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ILAC Newsletter Issue 59 | April 2021



From the Chair

Chair



Thank you to all ILAC members, stakeholders, the secretariat and global partners for your efforts to promote accreditation in this last challenging Year.

I wish you all the best and success in good health for the coming year.

We are all adapting to the "new normal" including changes in work processes and management that are influenced by the digitization processes.

We have been required to do this in the past year. The changes in the work processes in the world require us to deal with new issues like ethics, compliance with labor laws and the definitions of intellectual property as part of our new way of work. The new, adapted leadership will require not only management skills but one that can and wants to lead change.

We must LEAD: Learn, Educate and Engage, Agile and Dare to take assessed risks and update our ways of assessments and evaluations.

We must continue to engage and develop the way we work together with our stakeholders.

To advertise the "new normal" to the public and businesses that rely on our accreditation system, we have to be sensitive and work with passion and compassion as changes are difficult for people. On the objective side, people often don't have the resources that they need for change and subjectively many feel comfortable in their current situation.

All of us around the globe have the same goal: "To promote Accreditation by qualified and competent organizations in a harmonized way for the benefit of the world "!

From the Secretariat

Secretariat Update April 2021

World Accreditation Day (WAD)

The theme for WAD 2021 is:
"Accreditation: Supporting the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)."

This year ILAC and IAF held a contest for the official poster for World Accreditation Day 2021 (#WAD2021). The winners of the contest are:

- In first place with a prize of USD1500, Irene González, Soledad Pacheco, and Denise Díaz from ENAC;
- In second place and awarded a prize of USD500, Japhet Tolosa-Celis (PAB);
- In third place and awarded a prize of USD500, Laura Uraine (IAS).

We would like to thank everyone who participated in this year's contest; we were thrilled by the quality of submissions received.



The final work on the promotional materials including the joint statement and the brochure is currently being completed by the IAF/ILAC JWG Communications and will be available from the IAF and ILAC websites in the near future. As in past years the templates for translating these WAD 2021 materials will also be made available for use by the members.

2021 - 2023 ILAC Executive Committee

The members of the 2021 - 2023 Executive Committee officially took up their roles on 1st January 2021:

ILAC Chair
Vice Chair
AMC Chair
ARC Chair
AIC Chair
IC Chair
MCC Chair
JDSC Chair
Laboratory Committee Chair

Etty Feller (ISRAC)
María Isabel López Martínez (ema)
Jennifer Evans (NATA)
Dana Leaman (NVLAP)
Erik Oehenschlaeger (DANAK)
Lorraine Turner (UKAS)
Verónica Ramírez (ema)
Sharonmae Shirley (JANAAC)
Jeff Gust (NCSLI) elected by the Laboratory Committee

AFRAC Representative
APAC Representative
ARAC Representative
EA Representative
IAAC Representative
SADCA Representative

Araya Fesseha
Trace McInturff
Amina Ahmed Mohammed
Andreas Steinhurst
Ferne Chaparro
Ronald (Ron) Josias

The first meeting of the ILAC Executive for 2021 was held on-line on 24 February 2021. The next ILAC Executive meetings are scheduled (on-line) for 19 May and 1 June 2021.

ILAC and COVID-19

Information on the ILAC response to the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be published on the ILAC website as required via [Latest ILAC News](#).

In particular IAF/ILAC-A1/A2: *Addendum 01/2021 – IAF/ILAC Approach to Remote Peer Evaluations of Regions and Single Accreditation Bodies during the COVID-19 Pandemic* has been published since the last edition of ILAC News. Published in January 2021 it aims to help maintain the harmonization of processes and the robustness of the IAF, ILAC and Regional peer evaluation systems.

This addendum to IAF/ILAC A1 and IAF/ILAC A2, which will remain in effect for the duration of the pandemic, provides policies for the role and conduct of remote peer evaluations and allows for a more flexible approach to remote witnessing activities during this period.

Decision to Establish a Single International Organisation for Accreditation

The contract for the IAF-ILAC Single Organization Project has been signed with the successful contractor: Dr.-Ing. Thomas Facklam Unternehmensberatung. Work on this project to establish the Single International Organisation for accreditation in accordance with the 2019 JGA Frankfurt Resolutions commenced on 1 March 2021.

The ILAC MRA

There are currently 103 signatories to the ILAC MRA representing 105 economies. The ILAC MRA covers recognition for accreditation in the areas of calibration (ISO/IEC 17025), testing (ISO/IEC 17025), medical testing (ISO 15189), inspection (ISO/IEC 17020), proficiency testing providers (ISO/IEC 17043) and reference material producers (ISO 17034). The list of signatories to the ILAC MRA is available from the [ILAC MRA Signatory Search](#).

The scope of recognition of the recognised regions to the ILAC MRA is available from <https://ilac.org/ilac-mra-and-signatories/recognised-regional-cooperation-bodies/>.

Information on the acceptance of calibration, testing and inspection results, programs provided by PTP and reference materials produced by RMP via the ILAC MRA is available from <https://ilac.org/ilac-mra-and-signatories/>.

The *ILAC MRA Annual Report 2020* will be published in May 2021.

All 103 accreditation bodies that are signatories to the ILAC MRA completed the [transition to the 2017 version of ISO/IEC 17011](#) by the November 2020 deadline.

The final reports on this transition process from the regional cooperation bodies were reviewed by the members of the ILAC AMC and IAF MLA MC (JMC) in December 2020 and confirmed this transition had been completed in accordance with the IAF/ILAC ISO/IEC 17011:2017 *Transition Plan* and the IAF/ILAC JGA resolutions: 2016 JGA Resolution Delhi Resolution 1 – *Transition to ISO/IEC 17011:2017* and 2017 JGA Vancouver Resolution 2 – *Implementation of transition to ISO/IEC 17011:2017*.

The reports from the regions on the [transition to ISO/IEC 17025:2017](#), as at the end of November 2020, were also reviewed by the members of the ILAC AMC in December 2020. These reports demonstrated good progress towards achieving the revised June 2021 deadline with 12 ABs confirming (as at 30 November 2020) that 100% of their laboratories accredited to ISO/IEC 17025 had transitioned to the 2017 version and a further 73 ABs confirming more than 75% had completed this transition.

The ILAC AMC Chair, Jennifer Evans, in particular thanked the regional MRA/MLA Committees for their extensive commitment and work in achieving these transition deadlines.

Case studies and research on the recognition of the ILAC MRA by governments and regulators are available from the [Public Sector Assurance website](#). The website is a collaborative initiative of the INetQI members and there are over 330 case studies, 90 research papers and 60 supporting materials available to view.

