ilac news

Issue 28, November 2005

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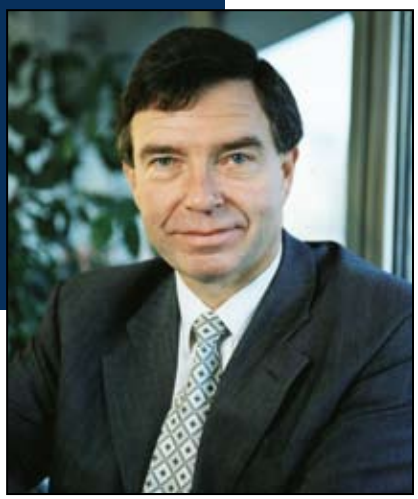
from the chair



It is now approximately one year since I took over from Mike Peet, but it seems to me that it was only yesterday. With ILAC being so busy, time is moving very fast, and there is still much to do, but thanks to our strategic and business plan the way forward is laid out.

I am very pleased to say that we are progressing on several major issues.

First of all, I will mention those related to the future of our organisation itself—for instance, the follow-up of the licensing and sublicensing of our mark, our insurance protection and other legal matters which are of primary importance.

Secondly, not forgetting that ILAC has an overall technical background, having previously addressed the question relating to accreditation of reference material producers, we are now working on the difficult subject of recognition of competence of proficiency testing providers. This is crucial to complement accreditation, as a means to give an objective measure of the confidence in testing and calibration results.

Thirdly, we are consolidating and expanding the work with our MOU partners (ISO, UNIDO, BIPM, WADA, IEC etc) and with our sister organisation, IAF. In the framework of the MOU signed together with IAF and ISO (March 2004), we have been able to establish a joint communiqué, signed by the heads of the three organisations, to clarify what accreditation according to ISO/IEC 17025 is, as opposed to ISO 9001 certification. This joint communiqué is a direct response to our stakeholders' expectations as accredited laboratories and their need to demonstrate to their customers that accreditation is a better assurance of their competence than just a certification of their generic quality management system.

Concerning IAF, our cooperation is now permanent and improving in different sectors: management of the MLAs, publications and marketing and the future organisation of meetings are examples. This cooperation has now been formalised in an agreement. All this progress is achieved thanks to active participation of our members, supported by a very dedicated secretariat.

It is clear that the amount of work to be done is increasing. This is why ILAC needs, more than ever, volunteers to participate actively in our efforts, to provide the service we are requested to offer, for the benefit of worldwide socio-economic activities and global trade.

Daniel Pierre
ILAC Chair

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Editor: Agnes Koltai
Designer: Denise Popovic

International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation

ILAC News is published twice a year by the ILAC Secretariat. Contributions represent the view of the authors and the editorial represents the opinions of the Editor. Such views and opinions do not necessarily reflect ILAC Policy.

news from the ilac secretariat

ILAC Secretariat: Alan Squirrell, Annette Dever, Florence Fung, Mohan Sabaratnam, Alison Hay

Greetings from all our readers from the ILAC Secretariat. A summary report on activity since the last *ILAC News* follows:

Secretariat Staff

We are sad to report that Paul Davies has moved on to "greener pastures". Paul has actively contributed to the work of the ILAC Secretariat over the last 9 years, particularly in the areas of ILAC publications (including his role as editor of *ILAC News*), website, general enquiries and an important role with links to the ILAC Marketing and Communication Committee (MCC). We wish Paul all the very best for the future in his new employment.

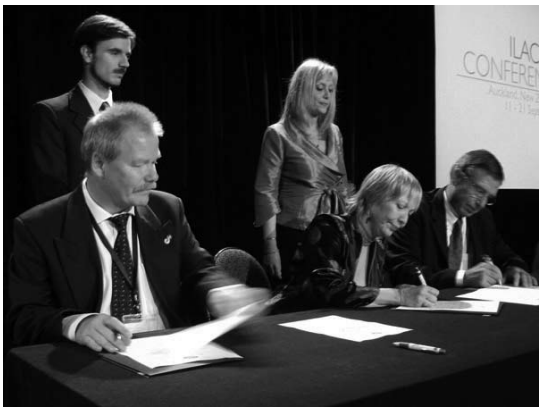
On a brighter note, we are pleased to introduce Alison Hay who started working part time in April 2005 with us, providing administrative support. A big welcome Alison! Also to Agnes Koltai, who has bravely stepped into the position of *ILAC News* Editor and is helping us with other ILAC publications, and Andy McKenna who is assisting with the ILAC website.

ILAC Meetings

Our mid-year suite of Executive and joint meetings with IAF was held in Frankfurt, Germany in June. Our thanks to Thomas Facklam for the excellent arrangements. It was a productive week culminating with the joint ILAC/IAF/ISO working group meeting where the Communiqué on the recent alignment of ISO/IEC 17025 with ISO 9001 (2000), in relation to accreditation statements, was finalised. This was sent out to all members in August 2005 and can also be found on the ILAC website (members section). Our Laboratory Committee (LC) made a very active contribution to this and hopefully it will assist those members who feel that this information is needed, particularly for new and existing clients of accredited laboratories.

Also, in Frankfurt, an ILAC workshop on Reference Materials was held for developing and developed countries (see JDSC report on page 15). Alan was pleased to make a contribution as one of the presenters and the discussion reinforced the fact that the regular use of (values associated with good quality) Reference Materials is essential for establishing and maintaining traceability and thereby giving confidence in the measurement results provided by accredited laboratories.

In September, the annual ILAC/IAF meetings and General Assemblies were held in Auckland, NZ. We have just returned "armed" with a lot of actions – but we think this reflects a successful two weeks! (The resolutions from the 9th ILAC General Assembly are published on page 45 of this edition of *ILAC News*). Thanks to everybody for their constructive input and especially to Llew Richards and his staff at IANZ who put on a great show!



Signing ceremony during Auckland meetings

Standing — Staff members OAA, Argentina. Seated (left to right) —Thomas Facklam (IAF Chair), Beatriz Garcia (OAA, Argentina) and Daniel Pierre (ILAC Chair)

Publications

Since April 2005, the following ILAC documents have been published:

- ILAC G9:2005 *Guidelines for the Selection and Use of Reference Materials*
- ILAC P9:2005 *ILAC Policy for Participation in National and International Proficiency Testing Activities*

In the "pipeline" are:

- *Guideline for the Determination of Calibration Intervals of Measuring Instruments* (voting period ended on 23 October 05)
- ILAC P1: 2003 *ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Requirements for Evaluation of Accreditation Bodies By ILAC-recognised Regional Cooperations* (revised document out for voting)
- ILAC P3: 2003 *ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Procedures for Evaluation of Unaffiliated Bodies for Purpose of Recognition* (revised document out for voting)
- ILAC-P8:200x *ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement: Supplementary Requirements and Guidelines for the Use of Accreditation Body Symbols and for Claims of Accreditation Status by Accredited Laboratories* (document out for comment)

A reminder to all to keep those postal ballot votes and comments coming in … please!

ILAC Liaisons

Our appointed liaison officers continue to be busy – it is no small task to prepare for, present a consolidated ILAC position, and report on meetings all over the world with important external organisations that vitally impact on ILAC's current and future work. Since April 2005 there has been much activity in metrological matters (eg. BIPM and associated committees, ISO REMCO (reference materials) - and also various ISO groups and committees - eg TC 212 (medical) and TC 176 (ISO 9000). In November this year, further ISO meetings (eg CASCO Plenary and ISO/ILAC/IAF Joint Working Group) will take place. The Joint Committee and Traceability in Laboratory Medicine (JCTLM) will also meet again and the results will impact on ILAC's future work with the accreditation of medical laboratories.

The work of the ILAC Secretariat

Work continues on improving the ILAC website (regular internal audits and close communication with the MCC and other ILAC Committees). As always, member suggestions for improvements to the website are always welcome.

The ILAC-MRA Mark registration process continues and as at 16 October 2005, 34 ILAC Full Members had signed Licensing Agreements with ILAC, for the use of the Combined MRA Mark. The Combined MRA Mark, is the ILAC-MRA Mark used in combination with the accreditation body's own mark. The Secretariat continues to receive a variety of enquiries on various aspects relating to the registration, licensing and use of the ILAC-MRA Mark. To assist in this area, a list of "Frequently Asked Questions" on ILAC-MRA Mark matters, was compiled earlier in the year. It can be downloaded from the Member's area of the ILAC Website.

Other on-going activities include the ILAC accounts, general and specific enquiries, publications and updating membership and liaison activities. The ILAC Secretariat Procedures Manual is also nearing completion.

ILAC Membership

ILAC membership as at 13 October 2005 is as follows:

- 49 Full Members (Signatories to the ILAC Arrangement) representing 40 economies
- 18 Associates representing 18 economies
- 22 Affiliates representing 20 economies
- 5 Regional Cooperation Bodies
- 1 National Coordination Body
- 18 Stakeholders

The ILAC membership (total 113 bodies) now covers a total of 82 different economies worldwide and approximately 26,000 laboratories and inspection bodies are accredited by the 67 ILAC Full Members and Associates.

Further information on ILAC can be obtained from the ILAC website at www.ilac.org, or email the Secretariat on ilac@nata.asn.au.

Finally, a big thank you to all members who actively contribute in a productive and cooperative manner to the work of ILAC – we still have a lot to do to meet the objectives and strategies listed in our Business Plan (ILAC S3: 2004 ILAC Strategic and Business Plan) and we need to "share the load".

Also, special thanks go out to our hard working Executive Committee - Daniel, Peter, Committee chairs and other Regional representatives - for their ongoing support, which is much appreciated. One wonders sometimes how they manage to cope with their ILAC workload (as unpaid volunteers) when they have so many other important domestic duties.

Changes to ILAC Membership

The following changes have occurred with the ILAC membership since the last issue of *ILAC News*.

Full Members

- International Accreditation Service, Inc (IAS), United States of America. Granted for Extension of scope to include calibration.
- National Accreditation Body of Republica de Cuba (ONARC), Cuba
- National Laboratories Accreditation Bureau (NLAB), Egypt
- Organismo Argentino de Acreditacion (OAA), Argentina
- Polish Centre for Accreditation (PCA), Poland

Associates

- AAC Analitica, Russia
- Canadian Association for Environmental Analytical Laboratories (CAEAL)
- Dubai Municipality – Accreditation Center (DAC), United Arab Emirates
- Office Luxembourgeois d'Accreditation et de Surveillance (OLAS), Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

Affiliates

- Kenya Accreditation Service (KENAS), Kenya
- Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MNCCI), Mongolia

Surveying the Needs of ILAC Members

This paper continues on from Part I, which was published in the April 2005 issue of *ILAC News*. In the previous issue, the topic of Planning Your Survey was covered. This paper continues with Planning, Conducting and Analysing the Survey.

Part II Designing and Conducting the Survey

2.3 Planning Your Analysis

During the design phase, you should develop your analysis plan to help you keep organised and focused. Your analysis plan will establish the variables, measures, and the relationships between variables that you want to explore. Developing the analysis plan will help you think through your questions and determine if you need to make changes such as the following:

- Add new questions or eliminate extraneous questions
- Change existing questions
- Rethink your data collection plans

The analysis plan will also help you to determine the type of software and programming you will use for the analysis. This will help ensure that the technology you have selected is capable of handling the type and quantity of data you will collect as well as the type of analysis you want to perform. There are never any guarantees, but planning your analysis will help to ensure that your survey efforts will be efficient and successful.

2.4 Pilot Testing Your Survey Instrument

How does a pilot test help you?

- Ensures that your instructions are clear and properly understood
- Ensures that your questions are understood
- Identifies issues with the wording and order of your questions
- Gives you an idea of what kind of time and resource burden you will be placing on potential respondents
- Ensures that the design of your survey is free of flaws that could lead to incorrect information
- Determines the respondent's level of interest in completing the survey

It is critical that you pilot test your survey to ensure that your survey instrument will be uniformly interpreted and understood. Even if you think your research, planning, and design efforts have been thorough, there is always the chance for misinterpretation or unforeseen difficulties.

You will get more accurate results if your pilot test participants are representative of the group you will be targeting in your survey. You should request volunteers from the different types of ILAC members. The typical group for a pilot test is 5 to 10 people. However, given the relatively small size of the group you will be surveying, a smaller group may be appropriate. Have your participants come to a central location to fill out the questionnaire for the pilot test so they can meet as a group afterward to discuss the results. If this is not possible, the discussion of results could be conducted by teleconference. If neither of these options is viable, the participants can be asked to submit written comments.

If you have decided that one of your objectives is to encourage the participation of members who were low responders in the previous survey, you will want to include representatives from those groups in your pilot test. That way, you can get specific information from them regarding how members of their group will respond to the survey. They may be able to give you advice on how to make members of their group more receptive to the questionnaire and therefore more likely to fill it out.

2.5 Conducting the Survey

Steps in conducting the survey

- Set up a tracking database
- Send an advance letter
- Send the survey package
- One week later, send a reminder
- Three weeks after the reminder, send a reminder and new form
- If no response from some recipients, follow up with a phone call or proceed to the organisation and analysis of your results

To conduct your survey efficiently, you should be organised. Keep track of what you have sent out and the responses you receive. You will probably have to conduct some type of follow-up to ensure maximum response rates. These steps are addressed in the following sections.

2.5.1 Tracking the Survey Process

Surveying efforts are often tracked by creating a simple tracking database. However, if the potential respondent group is not very large, it may be just as easy to track your progress using a simple hard copy table. Either way, you will want to keep track of the following information:

- Unique identifier for each potential respondent
- Address and contact information for each potential respondent
- Date that advance letter was sent
- Date survey was sent

- Date response was received
- If response is not received, date(s) follow-up was sent
- Date that response data were entered
- Date of data verification (ie. when QA/QC was conducted)

2.5.2 Developing and Disseminating Your Survey Materials

To ensure that your survey is well received by potential respondents, you should always send them an advance letter to let them know the survey instrument is coming. The letter can be sent either by email or by regular mail and should be received approximately 1 week before they get the questionnaire. Sending a letter with a real signature by regular mail can add a personal touch to your communication. However, there are no postage costs associated with sending your advance letter by email.

Your letter should inform the recipient about the reason for the survey and how the data will be used. Tell them when to expect the survey instrument and approximately how much of their time will be needed. Let the recipients know how important their input is. Assure them that the confidentiality of the information they provide will be secure. Tell them whom to contact if they have any questions. If you have decided to conduct the survey via the Internet, provide the Web address and log-on procedures.

You should time the dissemination of your survey instrument so that it arrives about a week after your advance letter. Include a cover letter with the survey instrument that reiterates some of the information and instructions provided in the advance letter.

2.5.3 Following Up with Potential Respondents

Once you have sent the survey package out, you will probably need to follow up with at least some of the recipients. A week after they receive the questionnaire, send a reminder out to those who have not completed and returned the questionnaire. Make the tone of the reminder friendly and remind them how important their input is. Ask them if they are having any difficulties with the survey instrument and provide contact information. If you still have recipients who have not responded 3 weeks after the reminder was sent out, send another reminder with a new questionnaire. If two written reminders do not produce results and your resources permit, you may wish to phone the recipient to encourage them to participate.

If none of these steps produces results, you should re-evaluate your response rate against the goals of your surveying efforts and ask the following questions:

- Is the non-response rate high enough to warrant further follow-up?
- Do you have sufficient resources to proceed with further follow-up?

After examining the answers to these questions, you might decide to move on to the next steps — organising and analysing the results.

2.6 Analysing the Data

2.6.1 Organising the Results

Steps in organising survey results
- Collect data and enter the data into a database
- Run checks and frequency distributions
- Conduct manual QA/QC
- Code responses to open-ended questions
- Conduct QA/QC of coded responses

To efficiently analyse the responses you have received, you need to collect and enter the data in a database. The database should mirror the survey instrument. It should be tested and debugged before you send out the survey package. That way the database will be ready to receive information as soon as the responses start coming in. If your survey instrument did not change much after pilot testing, you can use the responses from the pilot survey to test the database. Otherwise, you can have someone who is familiar with the project make up fictional responses. It is also important to ensure that the database is properly maintained and backed up throughout data entry and analysis to protect the integrity of data and prevent corruption or loss of data. Regular database maintenance is essential to performing quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC), so check with your software vendor for specific instructions regarding database maintenance.

2.6.2 Ensuring Data QA/QC

Data QA/QC is critical during this phase of the survey process. If the quality of your data is not ensured to the appropriate level, you cannot rely on the results of your surveying effort. The following sections discuss different ways of performing data QA/QC. Some of these can be conducted electronically; others must be done manually.

2.6.2.1 Performing Electronic QA/QC

Running frequency distributions, also known as univariate analysis, is a quick way to check for completeness. This can also help you identify inconsistencies and flag out-of-range responses. For instance, if the total number of respondents is 70 and a certain question resulted in 76 answers, you will know that something is wrong. You should run frequency distributions that show you the number of responses for each type of question. Unless more than one answer is possible for a particular question, the total number of responses to a question should not exceed the total number of respondents. Also, the total number of responses to one question should

not vary significantly from the number of responses to other questions.

This type of analysis will help you prepare your data for analysis as well as give you a framework for defining the overall universe of your study.

2.6.2.2 Performing Manual QA/QC

Once you have run your frequencies to identify any general errors, you can begin the manual QA/QC process. One method for doing this is to print out your data so every answer to every question can be manually checked against the completed questionnaires. If the amount of total data is too large for this method, and resources do not allow for this type of extensive check, you can randomly sample a percentage of the responses for errors.

If you are going to use sampling, you will first want to determine the error rate you will be comfortable with. That rate will depend on the objectives that you initially set for the survey and the planned uses for the resulting information. Checking 10% of the completed questionnaires is typical. If during the sampling, a pattern of error emerges, it might indicate that the person entering the data or the respondents did not properly understand the particular question. If an error pattern is detected for a question, all answers to that question should be checked.

2.6.2.3Coding and Performing QA/QC on Open-Ended Answers

If you included open-ended questions in your survey instrument and you want to analyse the responses electronically, you will need to code the responses and add another level of QA/QC. Someone with a good working knowledge of ILAC and the issues being addressed by the survey should review a sample set of completed questionnaires to determine typical responses to the questions. A sample set of 10 to 15 should suffice. The reviewer can categorise the responses and develop guidelines on how to enter the data. As the data are being categorised and entered, interpretation issues will probably be encountered. As these issues are resolved, it is helpful to document them and provide that documentation to the people analysing the data. That way if a similar issue comes up, you will have a record of how it was addressed and be able to apply the same interpretation. Once the data are entered, the experienced reviewer should check some or all of the data to ensure that they were interpreted correctly.

2.7 Analysing the Results

The type of analysis you choose depends on the level of complexity of your questions. For the most part, the type of analysis should be worked out in your analysis plan. However, the analysis plan should be a fluid document, because all eventualities cannot be foreseen. As you begin running queries in the database, unexpected trends or patterns may show up in the data. If those trends and patterns provide useful information, you will naturally want to explore them further and should adjust your analysis plan accordingly. However, avoid pursuing patterns and trends that are not relevant to your survey objectives.

Types of analysis

- Univariate—analyses one group of data
- Bivariate—compares two groups of data
- Multivariate—compares more than two groups of data

Three main types of analysis are used for interpreting survey data: (1) univariate, (2) bivariate, and (3) multivariate. As previously discussed, univariate analysis involves running distribution frequencies on one group of response data at a time. Univariate analysis not only helps you review data quality and completeness but also gives you an idea of general data trends. The majority of analysis performed on the data gathered in the 1999 survey was univariate. A few bivariate analyses were also conducted. Multivariate analyses of the data did not prove useful, because the sample groups became too small at that level of analysis; and therefore, meaningful trends could not be identified.

