessons. We used to fear ZCSA but we are now happy that the Agency is there to help us grow," he said.

Mr Tembo firmly believes that adhering to compulsory standards is one way of growing his customer base.

He implored other producers to take advantage of such engagements in a bid to assure safety among their consumers.

"I want to encourage my other friends who did not attend the meeting that next time they should come so that we learn together and see how we can enhance the safety of our products," Mr Tembo said.

In her presentation to participants, ZCSA Domestic Quality Monitoring (DQM) inspector Chishimba Lombe said aflatoxins were harmful to the public especially in rural areas where peanuts were being consumed without due care.

Ms Lombe said it was therefore imperative that peanut butter producers looked out for possible contamination before producing their products.

She further underscored the need to ensure that Peanut Butter was properly packaged and labelled in a quest to instill public confidence.

ZCSA inspects all products using ZS 033 (Part 1 and 2) which provides general guidelines for labelling and packaging for all products.

The information on the label must include among others; the name of the product; the list of ingredients; net content and drained weight; name and address of manufacturer; country of origin; lot identification system; date; marking and storage instructions; and instructions for use.

Other requirements include; Quantitative labelling of ingredient composition, that is, the amount of each ingredient contained in the product and an indication of durability of product i.e. best before date, date of expiry or use by date.

Further, language must be clear and it must be English even if other languages have been used on a given product.

Earlier, ZCSA DQM Inspections Manager Francis Mwelwa outlined the mandate of the Agency as it relates to the regulation of locally manufactured products such as Peanut Butter.

ZCSA Executive Director Gerald Chizinga said the engagement provided a platform for sharing of information with producers of peanut butter to equip them with the technical knowledge necessary for them to produce safe products.

Mr Chizinga said there were many benefits of complying with Compulsory Standards such as producing safe products, reduced losses, reduced customer complaints and increased market access for manufacturers locally and internationally, among others.

He said ZCSA recorded 15 incidences in which non-compliant Peanut Butter products were withdrawn from trading outlets in six provinces namely Lusaka, Central, Eastern, Southern, Western and Copperbelt between July and September 2023.

This was during the Open Market Surveillance inspections aimed at ensuring that only safe products are available on the market.



ZCSA trained Peanut Butter producers in packaging and labelling, among others.

producers to organise themselves in to a cooperative which would be an easier avenue for them to access funding.

As for Raphael Tembo, who also attended the training, the meeting provided an opportunity for Peanut Butter producers to dispel their misconception about ZCSA and other regulators.

Some regulated entities are of the view that ZCSA only focuses on enforcement activities and seizing non-compliant products from the market.

Contrary to this perception, Agency is also mandated to educate the public on Compulsory Standards through stakeholder engagement meetings, roadshows, exhibitions and media interviews, among others.

In this regard, Mr Tembo was excited to learn that ZCSA's desire was to provide support to industry in ensuring compliance with Compulsory Standards for the safety of consumers.

Compliance Rate Increases by 4% in 2023

From July 31, 2023 to September 29, 2023, the Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) conducted National Open Market Surveillance Inspections to check compliance on 61 products which are covered by Compulsory Standards.

Market Surveillance Inspections were conducted in six provinces of Zambia, covering 22 districts and 64 localities inspecting a total of 35 products.

The six provinces covered were Eastern, Central, Lusaka, Southern, Western and Copperbelt.

As part of this exercise, 2,540 trading outlets were inspected in the six provinces of Zambia.

There were 35 products which were inspected during the period under review while the incidents of non-compliance stood at 150.

ZCSA Executive Director, Gerald Chizinga, who unveiled the findings of the survey, said compliance rates this year stood at 89 per cent from 85 per cent recorded last year in the same provinces.

According to Mr Chizinga, the compliance rate for this year represents an increment of four per cent.

Mr Chizinga said the total value of withdrawn products from the six provinces was K271,266.19.

He was speaking at a media briefing held at the ZCSA Head Office in Lusaka when he discussed the findings of the preliminary report regarding the status of the National Open Market Surveillance inspections.

In terms of the nature of non-compliance and number of incidents, there were 77 incidents of expired products while 54 incidents had to do with registration status.

Furthermore, there were 42 incidents of banned or prohibited products and 33 incidents of poorly labeled or packaged products.

In terms of compliance actions taken on the non-compliant products, the Agency withdrew non-compliant products from the market.

The withdrawn products, which include prohibited or expired ones, will be disposed of to safeguard the public as provided for under the Compulsory Standards Act No. 3 of 2017.

In addition, the Agency quarantined or restricted some products within respective trading outlets in the six provinces.

This particular action was implemented on all products whose status could not be established on site and whose status was still being determined by the Agency but not yet complete.

