

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

TIC Council is an international association representing independent testing, inspection and certification (TIC) companies.



Foreword



Dr Michael Fübi
President of
TIC Council

To our esteemed members and valued stakeholders,

It is my pleasure to present the TIC Council Annual Report for 2024, reflecting a year of progress, resilience, and impact across our sector.

As the world navigates growing regulatory complexities, digital transformation, and sustainability imperatives, the role of the TIC industry has never been more crucial. This year, we have further reinforced our presence in global policymaking, advocating for robust quality infrastructure. Our efforts to shape the regulatory dialogue—from cybersecurity to sustainability initiatives—demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding consumer trust and enabling responsible innovation.

At the heart of these achievements is our community of dedicated members. Your expertise, leadership, and collaboration continue to drive the TIC sector forward, ensuring that we remain a trusted partner in an evolving global landscape. This report highlights the significant milestones we have reached together, underlining the shared ambition that defines our industry.

As the Global Board, we remain focused on ensuring that TIC Council's strategic direction evolves in alignment with the needs of our members and the changing external environment. Whether through strengthening global engagement, refining our advocacy priorities, or expanding our reach in new and emerging markets or services such as AI, our goal remains clear: to champion the role of TIC services in fostering a safer, more sustainable, and more resilient world.

Looking ahead, we recognise that change brings both challenges and opportunities. With key regions undergoing regulatory shifts and industries adapting to new realities, TIC Council stands ready to support its members in navigating this dynamic terrain. Our collective expertise will be instrumental in shaping the next phase of our industry's journey.

Sincerely,
Dr Michael Fübi

Foreword



Hanane Taidi
Director General
TIC Council

Dear Members and Stakeholders,

2024 has been a year of continued progress and strategic engagement, strengthening our industry's role in shaping regulatory frameworks, sustainability initiatives, and digital transformation.

This year, we have deepened our efforts in sustainability, reinforcing our commitment to environmental responsibility. The launch of the Certification System for Sustainability Practices (CSSP) represents a significant milestone, providing a structured approach to verifying environmental claims and streamlining compliance processes for businesses worldwide. Additionally, our engagements with policymakers on the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and Green Claims Directive have helped highlight the vital role of independent assurance in fostering trust in sustainability reporting.

The digital landscape continues to evolve at an unprecedented pace, making cybersecurity and AI key areas of focus. The formation of the AI Quality Infrastructure (AIQI) Consortium has positioned the TIC sector at the forefront of shaping ethical and trustworthy AI frameworks. Our cybersecurity hackathons and engagements with regulators have further cemented TIC Council's role in ensuring digital trust and resilience.

Additionally, 2024 has seen TIC Council's influence expand further. From hosting high-level engagements with regulatory authorities in China, India, and the Americas to deepening our collaborations within the European legislative landscape, we have reinforced our global presence. Our continued advocacy for third-party conformity assessment in regulatory discussions demonstrates the industry's indispensable role in maintaining safety, quality, and innovation.

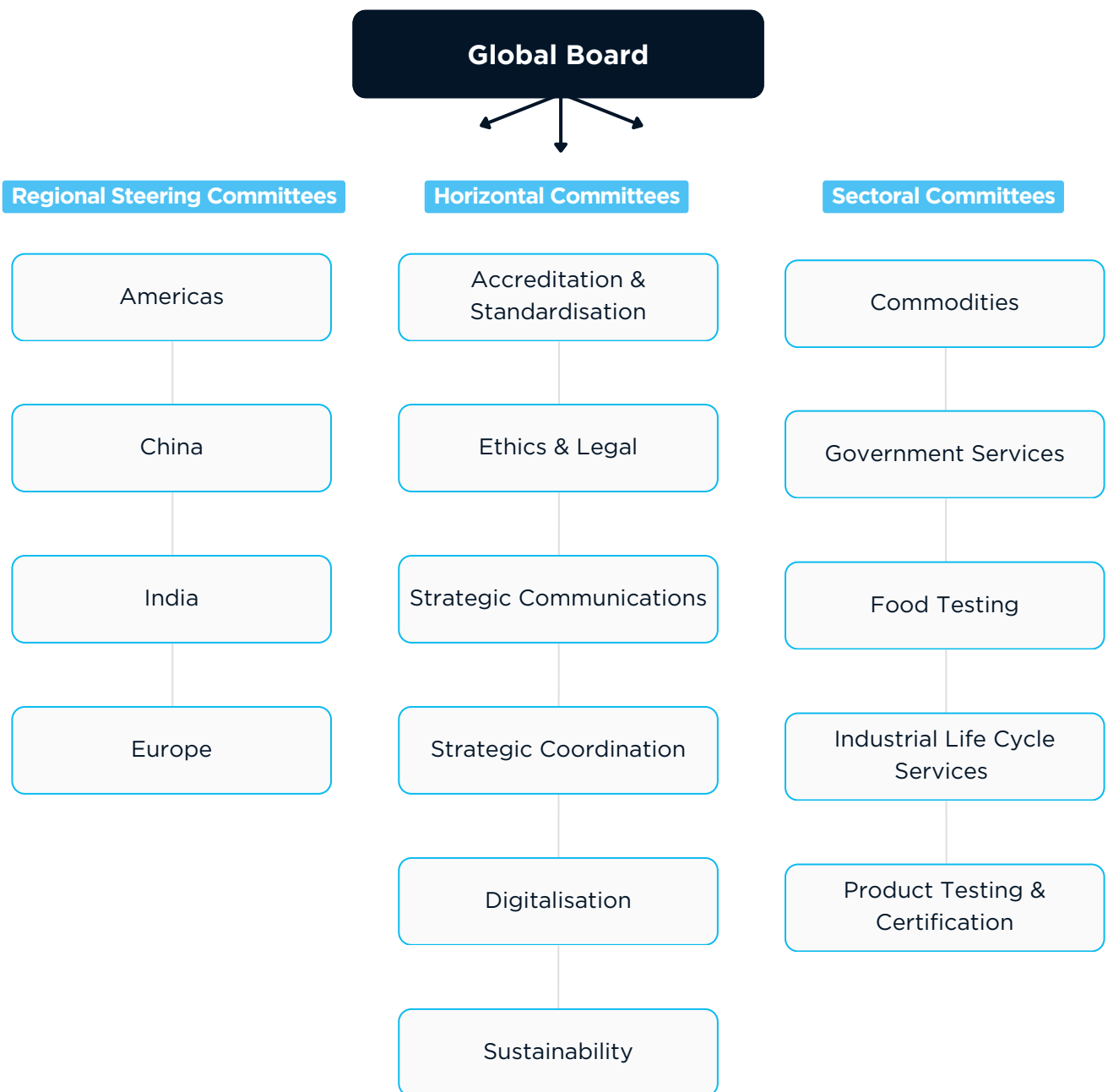
Finally, in 2024, after years of tireless work, the pilot of the Free Trade Zone Certification Scheme was officially launched in December at the Barcelona Free Trade Zone. On 3 December, we travelled to Barcelona to celebrate this major step forward in building more transparent and sustainable international trade. I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank our members for their time, expertise, and commitment to this milestone—and, of course, the OECD Countering Illicit Trade Working Group for entrusting TIC Council with this important project.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the dedication and expertise of our members. Your commitment to excellence and shared vision for a safer, more sustainable, and digitally secure world remain the driving force behind TIC Council's impact. I sincerely thank you all for your ongoing trust and engagement.