The [Business Benefits website](#) a reference website designed to demonstrate the monetary value of standards, conformity assessment and accreditation for businesses. The website represents another successful collaboration of the INetQI partners with over 95 case studies categorised into 6 areas of value. All of the case studies identify a clear financial benefit. The site also includes more than 75 research papers and contains a powerful filter that allows users to source information by standard, economy and sector.

Both the Public Sector Assurance and the Business Benefits websites have recently had upgrades to improve the search capabilities including a dedicated search function for each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Work is now in progress to link the case studies on these sites to applicable goals in preparation for World Accreditation Day which will highlight the role accreditation has in implementing these goals.

ILAC Meetings

The ILAC and joint IAF/ILAC Committee meetings are continuing to be held on-line.

The ILAC Executive as well as the Joint IAF MLA and ILAC MRA Management (JMC) and Joint Marketing and Communications Committees have all met on-line in the past three months.

In addition, the ILAC AIC, ARC and Inspection Committees and the Joint ILAC/IAF Development Support Committee meetings are being held as part of the on-line mid-term IAF/ILAC meetings currently in progress

throughout late April/early May. The online platform, registration processes and management of these meetings is being provided by Say Something Communications.

The 2021 ILAC-IAF Annual Meetings are currently scheduled to be held at the Westin Hotel, Montréal, Canada on 28 October - 6 November 2021. A decision will be made in the next month as to whether these meetings will remain as on-site meetings or transferred to on-line meetings.

The ILAC Committees and Working Groups continue to carry out the activities on their work plans via email and virtual meetings.

Information on future meetings and events can also be found in the [ILAC Calendar](#).

ILAC Membership

The ILAC membership as at 21 April 2021 is:

- 103 Full Members (signatories to the ILAC MRA) representing 105 economies;
- 13 Associates representing 19 economies;
- 8 Affiliates representing 12 economies;
- 22 Stakeholders;
- 6 Regional Cooperation Bodies (includes 5 Recognised Regional Cooperation Bodies)

The ILAC membership consists of 152 organisations from 128 different economies worldwide. Over 81,700 laboratories, 12,200 inspection bodies, 500 PTP and 200 RMP are accredited by the ILAC Full Members (signatories to the ILAC MRA). The latest statistics and graphs on the number of accreditation bodies, accredited laboratories, inspection bodies, PTPs and RMP are available from the [ILAC Facts & Figures page](#).

ILAC Liaisons and other International Activities

ILAC continues to carry out regular liaison activities with our international partners, participating in both the routine meetings that underpin these relationships as well as relevant ad hoc events that are scheduled. ILAC's liaison representatives are continuing to represent ILAC this year via on-line meetings.

The current list of ILAC liaison activities includes:

ILAC Liaisons with ISO and ISO/CASCO Policy Committees:

- ISO-IAF-ILAC JSG (Joint Strategic Group)
- ISO/CASCO Plenary
- ISO/CASCO CPC (Chairman's Policy Committee)
- ISO/CASCO STAR (Strategic Alliance and Regulatory Group)
- ISO/CASCO TIG (Technical Interface Group)
-
- ISO TC 69/ SC6 (Application of statistical methods) ISO TC 212 Plenary (Clinical Laboratory Testing and In-Vitro Diagnostic Systems) and WG1 (ISO 15189 revision)
- ISO TC 272 WGs 1-5 (Forensic Sciences)
- ISO TC 276 WG2 (Biobanking)
- ISO TC 334 (Reference Materials - formerly ISO/REMCO)

ILAC Liaisons with ISO/CASCO Working Groups/Task Forces:

- ISO/CASCO CPC TG Future of CASCO Toolbox
- ISO/CASCO WG 56 Revision of Guide 60 - Code of Practice
- ISO/CASCO WG 57 Revision of ISO/IEC 17043

ILAC Liaisons with Other Organisations:

- BIPM-ILAC WG Bipartite
- BIPM-ILAC-ISO-OIML Quadripartite
- OIML-CS Management Committee (MC)
- CITAC Cooperation on International Traceability in Analytical Chemistry
- EUROLAB Conference
- IEC/IECEE International Electro-technical Commission (ILAC-IAF-IEC Steering Committee)
- INetQI International Network on Quality Infrastructure
- JCGM Joint Committee for Guides in Metrology Plenary and WGs 1 (GUM) and 2 (VIM)
- JCTLM Joint Committee on Traceability in Laboratory Medicine
- ITU International Telecommunication Union
- OECD Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
- WADA World Anti-Doping Agency

Information on ILAC's partnerships, including copies of communiqués, joint procedures, press releases and MoUs, is available from the [ILAC Partnerships page](#).

ILAC thanks all of the ILAC liaison officers, and their organisations, who volunteer their time to assist ILAC in carrying out these activities for the benefit of all ILAC members.

The [Liaison information](#) page, located in the member's area of the ILAC website, continues to serve as the main repository for the reports and documents produced as part of ILAC's liaison activities. ILAC members can also find copies of all ILAC comments submitted during ISO/CASCO ballots on international standards pertinent to the work of ILAC.

ILAC Secretariat Staff

The ILAC Secretariat welcomed Rebecca Sheehan to the team earlier this month as the ILAC Marketing and Communications Officer. Rebecca joins us with not only a wealth of marketing and communications experience, but also accreditation knowledge gained during her previous role at JAS-ANZ.

Stephanie Sun, the ILAC Project Officer will be taking maternity leave from July 2021.

The ILAC Secretariat staff currently includes: Annette Dever, Sharon Kelly, Stephanie Sun, Vanessa Oconer Muhi, Rebecca Sheehan, Rose De Rota (0.7 FTE), Hannah Yeoh (0.6 FTE), and Joelle Nicolas (0.8 FTE).



Follow [@ILAC_Official](#) on Twitter to receive the latest ILAC news, including information on meetings, events, liaison activities and new publications.

You can also [subscribe to the ILAC Newsletter](#) and to the [latest news](#) items to receive updates from ILAC.

International Updates

CASCO Plenary Meetings

Approximately 150 experts, representing 65 CASCO P-Members and 12 liaison organizations, participated in the virtual 2021 CASCO Plenary Meetings, held 28 – 29 January. Participating experts discussed the key outcomes from CASCO's policy and technical work deployed over the past year, as well as CASCO's strategic priorities and action plan for the future.

This year CASCO has embarked on the development of the 2022 – 2026 CASCO strategic objectives and in addition will undertake a strategic review of the organizational structure, to ensure that it adequately supports the fulfilment of future objectives.

A topic that triggered particular interest and lively discussions was the future of virtual meetings for CASCO policy and technical work, in the context of lessons learned from 2020. Recommendations were collected, which will help design the future for CASCO's delivery model.