2.8 Conclusion

Surveys can provide a lot of information. However, if you want the information to be useful, you need to carefully plan your surveying efforts. Skipping steps in the planning process may be tempting, but in the long run, can cost you more. Following the steps laid out in this guidance will help you get the results you want as well as make you feel confident that the information you have gathered is valid. If you would like further information regarding surveys, two useful sources are:

- *Developing and Using Questionnaires*, which was developed by the U.S. General Accounting Office and is available on their website.
- *Hearing the Voice of the Customer: Guidelines for Customer Feedback and Customer Satisfaction Measurement*, which was developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and is available on their website.

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Fairfax County Department of Management and Budget. *Manual for Surveying for Customer Satisfaction*. 2002.

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(References continued on page 20)

committee news

Central to the contributions that ILAC makes to the international community is the important work undertaken by its various committees. These committees help create ILAC policy, develop and review ILAC's many publications, manage and monitor the ILAC Arrangement, liaise with the various stakeholders of ILAC (eg. laboratories), monitor and audit its finances, and develop and implement communications and promotional strategies.

Laboratory Committee

Tony Anderson, Chair, Laboratory Committee

left to right: Hisashi Inoue (JLA), Tony Anderson - Chair (NCSLI), Maire Walsh - Vice Chair (EURACHEM), John Wilson (NLA), Rick Wilson (CAEAL), Matt Callanan (NATA Laboratories)

The Laboratory Committee (LC) recently met on September 16 and 17, 2005 in Auckland, New Zealand.

The LC was pleased to learn of the positive vote on the amended ISO/IEC 17025 standard and it subsequent publication in June. The LC continues to encourages ILAC to educate the relevant markets that although the standard appears to be new the changes are minor and mostly for the alignment with ISO 9001:2000.

The LC discussed the proposed language for the statement about alignment or equivalence of ISO/IEC 17025:2005 with the principles of ISO 9001:2000 on certificates of accreditation and laboratory testing and calibration certificates. The agreement to adopt a two stage solution with a statement about being accredited to ISO/IEC 17025:2005 and that the laboratory uses a recognised management system referencing a joint communiqué from ISO/ILAC/IAF, is welcomed by the LC and feels this will go a long way to educating the market place to ask laboratories to become accredited rather than certified.

The LC has taken a proactive role in the new ILAC PT Consultative Group and has appointed a permanent representative to the Group, and participated in the PT Forum in Auckland. The LC has discussed various issues with respect to PT at its recent meetings and is willing to participate in the broader debate. Of particular concern to the LC, is if PT is used as a tool to widen surveillance intervals, then the cost and overhead to laboratories for PT participation could escalate.

The LC appreciated the opportunity at its Paris meeting to meet with the ILAC Chair and discuss the problems for LC members with joint ILAC/IAF meetings and the current length of the Annual General Assembly and associated meetings. The LC also expressed its concern over the growth of joint activities with IAF, giving the perception that ILAC is losing its independence and primary focus on laboratory accreditation. In particular the idea of joint management of the ILAC Arrangement and IAF MRA is of particular concern, as it would appear ILAC would be losing independent control of its main product. The LC was reassured by the ILAC Chair that this was not the intent and fully understood the concerns of Stakeholders in both organisations.

This year the Committee Chair has attended the ILAC Executive Committee meetings and associated meetings held in Paris, France, and Frankfurt, Germany and in Auckland. Active involvement by LC members in the other ILAC committees continues and provides the LC with valuable information for constructive cooperative efforts between the LC and the other committees. The LC Chair attended the ISO/ILAC/IAF JWG in Amsterdam last November and in Frankfurt in June. There were representatives of the LC at all the other committee meetings in Auckland.

The Laboratory Committee co-ordinates its work program with the working groups formed by other committees. Some issues are monitored on an ongoing basis such as those associated with ISO/IEC 17025. An updated list of LC representatives to the other ILAC Committees is provided in the following table.

Laboratory Committee (LC) Representatives of ILAC Committees

ILAC Committee	LC Representative/s	Email	Affiliation
AIC	Dr Maire Walsh Steve Sidney	mwalsh@statelab.ie steves@nla.org.za	EURACHEM NLA
AMC	Dr Maire Walsh Tony Anderson	mwalsh@statelab.ie tanderson@gcscalibration.com	EURACHEM NCSLI
ARC	Rick Wilson	rwilson@caeal.ca	CAEAL
JCCC	Tony Anderson	tanderson@gcscalibration.com	NCSLI
MCC	Matthew Callanan Tony Anderson	matthewc@pndt.com.au tanderson@gcscalibration.com	NATA Labs NCSLI
PT Consultative Group	Rick Wilson	rwilson@caeal.ca	CAEAL

Marketing and Communications Committee

Graham Talbot, Chair, ILAC Marketing and Communications Committee

The Marketing and Communications Committee met prior to the General Assembly in Auckland to consolidate work carried out earlier in the year and at the meetings held in Washington and Stockholm.

Work is underway to update the promotional brochures that are available on the ILAC website. The first stage will only be an update of the text (including those versions translated into Chinese, German, Japanese, Russian, Spanish and French), but over the next year we intend to look further at the overall design in order to make them as effective as possible as promotional and marketing tools. It is clear from the results of the survey last year that accreditation bodies want as much assistance as possible with promotional material, and this is a natural first step.

Over the year, we have collected a number of 'Good News Stories'—examples of where the use of accreditation or, in particular, the ILAC Arrangement, has brought about a particular benefit in a sector or industry area. These are going to be published on the website shortly so that you will be able to draw on these good examples to help you in your own marketing efforts. We welcome further examples (they need only be a few lines or a short paragraph to describe the outcome and benefit) to add to this bank of information.

We are nearing completion of the design for an ILAC roller banner that will be available in electronic form as a print-ready version to regions and accreditation bodies to use in support of promotional events. ILAC will provide the electronic design so that those that wish to do so, can have banners produced locally for their own use. A number of different language versions will be produced, but with flexibility in the electronic version of the design to allow changes to other languages to be made easily.

The aim of the committee continues to act as a focal point for the production of support material for the regions and accreditation bodies, with distribution and use remaining at the regional and national level. However, the discussions in Auckland also highlighted that there is a need to influence a number of key international organisations and raise their awareness of accreditation and the benefits that it brings. With this in mind, we intend to take on a more active role in reaching out to such organisations over the coming year. We will, however, continue to rely on the regional promotions committees to market to the regional organisations that we wish to influence, and accreditation bodies to do likewise at the national level.

In 2006 we intend to investigate possible taglines for use within ILAC promotional material, to update the survey of how accreditation is being used by regulators in individual economies in support of their regulation, and as a major project, to organise a marketing workshop for accreditation bodies to take place during the next General Assembly meetings in Cancun in November 2006. This is intended to provide practical education and ideas to help accreditation bodies in their marketing and promotions efforts. More details of this workshop will be provided to all accreditation bodies in due course.

The overall membership of the committee remains relatively small (currently representatives from nine accreditation bodies from four Regions, the ILAC Laboratory Committee and the ILAC Secretariat, although some representatives are only able to attend meetings infrequently). We foresee great value from working more closely with the committees within the regions in the future and will work hard to strengthen these links. We have developed a closer working relationship with the Accreditation Committee, which has formed a small team to focus on bringing appropriate items to our attention where there is seen to be a marketing or communication issue to address.

Following a proposal from one of the regions, and discussions in both the ILAC General Assembly and the Joint General Assembly, it was agreed that a Joint Working Group be established with IAF to provide better coordination of marketing and communications issues of common interest, to ensure that the strongest possible accreditation messages are promulgated into the marketplace, and to avoid duplication of effort. Over the next few months, the respective Executive Committees of ILAC and IAF will consider Terms of Reference and the composition of the Group, so that it can be formed in 2006.

Finally, the Committee wishes to record a note of thanks to Paul Davies of NATA, who left NATA in August 2005 having served for 9 years on the committee (and its predecessor, the Public Affairs Committee). Paul chaired the committee for a time and was the Editor of *ILAC News*, and his contribution to ILAC will be missed.

Proficiency Testing Consultative Group

Tony Russell, Chair, PT Consultative Group

At the ILAC 2004 General Assembly in Cape Town, the membership participated in an ILAC Proficiency Testing (PT) Forum. The forum discussed key issues regarding PT and its relationship to ILAC members and stakeholders. The responsibility for organising the 2004 workshop was taken on by Tony Russell, Convenor of the ILAC APC Working Group on PT Policy and Coordination.

Due to the success and inputs gathered from the forum, the 2004 ILAC General Assembly (GA) agreed that there was a need for the formation of a sub-committee, consultative group or forum (ILAC Resolution GA 8.22). In view of the GA decision, the ILAC Executive appointed Tony Russell, from the ILAC Executive, as interim Chair of the PT Consultative Group.

The first meeting of the ILAC Proficiency Testing Consultative Group was held as a forum to discuss and identify the major PT issues, necessary work items, terms of reference and resolutions of relevance to ILAC and the other stakeholders in the Group. The following issues were raised during the meeting:

- Confirmation of:
  the Terms of Reference for the PT Consultative Group; Membership; and the Proposed mode of operation.
- Significant PT issues for various sectors/interest groups;
- Regional and international PT comparisons in support of the ILAC MRA;
- The need for revision of ISO/IEC Guide 43 and any other related documents used for the accreditation of PT Providers;
- Priority issues and future work program for action and work items for the Group;
- Future meetings.

A total of about 90 participants attended this meeting representing accreditation bodies, PT Providers not associated with accreditation bodies, national measurement institutes providing PT programs, ILAC committees and ILAC regional bodies representing relevant PT committees. This meeting was held in conjunction with the 2005 ILAC General Assembly in Auckland, New Zealand on Tuesday 13 September 2005.

Resolutions

The following resolutions were adopted at the General Assembly: GA 9.12, 9.13, 9.14 and 9.23. (see page 45 of this issue of *ILAC News*).

Terms of Reference for ILAC Proficiency Testing Working Group (PTCG)

i. To organise or contribute workshops, seminars, and conferences dealing with PT issues for all parties, particularly accreditation bodies, PT providers and laboratories;
ii. To advise the ILAC Executive, ILAC AMC and General Assembly on PT Policy, coordination and technical issues relevant to the ILAC Arrangement and more generally on the use of PT by accreditation bodies and other users;
iii. To advise ILAC on the relevance of PT providers to the ILAC Arrangement;
iv. To review the policies on PT developed within Regional Cooperations for possible adoption by ILAC;
v. To assist in the coordination of Region to Region participation in PT by laboratories and potential involvement of unaffiliated bodies in Regional PTs;
vi. To identify needs for PT access for developing countries and unaffiliated bodies and cost effective mechanisms for including them in PT programs operated by, or on behalf, of ILAC members;
vii. To encourage all PT providers to use consistent or harmonised international criteria for operation of PT programs and to contribute to the development in ISO, ILAC, the Regional Co-operations of ILAC etc of such criteria;
viii. To advise ILAC on the appropriate harmonised criteria to be used to accredit PT providers;
ix. To draft documents, policies etc on PT for possible adoption by ILAC and other relevant bodies;
x. To serve as a forum for discussion(s) of accreditation oriented items or other issues relevant to the collective interests of PT Providers.

Arrangement Committee

Orna Dreazen, Chair, Arrangement Committee

A recent meeting of the Arrangement Committee (ARC) was held in Auckland on September 14 and 15, 2005.

MRA for accreditation of RM producers

In light of the criteria described in chapter 3 and the GA decision in Cape Town to accredit RM producers according to ISO Guide 34 (*General requirements for the competence of reference material producers*) in combination with ISO/IEC 17025,there was discussion about consideration of RM producer accreditation under the MRA or under another 'outside the box' global recognition program. It was noted that APLAC is well on its way under its MRA and suggested that ILAC follows suit. It was decided to develop a way forward to provide a global solution to recognition of RM producers.

Cross frontier accreditation — harmonisation between regions

The committee compared the requirements regarding cross-frontier accreditation in all regions:

- APLAC has a guidance document to complement the ILAC policy document. This cannot be considered a requirements document because APLAC cannot compel their signatories to subcontract assessment.
- IAAC reported that they follow the ILAC document and agreed that it will be considered guidance.
- EA has included specific cross-frontier language into their MRA requirements.

The committee discussed whether the cross-frontier guidance should be a requirements document. It was proposed that a requirement be added to the relevant A document(s) that each accreditation body will have a cross-frontier accreditation policy compliant with G21.

Complaint handling by accreditation bodies and regions

AMC asked ARC to develop additional guidance to the ILAC Accreditation Bodies (ABs) on handling complaints. As a basis for this discussion, ISO 10002 and ISO FDPAS 17003 were studied. It was pointed out that ISO 100002 can serve as possible guidance but it does not clearly address complaints from complainants that are not direct customers of the AB. ABs must keep laboratory information confidential and this makes it difficult to satisfy the complainant. Sharing of experiences in handling complaints may be more useful that writing guidance. The ARC members will collect examples of problematic issues that have risen when handling complaints. Then further discussion can take place at the ARC meeting in Tel Aviv that may result in a guidance document or in the format of frequently asked questions.

What do ILAC ABs accredit?

ARC discussed the problematic definition of accreditation in ISO/IEC 17011 and the strategy that we should take to address the issue. A few possible definitions for what is accreditable were suggested as a proposal for the open forum:

- Accreditation is assessment of competence by a third party, according to a well-accepted standard.
- An activity on which important decisions are based (medical test or treatment, trade etc.) is accreditable.

The committee considered that ILAC must develop its own definitions and work accordingly to get them accepted. At the same time convince ISO that ISO/IEC 17011 should be revised to include the new definitions.

ARC Working Groups

In addition to the Working Groups listed in the April 2005 issue of *ILAC News*, the following group has been added:

WG9 Maintenance of P9 (PT), chaired by Tony Russell.

Accreditation Committee

Merih Malmqvist, Chair, Accreditation Committee

Meetings

The first meeting of the Accreditation Committee (AIC), held in Narita, Japan on 28 and 29 April 2005, had 25 persons participating, including the secretary.

The second meeting was held in Auckland, New Zealand on 14 and 15 September 2005 with an average of 40 participants over the two days.

Working Groups

The Working Groups set up in the committee are listed as a separate item, which follows in this issue of *ILAC News*.

Work items

The following topics were discussed at recent meetings:

- ILAC-AIC administrative matters
- ILAC liaisons requiring AIC input
- Implementation of ISO/IEC 17011
- Implementation of ISO/IEC 17025 on a system level
- Implementation of ISO/IEC 17025 on a technical level
- ISO/IEC17020 issues
- The AIC stays informed on the developments in the inspection area through reports by EA, APLAC and the JWGI (IAF/ILAC Joint Working Group on Inspection)
- The AIC has also decided on improvements to make the meetings as efficient as possible.

Accreditation Committee Working Groups

Merih Malmqvist, Chair, Accreditation Committee

The following working groups have been set up within the scope of activity of the Accreditation Committee. The purpose is to achieve a clear delegation of responsibility to the members of the committee and to spread the workload across the different economies. All members of ILAC are welcome to participate in the work of the groups. As a committee, we would also like to see stakeholder groups participate in the work of the committee and therefore forward a special invitation to all client organisations of the ILAC member accreditation bodies, to participate in the working groups and get directly involved in the work of ILAC. Nominations can be made to Hanna Oinas at ilacaic@swedac.se.

WG#	Scope	Convenor	Members	email addresses
1	Information from AIC to the ILAC membership and the MCC	Trace McInturff, A2LA tmcinturff@a2la.org	Barry Ashcroft, IANZ Maire Walsh, EURACHEM	bashcroft@ianz.govt.nz mcwalsh@iol.ie
2	Calibration and traceability issues	Yoshinobu Uematsu, IAJ Uematsu-yoshinobu@nite.go.jp	Cecilie Laake, NA Patrick Reposeur, COFRAC Mauricio Soares, INMETRO Steven Sidney, NLA/SA	icl@akkreditert.no patrick.reposeur@cofrac.fr masoares@inmetro.gov.br steves@nla.org.za
3	Reference Material issues	Maire Walsh, EURACHEM mcwalsh@iol.ie	Ms. Suzana Saboia de Moura, INMETRO Gabriele Wermann, BAM Mohan Sabaratnam, NATA Lorraine Turner, UKAS Trace McInturff, A2LA W W Wong, HKAS Carmen García, ENAC	ssmoura@inmetro.gov.br gabriele.wermann@bam.de Mohan.Sabaratnam@nata.asn.au Lorraine.turner@ukas.com tmcinturff@a2la.org wwwong@itc.gov.hk cgarcia@enac.es
4	Scopes and related assessments G18	Barry Ashcroft, IANZ bashcroft@ianz.govt.nz	Werner Daum, DAR Gabriel Boisson, COFRAC Yoshinobu Uematsu, IAJ Etty Feller, ISRAC Carmen García	Werner.daum@bam.de Gabriel.boisson@cofrac.fr Uematsu-yoshinobu@nite.go.jp ettyf@israc.gov.il cgarcia@enac.es
5	Accreditation of sampling	Cecilie Laake, NA icl@akkreditert.no	Manuel Fernandez, EMA Peter van de Leemput, RvA Julian Wilson, NATA	ema@ema.org.mx Peter.vande.Leemput@rva.nl Julian.wilson@nata.asn.au
6	Accreditation in the medical field	Regina Robertson, NATA Regina.Robertson@nata.asn.au	Tuja Sinervo, FINAS Tsutomo Auoyogi, JAB Barry Ashcroft, IANZ Marianne Edman Falkensson, SWEDAC Isabel de la Villa, ENAC	Tuja.sinervo@mikes.fi taoyagi@jab.or.jp bashcroft@ianz.govt.nz marianne.edmanfalkensson@ swedac.se ivilla@enac.es
7	Accreditation of horse-racing laboratories	Terence Wan, HKAS	No other members at this stage	
8	Accreditation of fire testing laboratories	Patrick McCullen	No other members at this stage	
9	WADA	Regina Robertson, NATA Regina.Robertson@nata.asn.au	Roxanne Robinson, A2LA Cecilie Laake, NA Werner Daum, BAM Harald Fostel, BMwA Robert Leubolt, BMwA Patrick Reposeur, COFRAC Christina Waddington Terence Wan, HKJC Mauricio Soares, INMETRO Ian Mann, metas/SAS Notende M, SANAS JoAnne Dupont, SCC Isabel de la Villa, ENAC **WADA representatives** Oliver Rabin Victoria Ivanova	rrobinson@a2la.org icl@akkreditert.no Werner.Daum@bam.de harald.fostel@bmwa.gv.at robert.leubolt@bmwa.gv.at patrick.reposeur@cofrac.fr christina.waddington@finas.fi terence.sm.wan@hkjc.org.hk masoares@inmetro.gov.br Ian.Mann@metas.admin.ch NotendeM@sanas.co.za jdupont@scc.ca ivilla@enac.es **WADA representatives** Olivier.Rabin@wada-ama.org Victoria.Ivanova@wada-ama.org
10	Disaster Victim Identification (DVI)	Regina Robertson, NATA Regina.Robertson@nata.asn.au	Etty Feller, ISRAC Nobert Mueller, BMWA, Christina Waddington, FINAS	ettyf@israc.gov.il norbert.Mueller@bmwa.gv.at christina.waddington@finas.fi

Transition to ISO/IEC 17025:2005

From the ILAC Accreditation Committee

On 15 May 2005, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) published the 2005 edition of ISO/IEC 17025—*General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*, replacing the 1999 edition. This article summarises the changes and updates in the new edition of the International Standard, and details the transition requirements for accredited laboratories to implement the new International Standard.