Sincerely,
Hanane Taidi

TIC Council Organisational Structure

The governance of TIC Council is entrusted to the General Assembly which in turn delegates powers of strategy development and day-to-day business to the Global Board. Currently, TIC Council has the following structure:



Highlights



The TIC Summit 2024, held on May 14 in Brussels, convened over 250 stakeholders from public institutions, AI developers, and academia to discuss building trustworthy AI. The event began with the screening of "The Best Option," a film by Serge Goriely, depicting a world dominated by AI. This set the stage for discussions emphasising the necessity of ethical safeguards to ensure AI serves humanity.

Renault's Chief Scientific Officer, Luc Julia, addressed common misconceptions about AI, highlighting that while AI has been around since the 1950s, the recent data explosion has propelled its capabilities. He emphasised that AI remains a tool under human control, necessitating the establishment of "guardrails" for responsible development. The summit also featured insights from Michael Mainelli, Lord Mayor of the City of London, who underscored the role of testing, certification, and inspection in ensuring AI's reliability.

Panel discussions explored topics such as collective responsibility in the AI era, the efficacy of regulatory frameworks, and the environment for AI innovation. Speakers like Susan Taylor-Martin (CEO, BSI) and Risto Uuk (EU Research Lead, Future of Life Institute) stressed the importance of implementing ethical safeguards and gradual deployment to maintain human oversight. The summit concluded with a consensus on the need for collaboration among stakeholders to establish robust frameworks that ensure AI's benefits are maximised while minimising potential risks.



On 2 December, the OECD Launched Certification Pilot for Free Trade Zones (FTZs) in Barcelona

The pilot project was launched during a high-level dialogue at DFactory Barcelona, where our Director General Hanane Taidi joined Zona Franca Barcelona leaders Pere Navarro and Blanca Sorigué, OECD's Marion Jansen, and representatives from the EUIPO and Business at OECD (BIAC).

The OECD FTZ Certification Scheme is a voluntary programme designed to identify trade hubs that uphold international standards of transparency, governance, and compliance. The certification process will be carried out by accredited TIC bodies under the oversight of the OECD.

Zona Franca Barcelona, one of Europe's most established FTZs, will be the first to undergo this certification. With its advanced infrastructure and proven track record, it sets a strong example for other FTZs aiming to enhance governance and align with international best practices.

This pilot initiative represents a step forward in promoting responsible and transparent trade environments worldwide, encouraging Free Trade Zones to strengthen their role in global economic development.

Regional Developments

Americas

In 2024, the Americas Regional Steering Committee (RSC) prioritised policy initiatives in Cybersecurity of Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Climate/Non-Financial Disclosures, while continuing to support campaigns tied to Green Claims, Anti-Counterfeiting, and the Voluntary Carbon Market. Despite largely focusing on public policy engagement in the USA, the committee also expanded outreach to public stakeholders in Canada, maintained lines of communication with strategic partners in Mexico and Colombia, and continued to engage with Brazilian authorities on Quality Infrastructure reforms.