Members reiterated the importance of continually engaging with members. As Reinaldo Figueiredo, CASCO Chair, noted, CASCO will continue holding regional dialogue sessions in 2021 to engage with members in various regions of the world. CASCO will also pursue collaborative opportunities with industry representatives and regulators through the Strategic Alliance and Regulatory Group (STAR), which published in 2020 the paper on "[Delivering Supply Chain Confidence](#)", completing its work on *procurement* sector; and created a [dedicated online page](#), collecting STAR experience/resources in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. STAR's future engagement plan will focus on topics related to *sustainability* and the *circular economy*.

On the technical side, CASCO has been pursuing its work remotely, with six active Working Groups (WGs) revising or developing new conformity assessment standards. The list of ongoing WGs administered by CASCO can be found here: [ISO - ISO/CASCO - Committee on conformity assessment](#).

ILAC-WADA Cooperation

Raw Data Integrity – Considerations for the Future

On 27 April 2021, WADA and ILAC held a joint webinar on the integrity of raw data.



The webinar focussed on the manipulation and subsequent tracing of raw data in a laboratory setting using a case study from WADA. It was presented by WADA staff and Forensic experts from the Criminal School of Lausanne University. The webinar reflected on the lessons learnt and how these may be applied in assessing and confirming the integrity of raw data in the future. The session concluded with a 30 minute Q&A led by the forensic experts and WADA Science panel.

The lessons learnt and principles used in investigating this case study will likely be applicable across many areas of laboratory and inspection activities, where raw data is generated.

The ILAC representatives were very pleased to be able to join with WADA to raise awareness of this topic amongst the ILAC community. This latest joint endeavour is another example of the successful and enduring collaboration between our organisations over nearly two decades.

ILAC-WADA Communiqué

The third ILAC-WADA Communiqué issued with respect to the ILAC-WADA cooperation regarding the WADA anti-doping laboratories was published on 1 April 2021. The Communiqué is for the attention of all accreditation bodies involved in the accreditation of WADA anti-doping laboratories in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025.

WADA anti-doping laboratories are required to maintain dual accreditation by demonstrating compliance with two international standards, namely:

- I. ISO/IEC 17025 General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories; and
- II. WADA's International Standard for Laboratories (ISL).

The ISL requires that the ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation of WADA anti-doping laboratories be granted by accreditation bodies (ABs) that are signatories to the ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA), and this accreditation serves as the prerequisite for WADA's laboratory accreditation.

The ILAC-WADA Communiqué provides comprehensive information on the roles and responsibilities, as agreed between ILAC and WADA, in regard to the sharing of information between WADA and any ILAC MRA Signatory AB

that accredits an anti-doping laboratory.

Access the full communiqué here: <https://ilac.org/about-ilac/partnerships/international-partners/wada/>

Regional Cooperations

News from ARAC

1. New ARAC associate member: Somalia

Substantial growth in the ARAC membership has been achieved following the acceptance of the Quality Department of the Ministry of Public Works, Housing and Reconstruction in Federal Republic of Somalia as ARAC Associate member.

This new membership was approved following a 30 day ballot and review by ARAC Executive Committee and ARAC General Assembly members.

ARAC now has a total of 21 members (13 Full members, 6 associate members and 2 stakeholder members) covering 19 Arab countries (Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates & Yemen).

2. ARAC Annual meetings 2020

After much planning, ARAC has held (very successfully) its eighth Annual Meetings. The conference was held virtually from the 5th October to the 9th November 2020. The program including committees and GA meetings was as follows:

- ARAC Technical Committee,
- ARAC Executive Committee,
- ARAC MLA Committee,
- ARAC MLA Group,
- ARAC Communication and Marketing Committee,
- ARAC Capacity Building Working Group,
- ARAC General Assembly.

Significant achievements were made at these meetings mainly the following:

- Schedule of the ARAC Peer Evaluation activities;
- Establishment of the ARAC Capacity Building program that will be implemented remotely by using the E-learning and Online;
- Progress made in the development of the new ARAC website and IT solutions that cover the following modules:
 - Document control process,
 - Peer evaluation process,
 - Peer Evaluators qualification process,
 - ARAC membership process,
 - E-learning and online training platform,
 - ARAC election process,
 - Endorsement process of ARAC GA resolutions.
- Decision to extend the ARAC MLA scope to cover the Accreditation of Conformity Assessment Bodies certifying the competence of persons;
- The endorsement by the General Assembly on a number of resolutions, the most outstanding of which is related to the change of the Full membership category, with the aim to encourage ARAC non signatories' Full members to apply for the ARAC MLA signatory status; and
- Election of the ARAC Executive Board members.

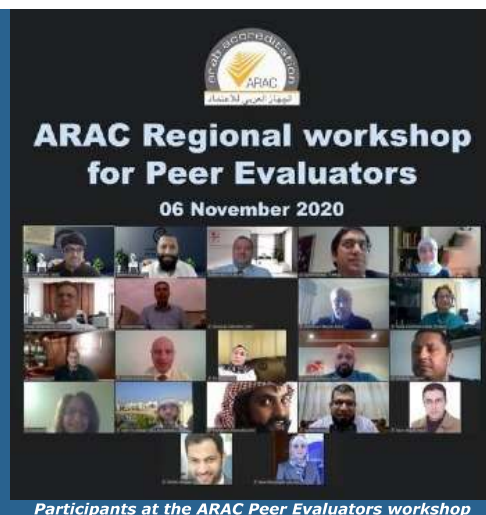
3. ARAC Regional Workshops

3.1 ARAC Peer Evaluators and MLA Group members online workshop

ARAC conducted its ARAC Peer Evaluators and MLA Group members workshop on the 6th November 2020 which covered mainly the following topics:

- Improvement opportunity for the ARAC Peer Evaluation process to boost the experience of the peer evaluators with peer evaluation issues including but not limited to the following:
 - i. Reporting on the follow-up of the findings raised during the pre-peer evaluations
 - ii. Discussion and grading (deliberation) of findings
 - iii. For new applications, identifying the issues where the TL/MLA Group members should decide to proceed with a Pre Evaluation visit
- How to ensure strong and flexible peer-evaluation systems to face the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic

The implementation of the new definition of the findings [NC and Comment] as stated by IAF/ILAC A3 and IAF/ILAC A1, and specifically how peer evaluators can evaluate the risk associated with each finding.



3.2 ARAC Peer Evaluators workshop on ARAC MLAG Policy and Procedure for Guiding Remote Peer Evaluations

Following the publication of the IAF/ILAC-A1/A2: Addendum 01/2021 (IAF/ILAC Approach to Remote Peer Evaluations of Regions and Single Accreditation Bodies during the COVID-19 Pandemic), a workshop for ARAC Peer evaluators was conducted on the 23rd and 24th March 2021 on the ARAC MLA Group guidance document "ARAC MLAG Policy and Procedure for Guiding Remote Peer Evaluations". This document sets the requirements and provides guidance for ARAC peer evaluators on how to plan, manage, and facilitate remote evaluations using Information and Communications Technology (ICT) as a complement or substitute to traditional evaluation techniques.