Both ISO and the International Laboratory Accreditation Co-operation (ILAC) recognise that the changes and updates are not substantial and should have only a minimal impact on the operation of accredited laboratories in terms of their conformity with the ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation standard.

Background

From its origins in ISO/IEC Guide 25:1990, ISO/IEC 17025:1999 was created and documented to harmonise with ISO 9001:1994. Soon after its publication and implementation, ISO 9001:2000 was released and it could no longer be claimed the management system aspects of ISO/IEC 17025:1999 met the requirements of ISO 9001:2000. A revision of ISO/IEC 17025:1999 was thus embarked upon to correct this alignment.

With ISO/IEC 17025:2005, accredited laboratories will be able to state that the management system requirements of ISO/IEC 17025:2005 (Section 4) are written in a language relevant to and meeting the principles of ISO 9001:2000 and are aligned with its pertinent requirements —a position formally recognised by ISO.

While accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025:2005 does not infer full conformity with ISO 9001:2000, ISO, ILAC and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) have released a joint communiqué (see the ILAC website) that will give ISO/IEC 17025:2005 accredited testing and/or calibration laboratories an official attestation on their management system to provide to any customers that require the laboratory to be ISO 9001:2000 certified/registered.

Transition

ILAC, at its 2005 General Assembly in Auckland, New Zealand, confirmed the transition period of two years for the implementation to ISO/IEC 17025:2005, as follows:

"The General Assembly reconfirms the transition period of two years for the implementation of ISO/IEC 17025:2005. By 1st June 2007 all accreditation certificates, as defined and described in ISO/IEC 17011, of testing and calibration laboratories shall refer to the 2005 edition of ISO/IEC 17025. Such accreditation certificates shall be issued after proper assessment of the added and amended clauses of the International Standard. The assessment can be done during normal surveillance or reassessment activities or as a separate activity."

Accredited laboratories should contact their accreditation body to confirm the details of the processes to be used to implement this resolution.

Summary of Changes

As stated above, the effect of the added and amended clauses is not substantial; they deal primarily with how laboratory management ensures effective communication and how the effectiveness of the management system is continually improved.

Generic Changes: Terminology

Throughout the International Standard, any references in the 1999 edition to "quality system", "client", and "conformance" have been replaced by "management system", "customer", and "conformity", respectively.

Specific Changes

The table on the following page provides a summary of the changes to, or addition of, new specific clauses. At this time ILAC has no specific guidance on the interpretation of these changes. The need for such guidance may be considered in the future, but only after a period of implementation which shows such guidance to be necessary.

ISO/IEC 17025:2005 clause
4.1.5 a) The laboratory shall have managerial and technical personnel **who, irrespective of other responsibilities, have** the authority and resources needed to carry out their duties, **including the implementation, maintenance and improvement of the management system**, and to identify the occurrence of departures from the **management** system or from the procedures for performing tests and/or calibrations, and to initiate actions to prevent or minimize such departures (see also 5.2);
4.1.5 (k) – The laboratory shall ensure that its personnel are aware of the relevance and importance of their activities and how they contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the management system.
4.1.6 – Top management shall ensure that appropriate communication processes are established within the laboratory and that communication takes place regarding the effectiveness of the management system.
4.2.2 The overall objectives shall be **established, and reviewed during management review**…
4.2.2 c) **the purpose of the management system related to quality**;
4.2.2 e) the laboratory management's commitment to comply with this International Standard and to continually improve the effectiveness of management system.
4.2.3 Top management shall provide evidence of commitment to the development and implementation of the management system and continually improving its effectiveness.
4.2.4 Top management shall communicate to the organization the importance of meeting customer as well as statutory and regulatory requirements.
4.2.7 Top management shall ensure the integrity of the management system is maintained when changes to the management system are planned and implemented.
4.7.2 The laboratory shall seek feedback, both positive and negative, from its customers. The feedback shall be used and analyzed to improve the management system, testing and calibration activities and customer service.
4.10 The laboratory shall continually improve the effectiveness of its management system through the use of the quality policy, quality objectives, audit results, analysis of data, corrective and preventive actions and management review.
4.15.1 The review shall take account of **recommendations for improvement**;
5.2.2 **The effectiveness of the training actions taken shall be evaluated**.

Joint Development Support Committee

Maribel Lopez, Chair, Joint Development Support Committee

Reference Material Producers

The survey sent to developing countries to learn about the mechanisms by which they have access to Certified Reference Materials (CRM), resulted in the following needs:

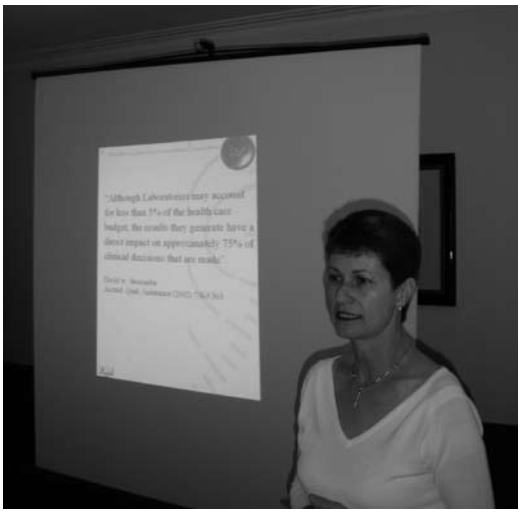
- Access to Certified Reference Materials;
- Policies regarding the use and credibility of certification;
- Training regarding the importance of the use of Reference Materials and Guide ISO 34.

Due to the developing country needs, the ILAC JDSC organised a training workshop on ISO Guide 34:2000 *General Requirements for the competence of RM producers*. This training workshop was held in Frankfurt, on June 16 and 17, after the ILAC and IAF ExCo meetings and it was addressed to all those developing countries which need knowledge. Orna Dreazen, Alan Squirrell and Tony Russell participated as facilitators and some developing countries have ILAC or PTB/Germany financial support. There were 18 participants from the following developing countries: Brazil, Costa Rica, Croatia, Guatemala, Mexico, Nigeria Romania, as well as from developed countries such as: Germany, Italy, U.S.A. and the international organisation, UNIDO. The workshop was very successful and it is expected that another workshop will be conducted in 2006.

We want to thank Alan Squirrell, Orna Dreazen and Tony Russell for their support as facilitators during the two day workshops, as well as TGA-GmbH for their cooperation in logistics and PTB which supported the participation of some Latin American participants.

In addition, Suzana Saboia, IAGRM representative, attended the APLAC workshop on Reference Materials, held in Hong Kong on March 11 and12.

Attendees at the Reference Materials Workshop in Frankfurt



Orna Dreazen, Chair of the ILAC Arrangement Committee, at the Workshop in Frankfurt

Accreditation Policies

A questionnaire on accreditation policies was sent to the regional secretaries (IAAC, EA, CAC-MAS-Q, SADCA and APLAC) in order to know what kind of problems and/or obstacles the accreditation bodies from developing countries face when they try to develop accreditation policies and if they need support from ILAC to facilitate the development of them. Results were presented at the meeting in New Zealand. A seminar was also held on "How to reach MRA/MLA signatory status?" There were about 25 participants, from 10 developing countries and 5 developed countries (see report following).

Technical Assistance

ONARC from Cuba received Mr David Dulmage from the Standards Council of Canada to carry on the technical assistance during the first week of February.

Cooperation

As a support to grant the resources for activities to be performed by Cuba and Indonesia, an agreement was prepared to be signed between these countries and ILAC. Cuba signed this agreement and Indonesia informed, during the last meeting of the JDSC held in Cape Town, that it does not need such support and asked that this support could be changed for use for its Product Certification Bodies Accreditation programs.

To date, the JDSC is taking advantage of the activities of other international organisations, such as IAAC-OAS and IABD projects which already are supporting conformity assessment activities.

The MoU between IAF/ILAC and UNIDO was signed during the meeting in Cape Town last October, and with this agreement, the JDSC can seek for funding support for conformity assessment activities for developing countries.

Proficiency Testing

ILAC JDSC has asked the APLAC Chair for support proficiency testing activities with IAAC, SADCA and APLAC regions. These activities are:

- To get a device or reference material in order to circulate it between the laboratories of the region mentioned above.
- To seek for support from regional and/or international bodies which can provide PT programs.

Mauricio Soares, INMETRO is the representative of JDSC at PTCGAG.

Developing Countries Seminar
How to reach MRA/MLA signatory status?
Auckland, New Zealand 21 September 2005

A questionnaire on accreditation policies was sent during the first semester of 2005, to developing countries and regions to know the difficulties that developing countries face when developing and applying accreditation policies.

Responses were received from 15 countries from the following regions: Europe, Asia, America, Africa and East Europe. The identified needs arisen from this questionnaire were:

- Training courses:
  - PT Programs (microbiological testing, environmental)

    - Accreditation of RM Producers
    - Changes in standards or policies
- Technical Assistance for:
    - Implementation of Management System
- Supplying Official Standards
    - 17025, 17011, ISO Guides for RM
- International Documents for sector specific schemes
- Twinning for new accreditation programs (RMP, PT Providers
- PT for regions and for developing countries
- Show benefit of MRA to trade
- Kyrgyz Republic needs support in creation of an independent AB (earlier accreditation activities at NMI)
- To inform developing countries about the complete set of documents that an Accreditation Body has to take into account when developing its programs if wants to become a signatory of the MRA/MLAs.

Because of the above, the Executive Committees of IAF and ILAC decided to organise a Seminar to explain the documents that at International and Regional level are used to evaluate Accreditation Bodies when they decided to apply to the Multilateral Recognition Agreements. This seminar took place on September 21, 2005 within the General Assembly meeting in Auckland, New Zealand.

The topics presented in the Seminar were:

- Summary of the results of the questionnaire on accreditation policies
- General review of ISO/IEC 17011. Main issues.
- ILAC documents (G series, P series)
- General review of ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation. Main Issues.
- IAF/ILAC A series
- General review of Main Requirements (ISO/ IEC Guide 62, 65, 66 plus IAF Guidance) for Accreditation of Certification Bodies.
- Relevant Background Information for Product Certification Accreditation and Annexes of IAF Guidance
- Requirements of regions (EA, APLAC, PAC, IAAC)

The speakers in the seminar were Joan Brough – Kerrebyn (Canada), Roxanne Robinson (United States of America), Wei-Hao (China), Dr. Monica Wloka (Germany), Veronica Solorzano (Mexico), Sean MacCurtain (South Africa), Helen Liddy (Australia), Maribel López (México), Gro Rodland (Norway).

There were 47 attendees from Thailand, South Africa, Trinidad & Tobago, Mexico, Norway, Egypt, Slovakia, Malaysia, South Africa, Iran, Brazil, Germany, Kenya, United Arab Emirates, Taiwan, China, Kazakhstan, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Canada, Australia, United States of America and South Korea. It was concluded that to reach MRA/MLA signatory status all the ABs need to fulfil the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011 taking special care regarding the requirements of legal establishment, impartiality and technical competence.

ABs must also remember to follow the requirements of ISO/IEC Guides and standards 17025, 17020, 17024, 62, 65, 66, etc plus the ILAC and IAF Policies, Guides and Guidance. If an AB applies through its Regional body, it needs also to comply with the specific Regional Bodies Requirements that are not different, but have sometimes different approaches.

ABs must be aware of all the different documents and criteria and its modifications, giving special attention to the critical specific requirements that ILAC have for:

- Measurement Traceability, Measurement Uncertainty
- Proficiency Testing
- Reference Materials
- (Technical) Assessor qualifications
- Technical committees and decision making

The main lesson learned is that there are many documents that can be use by developing countries, and that Guides, Policies, Guidance and Documents are not more barriers to sign the MRA/MLA, but very good tools that help the understanding and setting of the criteria needed in each country.

Valuable information was given by the Regional Cooperation Bodies representatives, particularly about the activities that they are having to support Developing Countries, such as: Training, PT programs, Peer Evaluations, Technical Assistance. They can be contacted for further information.

Developing countries representatives agreed that we are a team, and that ILAC and IAF want to have all the Developing Countries in the MRA/MLA, so if they need help they can contact either the Co-Chairs of the Joint Development Support Committees or any member of these organisations.

A specific request was made of UNIDO for a Pre Peer evaluation for Kenya, North Korea and Dubai, and to present the Egypt project.

Gro Rodland presented the concept that the goal is not only to arrive but to maintain us as signatories, so Accreditation Bodies in Developing Countries will work toward this achievement.

The Development Support Committee will analyse all the needs presented by the Developing countries and will work on these.

International Update

IAF Report

Dr Thomas Facklam, IAF Chairman

IAF Membership Status

At the 2004 Annual Meetings in Cape Town the IAF General Assembly was able to welcome the admission of PNAC (Pakistan) as a new Accreditation Body member, as well as PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) as a new Association member. Since then the new Observer membership category has been extended to the CAC-MAS-Q (Central Asian Cooperation on Metrology, Accreditation, Standardization), the Euro-Asian Council for Standardization, Metrology and Certification (EASC) and the World Food Safety Organization (WFSO). Observer membership is a special class of membership for situations where the Board of Directors suggests that it is in the interests of Members of IAF to develop closer relationships with another body.

Recently ballots have been held for the transfer of the National Institute for Standardization (INN) of Chile to Membership of IAF as an Accreditation Body Member, for Accreditation Body Membership by the Luxembourg Office of Accreditation and Surveillance (OLAS) and for Association Membership by the International Personnel Certification Association (IPC – formerly IATCA). These three organisations recently signed the IAF MoU at the Signing Ceremony during the banquet.

This now brings the number of IAF members to a total of 69 Members, these being 46 Accreditation Body Members, 14 Association Members (9 Certification/Registration/Inspection Body Associations & 5 Industry/User Associations), 4 Regional Groups with Special Recognition being EA (European Cooperation for Accreditation), IAAC (Inter American Accreditation Cooperation), PAC (Pacific Accreditation Cooperation) and SADCA (Southern African Development Community in Accreditation), 2 Partner Members (ISO and the QUEST Forum) and 3 Observer Members.

IAF-ILAC-ISO Relationship

Since the signing of the IAF-ILAC-ISO MoU in March 2004, three meetings of the IAF-ILAC-ISO Joint Working Group (JWG) have been held. IAF and ILAC membership of the JWG consists of the Chairs, Vice Chairs and Secretaries of IAF and ILAC together with the Chairs of the IAF Technical Committee (TC) and the ILAC Laboratory Committee (LC). ISO is represented by the Chair of CASCO, a member representing both ISO/TC 176 and ISO/TC 207, the Convener of CASCO WG 23 Common Elements in Conformity Assessment and the Chair of the IEC Conformity Assessment Board (IEC CAB). The chairmanship of the JWG rotates after every second meeting, while the secretariat remains with CASCO.

Amongst issues which have been considered by the JWG has been the need for and formation of a joint IAF-ISO Task Force on Auditor Competence. This TF met three times to review the existing guidance in ISO 19011 to determine if more specific requirements were needed and how IAF and ISO should respond. This work was completed within 6 months and as a result, IAF has been asked by ISO to continue its work on developing its own guidelines on ISO 19011 which, when available, will be used by ISO as a basis for a new part to ISO 17021 covering requirements for the establishment and management of auditor competence.

Other matters covered have been the future development of conformity assessment requirements for ISO DIS 22000 Food Safety Management Systems, validation and verification of Green House Gases, greater involvement by IAF in the ISO survey on management system certificates and interaction with ISO on the handling of complaints about conformity assessment practices.

Extension to the IAF MLA

A major highlight of the 2004 Annual Meetings was the extension of the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) to now include Environmental Management Systems and Product Certification. As a result of these programs becoming operational, 28 IAF Members were able to sign EMS MLA Certificates and 23 Members signed Product MLA Certificates at a ceremony during the IAF-ILAC Gala Dinner. A list of signatories to the two new arrangements can be found on the IAF website at www.iaf.nu under: About IAF, Section 12 IAF MLA Signatories.

The Romanian Accreditation Association (RENAR) and the Hong Kong Accreditation Service (HKAS) were also both admitted to membership of the IAF Quality Management System Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (QMS MLA) at the same ceremony. Since then the Polish Centre for Accreditation (PCA) has been accepted for QMS MLA membership as a result of its membership of the EA QMS MLA. This brings the membership of the IAF QMS MLA to 35.

Licensing of the IAF MLA Mark

Following the adoption of the new IAF Logo and MLA Mark designs in 2003, an intensive registration program for both the Logo and Mark has been undertaken on a worldwide basis to ensure the recognition of IAF's ownership of these symbols and that protection arrangements are in place. The IAF Executive agreed in the last quarter of 2004 to make the IAF MLA Mark available to MLA Accreditation Body signatories and their accredited Certification/Registration Bodies (CRBs) for use on their certificates, letterheads, websites, advertisements etc. Initially the license agreements were limited to QMS MLA Members, but following a successful 6-month introduction period the Executive agreed to the extension of the MLA Licensing Agreements to include the EMS and Product MLAs.

The response in taking up this licensing opportunity was very positive with 18 QMS MLA Members doing so within 3 months. After the extension of the program to cover all the MLAs, a total of 25 Licensing Agreements have now been issued to IAF MLA members covering any of the QMS, EMS and Product MLAs, depending upon the relevant MLA membership of each Licensee.

Transition Period for revised ISO 14001

The revised ISO 14001 was published in November 2004 and an 18 month phase-in period is intended to facilitate the transition during the normal certification cycle. As no new technical changes have been introduced into the revised standard it was agreed that organisations will need far less time to attend to changes in their management systems than was the case for ISO 9001:2000.

Joint IAF-ILAC Publications

The first joint publications issued by IAF and ILAC, which have been designated as the "A-Series", were prepared by the JWG for the Harmonization of Peer Evaluation Processes. These cover harmonised evaluation requirements and the procedures are available from both the IAF and ILAC websites. The A-series documents (A1, A2 and A3) which will become the main part of the IAF MLA Policies and Procedures (P&P) document will be required to be implemented by IAF MLA signatories no later than 1 January 2006. Those areas not covered in A1, A2 and A3 have been collated into an IAF-only document which will become IAF Policies and Principles (P&P), Issue 4. This has recently been circulated to all IAF Members for comment and were reviewed during the meetings in Auckland.

The IAF-ILAC Guidance on the Application of ISO/IEC 17020 - *General criteria for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection* has also been completed and this was published as the fourth joint IAF-ILAC document, A4.

IAF Complaints Procedure

Last year IAF completed the revision of its Procedure for the Investigation and Resolution of Complaints which was published as IAF PR 1:2004. If a satisfactory outcome is not reached using the AB's own complaints process the new IAF procedure will focus on appointing, in the first instance, the relevant Regional Accreditation Group to investigate a complaint made against any of its members. Alternatively, if the subject of the complaint is not a member of a Regional Group the MLA MC will appoint a 'Designated Investigator' to undertake the enquiry. It is expected that the revised procedure will reduce the time taken to resolve issues raised.

AB Code of Conduct

At the IAF Executive meeting in June 2005 the number of signatories of the IAF Code of Conduct for IAF Accreditation Body Members (IAF PL 1:2003) was reviewed. The results were regarded as very satisfactory with 43 ABs so far having adopted the Code and its principles since the Code's release in November 2003. All IAF Accreditation Body Members are obliged to comply with the Code of Conduct and as each Member adopts the principles of the Code within their own organisation, notification of the date when the adoption was implemented is forwarded to the IAF Secretary. All declarations to this effect are added to the Member's entry in the IAF Website so that information on this commitment is publicly available.