During the year, TIC Council Americas submitted seven public comments and increased efforts to expand stakeholder engagement. Improved coordination with industry groups, such as the Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA), the Colombian Conformity Assessment Association (ASOCEC), and the Mexican Industry Confederation (CONCAMIN), assisted the committee in identifying opportunities across the region.

The Americas Committee made significant progress on advocating for the sector's involvement in the Voluntary Carbon Market (VCM) and Green Claims. In February, we submitted comments to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) highlighting how the TIC sector could contribute to a trusted carbon futures market. Later in the year, following an extended application process, the TIC Council was admitted into the Carbon Dioxide Removal Consortium (CDRC) of the U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) - a forum of stakeholders to assess measurement and standards related to carbon dioxide removal and propose guidance. Shortly following the passage of amendments to the Competition Act, we responded to requests for comments by the Canadian Competition Bureau (CCB) regarding new greenwashing rules.

TIC Council Americas worked closely with strategic partners to advocate for legislation, track and monitor important policy across the region, and identify opportunities for collaboration. Through the SHOP SAFE Coalition, a collection of consumer advocates and industry associations, TIC Council participated in lobbying campaigns in both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

We also maintained contact with policymakers in the USA and Brazil. TIC Council Americas increased regular communication with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), responded to requests for information from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the Department of Commerce, and provided public comment to three other U.S. Agencies. We also continued outreach with the Brazilian Ministry of Development, Industry, Commerce and Services (MDIC) ahead of their publishing of the National Quality Infrastructure Strategy (ENIQ).



SHOP SAFE Lobbying Day (Coalition meeting with the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee), July 2024

A major 2024 priority area for the region was addressing the U.S. Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) proposed rules regarding enhanced restrictions for Telecommunications Certification Bodies (TCBs) and the Cyber Trust Mark. Importantly, following consistent outreach efforts by TIC Council Americas, the FCC published a final rule that ensured an important role for the TIC sector.

We moderated two panels at the International Consumer Product Health and Safety Organization's (ICPHSO) annual symposium, highlighting the role of the TIC Sector in digital labelling and presenting the results of our 2023 US Market Study report. A final version of the report was published later in the year.

For 2025, the Americas Regional Steering Committee will prioritise strengthening the TIC Council's profile within the USA. The committee will work to identify important bills and regulations at the state-level, and establish detailed engagement plans with policymakers to highlight the important role of accredited third-party conformity assessment bodies. Policies of particular interest include the assessment and safety requirements of AI systems, IoT cybersecurity requirements, and regulations restricting and/or monitoring the use/disposal of Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

The committee will maintain engagement with regulatory bodies involved in legacy programs – such as regular meetings with OSHA in connection with its review of directives for managing the Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL) program, as well as with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), with regard to the Equipment Authorization Program (EAP) and the Cyber Trust Mark. Furthermore, we will leverage participation in the NIST CDRC, through the TIC Council project team, to ensure that any proposed guidance on carbon capture utilisation and carbon capture and storage includes engagement with the TIC sector.

China

In China, TIC Council focuses on fostering close connections with all levels of governments, industrial associations, and organisations to advocate for public safety, sustainable development, support for innovation, and promotion of international trade.

In 2024, the China Regional Steering Committee (RSC) continued to expand its engagement with policymakers, industry stakeholders, and TIC Council members. Through multiple high-level forums, technical seminars, and government consultations, the committee reinforced its role as a bridge between international best practices and China's regulatory environment.

Throughout the year, TIC Council China played a central role in promoting regulatory alignment and industry best practices. The Advocacy Working Group led several key initiatives, including hosting the Compliance Public Lecture with the China Certification and Accreditation Association (CCAA), reinforcing the importance of compliance and international cooperation in China's TIC sector. Additionally, the working group supported the TIC Council Global Board Meeting in Beijing, facilitating high-level exchanges between global TIC leaders and Chinese regulatory authorities. Engagement with policymakers remained a priority, with the working group providing expertise on certification policies, particularly in relation to carbon-related certification schemes and China's evolving regulatory landscape.

The Digitalisation Working Group was highly active in promoting digital transformation within the TIC sector. In September, TIC Council China hosted the EU RED DA Cybersecurity Seminar, providing manufacturers with in-depth insights into upcoming regulatory changes affecting wireless devices and network security. To further enhance industry understanding, the group published the Chinese version of the Trustworthiness of Artificial Intelligence - Recommendations of the TIC Sector white paper, advocating for responsible AI governance and secure digital infrastructure.

The Commodities Working Group continued to monitor regulatory developments affecting third-party inspections in China. The group closely followed updates on Decree No. 259 and engaged with the General Administration of Customs (GAC) to discuss the potential expansion of third-party inspection scope, particularly in areas such as metals and minerals. Additionally, TIC Council China published the Chinese version of the Petroleum Inspection Safety Code, promoting the safety ethics among inspectors in China.

The Product Testing and Certification Working Group remained focused on regulatory developments impacting TIC businesses. The working group compiled the International Certification Guide for Key Products: New Energy Vehicles, Lithium Batteries, and Photovoltaic Modules, which serves as a key resource for Chinese exporters navigating international certification requirements in global markets. The working group also actively strengthened cross-border technical cooperation by inviting seven overseas laboratories from TIC Council member organisations to participate in the High-Temperature External Short-Circuit Test international proficiency testing project. These laboratories successfully completed the validation process and were awarded proficiency testing certificates, reinforcing their expertise in battery safety compliance.