4. Establishment of ARAC E-learning platform

Taking into consideration the COVID-19 outbreak that reveals the benefits and the need for the e-trainings, ARAC established its first e-learning platform by accomplishing the materials of the first ARAC e-learning training course on new accreditation scheme development and risk based assessment approach for the Accreditation Bodies.

The main objectives of this e-learning course are as follows:

- Review key aspects of risk management,
- Recognize the risk based thinking in ISO/IEC 17011:2017 and the different accreditation standards,
- Provide a common understanding of the expected outcomes of the risk management process,
- Review the possible tools to confirm the compliance of the Accreditation Body ability to address risks and opportunities in its operation,
- Describe the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011:2017 with the viewpoint of what has to be demonstrated by an Accreditation Body for the establishment of new accreditation schemes.

5. ARAC PT programs

Since March 2020, and with the aim to enhance the measurement capability and traceability in countries and economies of the Arab region through an improved regional scientific infrastructure, the following proficiency testing (PT) programs have been implemented under the auspice of ARAC:

- ARAC PT 001 "Contaminants in Food: Trace elements (Arsenic, Cadmium, Copper, Cobalt, Fluoride, Iron, Lead, Molybdenum, Mercury, Manganese, Selenium, Total Sulphur, Zinc) in milk powder"
Hosted by the PT provider Global Proficiency. More than 75 laboratories from the Arab region participated in this program.
- ARAC PT 002 "SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) Molecular Proficiency Testing Program"
This program saw the participation of more than 50 clinical microbiology laboratories in the Arab region that perform microbiological analysis of clinical samples and provide an independent assessment of measurement quality. ARAC PT 002 aims to help participating laboratories:
 - add a level of quality assurance to improve accuracy and reliability of test results;
 - meet requirements for alternative performance assessment; and
 - assess their entire workflow from nucleic acid extraction through detection.
- ARAC PT 003: "Pesticides in Fruits and Vegetables"
Following the ARAC Technical Committee request to implement a third PT program on Pesticide in food, ARAC set out to determine the number of the laboratories that would participate in this program and types or classes of pesticides. Based on the feedback received the new ARAC PT 003 was established and a competent PT provider was selected to implement this PT program under the auspice of ARAC with the participation of more than 50 laboratories from the Arab region.

It should be highlighted that the results from participation by the ARAC AB accredited laboratories in the ARAC PT programs are used in the Peer evaluation process conducted by ARAC to help determine the compliance of ARAC ABs with ILAC/IAF A2 and ARAC applicable requirements. These PT programs will enhance the measurement capability and traceability of measurements in countries and economies of the Arab region through a better regional scientific infrastructure.

6. Signing of the head quarter agreement between ARAC and the Tunisian Government

Following the ARAC GA resolution number 2019/06 which related to the acceptance of the Tunisian Accreditation Council's (TUNAC) offer to host the ARAC Secretariat and the registration of ARAC as legal entity; the ARAC Chair and the Tunisian Ministry of Industry signed the head quarter agreement on 09th March 2021.

The signed head quarter agreement between ARAC and the Tunisian Government will be adopted as the legal framework for the registration of ARAC as legal entity in Tunisia pending approval by parliament.



Head quarter agreement signing ceremony

The contact details of ARAC Secretariat are:
ARAC Secretariat
Email : secretariat@arabarac.org
Tel: + 212 600 78 56 78
The new website address is: <http://www.arab-accreditation.org>

EA CSI News



Accreditation Model for Crime Scene Investigation

The European Network of Forensic Science Institutes' (ENFSI) AFORE project on Accreditation of Forensic Laboratories in Europe aims to support forensic science laboratories across the EU Member States in their move towards accreditation or the expansion of their scope.

The AFORE project's tasks are divided across a series of Work Packages. One of the many activities the AFORE project Work Package 2 (WP2) participants are involved in is the development of a European model for accreditation of crime scene investigation processes to meet the requirements of ISO/IEC 17020. As well as raising awareness of crime scene investigation processes progressing towards accreditation within the European Accreditation (EA) framework.

On the 22nd March 2021, EA held a seminar on 'Crime Scene Investigation Processes'. This was a joint initiative with ENFSI to promote Accreditation of Forensic Laboratories in Europe.

Six speakers from ENFSI shared their experience with almost 300 participants regarding crime scene investigation:

- Katri Matveinen, National Bureau of Investigation Forensic Laboratory (NBIFL), Finland;
- Monika Hilgert, Federal Criminal Police Office, Forensic Science Institute (BKA), Germany;
- Josita Limborgh, Netherlands Forensic Institute (NFI), The Netherlands;
- Fernando Viegas, Forensic Science Laboratory (LPC), Portugal;
- Tore Walstad, National Criminal Investigation Service (NCIS), Norway;
- Erika Skoogh, National Forensic Center (NFC), Sweden.

Jenni Harjuoja from the Finnish Accreditation Service (FINAS) moderated the event and the introductory speech was made by Orbay Evrensevidi from the Turkish Accreditation Agency (TURKAK), and Chair of the EA Inspection Committee.

The seminar aimed to provide a better understanding of the whole forensic process, including crime scene investigation (CSI) and laboratory activities (e.g. logistics, search for traces, different types of traces), the different roles of personnel conducting CSI (e.g. crime scene manager, scene of crime examiner, forensic scientist), principles and importance of CSI (such as documentation of the scene, identification of the crime, etc.), case studies, and the benefits of CSI accreditation.

We interviewed Jenni Harjuoja and Katri Matveinen for their thoughts on the seminar:

Jenni Harjuoja, you were at the origin of the EA/ENFSI workshop: What were the objectives of the workshop and would you say they have been reached?

The goal of this seminar was to promote awareness of this project, WP2, and also [educate] people involved in accreditation [on] CSI and [the] work they are doing. After that we are more aware of the whole and it's easier to understand and manage forthcoming assessments. At the moment, CSI activity is not widely accredited in Europe. So in this respect I would say that the seminar reached the preliminary objectives.

On the other hand [another] objective of this WP2 is to understand the current status of accreditation of CSI activities and what the relevant needs for developing accreditation in CSI are. For this purpose WP2 [developed] a survey last year however, results from this survey are not yet ready and therefore not presented in the seminar.