Quarantined products are usually allowed after the owner of the entity normalizes the legal and administrative processes and ZCSA is satisfied that the product is safe, among other measures.

According to the preliminary report, a total number of 189 outlets had their products withdrawn



ZCSA Executive Director Gerald Chizinga (right) addressing journalists (not in picture) in Lusaka recently during the unveiling of the preliminary findings of the Open Market Surveillance Inspections as ZCSA Domestic Quality Monitoring Inspections Manager Francis Mwelwa (left) looks on.

in the six provinces.

In terms of a breakdown of withdrawn products, the majority of incidents were incandescent lamps or bulbs and fruit flavoured drinks with each at 37 incidents respectively.

Notable incidents of products withdrawn from the market were clear beer, peanut butter, biscuits, shoe polish, laundry soap, electrical fittings and

Others were Urea, Compound D fertilizer, shoe polish, toilet soap, electrical fittings and connections, peanut butter, cooking oil, margarine, fruit flavored drinks, glycerin, biscuits, cooking oil and dry batteries, just to mention a few.

In terms of the number of non-compliant products and brands by region, Lusaka Province recorded the highest number of incidents.

Lusaka was followed by Eastern, Central, Western and Coppebelt Provinces respectively with Southern Province recording the lowest number of non-compliance.

Going forward, ZCSA will intensify its public education on compulsory standards through road shows, exhibitions, and traditional and digital media in a bid to increase consumer awareness on product safety.

This year, the Agency had two roadshows at Mtendere and Chisokone markets in Lusaka and Copperbelt provinces respectively while plans are underway to undertake more roadshows across Zambia.

The Agency will also continue enhancing enforcement activities and public education on the market to protect consumers.

The Agency hopes to have more joint operations with other Government agencies as mandated by the Compulsory Standards Act No. 3 of 2017.

Further, the Agency will continue working closely with other agencies on joint education of the public.

Besides seizing and withdrawing of products from the market, ZCSA is exploring more punitive actions and penalties to deter would be offenders.

...ZCSA will intensify its public education on compulsory standards through road shows, exhibitions and traditional and digital media...

connections, potable spirits, margarine, washing detergents, cooking oil, opaque beer and maize meal, among others.

With regards to quarantined or restricted products in trading outlets, 35 incidents were recorded during the period under review.

The majority of incidents for quarantined products were potable spirits, maize meal and household electrical appliances.

Unveiling Compulsory Standards' Role in Economy

Standards play an important role in the economy. Both local and international standards ensure that different products are safe, reliable and of good quality.

As a result of existing standards, consumers have confidence in products that are available on the market. Further, standards help make the world a safer place.

A standard is basically a technical document detailing the requirements necessary to ensure that a material, product, service, or procedure is fit for the purpose for which it was intended.

These requirements could include design, material, performance, manufacturing and testing requirements, including packaging and labeling.

All standards at publication are voluntary. Voluntary standards are put in place for business best practice so that there is a level of uniformity and acceptability of the quality and safety of a product.

However, some standards are declared compulsory on consideration of Public Health, Public Safety, Environmental Protection and for Economic reasons.

Under Part 11 of the Compulsory Standards Act No. 3 of 2017, a national standard can be declared compulsory where it is necessary or expedient to do so in respect of a commodity or service to promote public safety, health, consumer or environmental protection

While voluntary standards are not enforced by law, declaration of a compulsory standard makes it enforceable by law.

If a product is subject to a compulsory standard, it must meet specific criteria before it can be supplied to the market and these may include performance, composition, contents, methods of manufacturing or processing, design, packaging or labeling, among others.

The Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA), a statutory body under the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry, enforces compliance to compulsory standards.

Established by the Compulsory Standards Act No. 3 of 2017, ZCSA administers, maintains and enforces compulsory standards for the purpose of public safety, health, consumer and environmental protection.

The Agency commenced its operations on January 1, 2018 as a regulatory body responsible for enforcement of compulsory standards.

Compulsory standards contain mandatory specifications or minimum requirements that products must meet before they are supplied on the market.

Manufacturers of goods subject to compulsory standards must ensure they meet the requirements of the particular standard relating to their product of choice before it is introduced on the market.

This is in a bid to prevent or reduce the risk of injury or harm to public health or the environment.

It is a legal requirement for any producer or importer of products subject to compulsory standards



ZCSA Acting Manager - Human Resource and Administration, Boniface Zulu (left), showing journalists some seized products in Lusaka recently.

to comply with the law.

The Compulsory Standards Act No. 3 of 2017 clearly stipulates what manufacturers and importers should do before manufacturing or importing a product that is subject to compulsory standards and the punitive action against a manufacturer or an importer who does not comply with the Act.