JCCC Activities

The Joint Committee for Closer Cooperation (JCCC) has been busy with a number of activities over the last 12 months. In addition to monitoring existing joint groups these have included coordinating the finalisation of the A Series of publications mentioned above, formalising the formation of a JWG for Training and recently, a JWG for the development of guidance to ISO/IEC 17011. The JCCC has also been working on how to improve the IAF-ILAC Joint General Assemblies and both IAF and ILAC have conducted an extensive survey of their members to find out what members felt about the current meeting schedule and to obtain their suggestions for improvement. The results of this survey have already been circulated to all IAF and ILAC members and an opportunity was provided for further discussion at the IAF General Assembly meeting during the Open Forum session.

Strategic Directions

In late 2002 the IAF Executive held a special meeting to review the IAF Scorecard and to develop strategic directions for the next three years. These have identified specific actions and projects to be carried out by the various committees and working groups, with progress being reviewed at each Executive meeting. The combined Scorecard and Strategic Directions summary with assigned responsibilities, actions planned/taken and timelines has been circulated to members on a number of occasions and has been placed on the IAF website to enable everyone to acquaint themselves with these aims. While these have been found to have served IAF well, the Executive will be meeting in November to take an overview on what IAF has achieved and develop a new perspective on where IAF should position itself to meet the challenges likely to be faced over the next three years.

BIPM News

Rainer Köhler, BIPM

The 94th meeting of the International Committee for Weights and Measures (CIPM) took place in early October 2005. This meeting was preceded by a one-and-a-half-day meeting of Directors of National Metrology Institutes (NMIs), of signatories of the Metre Convention and Associates of the General Conference.

At the Directors' meeting, the current status of the CIPM MRA (Mutual Recognition Arrangement) was discussed, together with its continuing importance and success. Accreditors and regulators can find the calibration and measurement capabilities of NMIs at the BIPM website of the Key Comparison Database (kcdb.bipm.org), and use the information without further investigation. The entries in the Key Comparison Database are backed up by key comparisons, which test the major techniques in each field.

Presentations given at the Directors' meeting, addressed subjects such as the 'road mapping' of NMIs' priorities and long-term metrology programs, and the sharing of priorities between NMIs. A large proportion of the presentations were concerned with metrology in chemistry, biology, laboratory medicine and healthcare, clearly to be considered as major vectors for the future needs of competence for NMIs and for the BIPM.

Scientific work will continue to be an important part of the work of the BIPM. Work on a watt balance for a possible redefinition of the kilogram has begun at the BIPM. This research could lead to the replacement of the current definition of the kilogram, which is the last base unit of the International System of Units still defined by an artifact. Work is also under way on the construction of a calculable capacitor, which will allow the calculation of capacitance from a single geometrical measurement. Ionising radiation work will be extended, and the Time section will continue with the calculation and dissemination of Coordinated Universal Time.

The CIPM confirmed the shift in resources from the Length section to the Time section in terms of work on optical combs for use in a possible future redefinition of the second.

The extension of the activities of the BIPM into organic and inorganic chemistry continues; and plans were established to extend these activities into biological measurements and measurements in laboratory medicine.

The BIPM's collaboration with other international organisations is being extended, ISO and the International Laboratory Accreditation Corporation are growing partners for the promotion of the world's metrological system, and other international organisations are also contributing to this work. The BIPM continues its close relationship with the International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML).

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Surveying the Needs of ILAC Members

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News from OIML

Régine Gaucher, MAA Project Leader, BIML, OIML Headquarters

The Mutual Acceptance Arrangement of the International Organization of Legal Metrology

The International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML) is an intergovernmental organisation which was created in 1955 to develop cooperation in legal metrology. It comprises 60 Member States who ratified the Treaty, and 53 Corresponding Members.

The goals of the OIML are to develop mutual information, recognition, confidence and cooperation so that each Member can benefit from the legal metrology work carried out by other countries.

The OIML enjoys close cooperation with the Metre Convention and ILAC, and in particular an annual tripartite Meeting is organised between the Presidents, Vice-Presidents and Directors of the three organisations to exchange information and address joint actions to be carried out.

In 1991, the OIML set up the OIML Certificate System which aims to make it easier for manufacturers to obtain national type approvals worldwide.

In addition to this system, during its 39th Committee Meeting (Kyoto, November 2003) the OIML adopted a framework for a Mutual Acceptance Arrangement (MAA) on OIML Type Evaluations.

The aim of such an MAA is to increase confidence in type examination testing in order to facilitate the use of OIML Test Reports among participating countries and therefore avoid duplication of tests and examinations for manufacturers of measuring instruments.

The MAA is a voluntary system to:

- Facilitate and harmonise the work of national and regional bodies for type approval of measuring instruments;
- Help manufacturers to obtain their type approval;
- Help countries which do not have test facilities for type testing and type examinations;
- Increase confidence in tests and examinations by implementing an evaluation of testing laboratories involved in type testing and type examinations; and
- Take into account additional national requirements from participating countries whose legislation is not totally aligned with OIML Recommendations.

National legal metrology bodies may rely on the facilities and competence of other countries' bodies, especially in cases where they do not themselves possess facilities at national level.

The OIML MAA will give OIML Issuing Authorities (which are responsible for issuing OIML Certificates of Conformity) the opportunity to have the Test Report attached to the OIML Certificate of Conformity recognised by other countries. For manufacturers of instruments, it will facilitate the type approval of their measuring instruments in various countries, using the "one-stop testing" concept.

The OIML MAA is a system for recognition of test reports and participants are either "Issuing Participants" which are OIML Issuing Authorities or "Utilising Participants" which do not issue test reports under the OIML MAA but which undertake to use those attached to an OIML Certificate of Conformity issued by an Issuing Participant. Such "Utilising Participants" may be:

- OIML Issuing Authorities;
- National Issuing Authorities;
- National Responsible Bodies.

The OIML MAA may be implemented for different categories of measuring instruments. The result of its implementation for one category of measuring instrument is a Declaration of Mutual Confidence (DoMC).

The OIML MAA is based on an evaluation of the subcontracting testing laboratories of "Issuing Participants" according to ISO/IEC 17025 *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*.

The OIML MAA recognises the role of ILAC for establishing confidence and provides two possibilities for demonstrating conformity to ISO/IEC 17025 requirements:

- Accreditation by an accreditation body which is a full member of ILAC (ILAC MRA signatory)
- Peer assessment.

In the first case, the scope of the accreditation shall cover the scope of the Declaration of Mutual Confidence.

In the event that testing laboratories are not accredited or that the scope of their accreditation is not in line with that of the Declaration of Mutual Confidence, testing laboratories are peer assessed.

The implementation of the OIML MAA started in January 2005 and currently covers load cells and non-automatic weighing instruments. The signature of the first two

Declarations of Mutual Confidence related to these two categories of measuring instruments is expected in the first half of 2006.

The peer assessment process has been designed to be closely aligned with ILAC requirements so that peer assessments may be acceptable to accreditors. Peer assessment procedures have been drawn up following the same guidelines as those used for laboratory assessment in the accreditation process. Supporting documentation and guidelines for the application of ISO/IEC 17025 have been prepared for the first peer assessments.

Peer assessment teams are composed of one technical expert and one expert in quality systems. One difference has been introduced, however: the team leader in the OIML peer assessment process is the technical expert.

The OIML has established a list of technical and metrological experts who will be responsible for conducting the peer assessments. This list, approved by ad-hoc committee, the Committee on Participation Review, for each category of instruments, is available to ILAC.

Since the peer assessment team is composed of one technical and metrological expert and one expert in quality systems, the OIML contacted the ILAC Liaison Officer, Patrick Reposeur (COFRAC) to cooperate in the development of this process and to address any comments which might be brought up by ILAC.

A training session for peer assessment experts was organised in September with the technical support of COFRAC, and the experts have attended extensive presentations of ILAC structures and procedures, a presentation by accreditation assessors on their experience of audits, and a detailed presentation of the supporting documents and procedures to be used for the assessments.

In its Technical Subcommittee TC 3/SC 5 Conformity Assessment, the OIML is now working on the basis of the peer assessment procedures and intends to draw up general OIML Documents that can be used for the application of ISO/IEC 17025. Another Document, *Guidelines for the application of ISO Guide 65 for Legal Metrology Certification Bodies*, is also being developed. ILAC is one of the most essential liaisons for this work in order to issue documents that can also be used by accreditors.

Regional Cooperations

APLAC Update

Helen Liddy, Janet Clark, Jane King
APLAC Secretariat

APLAC 2005

We are looking forward to APLAC 2005 in Chiang Mai from 13–18 November 2005. This year's General Assembly and Technical Meetings are being co-hosted very capably by TISI, DMSc and DSS. A very warm welcome is extended to all APLAC members and other invitees, including ILAC and representatives of each region, to attend. All details can be found at http://www.tisi.go.th/APLAC.

APLAC MRA

Congratulations to IAS, USA whose MRA recognition was extended on 25 April 2005 to include calibration. IAS's recognition also covers testing and inspection.

Incorporation of APLAC

APLAC is continuing to progress with arrangements for its incorporation and plans to become incorporated in New Zealand during 2006.

APLAC Documents

The Secretariat is frequently updating documents so please check the website (www.aplac.org) for current versions of all APLAC documents.

RM Producer Workshop

APLAC held a workshop on accreditation of RM producers in Hong Kong, China in March. Copies of the report on the workshop have been sent to ILAC and all regions to circulate to their members. APLAC intends to extend the APLAC MRA to include accreditation of RM Producers with calls for applications being made on 1 January 2006.

The workshop was facilitated by Mr Alan Squirrell of NATA, Dr Ed de Leer of NMI, Netherlands and Dr Robert Watters of NIST, USA. It was well attended and our thanks are extended to Alan, Ed and Robert for their excellent facilitation.

Training Course on ISO/IEC 17011

We have received very positive feedback from participants at the ISO/IEC 17011 training course that APLAC convened in April in Japan. The key differences between 17011 and Guide 58/TR 17010 were identified.

This information was used as the basis for the table sent out to all APLAC MRA signatories to return with supporting documentation to show compliance with 17011 by 31 December 2005. Reports are to be reviewed by the team leader on the accreditation body's last evaluation and the report and team leader's recommendation are to be considered at an APLAC MRA Council meeting to be held in the first few months of 2006.

Our thanks to the facilitators, Mr Peter Unger of A2LA, Dr Panadda Silva of DMSc and Mr Barry Ashcroft of IANZ, for the huge contribution they made to this workshop.

IAAC Update

Victor Gandy, Executive Secretary, Inter-American Accreditation Cooperation

IAAC Membership

IAAC currently has a total of 38 members, 20 full members, 8 associate members and 10 stakeholder members of 23 countries in the Americas. The IAAC General Assembly approved the incorporation of the Accreditation Body of Ecuador (OAE) as a full member, and the incorporation of the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors/ Laboratory Accreditation Board (ASCLD-LAB) of the United States, as an associate member. IAAC confirmed the full membership of ANSI-ASQ Accreditation Board (ANAB), taking into consideration the legal change from ANSI-RAB NAP to ANAB.

IAAC meetings

IAAC held its 10th General Assembly in San Jose, Costa Rica, from May 8-14, 2005. Forty-three representatives of accreditation bodies in the Americas met together to further promote the development of the regional accreditation system.

IAAC website

Our website (www.iaac-accreditation.org) has been revamped for easier access to all IAAC documents. There are new sections such as the IAAC Library where you may find international documents that are available to everyone. Additionally, there is a section called Peer Evaluator Package, where IAAC peer evaluators may find all of the documents that they require to undertake a peer evaluation.

New IAAC Documents

The General Assembly approved new IAAC documents, including the Policies and Procedures of the IAAC MLA and the Procedure for the selection and monitoring of IAAC peer evaluators. We have adopted relevant IAF-ILAC guides and placed them on the IAAC website for those who need to know and apply them. The General Assembly also approved the IAAC Strategic Business Plan for 2005-2006 with new goals and challenges for the coming years.

The General Assembly agreed to adopt the IAF document regarding Cross Frontier Policy as a mandatory document for the IAAC MLA of certification bodies accreditation. Additionally, it agreed to adopt the IAF Guide regarding transition to ISO 14001:2004 (IAF GD 4:2004). All of the IAAC documents are available in our website for those who need to know and apply them.

Technical Cooperation Projects

2004 OAS Project

The 2004 Organization of American States (OAS) project was executed by ema of Mexico. The final report was submitted in March 2005 and IAAC used 95% of the project's funds in the programmed activities.

The project's activities included 3 evaluations and 3 pre-evaluations to accreditation bodies, 3 training courses, 3 consultancies to developing accreditation bodies, 3 internships for staff of developing accreditation bodies, a seminar regarding accreditation, and rounds of proficiency tests. The final report of the project is available in the IAAC website at www.iaac-accreditation.org

2005-2006 OAS Project

ema of Mexico formally submitted a project proposal for 2005-2006 to the OAS, which was recently approved and began its implementation in August. The project includes funding to carry out IAAC peer evaluations, consultancies, internships, training courses, seminars, proficiency testing programs, office equipment for the IAAC Secretariat, etc.

2005-2006 IDB Project

The Inter-American Development Bank project titled 'Reduction of Technical Barriers to Trade through the Strengthening of the Accreditation Systems' which includes the participation of Mexico, Paraguay, Costa Rica and Trinidad & Tobago, was originally scheduled to be completed at the beginning of 2005. However, a project extension was requested due to difficulties to carry out the programmed activities. The IDB authorised a 12 month extension (until May 2006) to finish the project's pending activities which include technical assistance visits, training courses, consultancies to laboratories undergoing the process of accreditation, joint evaluations between an IAAC evaluator and a staff person of the AB, and IAAC peer evaluations.

2005-2006 PTB Project

IAAC submitted a project proposal for 2005-2006 to the Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB) of Germany. The activities that have already been

performed include a workshop to review results of an interlaboratory comparison of a chocolate powder sample; travel funds for the IAAC Chair to attend the ILAC Executive Committee, the ILAC Arrangement Committee, and the joint workshop of international and regional accreditation and metrology organisations organised by ILAC and BIPM all of which took place in Paris, in March 2005; a training course for IAAC members on ISO/IEC 17020 regarding inspection bodies; a laboratory evaluation excercise for IAAC members which took place in Peru, in August 2005. The remaining project activities include funding to carry out a training course for IAAC peer evaluators, the international witnessing of an IAAC evaluation, a regional interlaboratory comparison, etc.

Inter-Institutional Relations

IAF-ILAC
Randy Dougherty of ANAB represented IAAC at the Technical Committee of IAF at its meeting held in Taipei, last February.

Ana Maria Coro, IAAC Chair, participated in the ILAC Executive Committee, as well as at the ILAC Arrangement Committee, and the ILAC-BIPM workshop, all of which took place in Paris, in March 2005.

APLAC
IAAC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with APLAC in March 2005 in order to implement joint actions for the benefit of both Cooperations. Before signing this MOU, APLAC had invited IAAC members to participate in several proficiency testing programs.

SADCA
As a result of the Statement of Technical Cooperation that IAAC signed with SADCA on October 2004, two representatives of the Caribbean Epidemiology Center (CAREC), of Trinidad & Tobago, attended a SADCA meeting in Namibia in February 2005.

IAAC-NACLA MOU
A Memorandum of Understanding between IAAC and NACLA was signed in May 2005, in Costa Rica during the IAAC General Assembly, in order to strengthen the links of cooperation between both organisations.

COPANT-IAAC
For the first time IAAC held its annual meetings in parallel with the Panamerican Standards Commission (COPANT) in Costa Rica, in May 2005. On May 13, there was a joint meeting of the IAAC Executive Committee and the COPANT Board of Directors, where we shared our institutions' goals, plans and agreed to sign a memorandum of understanding in the near future. Some of the actions we established are as follows:

- Participation of the national accreditation bodies in the ISO/CASCO work through the national standards bodies.
- Joint training regarding some conformity assessment standards of mutual interest.
- Establish strategies to create awareness in the regulatory authorities regarding the use of standardisation and accreditation.

To fulfil these lines of action a work group was formed with 2 representatives of each organisation to develop a first draft of the MOU.

ILAC and IAF recognition of the IAAC MLA as regional arrangements

IAAC evaluation by IAF and ILAC
During 2004 IAF and ILAC performed an evaluation of IAAC. The corrective actions that address the non-conformities found, have been mostly completed. By the end of 2006 IAAC should be complying fully with the established criteria to achieve recognition of the IAAC MLAs by IAF & ILAC.

Incorporation of new signatories to the IAAC Multi-lateral Recognition Agreement (MLA)

Two IAAC members have successfully concluded their process to achieve the IAAC Multi-lateral Recognition Agreement (MLA). The ONARC of Cuba signed the IAAC MLA in May 2005, with a scope in Calibration and Testing Laboratories, and the OAA of Argentina signed the IAAC MLA in May 2005, with a scope in Calibration and Testing Laboratories as well as Quality Management Systems Certification Bodies.

IAAC Peer Evaluations

IAAC performed the following since April 2005:

A surveillance of ema, Mexico was performed by IAF-PAC-IAAC, with a scope of Certification Bodies of QMS, in May 2005.

A follow up evaluation of ema, Mexico, was performed by APLAC-IAAC for the incorporation of the MRAs with a scope of Testing & Calibration Laboratories, in June 2005.

An evaluation of ACLASS - United States, was performed by APLAC-IAAC for the incorporation of the MRAs with a scope of Testing & Calibration Laboratories.

An evaluation of INDECOPI - Peru was performed by IAAC with a scope of Certification Bodies of QMS, in July 2005.

Strengthening and Development of IAAC Human Resources

IAAC has increased its peer evaluator registry since 2001. Currently IAAC has a total of 22 peer evaluators, 5 of which are leader evaluators and 17 evaluators. However, since more and more members are in the process of achieving the signature of the IAAC MLA and requesting evaluations or pre-evaluations, during the months of October and November of 2005, IAAC will provide two training courses for IAAC peer evaluators. One course is organised in conjunction with APLAC. The objective of these courses is for IAAC to strengthen the availability team leader and team member evaluators.

News from EA

Martine Blum, EA Secretary

EA is the European network of National Accreditation Bodies and brings together 33 full and 3 associate members. EA also developed 15 contracts of cooperation with non European Accreditation Bodies out of which 9 have entered into a bilateral agreement with EA. BATA (Bosnia & Herzegovina), CAECP (Moldova) and IARM (located in the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia) entered into a contract of cooperation with EA during the last General Assembly in June.

Important discussions are developing between EA and the European Commission about the future of EA, further to a European Council Resolution issued in November 2003. Discussions focus on how to reinforce and harmonise the use of accreditation in the notification process and on a legal status for accreditation in order to strengthen the position and role of Accreditation Bodies in Europe.

It is considered to establish accreditation as a service of general economic interest, that is an activity developing in the context of a monopoly and deriving its authority from the government. This is expected to protect the accreditation customers from the monopoly potential deviations. The role of EA should eventually evolve and its relationships with the European Commission be extended and reinforced. The discussions involve the EA Chairman, the Executive Committee and the EA members through their national representatives at the Senior Official Group for Standardisation (SOGS). The EA Advisory Board fully supports EA in this matter.

In line with these high priority discussions, the EA Criteria for membership have been revised to include a provision concerning non competition which reads:
"… competition between the EA members and unnecessary duplication of accreditation services shall be avoided, since this can lead to undermining the independence and credibility of the members."