Accreditation is an important tool to minimize systematic errors and provide greater reliability and trust, and ensure or maintain confidence and competence. It can help secure chain of evidence throughout the forensic process, regardless of which part of the chain the evidence is in, and improve conditions for results on the entire forensic process to work according to the same quality requirements. It also provides for greater reliability in sharing or using forensic results within investigation or between countries.

Katri Matveinen, the AFORE project illustrates the good cooperation between ENFSI and EA, reflecting also the growing confidence puts in accreditation in the field of CSI. What does it mean concretely in the activities of CSI people?

I think activities have a connection to a quality management system of CSI based on the requirements set by the international standards ISO/IEC 17020 (Conformity assessment — Requirements for the operation of various

types of bodies performing inspection) and ISO/IEC 17025 (General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories).

Concrete activities include e.g.:

- competence of staff is controlled;
- clearly defined responsibilities of staff, and working practices;
- equipment and test methods are validated and appropriate quality assurance procedures are in place;
- consumables are tested fit for purpose in a systematic way;
- risk of contamination has been taken into consideration during the entire process;
- monitoring of quality of CSI at the scene;
- use of collaborative exercises or proficiency tests;
- identification and analysis of non-conformities as well as carrying out corrective/preventive actions; and
- traceable chain of custody of samples, documentation of crime scene investigation, and records.

Finally Jenni, how do you see accreditation developments in the CSI field? Is there anything that EA should be doing to support closer cooperation in your view?

There are requirements for accreditation at [the] EU level (Council Framework Decision 2009/905/JHA). Therefore some forensic services – sensitive personal data as DNA-profiles and dactyloscopic data (for example fingerprints) are already under accreditation (testing). It would be good to have also the sampling of these samples under accreditation and have more trust in the result of DNA and fingerprints. That is why we should develop accreditation of CSI activity. Actually there are no requirements for accreditation of CSI activities, it means it will all be based on voluntariness. Raising awareness on the importance of accreditation, developing training and education on how accreditation could support CSI processes would help in this regard. When the activity increase in accreditation we will also need to harmonize practices at EA level.

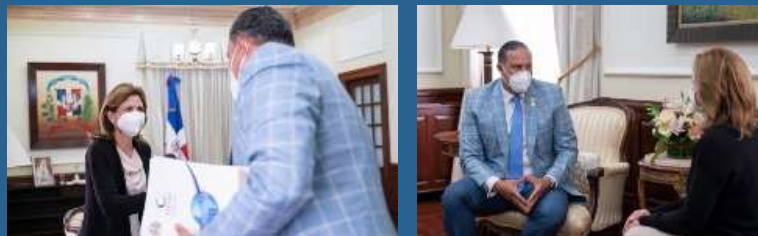
Accreditation Updates

ODAC

Accreditation in Product and Health Sectors in the Dominican Republic

ODAC shows its commitment to strengthening the Dominican Quality System, emphasizing importance of accreditation in Product and Health Sectors in the Dominican Republic

The Vice President of the Dominican Republic Raquel Peña received at her office the Executive Director of the Dominican Accreditation Body (ODAC) Angel David Taveras Difo, to discuss the importance of accreditation for the Product and Health sectors in the Dominican Republic (DR).



At the meeting, Raquel Peña showed interest in the issue of accreditation as an important support for local producers in their national and international development. Taveras Difo explained that ODAC is making efforts so the country's products and services have the highest quality standards and are competitive in international commerce.

"The mutual recognition agreements have a significant impact on the development of the product sector in the DR, which translates into benefits for the country," said Taveras Difo.

Visits

Following the meeting with the Vice President of the Dominican Republic, ODAC has been conducting visits to different institutions in the country with the aim of promoting accreditation in the country, highlighting thus:

- Accreditation as a pillar for strengthening the Dominican System for Quality (SIDOCAL), its importance for these sectors and the industry of the Dominican Republic.
- Benefits of accreditation.
- ODAC and its accreditation services.
- Importance of accreditation of Conformity Assessment Bodies in The Dominican Republic.

Santiago Aqueducts and Sewerage Corporation

Sanitago Aqueducts and Sewerage Corporation (Coraasan) is dedicated to the administration, operation and maintenance of the Aqueducts and Sewers of all the municipalities of the Santiago province. In the meeting, both directors discussed important issues of interest for their institutions.

The Technical Direction of ODAC presented its accreditation process to Coraasan.



Dominican Port Authority

Port Authority is a service institution linked to the logistics and transportation chain of the Dominican Republic. They control and administer the maritime ports of the Dominican Republic in a commercial sense. At the meeting, the Executive Director of ODAC, Angel David Taveras Difo, and a small technical group expressed, as a central topic, the development of the national quality to reduce technical barriers to international trade in the country.



Central Veterinary Laboratory

The Central Veterinary Laboratory (LAVECEN) is the national reference laboratory that supports the Agricultural Sector and the Public Health Ministry, specifically with the diagnosis of animal health and zoonotic diseases; quality control of food, forages, chemical residues in meats, fruits, and vegetables; and quality in agrochemical formulations, which support the different health programs in the Dominican Republic.

In order to formalize important accreditation projects in accordance with national and international standards, the Executive Director, Angel David Taveras Difo, suggested the signing of a support agreement that would allow LAVECEN's technical staff to become part of the ODAC body of evaluators and technical experts.

"It is necessary for the national production of goods and services to conform to international quality standards, with the application of technical regulations, accreditation and conformity assessment," declared the director of ODAC.

In commemoration of World Accreditation Day

ODAC has organised a webinar aimed at different stakeholders in order to promulgate what accreditation is, its impact in national and international commerce, and to enhance the accreditations granted by the ODAC as a seal of trust, competence, and quality.

At the same time, we would promulgate the contributions of accreditations in the strengthening of the Dominican System for Quality (SIDOCAL).

As an Accreditation Body we understand that if Conformity Assessment Bodies develop a culture of quality, competitiveness, quality, providing confidence to the population, we will have a better Dominican Republic for all.

More Details can be found in ODAC social networks

Webpage: www.odac.gob.do

Instagram: @ODACRD <https://www.instagram.com/odacrd/>

Twitter: @ODACRD <https://twitter.com/odacrd>

Facebook: <https://es-la.facebook.com/ODACRD/>

JAS-AU's Achievements During COVID-19



JAS-AU's Distinguished Activities During COVID-19 Pandemic

Following the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic across the globe, the Jordanian Accreditation System – Accreditation Unit (JAS-AU) recognized the importance of protecting the health of personnel while maintaining its essential operations and a plan was prepared outlining its core processes with defined responsibilities during this time.

Since March 2020, 50% of JAS-AU internal personnel are working from home. All accreditation activities were performed as usual with the exception of some onsite assessments. JAS-AU has however, learned from the experience of different regional and national accreditation bodies in conducting remote assessments and has considered the potential challenges.