The Communications Working Group worked to expand TIC Council China's visibility and outreach through strategic communication initiatives. In April, the group was officially established in Shanghai, marking a new milestone in TIC Council China's engagement efforts. One of the major initiatives this year was the launch of the "EU TIC Policy Updates" section on TIC Council China's official WeChat account, providing regular insights into regulatory developments across product safety, digitalisation, sustainability, and trade.

Beyond working group activities, TIC Council China actively participated in several high-profile industry events to reinforce its leadership role in the TIC sector. In April, representatives took part in the International Round Table on Consumer Product Quality and Safety organised by the China General Administration Customs, engaging with regulatory authorities and industry leaders on aligning Chinese consumer product standards with international best practices. In June, TIC Council China was invited at the China Certification and Accreditation Conference on World Accreditation Day. Director General Hanane Taidi was invited to deliver a keynote speech themed "Conformity Assessment Building Trust Through Innovation and Cooperation." TIC Council China and China Certification and Accreditation Association (CCAA) released a joint initiative - "Compliance Establishes Cornerstone and Cooperation Shapes Future," which emphasised four key areas: compliance, innovation, openness and communication, and received positive responses from members.



TIC Council and the China Certification and Accreditation Association (CCAA) have launched a joint initiative to address global challenges and opportunities through certification, accreditation, inspection, and testing.



TIC Council's Global Board meeting was held in China for the first time, hosted by CCIC in Beijing.

Global Board meeting of TIC Council has been held in China for the first time, kindly hosted by CCIC in Beijing. Before CEOs travelling to Beijing, the delegation headed by President Dr. Michael Fübi met with the Vice Mayor Mr. Chen Jie and Shanghai Administration of Market Regulation over the topics of leveraging TIC industry to support Shanghai's industrial upgrade and green transformation. TIC Council China hosted an industry networking event in Shanghai, which brought together senior government officials and industry representatives. During the event, TIC Council signed two Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with Pudong SAMR and Jinqiao Industrial Park, reinforcing its commitment to regulatory cooperation and industry development. In Beijing, Vice Minister Pu Chun of State Administration of Market Regulation received TIC Council Global Board members and discussed the development prospects of conformity assessment in emerging fields such as the digital economy and AI.

In November, TIC Council China was rewarded as the "Excellent Strategic Partner" at the Lujiazui Conference of Global Investment Information and Services (Core Financial Zone of Shanghai), highlighting its contributions to international standardisation and professional services.

Europe

The Europe RSC found itself at a crossroads in 2024, a year where the new priorities of the incoming European political leadership drive the Brussels agenda. This is an important moment to reflect on what was accomplished in the last five years, how the TIC market and services have been transformed by new European legislation, and to propose a roadmap for the next five years. The Committee therefore plays a strategic role in setting the priorities for the TIC Council's engagement with the European co-legislators, and in providing guidance to ensure that public affairs and communication actions fit the business priorities of the members active in Europe.

2024 was first and foremost about the transition between two different majorities in the European Union (EU) and adapting to new overarching political priorities; in other words, transitioning from high ambitions on sustainability to the new mantras of competitiveness and simplification.

The TIC Council published its manifesto for the next five years, highlighting its priorities and making pointed recommendations for actions to be taken by European leadership in eight policy fields: AI, cybersecurity of IoT devices, sustainability reporting, the safety of toys, green claims for products, the safety of food products, renewable energy, and clean water. Each topic was addressed through the premise that the TIC industry does remain little known in the policymaker circles, and presenting the reasons why it should be better known given its centrality to the proper functioning of the European Single Market and to provide a space for safe innovation and competitiveness of European industries.

In parallel, with the incoming crop of MEPs, especially in the Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee, there is a demonstrated need to go to the basics and explain what conformity assessment is and why it matters for the European Single Market. To this end, a "Conformity Assessment Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)" was developed; alongside with the EU manifesto, TIC Council has a set of materials that explain to a wide audience what the TIC sector is and what it stands for.

Regarding legislative priorities, some files were carried over from one term to the other, and the TIC Council spent considerable time in the halls of the European Parliament to explain to MEPs the stakes of the Green Claims Directive, by explaining how the certification of Green Claims works in practice, inviting MEPs to visit testing laboratories in the countries they represent, and defending the importance of the independent verification of claims in a context where industries clamor for the simplification of these processes. This effort has run parallel to the creation of the Certification System for Sustainability Processes (CSSP), which the TIC Council secretariat presented to a wide range of trade associations representing users of green claims, scheme owner associations, the European Commission and the European Council's rotating presidencies, with the aim of fostering its adoption by the market and also in the legislation.

Outside of Brussels, and like in 2023, the TIC Council continued to advocate for the opening of the Corporate Sustainability Reporting assurance market to the TIC sector, by supporting ad-hoc efforts in Member States, participating in practitioner roundtables to support the expert role of the TIC industry, and increasing links with accreditation and standardisation bodies, to ensure that the whole quality infrastructure ecosystem is ready to support the sustainability reporting goals of the EU.