Currently, ZCSA administers 61 compulsory standards in a quest to enhance its mandate of ensuring public health and safety, consumer and environmental protection.

It should be noted here that products applied in the environment such as fertilizers and those which people consume, or use have the potential to affect their health and safety.

Compulsory standards are declared following a risk assessment which is conducted.

The assessment is conducted to ascertain the risk which products subject to compulsory standards pose on public health, safety and the environmental and what needs to be done to mitigate the problem.

ZCSA monitors compliance with compulsory standards through activities such as factory and border inspections and pre and post market surveillance inspections.

A market surveillance is an activity aimed at ensuring continued post market compliance by checking whether products already on the market meet the applicable quality and safety requirements.

It is worth mentioning here that Compulsory standards have been put in place not to restrict growth of industry but to help industry to thrive and protect the public from consuming unsafe products.

Complying with compulsory standards protects local manufacturers' business' interest because imported products of a similar nature also have to conform to the local compulsory standards, hence protecting industry against potential substandard products entering the market.

This also entails that locally manufactured products can compete favourably with imported products as they are subject to the same minimum requirements.

Further, products which comply with compulsory standards create confidence in the ability of the local manufacturers to produce quality and safe products, thereby assisting businesses to grow through access to local, regional and international markets.

This is because adherence to compulsory standards helps businesses to meet regulatory requirements for both local and export markets.

Once industry players adhere to compulsory standards, a level playing field is created because all participants in the industry are subjected to the same regulatory requirements.

This, therefore, creates a competitive business environment where players strive to grow by continually improving their business processes.

ZS 808: Key to Control Harmful Spirits



Some of the seized beverages from JBJ Enterprises in Lusaka's Kalikiliki township on March 31, 2023.

It is undeniable that alcoholic beverages have been consumed by humans in Zambia for many years.

The beverages are often consumed to mark celebrations of important events like weddings, birthdays and parties, among others.

Alcohol is also consumed at sorrowful occasions like funerals with the intention of helping one to get over the sorrowful state.

According to experts, however, alcohol has a complex microbiological structure with a potential to impact on the physiological function of the human body.

There are many different types of alcoholic beverages available in Zambia being produced under different specific formulations and varying alcohol fraction contents.

For example, commercially produced alcoholic drinks range between two to 40 per cent in alcohol content.

However, illegal production of alcoholic drinks unfortunately does happen in Zambia with products of more than 40 per cent of alcohol content being offloaded on the market.

Sadly, such beverages which are not approved by relevant authorities contain alcohol above the safe threshold for human consumption.

Of particular concern currently in Zambia is the commercial production of unregulated strong potable spirits.

In a bid to control excessive alcohol consumption in Zambia, the Statutory Instrument (SI) Number 18 of 2020 was put in place to guide on the manufacture, sale and distribution of potable spirits.

The Zambian Standards (ZS) 808 for potable spirits was declared compulsory following the signing of the SI Number 18 of 2020 by the Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry.

In this regard, the rationale of ZS 808 is to address the alcohol content and packaging requirements in potable spirits.

This said SI is intended to regulate the risks and

dangers of excessive alcohol content in potable spirits.

Former Permanent Secretary for Technical Services at the Ministry of Health Permanent, Lackson Kasonka, says SI 18 of 2020 is a good piece of legislation meant to safeguard the health of the citizens through prevention of harmful spirits, adding that the legislation therefore requires full support in its enforcement.

Professor Kasonka noted that illicit brewed spirits are extremely destructive to health, hence must be avoided.

"Please note that alcohol does not solve but compounds personal problems. It causes further depression and can lead to death. Alcohol is the cause of many traumatic injuries and therefore do not drink excessively and drive," he said.

He observed that alcohol could be addictive leading to overconsumption, financial and social deprivation.

"Alcohol is metabolised in the liver and other delicate tissues of the body. The constant exposure of these tissues to the complex molecules of alcohol can lead to functional impairment of these tissues and organs causing various health problems. Strong alcoholic spirits are particularly known for this," Prof Kasonka said.

On another hand, some citizens have argued for the economic benefits of alcohol as one of the important drivers of national economies.

However, the health costs arising from ill health of excessive alcohol use also deserve mention.

A Medical Expert, Teddy Mulenga, said in a separate interview that excessive alcohol consumption is deadly.

Dr Mulenga said excess alcohol consumption affects the liver and then the brain cells resulting in poor judgement and poor memory.

"Next the kidneys will fail to drive out toxic substances. Nerves get damaged and you get feeling of needles and pricks on your limbs. Erectile dysfunction creeps in for men and infertility in

women. The whole body suffers," Dr Mulenga said.