This article sheds light on different activities performed during COVID-19 pandemic.

Technical committee work was conducted in a different way with online meetings replacing face-to-face meetings. The JAS-AU environment working group took the initiative to hold the first online meeting on 20 April 2020; another 12 online working group meetings were held during the pandemic to achieve the planned activities. New policies on air quality measurements and accreditation requirements for inspection bodies working in the field of lifting equipment and lifting accessories were prepared, several JAS-AU policies were amended based on recent ILAC policies, and general laboratory safety practices during the viral pandemic were added. Moreover, 12

assessor interviews were performed virtually in order to assess their technical competence. The opening meeting of the new formed technical committee for the years 2021-2022 was also held virtually on 13 January 2020 with the attendance of more than 50 participants. During this meeting, committee rules, achievements, and the 2021 plan were presented and discussed with the members.



2020 JAS-AU TC WG Online Meetings



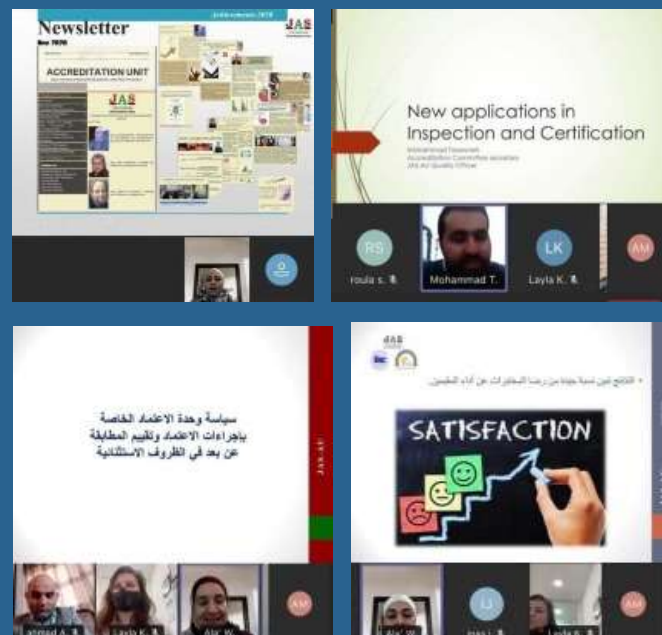
JAS-AU Technical Committee Opening Meeting



JAS-AU Technical Committee Formulation for the years 2021-2022

New applicant conformity assessment bodies were also able to sign their contracts and begin the accreditation process online.

The annual refresher session for technical assessors and experts was also held virtually on 23 February 2021, where JAS-AU internal personnel presented the achieved goals and future plans focusing on extending the JAS-AU scope of work and international recognition framework to include accreditation of inspection and product certification bodies. JAS-AU's new policy on conducting remote assessments was presented and 12 remote assessments were performed on accredited laboratories for the purpose of confirming the accreditation scope. This applied policy is necessary for the execution of the annual assessment program with the time restrictions due to the partial lockdown imposed by the government, where travelling to some conformity assessment bodies is not an option. Challenges and suggested improvements were discussed with the assessors and experts.



2021 JAS-AU Refresher Session for Technical Assessors/Experts

In regional and international news, JAS-AU personnel participated in the virtual meetings held by the Arab Accreditation Cooperation (ARAC), ILAC, and IAF. They also participated in the Arab Food Safety and

Accreditation week during the period 6-10 June 2020 under the theme "Together towards enhancing the accreditation and food safety infrastructure to protect the consumer in the Arab region".



Participation of JAS-AU personnel in virtual regional and international meetings

JAS-AU personnel participated in the online European Accreditation (EA) training for the new version of the EA-2/17 M:2020 "EA Document on Accreditation for Notification Purposes" held on 03 December 2020 for representatives from different national accreditation bodies. They also participated in the virtual training session on ISO/IEC 17067:2013 held on 08-10 March 2021 to strengthen JAS-AU capabilities in accreditation of product certification bodies. Several examples on different product certification schemes were discussed with the participants.



Virtual Training Session on ISO/IEC 17067:2013

Moreover, JAS-AU personnel participated in a webinar on Business Continuity Management with the aim to prepare for, provide and maintain controls and capabilities for managing JAS-AU's overall ability to continue to operate during disruptions. The importance of business impact analysis and risk assessment, identifying business continuity strategies and solutions based on the outcomes, and evaluation of implemented plans and procedures for effectiveness were highlighted. Several scenarios and practices were presented and discussed with the participants.



And in order to protect the health of assessment team during upcoming onsite assessments, general safety instructions were prepared based on the instructions of the Jordanian Ministry of Health, and distributed to both conformity assessment bodies and assessment teams prior to each assessment. All parties shall adhere to the set requirements; any violation will result in stopping the assessment.



JAS-AU General Safety Instructions During COVID-19

Lastly, JAS-AU personnel participated in improving the national platform "Bekhedmetkom" by listing the Frequently Asked Questions JAS-AU receives about their services. Questions and answers constitute a common understanding and harmonize different parties interested in JAS-AU activities.

In summary, JAS-AU took advantage of the COVID-19 pandemic to develop its management system and plans in order to fulfil the needs of its conformity assessment bodies and expectations of related bodies while protecting the health of all personnel.

A2LA Welcomes New Board of Directors Members and New Vice Chair

January 28, 2021, Frederick, MD – Members of the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA) have elected and approved two new individuals to A2LA's Board of Directors for terms beginning 1 January, 2021. Mike Carter, CEO of Western Energy Support and Technology (WEST), is an accomplished executive with over 29 years of experience in flow measurement and calibration. William Troy, a retired three-star Lieutenant General in the U.S. Army, is former CEO of the American Society for Quality, where he led a \$40 million budget for the global, 68,000-member non-profit organization. The Board of Directors has also appointed Robin Stombler, President of Auburn Health Strategies, as its new Vice Chair. Stombler's decades of experience working with the laboratory community, as well as her strategic and governmental perspective are invaluable to the A2LA board.

"We are honored to welcome these new individuals, and to continue our collaboration with Ms. Stombler in this new leadership role" said Lonnie Spires, A2LA President and CEO. "The knowledge and experience of our existing and newly elected board members is essential to support A2LA in its mission to provide independent, world-class accreditation programs that inspire confidence in the quality of services and acceptance of results from accredited organizations."

A2LA is governed by a volunteer board of directors, who use their leadership acumen and expertise in the accreditation field to guide the association's strategic vision. They are a small, agile team elected by A2LA members who work closely with the CEO and management to ensure A2LA's success and uphold their commitment to leadership in the field of accreditation.