Relationships with the stakeholders

EA and Euromet signed a MoU during the General Assembly in June. By this MoU, Euromet agree to take over management of the calibration-specific documents and to reinforce its assistance in the organisation of interlaboratory comparisons (calibration). This marks a significant step in the restructuring of the EA Laboratory Committee, successfully conducted by the Chairman, Hanspeter Ischi (SAS, Switzerland). In the same vein, a MoU between EA and the Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements (IRMM) is being signed. It will formalise a cooperation which has already fruitfully developed over the years.

The EA **policy for sector schemes** was finally endorsed by the General Assembly in June at the end of a long working process in close cooperation with the EA Advisory Board. The document referenced EA 2 / 11 is now published on www.european-accreditation.org

The EA **website** was completely revamped. The new homepage was launched in July. Graphics have been refreshed and new services for EA members, under a Members' only page, have been developed. The website is more interactive and has been designed in order that the secretariat can maintain and keep it updated easily. We are pleased to mention that the EA Annual Report has also been changed. New graphics, new format, a more friendly document, the EA 2004 Annual Report should retain attention of a greater number of readers! The document can be downloaded from the EA website.

EA members' accreditations on line

The EA database for data concerning accredited calibration laboratories have now been online for a couple of years. At present, Danak, DAR, FINAS, UKAS and COFRAC have published their data. More members are in the process to enter the system soon. Whereas the search function for calibration is based on an EA common arborescence (scope), we are developing a full text search function for testing. In parallel however, a common arborescence for testing is also being worked out. As soon as Danak, DAR, Finas, UKAS and COFRAC have published their data for testing, the full text search will be implemented at http://db.european-accreditation.org or www.european-accreditation.org, page Database for accredited bodies.

As a result of the elections that took place in June, Lorenzo Thione (Sincert/FIDEA) and Graham Talbot (UKAS) became the future Chair and Vice Chair of EA. Their mandate will start on January 1st, 2006. The members of the new EA Executive Committee are:
MAC Committee: Gro Rodland (NA, Norway)
Communication and Publications Committee: Tom Dempsey (INAB, Ireland)
Laboratory Committee: Hanspeter Ischi (SAS, Switzerland)

Inspection Committee: Merih Malmqvist (SWEDAC, Sweden)
Certification Committee: Norbert Müller (BMWA, Austria)
and Rozsa Ring (NAT), member of the Executive not chairing a committee.
Also the General assembly elected a **financial oversight committee**. The committee will be chaired by Jan Van der Poel (RvA, the Netherlands). The members are, in addition to the Chair, John Matsas (ESYD, Greece) and Jiri Ruzicka (CAI, Czech Republic).

Malcolm Hynd (UK) became Chairman of the EA Advisory Board in April. Guy Jacques, representing IQNet, CAB college and Guenther Beer, UNICE, representing the Industry college became the new vice chairmen of the Board. We are pleased to report that Martin Stadler, European Commission, DG Enterprise, kindly accepted to take over from Malcolm to be the Board observer at the MAC Committee. This is a strong signal of the Commission's confidence in EA's work.

The EA Advisory Board met in Paris on October 19, the day before the European seminar sponsored by EA, Eurolab, Eurachem and CEOC about "Regulation and Standards Requirements for Conformity Assessment of Products, Services and Processes", organised by LNE in Paris. The next General Assembly will take place in Rome, on November 17-18. Further information can be found at secretariat.EA@cofrac.fr, or martine.blum@cofrac.fr.

Report of the Central Asian Cooperation on MAS-Q

Svetlana Zhanaidarova-Nemeroff, Secretariat of CAC MAS-Q

Recent CAC MAS-Q meeting

A recent meeting took place on 21–22 October, in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The main focus of the meeting was discussion of new ILAC approach to the regional organisations on accreditation, and possible CAC MAS-Q membership in ILAC as a regional body on accreditation. Donor organisations such as World Bank, International Trade Center, European Commission and USAID were present at the meeting. Mr John Gilmour, the former chairman of ILAC, attended the meeting and made presentations.

Model quality manual developed for accreditation body in accordance with ISO/IEC 17011 and ILAC

The CAC accreditation committee decided to initiate drafting a Quality Manual for Accreditation Bodies as part of the Road Map implementation. To consolidate resources and unify the technical approaches in the region, it was decided to develop a model Quality Manual for all four members. For this purpose, a working group was established. The members of the working group were the representatives of all four countries. The Draft Quality Manual developed by the National Accreditation Body in Uzbekistan was used as the basis. At present, the Committee members have developed and approved the draft model CAC MAS-Q Quality Manual.

BIPM/ILAC Workshop in Paris

At the request of ILAC, Nina Aleksandrovna Mukhamedshina the Committee Chairman on Accreditation and the representative of our regional organisation, together with Akybaeva Aigul (translator), participated in the joint session of ILAC/ BIPM workshop on "Consultation with Regional Structures on Issues Surrounding Accreditation". Other regional organisations such as EA, APLAC, IAAC, SADAC, etc., also participated in this session, which was held at BIPM in France on March 7 – 8, 2005. As a result of the CAC's active participation in the workshop, ILAC requested that the CAC nominate a representative to sit on the ILAC Executive Committee and on the ILAC Arrangement Management Committee. Representation on these committees is in addition to the opportunity to nominate representatives to attend one of the ILAC working committees.

Program to provide Russian translation of ILAC procedures and IAF/ILAC joint documents

One peculiarity of the Central Asian region is lack of technical experts with a command of English. All four countries have different official languages and Russian is used for business and general communication, including technical issues. All technical documentation can be properly taken in and interpreted only if it is in Russian. The CAC MAS-Q accreditation committee decided to translate specific ILAC and joint IAF-ILAC documents into Russian with to enhance access to ILAC and IAF information related to accreditation within the region. Members of CAC MAS-Q are in the process of translating about twenty ILAC procedures. CAC MAS-Q also started with translation of joint IAF and ILAC document IAF/ILAC-A1:2005 IAF/ILAC Multi-Lateral Mutual Recognition Arrangements (Arrangements): Requirements for Evaluation of a Regional Group. Members of the Cooperation are interested in full membership in both IAF and ILAC organisations. We are using a special procedure to ensure an accurate translation. The initial translation is performed by our project through the office of the Secretariat of the CAC MAS-Q. The Secretariat formally coordinates the review process between all of the National Accreditation Bodies (NAB) in Central Asia. Each NAB reviews, provides comments and recommendations. After all comments

and recommendations are completed, a final draft version is produced and circulated to the NABs for final approval and signature.

ILAC/IAF 2005 Conference in Auckland, New Zealand

CAC MAS-Q received an official invitation to attend the recent ILAC/IAF 2005 Conference in Auckland, New Zealand. Serik Sh. Kurmangaliev S.Sh., member of Accreditation Committee of CAC MAS-Q, and Member from CAC MAS-Q of ILAC Executive and Arrangement Management Committee represented our organisation at the Conference. The report and results of the Conference will be presented to the next CAC MAS-Q meeting in October.

Summary and conclusions

The majority of CAC MAS-Q activities are focused on accreditation issues. An objective to obtain international mutual recognition of certification results at the national level is the highest priority for the members of the Cooperation. The members of the Cooperation consider the CAC MAS-Q status in ILAC as a transient stage to full ILAC membership, and as a result, achieving the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement.

Stakeholders

EUROLAB Report

New Presidents after the EUROLAB General Assembly 2005

EUROLAB held its General Assembly in March 2005 in Bilbao, Spain, where Marc Mortureux, director of LNE, France (Laboratoire national de métrologie et d'essais) was elected new EUROLAB President and Bent Larsen, director of Force Technology, Denmark, was elected new Vice-President. Manfred Golze, BAM, Germany, was re-elected as Secretary. It was decided to transfer the Technical Secretariat from BAM to LNE, Paris, in the beginning of the next year.

EUROLAB activity priorities for 2005/2006

On the basis of the activity plan for 2005, the priorities for the next period were defined and include:

- further promotion of EUROLAB networks as actual platforms for exchange of experience within the laboratory community
- enhancement of co-operation, information and support of the everyday work of the members, especially by promoting the activities of the Technical Committees and technical Working Groups and by co-operation within international organisations such as the Permanent Liaison Group (PLG)
- organisation of workshops strengthening the dialogue with accreditation bodies (eg. on accreditation with flexible scope).

Current Technical Activities of EUROLAB

Review of the European legislation in product safety and marking

The 'New Approach', which is the current system of European Directives regulating product areas relevant for safety and CE marking, is currently under review by the European Commission. Important issues in the current discussions are:

- future role of EA and accreditation, also within the notification process
- improving and harmonising market surveillance as a task for the EU member states
- possible new structure of conformity assessment modules (mirroring ISO 9001:2000)
- role of CE marking with regard to private marks.

EUROLAB is intensely involved in the discussions on this development which is of essential importance for EA and European conformity assessment bodies.

EUROLAB recently organised a workshop on the Review of the 'New Approach', titled "EA-EUROLAB-EURACHEM Workshop Regulation and standard requirements for conformity assessment of products, services and processes", which was held in Paris in late October. The EUROLAB National Members' Meeting was also held Paris at that time.

EUROLAB Networks
The General Assembly agreed to set up sector-specific EUROLAB networks, serving as communication platforms in the internet for members within specific fields. EUROLAB-Denmark is hosting a network in the field of electrical calibration, ENeCal. It provides a good possibility for exchange and development of experiences by discussion of different problems around accreditation/ calibration/ measurement in the field of electrical calibration in an informal way. The chairman Peter Høgh Hyllested has just started the topic by an interlaboratory comparison.

EUROLAB positions on some issues currently discussed within ILAC and IAF

ILAC/IAF/ISO Communiqué is appreciated
EUROLAB highly appreciates the signing of the ILAC/IAF/ISO Communiqué on the relation between ISO/IEC 17025 and ISO 9001 with regard to the quality systems of laboratories. We feel that this communiqué will provide a good means for accreditation bodies and laboratories to inform the market about the meaning of accreditation and should avoid the need for accredited laboratories to apply for additional certification of their quality systems.

Criteria on standards under the MRA
As a contribution to the EA discussion on criteria for inclusion of standards under the ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) EUROLAB took the following position:
Both the accreditation bodies and the conformity assessment (CA) community should have a common interest in restricting the number of generic CA standards to a minimum. Thus both parties should jointly oppose any tendency of some standardisation committees to develop sector-specific CA standards, instead of using the generic ones (ISO/IEC 17000 series), developed and maintained by ISO CASCO as the pertinent ISO committee. The demand for attestation of competence in various sectors can best be met by accreditation against the generic CA standards in combination with normative documents specifying sector-specific requirements.

Accreditation of PT providers and RM producers
Because of the vital importance of the technical aspects concerning the testing activities for the overall quality of reference materials (RMs) or proficiency tests (PTs), from EUROLAB's point of view, PT providers or RM producers are not accreditable without their own technical activities. The following normative documents should be the basis for accreditations in these fields:

- for PT: ISO/IEC 17025 or ISO/IEC 17020 in combination with ISO Guide 43 or ILAC G13,
- for RM: ISO/IEC 17025 in combination with ISO Guide 34 (in line with the ILAC resolution GA 8.12).

We request that accreditation bodies do not accredit organisations which subcontract all technical activities. In addition EUROLAB will strictly oppose any tendency of accreditation bodies or individual assessors to demand that accredited laboratories use RM or participate in PT of accredited providers only.

ILAC/IAF Guide on application of ISO/IEC 17011
EUROLAB submitted two documents to the ILAC/IAF Joint Working Group on Guidance on ISO/IEC 17011:

- a joint paper of EA, EURACHEM and EUROLAB on a reduction of other surveillance measures in case of successful participation in proficiency tests ('Trade-off' Paper),
- a discussion paper of the EA / EUROLAB / EURACHEM Permanent Liaison Group (PLG) on the accreditation of multifunctional, multidisciplinary and multi-site organisations.

Because of the importance of efficient accreditation processes for conformity assessment bodies, EUROLAB suggested that the approaches developed in these two documents should be taken on board in the future ILAC/IAF Guide.

Update from NACLA

Joe O'Neil, Executive Administrator, NACLA

NACLA Signs MOU With IAAC

NACLA and the Inter-American Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to cooperate in the coming months and years. Both organisations share the same goal: coordination and improvement of the work of laboratory accreditation bodies (ABs). NACLA's mission is to evaluate and grant recognition to U.S. ABs. IAAC provides similar services to ABs throughout the Americas. Both Cooperations participate in ILAC; accordingly their evaluation programs are based on the international standards for competence that are endorsed by ILAC.

The MOU cites "the need to foster national, regional, interregional and global schemes for operation and recognition of reliable accreditation programs." It indicates the following areas of "cooperation and responsibility":

- **Training and Development**: This includes participation in training activities organised jointly or by each party, when appropriate.
- **Proficiency Testing Programs**.
- **Peer Evaluations**: In both programs, participation in the evaluation of applicant ABs is a requirement for ABs that have themselves been evaluated and recognised. The MOU calls for interchange of peers on occasion.
- **Information Exchange**: The parties will exchange information on accreditation and experience on the operation of regional and national associations, and will seek to discuss and understand each other's positions on issues of mututal interest.
- **Support on Technical Matters**.
- **Projects and Fund-Procurement**.

Cooperation among the two organisations is already under way. The Vice President of the IAAC, Pat Paladino, head of the Standards Council of Canada, made a presentation at the 2005 NACLA Laboratory Accreditation Forum held earlier this year. Also, members of both the IAAC and NACLA will participate in a training program for evaluators scheduled for early October, in Ottawa, Canada.The text of the NACLA-IAAC MOU and other information about NACLA can be found on the NACLA website (www.nacla.net).

Evaluators Training Course

NACLA will hold a training course in the new standard for accreditation bodies (ISO/IEC 17011) during the last week of October, 2005, at the National Institute of Standard's North Building, in Gaithersburg, MD. Keith Greenaway, Chair of the Training Subcommittee, made the announcement. He and Fred Grunder, NACLA's Evaluation Coordinator are in charge of arrangements for the program. Faculty members will include Pete Unger, President of A2LA; and Warren Merkel, Chief of NVLAP.

The course will be particulary important for the individuals who serve as NACLA Lead Evaluators. In that role, they have primary responsibility for the organisation and coordination of the evaluation, preparation of the evaluation report and representation of the applicant accreditation body before the NACLA Acceptance Panel, which makes the decision of whether or not to grant recognition.

NACLA Forum-AGM in March

NACLA will hold its Fifth Annual Forum on Laboratory Accreditation, in conjunction with its Annual General Meeting, on March 28 and 29, 2006 in Columbia, MD. Presentations will include: an Update on the Global Recognition System; an Assessment of How ISO/IEC 17011 is Working; The Growing Importance of Proficiency Testing in Accreditation and Recognion; a Panel of Accreditation and Laboratory Officials discussing Assessment/Accreditation Issues; Guidelines for Calibration Scopes; Increasing Reliance on NACLA by U.S. Government Agencies; and a Status Report on Key NACLA Programs. The Preliminary Program and Registration Form for the conference can be found on the NACLA web page, www.nacla.net.

NACLA Grants Recognition to ACLASS

In Washington, DC on September 26, 2005, the National Cooperation for Laboratory Accreditation (NACLA) granted recognition to Assured Calibration and Laboratory Accreditation Select Services (ACLASS), a multi-discipline laboratory accreditation body (AB), headquartered in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. ACLASS is the eighth AB that has been recognised by NACLA. Recognition is an indication that ACLASS has demonstrated to a NACLA evaluation team that it complies with NACLA procedures and the international standard for a competent AB (ISO/IEC Guide 58).

ACLASS was recognised for a broad range of accreditation services: Calibration – dimensional, mechanical, thermodynamic, electromagnetic DC/low frequency, electromagnetic RF/microwave, time/frequency and optical radiation; Testing - mechanical/metallurgical, chemical, construction materials, biology/microbiological, thermal, environmental, non-destructive, optical, and dimensional inspection.

ACLASS operates in international and domestic markets with assessors located throughout North America. ACLASS accredits laboratories to the ISO/IEC 17025 standard for a variety of testing and calibration areas. In addition to its participation in NACLA, ACLASS is actively involved in the international accreditation community.

NACLA-recognised ABs sign a mutual recognition arrangement (MRA), whereby they commit to:

- use equivalent procedures in the accreditation of laboratories;
- recognise the operation of other signatory ABs as having met the same technical requirements for competence; and
- accept the test reports and calibration certificates issued by signatory-accredited calibration and testing laboratories.

The roster of NACLA-recognised accreditation bodies and the scopes of accreditation services for which they are recognised are posted on the NACLA website (www.nacla.net). Visit the site for other information about NACLA as well.

National Laboratory Association — South Africa

Steve Sidney, Manager, NLA

Local Issues

Training

The NLA training activity continues to dominate a large portion of the day-to-day business of the Association. Once again during the year we organised and ran more than 15 training courses and had more than 130 candidates who attended our courses during the past 12 months.

The most successful courses continue to be held in the following areas: Mass, Temperature, and Estimation of Uncertainty of Measurement.

Significantly, we have seen a growing attendance by the testing community at the UoM courses and the NLA looks forward to making a useful contribution in this very important area.

Personnel Registration

Late in 2004, after the ILAC Meeting in Cape Town, SAQA, the South African Qualifications Authority, approved and registered the first 14 Unit Standards, which forms a large portion of the intended SA Metrology Qualification. This is a vital component of the intended Professional recognition.

Whilst this process is taking longer than was first envisaged, progress is slowly being made, and the NLA is hopeful that during the next 12 months an application for the registration of a Metrologist category will be made and approved by the relevant authority.

Annual Conference

The annual T&M Conference took place in early September. Although there hasn't yet been time to thoroughly evaluate the formal evaluation survey which is conducted after each Conference, there is no doubt that the Conference remains a highlight of the NLA's activity and all those involved reported that attendees were extremely satisfied.

Importantly there was approximately a 20% increase in numbers attending as well as a 50% increase in the number of Exhibition Stands/Booths and the NLA is keen to find mechanisms to increase these further. It was also pleasing to note the first formal participation of the medical community in presentations and attendance.

Other than a large contingent of overseas attendees and speakers, the NLA was pleased to welcome more than twenty attendees from our Region, and are hopeful that in future this will grow. We were pleased that Eurolab sent Jean-Marc Aublant, the new Eurolab Secretary, who agreed to look at mechanisms for facilitating further European expert laboratory participation.

General

Steve Sidney attended and presented a paper at this year's NCLSI Conference which was held in Washington. The paper presented provided an overview of the development of the Metrology Qualification which was well received and a number of those who attended the session requested further information.

The NLA's ILC/PT program (Mass, Electrical & Temperature), which was previously reported was successfully concluded and the final reports are available on the NLA website. This year's program has taken longer than anticipated to establish but at the time of this report the anticipated On-Site ILC will take place during the balance of 2005. Given the importance of PT for the Accreditation Body and the laboratories, this activity will continue to receive attention by the NLA and it is expected that in due course the NLA's PT Program will grow into the testing arena.

Regional Issues

Regional Association

The NLA continues to promote the formation of a Southern African Regional Laboratory Association. As far as the NLA is aware both Zimbabwe and Botswana have made good progress towards establishing their own local Associations. This is first but vital step and it is hoped that during the next 12 months that the first tentative steps can be taken towards establishing the Regional Association.

International Issues

ISO WG25-17025

The final outcome of the alignment and revision of ISO 17025 is supported by the NLA and as an Association will be working with SANAS to inform its members on the transition to the new version.