Finally, 2024 was the year where Artificial Intelligence, and the EU's AI Act, entered into force, which continued to raise many questions about its implementation, and especially the certification aspects.



TIC Council hosted a breakfast event in Brussels to introduce the AIQI Consortium, a forum of quality infrastructure bodies and organisations aimed at promoting open dialogue to ensure AI is developed and deployed safely and ethically.

Like for CSRD, TIC Council advocated for the role of the quality infrastructure ecosystem through the AIQI Consortium, organising a breakfast event at the TIC Council office, bringing together the EU AI office, staff of the European Parliament, and researchers to make explicit the role of quality infrastructure in implementing the AI Act.

Looking forward, 2025 brings a certain number of challenges, first and foremost symbolised by the “simplification” agenda of the European Commission, which may change a certain amount of legislation under which the TIC sector offers services, such as the Pressure Equipment Directive or the Medical Devices Regulation. The simplification of sustainability and due diligence reporting rules, and the update of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) before even its entry into full force also act as catalysts for action, mostly in continuing to find ways for the TIC industry to position itself as an asset for European competitiveness. TIC Council will continue to organise events on these topics and others, such as renewable energy, to showcase the sector’s deep technical knowledge and added value in these highly competitive fields.

India

The Regional Steering Committee of TIC Council India has played a pivotal role in strengthening the TIC sector in the region by engaging with policymakers, industry leaders, and regulatory bodies. Our key objectives include advocating for robust quality infrastructure, enhancing sustainability initiatives, and positioning the TIC sector as a crucial enabler of India's economic and digital transformation. In 2024, our efforts have been directed towards fostering strategic partnerships, deepening engagement in ESG and sustainability initiatives, strengthening India's cybersecurity framework, and leading dialogues on manufacturing competitiveness, food safety, and regulatory compliance. We have also expanded our advocacy efforts through key collaborations with organisations such as Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI), and Telecom Engineering Center (TEC), ensuring that TIC Council India remains at the forefront of shaping industry policies and standards.



Attendees at the TIC Council's first India Summit in Delhi on February 20, 2025, engaged in discussions about India's vision to become a \$30 trillion economy by 2047, with a focus on quality, sustainability, and consumer protection.

TIC Council hosted its first India Summit on February 20 themed Navigating the Future Towards 2047 in Delhi, gathering distinguished dignitaries, industry leaders, and policymakers to discuss tangible strategies to support India's ambitious goal of becoming a \$30 trillion economy by 2047, known as "Viksit Bharat@2047". The summit was inaugurated in presence of Dr. Michael Fübi, CEO of TÜV Rheinland and President of TIC Council and Ms Hanane Taidi, Director General TIC Council, and speakers from Bureau of Indian Standards, Quality Council of India, Bill Gates Foundation, FICCI, and former Secretary of the Department of Food and Public Distribution. The discussions were focused on the importance of quality and a robust conformity assessment ecosystem in ensuring sustainable development and protecting consumer interests.

TIC Council India secured representation in key government advisory groups, including the Securities and Exchange Board of India's (SEBI) ESG Advisory Working Group, receiving official representation in October 2024. This milestone underscores the organisation's commitment to shaping India's ESG landscape, as it provided valuable input on regulatory drafts released for public consultation. Additionally, TIC Council India secured a seat in the Department of Communication Stakeholder Advisory Committee for R&D and academic collaborations, chaired by the Honourable Minister of Communication.

TIC Council India published the paper "Recommendations for a Robust Cybersecurity Framework in India" in February 2024, outlining key strategies to strengthen the country's digital security. In June 2024, it released the policy document "100 Days of Trust," which outlined TIC Council India's recommendations for the new government's first 100 days. This document received positive feedback from multiple ministries and policymakers.



In 2024, PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry and TIC Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to foster collaboration and promote sustainable business growth.

The organisation strengthened its positioning within industry associations by renewing its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Confederation of Indian Industry - Institute of Quality (CII-IQ) during the TIC Summit India on 20th February 2024. Additionally, on 25th July 2024, TIC Council India signed an MoU with the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI), aiming to support sustainable initiatives, assist SMEs in aligning with state priorities, and engage in joint research to overcome trade barriers.

Further, TIC Council India organised three Quality Control Awareness Workshops in collaboration with the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), and the Quality Council of India (QCI). These workshops focused on raising awareness about Quality Control Orders (QCOs) in the textile and laboratory infrastructure sectors, facilitating industry compliance.

As a testament to its commitment to sustainable, globally competitive manufacturing, TIC Council India is working towards its Vision 2030 document. This vision outlines the strategic role TIC companies will play in bolstering India's GDP, advancing global market competitiveness, and establishing a trusted framework for public-private partnerships, quality assurance, compliance, and market access. The proposed paper will highlight how the TIC sector can drive India's transition into a developed economy.

Committee Developments

Accreditation & Standardisation

TIC Council's Accreditation and Standardisation Committee provides a forum to exchange views related to accreditation and standards relevant to conformity assessment. The work of the Committee includes developing positions regarding various accreditation and conformity assessment issues. It also determines the TIC Council position on international and regional documents related to accreditation and conformity assessment.