He further said SI 18 of 2020 is very progressive regulation in the country.

Dr Mulenga suggested that Zambia should ban the sale of alcohol openly in markets as many entities don't even have licences.

"Let us monitor strictly the closing and opening hours for bars and revoke licences for non-compliant entities. Sadly, the age limit restriction is poorly enforced. We should consider doing away with infamous spirits known as 'tujilijili' or 'junta'," Dr Mulenga said.

Lusaka City Council (LCC) Civic Leader, Shadreck Mwanza Chimwanga, urged manufacturers of alcoholic beverages to get appropriate licences so that their products are tested and approved for human consumption.

Mr Chimwanga, who is Kalikiliki Ward 35 Councillor, said in an interview recently that many citizens in townships are risking their lives by consuming uncertified drinks from illegal manufacturers.

ZCSA Executive Director Gerald Chizinga says the Agency, a statutory body under the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry, started implementing the ZS 808 a compulsory standard for potable spirits on August 1, 2021.

Effective August 21, 2021, it became mandatory for all manufacturers, importers and traders to obtain authority from the Agency to supply any type of potable spirits on the market.

Mr Chizinga said ZCSA has implemented a number of enforcement activities, among which are factory inspections, import inspections and market surveillance inspections in a quest to ensure compliance to the requirements of the compulsory standard.

The Agency, in partnership with other stakeholders, is enhancing enforcement activities on any unauthorised manufacturers of potable spirits, including backyards if need be.

"ZCSA is appealing to the public especially who may have information on any unauthorised manufacturer of potable spirits to visit the nearest ZCSA Office and provide information. Be assured of protection in line with the Agency's Whistle Blower Policy," he said.

Mr Chizinga said ZCSA would enhance awareness and public education on the implementation of ZS 808 for enhanced safety of consumers.

He added that the Agency has enhanced enforcement activities on the illegal production and sale of potable spirits and other products subject to compulsory standards.

Furthermore, ZCSA is mandated by the Compulsory Standards Act Number 3 of 2017 to cooperate with other state institutions in enforcing compulsory standards.

During the first quarter of 2023, the Agency conducted joint operations with other state institutions namely LCC and the police on the illegal production of beverages.

Products worth more than K150,000 were seized and three illegal production facilities in Lusaka were closed by a joint team of officers from enforcement agencies.



ZCSA Football Team Losses, Remain Positive

On July 9, 2023, the Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) Football Team participated in the Fallsway Arena Corporate Tournament 2023.

The ZCSA Football Team, which was led by Captain Ephraim Kapela, lost games played with Zambia Information and Communication Technology Authority (ZICTA), National Prosecution Authority (NPA), Armaguard and Prudential.

However, the Agency's Team received a trophy as the Most Disciplined Team.

The enforcers of Compulsory Standards conceded defeat and pledged to do better in future games.

ZCSA is committed to ensuring that its members of staff are in good health as they carry out their mandate of administering, maintaining and enforcing compulsory standards for the purpose of public safety, health, consumer and environmental protection.

Sport is important because it helps prevent a range of diseases. Further, sport keeps people physically healthy and builds a sense of belonging and pride in the community as well as improves physical and mental health.

Here are some of the pictures captured during Fallsway Arena Corporate Tournament 2023.



News in Pictures...



1. Annetta Namakobo doing her eye check during the ZCSA Team Building event.

2. ZCSA Inspector inspecting a fuel tanker in Serenje during the Open Market Surveillance Inspections.

3. ZCSA Inspector Mercy Mugala (left) attends to a client during an exhibition in Lusaka.

4. Paramount Chief Mpezeni of the Ngoni People (middle) with ZCSA Acting Manager - Human Resource and Administration Boniface Zulu (second from left) and other ZCSA members of staff after a courtesy call on the Chief.



ZCSA Management with Union officials after signing the new collective agreement for conditions of service.

News in Pictures...



1



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3



4



5



ZCSA Staff participating in a game during the Team Building event in Lusaka.

1. ZCSA Head of Communications Brian Hatyoka (right) being interviewed by **ZNBC TV2** Journalist Kasabula Muchimba at the **ZNBC** studio.

2. ZCSA Staff during the Lusaka Agriculture and Commercial show.

3. HK Entertainment Director Humphrey Kanyanga and James Chamanyazi visit the ZCSA stand during the World Food Safety Exhibition.

4. Former Deputy Inspector of Police Doris Nayame (right) interacts with ZCSA staff during the Zambia Police Service Open Day.

5. ZCSA Kazungula Border staff after participating during the Labour Day commemorations.



"With Your Safety in Mind"

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