Eurolab

Steve Sidney continues to be the primary contact with Eurolab and attended the GA Meeting in Bilbao, Spain in March 2005. Further discussions with Eurolab took place at the NLA T&M Conference as reported above.

ILAC LC/AIC

The NLA continues to remain involved in both the Laboratory and the Accreditation Issues Committees of ILAC and may also become more involved in the newly formed ILAC PT Consultative Forum.

For further information regarding any of these activities as well as the role the NLA plays in the South African laboratory community please use the contact details below.

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NCSL International

Tony Anderson, NCSLI Director

In early August NCSLI held its annual Workshop and Symposium in Washington, DC, USA. Over 1100 attendees from many countries attended the symposium. There were 4 days of technical and managerial presentations, with six different track themes for the first three days and panel sessions on the final day. Over 150 Exhibitors participated in the conference from Europe, North America and the Pacific Rim. Immediately prior to, and following the symposium, three full days of tutorials were held adding to a very full program of activities. The 2005 NCSLI conference program addressed many of the issues confronting laboratory practitioners and conformity assessment issues in general.

The conference theme, *Advances in Science and Technology – Their Impact on Metrology* was introduced by Dr Hratch G. Semerjian, Acting Director of the National Institute of Science and Technology (NIST) who gave the keynote address. His speech, titled *Expanding the Frontiers of Measurement* explained how NIST is constantly expanding the frontiers of measurement to promote innovation, advance US manufacturing, facilitate trade, improve public safety and security and improve the quality of life. While expanding into new technologies such as nanotechnology, biotechnology, quantum computing and facing the challenges of homeland security, NIST continues to perform its traditional role in metrology and is addressing the measurement challenges posed in creating the 'electronic kilogram' and measuring frequency to the femtosecond level.

Dr Semerjian reported on the commissioning of the new Advanced Measurement Laboratory recently opened at the NIST site in Gaithersburg, Maryland. The new laboratory has provided NIST scientists and engineers with a unique facility that allows both cutting-edge research and state of the art measurement capabilities. During the NCSLI conference VIPs from NMIs around the world were invited to a private tour of the new NIST laboratories hosted by Dr Semerjian and accompanied by the President and Vice President of NCSLI and other NCSLI management.

This year the prestigious William A. Wildhack award, presented annually to recognise outstanding contributions to the field of metrology and measurement science, consistent with the goals of NCSL International, was awarded to Dr Richard Pettit, a long serving member of the Board of NCSLI who until his recent retirement, was Director of Metrology at the Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Dr Pettit more recently has been involved in accreditation issues for laboratories and also sits on the board of the National Cooperation for Laboratory Accreditation (NACLA). This is the third year in a row that someone involved with laboratory accreditation in addition to their contributions to metrology, has won the Wildhack award. The award was established in 1970 in honour and recognition of William Wildhack, a long-time employee of the U.S. National Bureau of Standards, now NIST. Mr. Wildhack was not only very instrumental in the founding of the NCSL, but also, through his wisdom, his leadership, his dedication and foresight, he helped shape the organisation during its early formative years.

At the conference this year, there was once again strong emphasis on international issues and in addition to the parallel tracks there were two general panel sessions comprised of international speakers. These general sessions covered a wide variety of issues important to the international measurement community.

The new ISO/IEC 17025:2005 was covered in one of the parallel tracks devoted to accreditation issues. News from ILAC of the agreement about a statement on certificates regarding laboratories operating a recognised management system and the joint ISO/ILAC/IAF Communiqué about ISO/IEC 17025:2005 meeting the principles of ISO 9001:2000, came just in time to be reported at the conference. The Board of Directors of NCSLI in its meeting following the conference was especially pleased with the results and acknowledged the role that the laboratory community, and the LC in particular, had played in getting all parties to agree. It is a major step forward for laboratories in educating their customers for the need for accreditation rather than certification.

In the early part of next year NCSLI will be introducing a new metrology magazine, called *Measure*. It will be completely different from the current newsletter, which will continue to be published, keeping the organisation up to date on news and events, but no longer carrying any technical articles. The new magazine will allow advertising, which is a first for NCSLI.

In January following the 2004 Board of Directors election, Roxanne Robinson of A2LA and well known to ILAC and the LC, was elected to the NCSLI Board of Directors as the Vice President of Industrial Programs. Back in 2004 she had joined the Board as an appointee to fill a Divisional

Vice President vacancy. Over the years, Roxanne has been an extensive contributor to committee work and a presenter at many conferences including this year when she presented a paper on the changes to the 2005 version of ISO/IEC 17025.

NCSLI continues to focus on education and training through the many products and services it provides to its membership and the metrology community at large. These training tools come in many different forms. There are Recommended Practices, Recommended Intrinsic/ Derived Standards Practices and Laboratory Management Practices as well as guides and interpretive documents. The annual Workshop and Symposium and the Tutorials provide intensive training and education sessions for the attendees, as do local and regional meetings and workshops. Annually NCSLI awards scholarships to several educational institutions to encourage courses in metrology, some at the degree level.

More news about NCSL International and next year's Annual Conference in Nashville, Tennessee (August 6 to 10, 2006) can be found on the organisation's website (www.ncsli.org).

EURACHEM Report

Máire C. Walsh, EURACHEM

The 2005 EURACHEM week was held in Malta during the second week of May. It comprised a compendium of events and afforded members the opportunity to network and discuss common issues. The General Assembly (GA) was opened by the Prime Minister of Malta who spoke about the importance of measurement and metrology in trade. The main business of the organisation is conducted at the GA, an integral part of which is the open forum. In this forum, policy and potential policy issues are both debated and formulated.

The GA, which was combined with meetings of the executive committee and working groups, was preceded by a workshop for EURACHEM Malta members, which focused on metrology and trade. These workshops are a feature of GAs and they afford the local organisers the opportunity to host expert seminars for their members at minimum cost.

This years the open forum centred around PT and the following topics were discussed:

- 'Trade-off' between PT participation and surveillance activities by accreditation bodies
- Accreditation of PT providers
- PT and measurement uncertainty

A very informative and open discussion took place and it was concluded that there is not a 'one size fits all solution' to any of the above topics.

Concerning the 'trade off', in general the concept was welcomed, provided it is recognised that PT is only one element of quality and each PT scheme will require consideration on an individual basis. 'Trade off' would have to be agreed with the accreditation body on a case-by-case basis and if it is decided to proceed by this route it must not lead to PT samples being accorded preferential treatment.

The need for the demonstration of competence by PT providers was clearly recognised and accreditation offers a mechanism to identify such competencies. This is very relevant for developing countries and for small countries which may have to purchase PT from abroad. It is also important for small organisations which lack the resources of their larger counterparts. It was considered that accreditation should not be mandatory and that a revision of Guide 43/ILAC G 13 would be beneficial.

The final topic was very much a pre-'state of the art' debate and some worthwhile views were expressed. The results of the EU COEPT project were also outlined with particular emphasis on how PT providers deal with uncertainty. More information on this project is available on the EPTIS website (www.eptis.bam.de).

Working Group Reports

Joint EURACHEM/CITAC working group on Uncertainty and Traceability

It is hoped that a document on the compliance issue will be distributed for comment by the end of the year. It was also concluded that the task of revising the Validation Guide is larger than expected. After discussion at the GA, members decided to set up a drafting group which will be led by E. Halder, Switzerland. Volunteers were requested for this activity. The working group in conjunction with CITAC plan to organise a half-day seminar at the AOAC Annual meeting in Minneapolis, USA in mid Sept 2006, to coincide with Máire Walsh's presidency of AOAC International. The topic will be related to metrology and trade. The proposal was accepted by the AOAC Programming Committee at the recent AOAC annual meeting.

Proficiency testing (PT)

This group is concerned with PT as it relates to the mission and strategic plan of EURACHEM. It interfaces with the 3E (European laboratory organisations) PT working group and ensures a balanced EURACHEM input into that forum. It recently held a workshop in Slovenia at the end of September 2005. It has also developed an information leaflet on PT which will be circulated to the GA national delegates for comment and approval. A bibliography of PT documents for inclusion on the EPTIS website is being developed.

Education and training
This group is currently working with the European Union's Joint Research Centre in Belgium on the organisation of the forthcoming Summer (European) school on Education of Metrology in Chemistry. The target audience is third level educators.

Joint working group on Uncertainty in sampling
A meeting was recently held in September and it is hoped to have a draft guide ready for circulation and comments later in the year.

Proposed bio-analysis working group
It was agreed at the 2004 GA to set up a brain-storming group who would identify what needs to be done in the area of quality of measurements for bio-analysis. However, this took longer that was initially anticipated, but a meeting is planned for Vienna later in the year.

Computer guidelines and Uncertainty in qualitative analysis

Both working groups had a quiet year.

Reports and liaisons

Reports were given either orally or in writing by the liaisons from the following organisations: ILAC, EA, PLG, 3EPT, EAAB, EUROLAB, EUROMET, MetChem, CCQM, CITAC, CODEX, CCMAS, DAC/FECS and IUPAC.

A review of the EURACHEM liaison persons to the various organisations was undertaken and instructions for liaison persons will be developed to ensure that the EURACHEM view and input is both given and formulated.

The next meeting will take place in Ankara, Turkey in May 2006.

Canadian Association for Environmental Analytical Laboratories (CAEAL)

Rick Wilson, Executive Director, CAEAL

CAEAL is a not-for-profit membership association with a total of 620 members, offering training, proficiency testing (PT) and accreditation to clients in Canada and internationally.

Some highlights of our programs and the participants:

- 366 laboratories participate in the regular PT program and another 175 organisations participate in a special PT program for Alberta municipal treatment facilities.
- The accreditation stream includes 160 laboratories that have been accredited and 20 applicants.
- 28% of laboratories in the regular program are public facilities and 72% are in the private sector.
- 7% of participants are from countries other than Canada.
- The most popular training courses are "17025 foundations" and "internal auditing"; the most recent training additions are web-based courses on "accreditation of environmental laboratories" and "measurement uncertainty for users of laboratory data."

With regard to the accreditation program, CAEAL became a Full Member of the Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC) in March 2005, welcomed an APLAC evaluation team in July, and has applied for Associate status with ILAC.

Laboratories and accreditors may be interested in a paper now available on the CAEAL website concerning the improved performance of laboratories in the proficiency testing program (see www.caeal.ca/perfacred-2004.pdf). In earlier studies, the CAEAL PT data has been used to show that accredited laboratories perform better than non-accredited laboratories. In the current study, it is shown that PT performance scores increase over the first few rounds followed by a plateau. This suggests that the combination of proficiency testing and conformance to ISO/IEC 17025 through accreditation is the best strategy to ensure consistently high quality analytical results.

Two workshops were held during 2004 to review and discuss the CAEAL PT program. The summaries, available at http://www.caeal.ca/04novptw_summary.pdf and http://www.caeal.ca/04Novptw_june_summary.pdf, indicate that the highest priority issues were scoring (5 of 12 recommendations), administration (5 of 12) and composition (2 of 12). There was discussion between laboratories and regulators of the need to balance cost and risk, and the conclusion was that eight samples annually is an appropriate level.

Subsequently two Canadian environmental laboratories that are part of international chains have reported that they observe very large variations in costs for laboratories that are accredited by ILAC-recognised accrediting bodies. It appears that variations in proficiency testing requirements (number of samples per year) may be the main cause, and it is hoped that the Laboratory Committee (and/or the PT Forum) will entertain discussion of these requirements recognising that the guidance to accrediting bodies (once every four years) is meaningless to chemical testing laboratories.

CAEAL continues to support ILAC by providing a liaison to ISO TC176 (Ned Gravel). The liaison report for the Nov/Dec 2004 Annual Meeting can be found in the Members area of the ILAC website, in the Liaisons section. The report indicates that there was a positive discussion in the Conformity Assessment Liaison Group on the differences between 17025 and 9000, and a desire to work with ILAC on accreditation certificates wording. It appears that ILAC's efforts of recent years are paying off, and that there is far less dissatisfaction over the approach taken to align ISO/IEC 17025 and agreement that CASCO is the appropriate vehicle for maintaining it. It should be noted that TC176 has started a revision of 9001 and expects the changes to be minor.

International Union of Independent Laboratories (UILI)

Progress Report

The Union Internationale des Laboratoires Independent (UILI) incorporated in Paris, France in 1961 is an international association of private laboratories and practitioners from throughout the world. Membership of over 700 organisations grouped in six National Member Associations or as individual Affiliate Members with laboratory facilities located in over 30 countries.

UILI's objectives include the representation of the professional and commercial interests of the private sector laboratories. In addition, UILI acts as a forum for the exchange of information and views on an international basis.

The UILI Governing Board met in Brussels, Belgium on 18 March, 2005 and in London, UK on 28 September, followed immediately by the Bi-Annual General Assembly meeting.

UILI's activities since ILAC General Assembly 2003, held in Bratislava, Slovakia include:

- Ongoing active participation in the work of the Laboratory Committee (LC) with additional participation by correspondence with WG 7 (Liaison with ISO/CASCO) of ILAC's Accreditation Policy Committee (APC);
- Our Governing Board continues to develop and implement our Business Plan; improve contact with trade representatives around the world, recruit new membership, and increase the value of our website to our members and all parties interested in independent testing, calibration and inspection services.
- Until recently, David H. Stanger, OBE has coordinated our contributions to the ongoing meetings of CASCO WG 25 — Alignment of ISO/IEC 17025:1999 and ISO 9001:2000. In addition, he sought to ensure that the UILI position and that of the working members of CASCO WG 25 prevail resulting in the publication of ISO/IEC FDIS 17025: 2004 without further amendment and without delay. Mr Stanger has announced his retirement. UILI pays him great tribute for his many years of faithful and effective service, not only on behalf of UILI, but for the world-wide testing community as a whole. He will be sorely missed. Mr Stanger is being succeeded by Richard Scales of Al Hoty Stanger Ltd. Mr Scales brings his over thirty years of experience in the independent laboratory testing field to representing UILI and its members in the international testing arena.

UILI seeks from ILAC, Laboratory Committee support on the following issues:

- Continued pressure for ISO/IEC 17025: 2005 to remain a stand-alone international standard; that the transition period adopted by ILAC reflects the demands of the laboratory community and the clients they serve around the world. Further improvement through a work item of the ILAC Arrangement Committee (ARC) on the understanding and application of ISO Directives and the relationship between CASCO and TC 176 who are responsible within ISO for all conformity assessment standards;
- To seek an amendment to the ILAC bylaws to permit UILI to call ourselves Stakeholder Members of ILAC;
- To monitor the substance and implementation of the ILAC/IAF/ISO Communiqué signed on the 18th June, 2005;
- To ensure immediate publication of the ILAC Procedure for Handling Complaints that was approved over 12 months ago by the ILAC Executive Committee; and
- Maintain support of the mission of the ILAC Joint Committee for Closer Cooperation (JCCC) and give consideration to attain 'alignment' between ILAC and IAF instead of 'merger'.

For further information, please contact us at UILI Secretariat, 1629 K Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, and DC 20006. USA. Tel: +1 202 887 5872 Fax: +1 202 887 0021.

Accreditation Update

CNLA/TAF Update

MRA Acceptance by the Taiwanese Regulator: A Success Story

The Taiwanese regulator, the National Treasury Agency at the Ministry of Finance, implemented new regulations on 1 July 2005 pertaining to the permissible content of alcoholic beverages. These new regulations, established pursuant to the existing Tobacco and Alcohol Administration Law, specify clearly the maximum tolerable amounts of impurities such as methanol, lead, and sulphur dioxide.

Since early 2004, CNLA/TAF has been entering into negotiations with the regulator with the goal of lessening the impact that these new regulations might have on the Taiwanese alcohol market (eg. technical barriers to trade). Initial face-to-face contact and over-the-phone conversations facilitated the progress with including CNLA/TAF accreditation in the regulatory process. Then, in March 2004, CNLA/TAF conducted a domestic Proficiency Testing Program to demonstrate to the regulator the competence of its alcohol-testing laboratories. We later had the pleasure of announcing, at an event to inform our alcohol-testing laboratories of the new regulations, that the regulator would indeed be accepting CNLA/TAF accreditation, and would be making use of their accredited alcohol-testing laboratories.

CNLA/TAF had been actively working to promote the use of the accredited alcohol-testing laboratories of their MRA member accreditation bodies (ABs). To smooth the process of acceptance by the regulator, CNLA/TAF had striven to demonstrate the equivalent technical competence of these alcohol-testing laboratories by applying the international APLAC Proficiency Testing Program T021. Thanks to these efforts, the National Treasury Agency eventually agreed to accept testing reports issued by accredited alcohol-testing laboratories, according to lists provided by the ILAC MRA member ABs. The ultimate goal would be for the regulator to recognise the common ILAC MRA-Mark without need to refer to such lists. CNLA/TAF will continue to do everything it can to achieve this goal.

Acceptance by the Taiwanese Regulator (CDC)

Starting from 1 August 2005, the Taiwanese regulator, the Centre for Disease Control, Department of Health, Executive Yuan, commenced the employment of hospitals whose laboratories were granted accreditation by CNLA/TAF as designated hospitals for employed foreigners' medical examination.

The required items applying in such designated hospitals include the following five examinations:

1. Immunoserology: RPR/VDRL test, TPHA/TPPA test, HBs Ag and HIV antibody screening
2. Pregnancy: ß-HCG or urine pregnancy test
3. Parasites: ova examination, identification of morphology and Amoebic smear/stain examination
4. Chest X-ray
5. The process and improving plan for health

In addition, such designated hospitals shall also be compliant with ISO 15189.

MoU Signing with ASCLD/LAB

After a year of negotiation, CNLA/TAF has now progressed to the point of forging a new cooperative relationship with the leading American organisation for forensic science accreditation: the Laboratory Accreditation Board of the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors (ASCLD/LAB). In Taipei, on 25 August 2005, the two organisations signed a MoU regarding joint assessments, technical collaborations, and mutual promotion of accreditation within forensic science. This step not only represents a new venture in accreditation for the CNLA/TAF, but also affords

the forensic science sector in Taiwan the opportunity of enhancing both its professionalism and international links.

COFRAC

Martine Blum, COFRAC

The accreditation of laboratories in France — activity levels and new developments

The accreditation of laboratories involves a team of 42 people within the COFRAC including 28 doctors or engineers, operating within the Laboratories Section. This team handles some 1430 accreditation schedules submitted by accredited test or calibration laboratories, including organisers of interlaboratory comparisons. Where its accreditation missions are concerned, it carries out the following functions:

- The preparation of assessments: studying the scope of the accreditation, including for new fields, examining technical questions making it possible to optimise the assessment teams;
- Carrying out assessments;
- The examination of evaluation reports with a view to submitting decision proposals to the General Manager of the COFRAC;
- Managing evaluators and monitoring their performance;
- Drafting documents and rules for the harmonisation of the work of the Technical Accreditation Commissions;
- The in-depth examination of problems, drawing upon the necessary skills (either internally or externally);
- Managing complaints and appeals.

In order to be best able to carry out these missions, it is organised into four divisions, with each division including between 6 and 7 engineers, so as to create a uniform scientific and technical environment. These divisions are co-ordinated by a Section Manager, and this cross-divisional coordination is further reinforced by the existence of 3 Mission Managers' posts, these managers having the task of running the "quality" and "development" aspects.

Additionally, the Laboratories Section can draw upon approximately 120 Quality Assessors and 700 Technical Experts operating outside the permanent office. It manages and supervises these evaluators. As a result, these evaluators (among others) regularly participate at harmonisation meetings (which can be either general meetings, or meetings held for each different technical area) organised by the permanent office.

The following examples demonstrate the technical work carried out by the section, mentioning just the latest developments or those to be introduced before the end of the year.