The Accreditation and Standardisation Committee engages with international and regional accreditation and standardisation stakeholders in order to maintain and enhance the recognition of the competence of the members. The main organisations the Committee interacts with are the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the regional accreditation groups, such as the European Co-operation for Accreditation (EA) as well as the Conformity Assessment Committee (CASCO) of the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO).

The Committee expertly manages TIC Council's collective dialogue and input on accreditation and standardisation matters. In 2024, the Committee met 4 times and provided input for about 80 documents and consultations from international and regional organisations. The Committee successfully increased TIC Council experts' participation in a variety of relevant international groups. This participation aims to influence the international and regional rules that members have to abide by.

TIC Council has continued its effective work, as co-convenor, in the IAF Working Group for the certification of products, processes and systems as well as participation in the ISO CASCO Chair's Policy and Coordination group.

Members of the A&SC have been effectively involved in the revision of ISO/IEC 17020 for inspection bodies to ensure that any changes do not negatively affect members. The Committee will also participate in the upcoming update of a key standard, ISO/IEC 17065.

In 2024, the Committee started to explore potential avenues for cooperation involving the Industrial Life Cycle Services Committee of TIC Council and ILAC, resulting in the participation of TIC Council representatives in the October 2024 meeting of the Inspection Committee of ILAC. It is expected that cooperative work will continue.

At the behest of the Global Board, and working with the Regional Steering Committee for Europe, the Accreditation and Standardisation Committee established a Task Force to explore ways to address the challenges presented by certain accreditation practices which negatively impact the members.

Digitalisation

The Global Board identified digitalisation as a strategic priority for TIC Council, leading to the establishment of the Digitalisation Working Group (WG) in November 2023. The group focuses on “TIC for Digital,” referring to the services provided by TIC companies to ensure that technologies such as AI and IoT products are, on the one hand, safe for consumers and, on the other hand, comply with an increasing number of digital regulations worldwide.

In 2024, key activities included defining the group’s scope under the “TIC for Digital” framework, which was structured through the drafting of a strategic document. The strategy, titled “From Physical to Digital: The TIC Industry’s Evolution to Digital Trust,” outlines the long-term vision for the group. The aim is that by 2029, the TIC sector will be recognised as a trusted provider in the digital space, reflecting the same level of confidence it has established in physical environments. The three key areas of engagement identified are cybersecurity, AI, and emerging technologies. A work plan and outreach activities have been developed, including engagement with manufacturers and policymakers.

A major achievement in 2024 was the establishment of the AI Quality Infrastructure (AIQI) Consortium. This initiative brings together different organisations within the Quality Infrastructure ecosystem, including TIC companies, accreditation bodies, standardisation organisations, metrology institutes, and academia. The objective is to foster collaboration on the safe, ethical, and trustworthy development and deployment of AI. Martin Schaffer, Chair of the Digitalisation WG, was elected Vice-Chair of the AIQI Consortium.

TIC Council hosted the AIQI Consortium launch event at its premises in December 2024, with participation from key stakeholders, including the EU AI Office, European Parliament representatives, and AI attachés from Member States. During the event, TIC Council presented an informative one-pager explaining the role of the TIC sector in facilitating trustworthy AI.

Regarding cybersecurity, Hinda Gharbi, CEO of Bureau Veritas and the Digitalisation WG’s sponsor, spoke at the Financial Times event “Cyber Resilience Summit,” highlighting the TIC sector’s critical role in strengthening cybersecurity across the supply chain. Furthermore, ongoing dialogue with manufacturers and other stakeholders on EU cybersecurity legislation, such as the RED Delegated Act and the Cyber Resilience Act, has taken place on a regular basis. The goal of these discussions is to facilitate the exchange of views and best practices to ensure smooth implementation and compliance.

Additionally, TIC Council became a member of the European Internet Forum (EIF), an MEP-led digital association. Through this membership, TIC Council secured a speaker slot at an EIF event at the European Parliament, attended by policymakers and industry leaders, to discuss the implementation of the NIS 2 Directive.

In 2025, priorities will focus on cybersecurity, AI, and emerging technologies to prepare the TIC industry for future challenges. A key focus will be developing a Quality Infrastructure framework for the digital age, addressing how digital technologies impact standards and accreditation. The AIQI Consortium will work on advancing the AI Assurance Framework to help AI supply chain stakeholders align with the EU AI Act and global regulations. Additionally, strategic efforts will include raising awareness of the TIC sector among policymakers, with events and speaking opportunities to highlight its role in Digital Trust.

Sustainability

The Sustainability Committee amended its Terms of Reference to update its mission and objectives. It also changed its name from the ESG Committee to the Sustainability Committee and introduced the goal of externally influencing policies across different regions while internally helping members better understand the risks and opportunities of these policies. Additionally, the specific mission of developing Certification Schemes was introduced.

In 2024, the Committee achieved several key objectives. For the first time in its history, TIC Council developed a certification system called the Certification System for Sustainability Practices (CSSP). This initiative aims to certify companies' internal data management systems, facilitating the verification of environmental claims. The system is regarded as a significant opportunity for the sector to streamline the compliance process by making environmental data more readily available for multiple purposes.