About A2LA

A2LA, the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation, is dedicated to the formal recognition of competent testing and calibration laboratories, medical laboratories, biobanking facilities, inspection bodies, product certification bodies, proficiency testing providers, and reference material producers.

A2LA Recognized by FDA to Assess Testing Laboratories Under ASCA Pilot Program

November 24, 2020, Frederick, MD - A2LA is proud to announce that it has been granted ASCA Recognition by the FDA, making it among the first accreditation bodies accepted as a participant in the ASCA Pilot program. The ASCA Pilot is a cooperative program that relies on participation from accreditation bodies, testing laboratories, medical device manufacturers and FDA staff. Accreditation bodies like A2LA that meet the FDA's requirements for this new program are granted ASCA Recognition, enabling them to assess testing laboratories seeking ASCA accreditation to perform premarket testing for medical device companies. The Pilot is intended to enhance product reviewers' and device manufacturers' confidence in medical device testing, which in turn helps to ensure the widespread accessibility of safe and effective medical devices.

In addition to supporting the FDA's public health mission by providing increased confidence in testing results from ASCA-accredited testing laboratories, the ASCA Pilot is expected to reduce the burden of individual premarket submissions when manufacturers rely on testing completed by ASCA-accredited testing laboratories. The Pilot relies on international conformity assessment standards and a set of FDA-identified ASCA program specifications to create clear and consistently applied criteria for accreditation, which a limited number of qualified accreditation bodies will be recognized to assess. A2LA is among the largest and most trusted accreditation bodies in the United States and applied for ASCA Recognition at the first opportunity. A2LA's commitment to the value and broad applicability of third-party accreditation aligns closely with the FDA's goals in creating this program, and A2LA is eager to serve the medical device testing companies to which this new program applies.

"A2LA is recognized as a leader in the global accreditation industry. With that reputation to uphold, we continually seek opportunities to expand the services we are able to provide our customers and to find ways to serve our community." Said Terriane Kohr, Accreditation Supervisor at A2LA, and closely involved with this new program. "The launch of this new program and cooperation with the FDA is an exciting opportunity for us to realize both of these missions within the medical device field. It is an honor to be among the first accreditation bodies recognized by the FDA to offer assessment services under this Pilot program. We are looking forward to working closely with the FDA and testing laboratories in this endeavor to improve the efficiency of the premarket review process and instill increased confidence in testing results within the industry". In the coming weeks, A2LA will be issuing guidance on how to apply for accreditation to this program, and will be providing additional information for both laboratories seeking A2LA accreditation for the first time and those who are already accredited by A2LA and are interested in this new program. Details provided by the FDA on the ASCA Pilot are available here. For any questions about accreditation with A2LA, please call 301-644-3248 or use this link to reach out by email.

Accredia



Giuseppe Rossi

Coronavirus: Accredia accredits the first Italian laboratories tasked with research into the virus obtained by swab

The accreditation of medical testing and analysis laboratories according to international standards, strengthens the tools to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Accreditation has been obtained in Padova and Teramo, Italy, and has been recognized by the European Commission for its value.

The Laboratory of Microbiology and Virology of University Hospital of Padova, led by prof. Andrea Crisanti and the Laboratory of the Experimental Zooprophyllactic Institute of Abruzzo and Molise, in Teramo, are the first laboratories accredited by Accredia, the Italian Accreditation Body, for the research of Coronavirus in throat swabs. This is another important contribution of Accredia to the fight against the pandemic due to COVID-19.

The laboratories had to demonstrate that the test procedure conducted on the swab performed suitably in terms of sensitivity, specificity, repeatability and limit of determination, by undergoing the assessment tests conducted by Accredia's assessors, aimed at ascertaining competence, independence and the impartiality of the way the structures operate.

"Accreditation represents an additional guarantee both for the health of citizens, who can thus count on tests carried out with competence and reliability, and for the laboratory itself, which achieves a real rise in quality in terms of greater reputation" explained the President of Accredia, Giuseppe Rossi. "Thanks to the activities carried out by Accredia, government authorities can rationalize and simplify the controls on the health facilities that

provide these services”, continued Mr. Rossi. “It is for this reason that both at the national level, as happens in the Autonomous Province of Trento, and at [the] European level, as in France, the accreditation of medical laboratories according to the ISO 15189 standard is a mandatory requirement”.

Accreditation obtained by the laboratories provides for the verification, both in terms of conformity of the management system and the technical adequacy of the laboratory, of all the processes involved in research of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, with particular reference to the competence of the staff, validation of the diagnostic system used, sampling and transport, work areas, equipment, metrological traceability, quality assurance, interpretation and presentation of the results of the tests.

The European Commission has also recently expressed its opinion on the value of accreditation (Commission Recommendation (EU) 2020/1743 on the use of rapid antigen tests for the diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 infection, 23 Nov 2020) inviting Member States to use ISO 15189 accredited medical laboratories for the diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 infection, because these laboratories, the Recommendation reads, “meet high quality requirements” and accreditation guarantees that the laboratories “are subjected to periodic checks and meet the necessary quality and competence requirements”.

“We hope that in Italy, already a leading country in laboratory medicine”, concluded Mr. Rossi, “there may be other structures that choose the path of accreditation”.

AERSSC News

Accreditation Education Research & Scientific Services Centre Pvt. Ltd (AERSSC), is now a full member of ILAC.

AERSSC has become a signatory to the ILAC MRA for testing (ISO/IEC 17025) and medical testing (ISO 15189). AERSSC originally joined ILAC as an Affiliate member on 24 February 2012, then became an Associate member on 21 January 2017.

In continuation with the accreditation activity, a four day Quality Management System and Internal Auditor Course for ISO 15189:2012 was conducted by AERSSC from 12th–15th March 2021 at the recently accredited, National Public Health Laboratory, Kathmandu, Nepal. The 15 participants were mostly Medical Technologists, Virologists and Clinical Microbiologists.

Further, AERSSC will conduct its first remote assessments, assessing four Medical laboratories as per the AERSSC accreditation procedure and Guidance on Remote Assessments by Accreditation Bodies and the associated template, from 31st March – 4th April 2021. The Team Leader Prof. C.V. Anand, Academic Director Foundation for Quality (India) and Technical Assessor Dr. Usha Anand, Consultant BioChemist, Vasavi Laboratory Bangalore were selected for reassessment activity of the Samyak Diagnostic/Kathmandu Pathlab and Surveillance Assessment of Reliable Diagnostic Laboratory and the National Public Health Laboratory.

COFRAC: Accreditation in Gemmology

Gemmology: an exciting new field of accreditation for COFRAC

Gemmology is the science concerning natural and synthetic gemstone materials and, since February 2021, is also a new field of accreditation for Cofrac*!