In addition to the revision of the documents necessary to accreditation made necessary by the publication of the new ISO/CEI 17025: 2005 standard, the section has drawn up policies (already published or to be published shortly) covering the following general themes:

- Interlaboratory comparisons (please see Compétences Magazine, July 2005 edition);
- The "virtualisation" and electronic transmission of test reports and calibration certificates (please see Compétences Magazine, July 2005 edition). A survey has been carried out for this purpose, in partnership with Eurolab-France, involving all of the accredited laboratories, and has attracted an excellent level of feedback;
- Flexible scopes: changes to the applicable policy with a view to making the most of feedback received in order to clearly define the means for expressing scopes and assessment criteria;
- Uncertainty: recording this in test reports and using it for the purpose of declaring conformity. This means providing indications concerning the manner in which uncertainties are to be recorded in the test reports, and clarifying the Cofrac's viewpoint when the laboratory declares conformity (or otherwise).

Activities in Each Division

The Biology/Biochemistry Division

- Technical accreditation guides concerning the validation of methods in medical biology (LAB GTA 04, available at www.cofrac.fr) and concerning inspections of analytical quality in medical biology (LAB GTA 05, available at www.cofrac.fr).
- Relations with the ministry for agriculture, in order to meet the needs expressed by this ministry concerning the accreditation of national reference laboratories.

- Work on technical accreditation standards in the fields of drinks, GMOs, BSE and molecular biology.

The Chemistry/Environmental Division

- In liaison with the various ministerial departments (Environment, Health, Employment and Agriculture), work is being carried out and the corresponding accreditations awarded. This concerns the fields of the analysis/sampling of atmospheric pollutants, pollutants in the air in workplaces, physical-chemical and microbiological analyses of water, sludge and sediment, the analysis of waste or the analysis of ultrapure chemical products used in microelectronics.

The Engineering Division

- Technical accreditation guide for temperature (LAB GTA 08, available at www.cofrac.fr): this guide concerns both accredited calibration laboratories or those applying for accreditation for temperature metrology and test laboratories carrying out temperature measurements.
- Working with the Ministry of Finances: drafting of an accreditation program concerning the inspection of structures made from precious metals.
- Work on the verification of three dimensional measurement machines in order to respond to the increasing numbers of major industrial originators in the automotive, aeronautical and mechanical construction fields.

The Physics-Electricity Division

- Technical accreditation guide concerning the traceability of EMC measurements (LAB GTA 07, available at www.cofrac.fr): this guide explains the connection principles, which can be applied in other technical fields.
- The expansion of accreditation for measurement laboratories (internal and external dosimetry) working on the individual monitoring of the exposure of workers to the dangers of ionising radiation, in response to a request from the Ministry of Employment.
- Accreditation extension to take in new methods and new measurement resources following the gradual opening of new telecommunications networks (UMTS for example).
- Work in the physics, electronics and IT field in view of the need for greater confidence in contact chip cards (bank cards, etc) or contactless cards, in addition to the related acceptance systems, software systems, cryptographic modules, etc.

COFRAC will be holding a Forum on December 8, 2005 involving all of the accredited laboratories with the aim of examining accreditation activities at a national and international level.

Accreditation Activities in Guatemala

Alexander Pineda, Head of the Guatemalan Accreditation Office

The year 2005 has been very positive for the activities regarding accreditation in Guatemala. By now, six accreditations have been granted by the Guatemalan Accreditation Office (OGA); one for a calibration laboratory and the others for testing laboratories, including two of clinical/medical analysis.

Two technical committees have been operating in order to support the activities of the Office, regarding the issue of guidelines and policies to be used during the assessments, based on the international documents. The committees, one for laboratories and one for certification bodies, are composed of experts in different fields from the stakeholders.

Further information about the scope of the laboratories and the activities of OGA are available at the web page www.mineco.gob.gt or by our email info-oga@mail.mineco.gob.gt.

OGA has new facilities and the office is located at the Calzada Atanasio Tzul, 27-32, Zona 12, Guatemala City. The telephone numbers are (502) 2476-6784 / 87 and the fax number is (502) 2476-6777.

News from JAB

Yuichiro Isu, Executive Director, JAB

ISO 15189 Accreditation Program Commences in Japan

JAB carried out pilot assessments of its medical laboratory accreditation program based on ISO 15189 from November 2004 to May 2005. The program has been developed in cooperation with the Japanese Committee for Clinical Laboratory Standards (JCCLS). The evaluation of the pilot assessments confirmed that there were no serious problems. JAB has therefore officially launched its medical laboratory accreditation program. To date, five medical laboratories have been accredited by JAB. Six more are in the process of assessment. Accredited medical laboratories are found on the JAB website at www.jab.or.jp.

Report from Japan Laboratories Association (JLA)

Kiyoto Mitsui, Chair, Japan Laboratories Association

Japanese regulatory reform relating to laboratories

Regulatory reform is proceeding in Japan, field-by-field and step-by-step, toward international harmonisation and deregulation. As a general policy, the government designation of conformity assessment bodies, including laboratories, is being changed into 'registration' based on various forms of assessment and recognition of competence.

However, the horizontal coordination of conformity assessment systems among ministerial sectors is still in a low level. As for laboratories, their competence is usually controlled by sector-specific schemes of each ministry, most of which do not recognise the status given by voluntary laboratory accreditation. This forces those laboratories that have a wide scope of work aiming for 'one-stop service' to undergo multiple assessments and different controls. To improve this situation, JLA has taken action cooperating with the accreditation bodies, but obtained so far very little results. JLA does hope that ILAC will strengthen its actions to the regulators so that they increase the use of comprehensive laboratory accreditation systems operated under ILAC/MLA.

New movement in Japanese laboratory community

In recent years, there is an increasing demand for analytical testing concerning environment, foods and hazardous substances contained in industrial materials and products. At the same time, the boundaries between the regulatory sectors in the past are becoming intricate. This situation has given rise to strong competition among laboratories, causing the price of testing in some fields to go down to an unreasonably low level. This is partly because some customers, including public sectors, do not care about the quality of the testing. In fear of breakdown in testing quality, a group of accredited laboratories was organised early this year to make a campaign for maintaining quality and good practice in testing business. The representatives of this group and those of JLA had talks and agreed to work together for better publicity of accredited laboratories.

Survey of laboratories' views on accreditation against ISO/IEC 17025

A committee which one of JLA member fosters carried out a survey in November 2004 of about six hundred testing laboratories operating in Japan and received about two hundred answers. This survey included questionnaires on laboratories' views on the reason why accreditation against ISO/IEC 17025 is slow in spreading in this country. Examples of the major answers are outlined below:

- Commercial benefit of accreditation is unknown (22%)
- Cost of accreditation seems too much for the price of testing (18%)
- Current customers do not require laboratories to be accredited (17%)
- Regulators do not recognise accreditation (12%)
- Scope of accreditation is too detailed and cannot cover a wide range (9%)
- There are no personnel who can lead the preparation for accreditation (6%)
- Quality of testing can be assured by ISO 9000 certification (5%)
- Effect of accreditation on international trade is unknown (4%)
- Measurement standards needed for accreditation are not available (3%).

News from the Jordan Accreditation Commission

A new name for the Jordanian Accreditation Body

As part of the Accreditation Unit's efforts to achieve international recognition, the Board of Directors in April 2005 took the decision to change the Accreditation Unit name to the Jordan Accreditation Commission (JAC). This decision was taken in order to reflect the actions taken by JAC to be independent. Additionally a new logo and symbol will be used by JAC to represent its new status.

JAC
Jordan Accreditation Commission
هيئـــة الإعتمـــاد الأردنيـــة

A twinning project to upgrade accreditation activities in Jordan

In view of the EU-Jordan Association Agreement and in order to enable Jordan to fulfil its commitments

in the agreement, Jordan signed a twinning project with Germany in August 2005. The project aims at the development of the quality infrastructure in Jordan among which includes accreditation. The accreditation component's main goal is to support the development of an internationally recognised Jordanian Accreditation Body through the achievement of the following aspects:

- Preparation of JAC for the multilateral agreement with EA/IAF.
- Expanding the scope of the accreditation services to cover accreditation of medical laboratories and certification and inspection bodies.
- Training of JAC staff and assessors in all areas of accreditation activities for bodies of product certification, quality and environmental management systems, inspection bodies and a special focus on medical laboratories.
- The public and legislators are aware of the importance of accreditation.
- Improvement of JAC's infrastructure.

The agreement action plan will be implemented by highly qualified experts in Accreditation body's requirements and accreditation procedures of conformity assessment from reputable German institutions such as the Federal Institute for Material Research and Testing, BAM in cooperation with PTB and DIN as well as DAP and TGA, and will last for two years.

Evaluation of the Jordanian Accreditation System

As part of the twinning project between Jordan and Denmark to upgrade the food chain laboratories in Jordan, a 'training' peer evaluation has been conducted on the Jordan Accreditation Commission (JAC) according to the requirements of ISO/IEC17011 and EA KPIs. The assessment was conducted by Dr Arne Soerensen from DANAK during the period of 17-21 July, 2005. The evaluation took the form of discussion with JAC staff, evaluation of the quality management system, QMS documentation, policies and procedures and the observation of a real assessment conducted by JAC assessors. The evaluation discussed the management of JAC, JAC integrity and impartiality, the accreditation and surveillance procedures, appointment and qualification of JAC assessors, etc.

In his report, Dr Soerensen mentioned that JAC is a well organised accreditation body with a well trained staff and assessors. He also reported that its ISO/IEC 17011 QMS is implemented. He also encouraged JAC to proceed in its efforts to be internationally recognised.

Department of Standards, Malaysia (DSM)

Expansion of Laboratory Accreditation Scheme of Malaysia (SAMM) in the field of Veterinary Testing

The Department of Standards Malaysia (DSM) operates two accreditation schemes as follows — Skim Akreditasi Makmal Malaysia (SAMM) or Laboratory Accreditation Scheme of Malaysia and Accreditation of Certification Bodies (ACB) Scheme.

The SAMM scheme covers accreditation of both testing and calibration laboratories against the standard ISO/IEC 17025: 1999. Under this scheme, medical laboratories are accredited against the standard MS ISO 15189:2004. As of 31 August 2005, 205 testing laboratories and 47 calibration laboratories have been accredited under this scheme.

Efforts by DSM in expanding its SAMM scheme to cover accreditation of veterinary testing laboratories started in late 2003 as a response to the request from veterinary laboratories in the country. With the cooperation and support from the Department of Veterinary Services, Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry of Malaysia, a technical working group (TWG) was established to develop application document that would assist these laboratories in implementing the standard ISO/IEC 17025.

Upon the completion of all the preparatory works including the training of technical assessors, DSM officially launched the accreditation of Veterinary Testing Laboratories on 30 June 2005, which was officiated by the Secretary-General of Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation.

The scopes of accreditation in the field of Veterinary Testing are bacteriology, mycology, serology, virology, parasitology, pathology, molecular biology, clinical pathology, immunology, prions, chemistry, feed analysis and animal nutrition.

The accreditation standard for the field of Veterinary Testing is ISO/IEC 17025: 1999 and supplemented with an application document, Specific Technical Requirement for Accreditation of Veterinary Testing Laboratories (STR 1.4). It is anticipated that 50 government veterinary laboratories and 50 private laboratories in Malaysia will benefit from this accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025.

News from MAURITAS

In the context of the agreement signed between the **Mauritius Accreditation Service (MAURITAS) and the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS)** in December 2004, the following activities have so far been undertaken:

i) Short consultancy on Proficiency Testing, Measurement Uncertainty and Traceability
Under this activity, the procedures of MAURITAS have been assessed so as to be in line with international practice. A three-day workshop was also organised to assist around 50 laboratories from both the public and private sector to understand these specific technical issues.

ii) Attachment training
Under this activity, one MAURITAS Staff member was given the opportunity to attend a two-week training programme at SANAS to learn about both the administrative/managerial aspects as well as the technical aspects of laboratory accreditation. Opportunities to attend specialist technical committee meetings and participation as observer and as lead assessor in assessment of laboratories provided an invaluable and enriching experience to the staff member.

Under the twinning agreement signed between **MAURITAS and Norwegian Accreditation (NA)**, the following activities have been undertaken:

i) Development of accreditation scheme for certification bodies
Under certification body accreditation, MAURITAS is getting the assistance of NA for preparing the policy, procedure and guidance documents as well as the regulations in respect of Quality Management System (QMS), Environmental Management System (EMS) and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) schemes. These documents and regulations are the basis for the establishment of an accreditation system within MAURITAS for accreditation of Certification body. The certification body accreditation programme for MAURITAS will be launched shortly.

ii) Attachment training
The second activity carried out under the agreement between MAURITAS and NA is an attachment training of 9 days for one MAURITAS staff member at NA. During the training, the staff member was given the opportunity to attend meetings as well as to observe assessments of certification bodies.

The way forward
MAURITAS will very soon be embarking on the accreditation process of its laboratories and certification bodies.

Singapore Accreditation Council (SAC)

New Accreditation Scheme to Enhance Competency of Medical Laboratories in Singapore
Singapore medical laboratories can now enhance the credibility of their testing, all thanks to the launch of the SAC-CAP (Singapore Accreditation Council-College of American Pathologists) joint accreditation program at the SAC Awards Presentation 2005 on 31 August 2005.

From left: Mr Cedric Foo, Chairman of SPRING, congratulating Mr Lew Syn Pau, Chairman of SAC, on the successful launch of the SAC-CAP Joint Accreditation Programme for medical testing

The program will recognise medical laboratories which demonstrate capability and competence. In so doing, it aims to improve and maintain the standard of medical testing and related activities in Singapore, and facilitate the recognition of test results in other countries including the United States.

"The scheme gives accredited medical laboratories in Singapore greater recognition for their capability and competency, especially towards acceptance by

the US Food and Drug Administration," affirmed Mr Cedric Foo, Chairman, SPRING Singapore, who was guest-of-honour at the SAC Awards Presentation 2005. "It signifies yet another step ahead for our National Accreditation Programme, and in supporting Singapore as a biomedical hub, valued at S$11.3 billion worth of output in 2003."

The SAC-CAP accreditation enhances the credibility of the accredited laboratory by providing evidence that the laboratory has been assessed by an independent panel of specialists and is competent in the specific fields of testing.

Industry and users will benefit from the new program. For a start, it provides opportunities for continuous improvement in technical expertise through interaction and exchange of knowledge with other specialists. Users will have greater confidence in the test data provided, so that verification of the results will not be necessary, thus leading to savings in time and money.

SAC and CAP will assess the integrity, independence and technical competence of medical laboratories against criteria set in the CAP's Standards for Laboratory Accreditation; ISO 15189 *Medical Laboratories – Particular requirements for quality and competence*; and SAC-SINGLAS Medical Technical Notes 001 & 002 Series. Application for accreditation is on a voluntary basis and is open to all medical laboratories.

The SAC Accreditation Scheme for Medical Laboratories enhances technical competency and creates better market access

SWEDAC

Energy efficiency improvements save millions for manufacturing industries

About 124 Swedish industrial companies have so far signed up to the Government's energy efficiency improvement program, PFE. Introduced on 1st July last year, the program offers companies a 0,5 öre/kWh reduction in their energy tax on electricity in return for a commitment by the companies to improve their efficiency of energy use.

Companies at which the program is aimed are major users of electricity, mainly in the pulp and paper and forest products industries, accounting for a total electricity use of about 30 TWh/year. In addition to their reduced energy costs, it is estimated that the companies that have so far joined the program will save about SEK 140 million/year through reduced taxation, says Mikael Åberg, in charge of the PFE project at the National Energy Agency.

Participation in the program commits companies to improving their efficiency of energy use over a five-year period, including adoption of a certified energy management system. Systems will be certified against the new SS 62 77 50 standard, which is very similar to SS-EN ISO 14001. No certification bodies have as yet been accredited by SWEDAC for certification of energy management systems. However, about six have expressed interest in the work, and it is expected that the first accreditations will be issued by the end of the summer.

Time to start work on emission reports

It is important that companies affected by the EU emissions trading system, which started on 1st January this year, should get down to preparing their emission reports without further delay, says Lars Waldner, of SWEDAC's Certification Section. "If nothing is done until after the results for 2005 have been collected, neither the companies nor the certification bodies will be able to meet the timetable requirements", he says.

About 680 companies in Sweden - primarily in the energy sector, the oil industry and the pulp and paper industry - are affected by the system. Swedish implementation of the Emissions Trading Directive, which includes regulations from the Environment Protection Agency, makes stringent demands on quality assurance of emissions, as the emissions are regarded as tradeable quantities. With certain exceptions, the fuel analyses on which emission measurements are based must be carried out by accredited laboratories. In addition, the companies' emission reports must be verified by accredited auditors, ie. certification bodies. These reports must be submitted

to the Environment Protection Agency by 31st March each year. SWEDAC is at present performing the initial work for accreditation of the first auditors.

Many video displays certified to the TCO standard

About half of all video display units worldwide carry the well-known TCO approval symbol. SWEDAC has so far accredited seven test laboratories around the world for testing to the TCO standard, and is at present in process of accrediting a laboratory in China.

The initiative came from the Swedish Confederation of Professional Employees (TCO) at the beginning of the 1990s, when the Confederation wanted to ensure that the office equipment that its members were using was safe. "Since then, the TCO approval symbol has become almost a market requirement", says Arne Nilsson, Quality Manager at TCO Development, the organisation within the Confederation responsible for the marking scheme.

Six of the laboratories accredited by SWEDAC are independent test and certification laboratories, the seventh is a laboratory at Dell Computer in Austin, Texas, USA. "This does not give Dell the right to certify its own products, but the company has nevertheless elected to carry out its own tests in order to be sure that its products meet the requirements when they're subsequently tested by an independent laboratory", says Stefan Öman, of SWEDAC's Industry Section.

Certification for safer foods

In recent years, many large Swedish food manufacturers have introduced quality management programs to international standards. In order to increase interest among the smaller and medium-sized companies, and to assure good quality of the certifications, SWEDAC has taken the initiative to a Foodstuffs Forum network, consisting of about 25 representatives from the National Food Agency, local authorities, certification bodies, consultants, the food industry and retailers. Two workshops have been held, and work is continuing in smaller working parties, discussing such aspects as requirement profiles for consultants and certification bodies involved in the certification process.

HS Fishing tests our fishing waters

HS Fishing has been accredited by SWEDAC for various types of biological investigations, such as test fishing by electrical means, test fishing by net, bottom fauna sampling and water sampling. It carries out 20-30 jobs each year for companies, district councils and county councils who, for various reasons, want to investigate the quality of water in a lake, a river or the sea.

HS Fishing is a country-wide network that is part of the Rural Economy and Agricultural Societies (HS), consisting of about a dozen fishery consultants and biologists in Luleå, Umeå, Sundsvall and Växjö. It has existed and operated for several decades, but SWEDAC's accreditation has now given the organisation a more solid structure. "The quality of our fishing waters has certainly improved, but there are still major threats to the environment, such as the high mercury level in the Baltic", says Johan Linnér of HS Fishing in Luleå.

TUNAC

Total independence of TUNAC

In order to allow to TUNAC to act in an independent way and to have the financial and administrative autonomy in conformity to the new standard ISO 17011 and to the requirements of ILAC and IAF, the law of creation of the Tunisian Accreditation Council TUNAC 70-94 was amended by a new law. This law was adopted by the chamber of deputies on 27 September. With this law TUNAC will have the status of an EPNA (Public organisation with a non administrative character).