The Committee also engaged with the European Commission on the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM). On 27th November, representatives from the European Commission joined the Sustainability Committee to discuss upcoming delegated and implementing acts related to the verification and accreditation of verifiers under CBAM. Similarly, on 23rd January, the Committee engaged with the European Commission on the Green Claims Directive, discussing ways to make the verification process more efficient and less burdensome for companies.

On an international level, TIC Council engaged with various authorities worldwide—including in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan, and Switzerland—to advocate for the inclusion of non-audit providers in sustainability reporting assurance. This initiative aims to expand the role of independent assurance providers in global sustainability reporting frameworks.

Another key achievement was the development of the TIC Council Guidelines for Double Materiality Assessment. These voluntary guidelines are designed to help companies conduct double materiality assessments in alignment with the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS).

Looking ahead to 2025, the Committee will focus on advocating for the industry as an enabler in simplifying multiple legislative frameworks proposed across various geographies. TIC services can play a crucial role in helping both industry and governments streamline and simplify compliance obligations. At the same time, the Committee will continue its monitoring and advocacy efforts on key topics, including the Green Claims Directive, Sustainability Reporting, and CBAM.

Ethics & Legal

The Ethics & Legal Committee plays a vital role in ensuring that TIC Council's governance framework remains robust, transparent, and aligned with industry best practices. The committee's primary objectives include maintaining TIC Council membership rules, including the Compliance Code and its Guidelines, ensuring they remain fit for purpose. Additionally, the committee provides legal and ethical support to the Global Board and other committees while also reviewing TIC Council's publications from a legal and ethical perspective.

In 2024, the committee achieved several key milestones. A significant accomplishment was the adoption of an updated TIC Council Complaints Handling Procedure, enhancing the organisation's ability to manage and resolve complaints in a structured and transparent manner. Furthermore, the committee revisited the format of its training sessions to improve engagement and accessibility, ensuring that members receive comprehensive guidance on ethical and legal compliance matters. Another key initiative was the review of various committee publications, including the Double Materiality Guidelines, two ILCS Bulletins, and the Model Committee Terms of Reference, to ensure they align with legal and ethical standards.

By strengthening governance mechanisms and refining compliance frameworks, the Ethics & Legal Committee will continue to play a pivotal role in safeguarding TIC Council's integrity and promoting ethical business practices across the industry.

Commodities

The Commodities Committee defines and oversees the overall strategy for the TIC industry regarding commodity inspections.

In 2024, the Committee focused on strengthening the industry's role in safety and technical best practices. Simultaneously, it worked to increase visibility on the TIC industry's key and critical role in ESG certification for emerging markets of critical commodities needed for the Energy Transition.

The Commodities Committee produced and published two white papers on Energy Transition Commodities, one focused on Carbon Capture, Storage and Utilization; and the other on Clean Hydrogen. These documents provide an in-depth analysis of these green commodities and their value chains, exploring the challenges faced by economic operators on their commercialisation, and highlighting how independent ESG Verification and Certification services play a crucial role in ensuring quality, transparency, safety and trust.

The Petroleum and Petrochemicals Committee has been renamed the Energy Committee to better reflect the evolving scope of the TIC industry's work in the energy commodities market, which now includes stocks such as hydrogen, ammonia, and methanol. In 2024, the committee reviewed and updated ten Technical Bulletins and is continuing discussions on improving both the reach and compliance of safety best practices developed by the TIC Council.

Furthermore, the Commodities Committee has established a dedicated Safety Committee as a forum to bring together Health, Safety, Security & Environment (HSSE) experts from all divisions of the commodities industry. This committee has been tasked with creating, champion and oversee Best Practice guidelines and projects for the commodities Industry, looking to improve HSSE performance for both members and the broader industry.

Lastly, the committee was engaged in the planning and execution of the fifth Safety Conference, this time jointly organised in cooperation with the American Petroleum Institute, in partnership with BP, Chevron, ExxonMobil, and Shell.

Two more White Papers are further under development, focused on Critical Minerals and on Biofuels - Used Cooking Oil. The committee will leverage the publication of the white papers to increase engagement with key stakeholder through events, such as webinars.

The Safety Committee and the Energy Committee will work together to strengthen the technical and safety library of documents produced, looking to increase reach and compliance with safety best practices, and exploring how to deepen cooperation among TIC Council members to improve and disseminate a stronger HSSE culture towards the commodities industry.

Food Testing

This Committee started its operations in September, after being created by the Global Board in May. Its main goal is to align the industry's vision and objectives in food testing operations.

One of the key priorities for the Committee has been addressing issues related to the import of samples. TIC companies have encountered difficulties with customs authorities in the EU when importing samples from both third countries and within the EU. In response, the Committee engaged with DG SANTE at the European Commission to discuss these challenges. It has been tasked with developing a legislative proposal to resolve these issues while maintaining stringent public health protections.

Another major focus of the Committee has been the development a Code of Practice (CoP) for Food Testing activities. The Committee has the mandate to uplift the industry standards and show how TIC Council members follow more stringent standards as their accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025 ensures. This CoP will make sure that companies in TIC Council manage their food testing operations following higher standards, ensuring the reputation of the whole industry.

The goal for the Committee in 2025 is making sure a specific proposal on the import of samples is addressed, and a first version of the Code of Practice is published and enforced to the whole of TIC Council's membership.