Arabic-cooperation for Accreditation

By the decision of the Arab industrial ministers, the meeting of "The high Arab Consultative Committee of Accreditation" was held in Tunis from 28–30 March 2005.

This meeting was organised by the support of the TUNAC and the AIDMO "Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization" and the participation of 13 representatives of different Arab countries. During this meeting, the participants approved the global common Arab strategy for accreditation aiming the creation of an Arabic organisation grouping the national Arab accreditation bodies in order to support and harmonise the accreditation activities in the Arab world. Discussions concerned also the structure and attributions of this organisation, and a sub committee was charged with elaborating a detailed vision of the "Arabic accreditation body". This proposition will be discussed at the next meeting of the committee.

A new training session for accreditation assessors in the nuclear field

In cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), from 6–10 June 2005, TUNAC organised a training session of accreditation assessors in the nuclear sector according to ISO/IEC 17025. Participants in this session represented more than 16 African countries working in fields related to nuclear testing and calibration.

Training of auditors and trainers of TUNAC

In July and September TUNAC organised training sessions for auditors and for trainers, the subjects of these training sessions were:

- The assessment of ISO 17025:2005;
- Training of assessors on ISO 17025:2005;
- The assessment of ISO 17020;
- Training of assessors on ISO 17020;
- Estimation and audit of measurement uncertainty;
- The validation of methods.

There were 50 participants in these training sessions.

Creation of a National Accreditation System in Ukraine

Sergiy Kazantsev, Head, National Accreditation Agency of Ukraine (NAAU) and Valerii Krasiuk, Head of informational -analytical department, NAAU

Technical barriers to trade can be removed by creating a clear and reliable system of mutual confidence in conformity assessment that is based on mutual recognition of the accreditation systems of conformity assessment bodies (CAB). For many countries, especially developing ones, creation of a national accreditation system according to the requirements of international and regional accreditation organisations with the possible subsequent joining to regional and international accreditation organisations can be a problem. Different approaches to principles of creation of the national accreditation systems can also be problematic.

The National Accreditation Agency of Ukraine (NAAU) was involved in works related to mutual recognition of the national accreditation systems at a regional level. Based on this work, and also NAAU's own experience of creation of the national accreditation system in Ukraine, NAAU determined principles and stages of creation of the accreditation system which can be recognised at the regional/international level. It allows necessary work to be done systematically, and progressively takes into account different levels of accreditation system development and availability. Stage-by-stage system creation is related also to a need for harmonisation of both legislation and the normative basis for accreditation in the different states.

Principles of the accreditation system fulfilling international standards:

- availability of necessary legislation in accreditation field of CAB, which determines the CAB accreditation system in a country;
- availability of national or coordinating accreditation body, which has relevant authorities from the state to sign an agreement and to implement it practically in a country; (Note: Need for a coordinating body can arise in cases where more than one accreditation body exists in a country).
- availability of relevant infrastructure of the national accreditation system in a country (independent national accreditation body; accreditation Council; Technical accreditation Committee; the Commission on appeals; and other system elements);
- implementation of standards, which contains requirements to CABs and which are harmonised with relevant international standards;
- compliance of accreditation body to the international standards, which contains relevant requirements to accreditation bodies.(Note: It is not necessary to implement relevant standards as national for performance of the last item).

Stages of creation of the accreditation systems

Stage 1: availability of necessary legislation, which determines the accreditation system in a country.

At this stage a country should determine at legislative level the national accreditation system, in which all necessary elements should be defined: independent national accreditation body; accreditation Council; Technical accreditation committee; the Commission on appeals; and other necessary elements of the system. It might be necessary to amend the existing legislation or to pass new laws that regulate the accreditation sphere of CABs.

Stage 2: availability of independent national accreditation body, which has relevant authorities from the state to sign an agreement and to implement the system.

On the basis of legislation in the accreditation field (as it is specified in stage 1) the country should create an independent national accreditation body, which would have authorities to sign agreements and to implement the system practically in a country.

Note: The accreditation body is considered as independent, if it is not engaged in activity that puts under doubt accreditation results; is not related to bodies, which are CABs, that work in the certification or standardisation sphere; has necessary rights and duties, which correspond to its activity sphere.

Stage 3: availability of the national accreditation system in a country (independent national accreditation body; accreditation Council; Technical accreditation committee; Commission on appeals; and other system elements).

On the basis of legislation in accreditation field (as it is specified at Stage 1) a country should create the national accreditation system, in which all above elements function.

Stage 4: implementation of standards, which contain requirements for conformity assessment bodies and are harmonised with relevant international standards.

In the national system it is necessary to implement standards, which are harmonised with ISO/IEC 17020, ISO/IEC 17025-2001, EN 45011, EN 45012, ISO/IEC Guide 66 or with standards which can replace the above-listed, in the future.

Stage 5: compliance of accreditation body to standards, which contains relevant requirements to accreditation bodies.

Compliance is determined on the basis of assessment by international accreditation organisations.

Note: The international standard, which contains necessary requirements to accreditation bodies, is ISO/IEC FDIS 17011.

Implementation of these five stages of creation of the national accreditation system will allow the national body to be recognised by regional accreditation organisations, and also by international organisations (IAF, ILAC) by signing relevant MLAs.

Adopted Resolutions of the Ninth ILAC General Assembly Auckland, New Zealand 18 and 20 September 2005

ILAC Resolution GA 9.01
The General Assembly accepts the Minutes of its eighth meeting, held 10 & 12 October 2004 in Cape Town, as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.02
The General Assembly welcomes the following new signatories to the ILAC Arrangement:
- Organismo Argentino de Acreditacion (OAA), Argentina—Testing and Calibration
- National Laboratories Accreditation Bureau (NLAB), Egypt—Testing and Calibration
- Polish Centre for Accreditation (PCA), Poland—Testing & Calibration
- International Accreditation Service, Inc (IAS), USA —Extension of scope to include Calibration
- National Accreditation Body of Republica de Cuba (ONARC), Cuba—Testing & Calibration

ILAC Resolution GA 9.03
The General Assembly welcomes the following Associates:
- Association of Analytical Centers "Analitica" (AAC Analitica), Russian Federation
- Moroccan Committee of Accreditation (MCA), Morocco
- Office Luxembourgeois d'Accreditation et de Surveillance (OLAS), Luxembourg
- Dubai Municipality – Accreditation Centre (DAC), United Arab Emirates
- Canadian Association for Environmental Analytical Laboratories (CAEAL), Canada

ILAC Resolution GA 9.04
The General Assembly welcomes the following Regional Cooperation Body:
- Central Asian Cooperation on Metrology Accreditation and Quality (CAC-MAS-Q)

ILAC Resolution GA 9.05
The General Assembly ratifies the Executive Committee decision to admit the following organisations as Affiliates:
- Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MNCCI), Mongolia
- National Body on Accreditation of Georgia (NBA), Georgia
- Kenya Accreditation Service (KENAS), Kenya

ILAC Resolution GA 9.06
The General Assembly accepts the report of the Finance and Audit Committee.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.07
The General Assembly accepts the audited financial accounts for 2004.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.08
The General Assembly notes the financial report for the period 1 January 2005 to 31 July 2005.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.09
The General Assembly approves the 2006 Budget, as submitted by the ILAC Treasurer.

Executive Committee

ILAC Resolution GA 9.10
The General Assembly resolves that the A-series documents (A1, A2 and A3) be updated to reference ISO/IEC 17011, for implementation by 1 January 2006 without the comment period.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.11
The General Assembly resolves that a common procedure for selecting venues and hosting of future IAF-ILAC Annual Meetings be jointly established with IAF by June 2006.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.12
Taking into account the current wide use of ILAC G13, and the need for a future Standard to be a suitable common base for accreditation of PT providers in all sectors by ILAC Members, the General Assembly endorses ILAC requesting an urgent revision of ISO/IEC Guide 43 Part 1 & 2 by ISO/CASCO and its conversion into a Standard.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.13
While awaiting the availability of a replacement Standard for ISO/IEC Guide 43, and noting the global use of many PT programs, the General Assembly recognises the need for its Members to use harmonised requirements for the

accreditation of PT Providers and endorses the use of ILAC G13 and ISO/IEC Guide 43 as the base criteria for such accreditations.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.14
The General Assembly endorses a review of the text of ILAC G13, while ISO/IEC Guide 43 is being revised/ replaced.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.15
The ILAC General Assembly resolves that the rules for use of the ILAC MRA mark should be amended to allow sub-licensees to use the laboratory combined MRA mark on calibration certificates and test reports, pre-printed letterhead, quotations for work, advertisements, websites and other documents.

Joint Working Groups

ILAC Resolution GA 9.16
Joint Working Group on Communications — The General Assembly resolves to establish a Joint Working Group with IAF for communications and marketing of issues of common interest and further resolves that the respective Chairs of the IAF and ILAC Communications and Marketing Committees, together with those from the Regional Accreditation Groups and a member representing unaffiliated bodies, should prepare draft Terms of Reference and a proposed constitution to be considered by the Executive Committee at its first meeting in 2006.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.17
Joint Management of the MLA-MRA — The General Assembly resolves:

- to recommend to IAF to hold joint meetings of the IAF MLA MC and ILAC AMC, with support by the Secretariats of both the IAF MLA MC and ILAC AMC, to consider evaluations with regard to regional MLA/MRA groups/unaffiliated accreditation bodies for the MLMRA on inspection body accreditation (once operational) and to develop a single recommendation for the IAF MLA Group and the ILAC Arrangement Council for inspection body accreditation signatories;
- to recommend to IAF to hold joint meetings of the IAF MLA Group and ILAC Arrangement Council for decisions (by the IAF MLA Group and the ILAC Arrangement Council) on signatories for the MLMRA on inspection body accreditation (once operational) and unaffiliated accreditation bodies;
- to recommend to IAF to hold joint meetings of the IAF MLA MC and ILAC AMC, for the organization and planning of peer evaluations (regional and unaffiliated accreditation bodies) for accreditation of other conformity assessment bodies where there are common activities, and to jointly consider common elements of evaluation reports from such evaluations.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.18
Inspection MLMRA — The General Assembly, acting on the recommendation of the JCCC, resolves to proceed with a global Multilateral Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MLMRA) for inspection jointly with IAF.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.19
Inspection MLMRA - The General Assembly, acting on the recommendation of the JCCC, resolves to encourage the JWG for Inspection to reach consensus on the technical issues under debate and looks forward to a resolution of these matters at the Cancun meeting, November 2006.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.20
Inspection MLMRA — The General Assembly, acting on the recommendation of the JCCC, resolves that the draft of the IAF-ILAC MLMRA Inspection text, be circulated to all ILAC Members for 60 day comment.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.21
Inspection Body Fees — The General Assembly, acting on the recommendation of the JCCC, resolves that the fee structure for accreditation of Inspection bodies would be introduced into the budgets of ILAC and IAF for the calendar year following the start of the process of implementing the IAF-ILAC MLMRA for Inspection.

Joint Development Support Committee

ILAC Resolution GA 9.22
The General Assembly encourages the Joint Committee on Coordination of Technical Assistance to Developing Countries in Metrology, Accreditation and Standardization (JCDCMAS) to build relationships with appropriate donor organisations in order to best use the resources available within the JCDCMAS members for the benefit of developing countries seeking to implement and strengthen their capacity in standards, accreditation, conformity assessment and metrology.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.23
Noting the work of the Proficiency Testing Consultative Group (PTCG), the General Assembly strongly supports the work between the UNIDO representative, the PTCG Chair and the Joint Development Support Committee (JDSC) Chair, taking into consideration the needs of developing countries in proficiency testing activities.

Arrangement Committee

ILAC Resolution GA 9.24
The General Assembly agrees to revise ILAC P2 (evaluation of regional cooperations), and to consider the P2 revision as a supplement to A1, and only contain the additional requirements that are unique to ILAC members' activity.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.25
The General Assembly supports the ARC's development of a discussion paper that proposes processes to expand or extend the scope of the MRA into other areas, considering

also the following criteria for inclusion of a standard or other normative documents in the ILAC MRA.

1. Significant relevance to accreditation of laboratories/ inspection bodies and bodies involved in related activities.
2. Sufficient substance to enhance the recognition of competence.
3. Fulfils appropriate needs on an international basis.
4. Lack of inclusion poses threats to ILAC leadership in accreditation.
5. Complementary to or supportive of any of the other standards being currently used.
6. Does not dilute the substance of any existing standard under the ILAC MRA.
7. Document must be produced by an international consensus process (including all relevant interested parties).

ILAC Resolution GA 9.26
Following the European directive on in vitro diagnostics and the market need conveyed by JCTLM, the General Assembly resolves that the accreditation of medical reference measurement laboratories should be based on the requirements of ISO 15195 in combination with ISO/IEC 17025.

The General Assembly also requires the ILAC Executive to request ISO that ISO 15195 be revised, including, but not limited to, the need to have a normative reference to ISO/IEC 17025.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.27
The General Assembly resolves that accreditation of medical reference measurement laboratories using ISO 15195 in combination with ISO/IEC 17025 will be included under the current ILAC Arrangement, when appropriate procedures for this activity are developed and agreed by ILAC.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.28
Following 2004 ILAC GA resolutions 8.11 and 8.12 relating to accreditation of Reference Materials Producers, the General Assembly resolves that the accreditation to ISO Guide 34 in combination with ISO/IEC 17025 be included under the current ILAC arrangement when appropriate procedures for this activity are developed and agreed by ILAC.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.29
The General Assembly notes the approval of ILAC P9, ILAC Policy for Participation in National and International Proficiency Testing Activities and reaffirms that it become effective from January 1, 2006.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.30
The General Assembly resolves to allow a vote on the approval of the ARC draft of P3 (evaluation of unaffiliated bodies) without a comment period, because this draft is aligned with A2 as decided in an earlier ILAC resolution.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.31
The General Assembly resolves that all ILAC members shall have a cross-frontier accreditation policy in harmony with ILAC G 21. The requirements for this shall be included in the relevant P document as soon as possible.

Accreditation Committee

ILAC Resolution GA 9.32
The General Assembly reconfirms the transition period of two years for the implementation of ISO/IEC 17025:2005. By 1st June, 2007 all accreditation certificates, as defined and described in ISO/IEC 17011, of testing and calibration laboratories shall refer to the 2005 edition of ISO/IEC 17025. Such accreditation certificates shall be issued after proper assessment of the added and amended clauses of the International Standard. This assessment can be done during normal surveillance or reassessment activities or as a separate activity.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.33
Noting that the G-series documents ILAC G2:1994 and ILAC G4:1994 have been superseded by ILAC P10:2002 and ILAC G18:2002 respectively, the General Assembly resolves to withdraw G2 and G4.

General

ILAC Resolution GA 9.34
The General Assembly notes with appreciation the reports from and the close cooperation with the following international organisations:
- Bureau International des Poids et Mesures (BIPM)
- International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)
- International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) and ISO/CASCO
- Industry Cooperation for Standards and Conformity Assessment (ICSCA)
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

ILAC Resolution GA 9.35
The General Assembly expresses its appreciation for the excellent arrangements and support services provided by IANZ as host for the Ninth ILAC General Assembly and associated meetings, 12 to 20 September 2005, in Auckland, New Zealand.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.36
The General Assembly accepts with appreciation the invitation by entidad mexicana de acreditación a.c. (ema) to host the 2006 Annual Meetings in Cancun, Mexico, from 6 to 15 November, 2006.

ILAC Resolution GA 9.37
The General Assembly accepts with appreciation the invitation by JAS-ANZ and NATA to host the 2007 Annual Meetings in Australia.

The International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) is the principal international forum for the exchange of ideas and information on laboratory accreditation. Established in the late 1970s, ILAC membership has grown rapidly and includes representatives from the world's major **laboratory accreditation systems in Europe, Asia, North America, Australia, Africa and the Pacific. Countries that are developing their own laboratory** accreditation systems are also welcome to participate and contribute.

The following ILAC publications are available free of charge on the ILAC website at www.ilac.org, as at October 2005.

Brochures

The ILAC Arrangement
Why Use An Accredited Laboratory?
Why Become An Accredited Laboratory?
How Does Using an Accredited Laboratory Benefit Government & Regulators?
The Advantages of Being An Accredited Laboratory

Information Documents (I Series)

ILAC-I1:1994	Legal Liability in Testing
ILAC-I2:1994	Testing, Quality Assurance, Certification and Accreditation
ILAC-I3:1996	The Role of Testing and Laboratory Accreditation in International Trade
ILAC-I4:1996	Guidance Documents for the Preparation of Laboratory Quality Manuals

Guidance Documents (G Series)

ILAC-G3:1994	Guidelines for Training Courses for Assessors
ILAC-G7:1996	Accreditation Requirements and Operating Criteria for Horseracing Laboratories
ILAC-G8:1996	Guidelines on Assessment and Reporting of Compliance with Specification
ILAC-G9:2005	Guidelines for the Selection and Use of Reference Materials
ILAC-G10:1996	Harmonised Procedures for Surveillance & Reassessment of Accredited Laboratories
ILAC-G11:1998	Guidelines on Assessor Qualification and Competence
ILAC-G12:2000	Guidelines for the Requirements for the Competence of Reference Material Producers
ILAC-G13:2000	Guidelines for the Requirements for the Competence of Providers of Proficiency Testing Schemes
ILAC-G17:2002	Introducing the Concept of Uncertainty of Measurement in Testing in Association with the Application of the Standard ISO/IEC 17025
ILAC-G18:2002	The Scope of Accreditation and Consideration of Methods and Criteria for the Assessment of the Scope in Testing
ILAC-G19:2002	Guidelines for Forensic Science Laboratories
ILAC-G20:2002	Guidelines on Grading of Non-Conformities
ILAC-G21:2002	Cross Frontier Accreditation — Principles for Avoiding Duplication
ILAC-G22:2004	Use of Proficiency Testing as a Tool for Accreditation in Testing
ILAC-G23:2004	ILAC Evaluator Training Courses

Secretariat Documents (S Series)

ILAC-S1:2000	Guidelines for the Proposal, Drafting, Approval and Publication of ILAC Documents
ILAC-S2:2003	Rules
ILAC S3:2004	ILAC Strategic and Business Plan
ILAC S5:2005	ILAC Procedure for Disputes, Complaints and Appeals

Procedural Documents (P Series)

ILAC-P1:2003	ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Requirements for Evaluation of Accreditation Bodies by ILAC-recognised Regional Cooperations
ILAC-P2:2003	ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Procedures for the Evaluation of Regional Cooperation Bodies for the Purpose of Recognition
ILAC-P3:2003	ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Procedures for the Evaluation of Unaffiliated Bodies for the Purpose of Recognition
ILAC-P4:2003	ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Policy Statement ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Terms of Reference and Composition of the Arrangement Management Committee
ILAC-P5:2004	ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement)
ILAC-P6:2003	Application for Full Member Status
ILAC-P7:2003	ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Key performance Indicators (KPIs)
ILAC-P9:2005	ILAC Policy for Participation in National and International Proficiency Testing Activities
ILAC-P10:2002	ILAC Policy on Traceability of Measurement Results
ILAC-P11:2004	Monitoring Performance of ILAC Evaluators
ILAC-P12:2005	Harmonisation of ILAC Work with the Regions

Joint ILAC IAF Documents (A series)

IAF/ILAC A1:2005	IAF/ILAC MRAs: Evaluation of a Regional Group
IAF/ILAC A2:2005	IAF/ILAC MRAs: Evaluation of a Single Accreditation Body
IAF/ILAC A3:2005	IAF/ILAC MRAs: Key Performance Indicators
IAF/ILAC A4:2004	Guidance on the Application of ISO/IEC 17020