Industrial Life Cycle Services Committee

The Industrial Life Cycle Services Committee defines and oversees the overall strategy for the TIC industry in the field of industrial inspections, looking to demonstrate the added value of TIC services towards key stakeholders.

In 2024, the Committee continued to focus on developing best practice guidance documents, publishing two new technical bulletins. The first, “Implementation of EN81-80,” was produced by the Lifts, Machines and Cranes Working Group to promote and provide guidance on this standard, improving and promoting state-of-the-art practices for older lift builds. The second, “Minimum Requirements for Digital Reporting,” defines a minimum set of required information for companies issuing digital reports where legislation and standards have gaps.

The committee’s hydrogen task force developed and published a survey on European legislation for hydrogen transport pipelines. This survey provides an overview of the European regulatory and legislative landscape for transporting pure and mixed hydrogen through new and repurposed pipelines. The survey aims to provide a snapshot of the evolving regulatory landscape, identifying trends, gaps, and potential contradictions at the country level.

Finally, the ILCS formally engaged with the ILAC Inspection Committee, appointing a representative to its meetings on behalf of TIC Council. The Committee and ILAC IC are discussing key topics of interest for both CABs and ABs and developing joint activities and documents.

The Committee and ILAC IC are discussing key topics of interest for both CABs and ABs and developing joint activities and documents. Pre-identified topics include recognition and alignment on remote conformity assessment activities, AI-assisted inspections, and developing minimum qualifications for industrial inspectors.

The Digitalisation Working Group is discussing a White Paper to raise awareness of the direct impact seemingly small software modifications can have on machinery safety and regulatory compliance. The document will emphasise the critical role of independent third-party conformity assessment companies who, with access to relevant software data, can ensure robust, conflict-of-interest-free safety assessments.

The hydrogen Working Group will expand its report to include information on hydrogen standards, technical guidelines from gas operators, and other relevant documents. The goal is a comprehensive document providing reliable guidance on the state of the art for hydrogen pipelines.

Product Testing and Certification

The Product Testing and Certification Committee (PTCC) continued to focus on the trends in the consumer product testing and certification market, and the challenges that these evolutions present for the market. Cybersecurity of IoT continues to remain one of the main priorities for alignment, but some more detailed topics on digital labelling, medical devices and chemicals testing have received attention.

In 2024, and in line with the priority on cybersecurity of IoT, the PTCC organised two Cybersecurity Hackathons, one in Singapore (TÜV SÜD - July) and another in Málaga (DEKRA - October). Six TIC Council laboratories—TÜV SÜD, DEKRA, UL Solutions, Bureau Veritas, TÜV Rheinland, and SGS—participated, bringing together 20 cybersecurity experts from around the world. Together, they collaborated on testing the requirements of ETSI EN 303 645 (standard) and TS 103 701 (technical specification), exchanging insights and addressing challenges related to applying cybersecurity standards in real-world settings.

The Hackathons aimed to evaluate the consumer cybersecurity assessment methodology for IoT devices, provide feedback to standardisation organisations on the difficulties in interpreting cybersecurity standards, and suggest improvements for overall clarity. They also sought to address the challenges manufacturers face in achieving comprehensive cybersecurity compliance for IoT devices while developing best practices to improve testing consistency and train evaluators across the TIC sector.

The Hackathon results revealed significant challenges and opportunities in the application of ETSI EN 303 645 and TS 103 701. The lack of detailed guidance and standardisation in testing procedures has led to open interpretations and inconsistencies across evaluations. This fragmentation, while concerning for manufacturers, presents a unique opportunity for the TIC sector to step forward and drive alignment in the implementation of these standards.

Secondly, the committee has started working on alignment for the upcoming EU Digital Product Passport, which will gradually enter into force from 2026 on, for 29 different product categories. On top of preparing for the validation & verification services, the committee has also explored how to ensure that TIC Council member databases can be interconnected and accessed through a crawler, which would allow all regulators and interested parties in accessing DPP information to do so. The ultimate objective is for the TIC Council to be recognised as an access point by the European Commission.

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Owing to the success of the 2024 hackathons, a third hackathon will be organized in April 2025, this time around the harmonized standard for the upcoming Radio Equipment Directive, EN 18031, with the same objectives as the first two sessions. 2025 will also be used to promote the best practices White Paper with a wide range of interested stakeholders and to engage standardisation organisations to provide pointed feedback on the standards that were used for evaluation.

Finally, in 2025, the committee will commission a new market study, this time on the levels of chemicals in widely sold consumer goods in the EU and US markets, identifying possible issues of non-compliance with applicable regulations and standards in these two important markets. The results of the study will help prove the importance of independent third-party testing for these products and the issues with self-declaration of conformity and will serve to showcase the importance of this issue with regulators. The results will also help with dialogues with manufacturers, who are facing challenges in regulatory compliance and chemicals testing, as evidenced by the discussion that the committee had with manufacturers and distributors of softlines.



TIC Council is a global association representing over 100 international independent third-party testing, inspection, certification and verification organisations. Testing, Inspection and Certification (TIC) companies cater to a diverse range of industry sectors and a variety of standards and legislation. The industry represents an estimated one million employees across the world with annual sales of approximately USD 200 billion.