The longest running laboratory of its kind, the French Gemmological Laboratory (LFG) is the only one to provide gemmological testing for all types of gems: diamonds, colored stones and pearls; with regard to their dimensions, internal characteristics, identity, shapes and colors. LFG delivers approx. 5000 reports and observes one million stones every year.



LFG does not evaluate the monetary value of gems but provides scientific evidence determining the authenticity and geographical origin of gem stones, which in turn, may be used for evaluation purposes. In order to affirm the scientific precision of its methods and gain recognition under an international framework, LFG sought accreditation with Cofrac. A new accreditation scheme was then developed, under the framework of the NF EN ISO/CEI 17025:2005 - General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories.

According to LFG, accreditation is synonymous with benefits, and provides a level of confidence in the precision of metrological measurements, of staff qualification, and equipment monitoring. In addition, LFG's accreditation enhances its reputation and consumer trust.

This new venture illustrates Cofrac's dynamism in developing new accreditation schemes that are not lacking in brilliance!

* Accreditation 1-6767, detailed list available on www.cofrac.fr.

** The French accreditation committee (Cofrac).

EIAC

EIAC launched accreditation schemes for hospitals and day surgery centers

The Emirates International Accreditation Centre (EIAC) has launched two new accreditation schemes for hospitals and day surgery centers. The purpose of these schemes is to ensure the provision of patients' safety and quality in healthcare services to the highest level. These schemes have been developed to align with the evolving healthcare needs and international best practices. The requirements include various aspects required to provide effective, efficient, safe and high-quality healthcare services.

The EIAC has received good response from the healthcare community in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and has already received applications and begun the accreditation process for three day surgery centers.

EIAC CEO elected as ARAC chair for two-year term

Ms. Amina Ahmed Mohammed Chief Executive Officer of EIAC was elected as chair of Arab Accreditation Cooperation (ARAC) for two-year term. This is her second term as ARAC chair. She was elected during the ARAC general assembly that was held virtually in November 2020.



EIAC extended cooperation with stakeholders

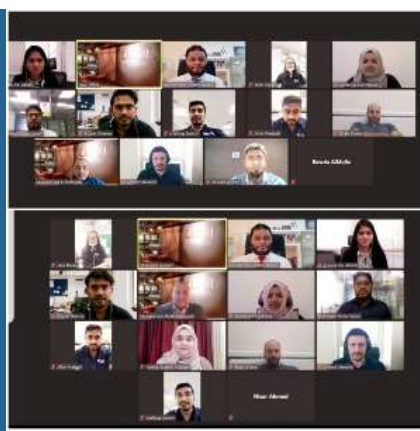
EIAC has signed Memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Ras Al Khaimah police in the presence of Major General Ali Abdullah Bin Alwan Al Nuaimi, Commander-in-Chief of Ras Al Khaimah police. Another MoU was signed with the UAE Telecom Company during the 40th GITEX Technology week in Dubai. This will enhance the cooperation between EIAC and stakeholders and build awareness among public sector organizations of accredited services and their application in various fields.



EIAC conducted webinars and online trainings

EIAC conducted various webinars and online training packages for conformity assessment bodies and other stakeholders.

The training includes ISO/IEC 17020 awareness training, ISO/IEC 17024 awareness training and remote assessment techniques. The webinars were conducted on various subjects including hospital accreditations, day surgery centers' accreditation and analysis on the extent of nonconformities. EIAC is planning to conduct various webinars and online training packages during the second and third quarter of 2021.



EIAC moved to new location

EIAC has moved its offices to Dubai World Trade Centre District in Dubai. The new EIAC office is located in the Offices 2 at One Central. The One Central is home to many important public and private sector entities in Dubai.



CNAS

CNAS Accreditation of Calibration Laboratories Facilitates Global Measurement Consistency

Accreditation and metrology are important aspects of the national and international quality infrastructure. While metrology is the measurement basis for accreditation and conformity assessment, accreditation provides support and confidence in measurement traceability. The China National Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment's (CNAS) accreditation scheme of calibration laboratories, established in 1997, has shaped China's National Quality Infrastructure and has facilitated the consistency of global measurement.

On World Accreditation Day, June 9 2020, Xiao Jianhua, CNAS Chief Executive, and Fang Xiang, Director of National Institute of Metrology, China (NIM) signed an MoU on technical cooperation which conforms to BIPM-OIML-ILAC-ISO Joint Declaration on Metrological Traceability and relevant policy on traceability. This will ensure the validity, credibility, comparability and acceptability of measurement results from accredited calibration and testing laboratories and inspection bodies, and promote the interconnection of national quality infrastructure.



Due to COVID-19, CNAS and Asia Pacific Metrology Programme (APMP) implemented remote peer reviews of NIM from August to November 2020. Nine APMP experts from the United States of America, Singapore, Japan and South Korea conducted the review via virtual meetings. The results ensure NIM's ability to keep its accredited scope in KCDB (key comparison database).

CNAS has set up a calibration committee, which is responsible for developing the criteria and technology of calibration laboratory accreditation and involves more than 30 representatives from government departments, associations, calibration laboratories and enterprises. Up to Dec 2020, there are 1416 calibration laboratories accredited by CNAS, with an annual growth of 12%. In May 2020, CNAS set up calibration laboratory accreditation department, which is specifically responsible for the accreditation of calibration laboratories and first-party electronic and electrical laboratories. During COVID-19, CNAS has conducted remote assessments for more than 300 calibration laboratories to ensure their transition for ISO/IEC 17025:2017 and maintenance of accredited scope.

In order to promote Gender Equality and include more women in Quality Infrastructure activity throughout Mexico, the Mexican Accreditation Body, ema has launched a new initiative, which invites women to collaborate in the activities of Metrology, standardization, accreditation and conformity assessment.



The group is made up of 97 professional women who lead and/or collaborate in government offices, laboratories, inspection and certification bodies, distinguished for their work within the Quality Infrastructure System in Mexico.

The main purpose of the group is to promote the integration of women and gender perspectives in the activities of Standardization, Metrology and Conformity Assessment.

This group of women is subdivided into 10 working groups. Some of the topics covered included: the gender perspective, data and statistics, liaison with the education sector, and synergy with the other 31 states in Mexico women's recognition subgroup.

On March 10, a meeting of the Group of Women of the Quality Infrastructure System was held, with the participation of more than 250 women from all over Mexico who were present to exchange experiences and knowledge.



RusAccreditation



1. Proficiency testing rounds

At the end of 2020 Russia launched a number of inter-laboratory comparison (ILC) proficiency testing rounds for various types of food products (canned meat products, fish fillets, chocolate, mineral waters), animal feed, mineral fertilizers, and cable products. Foreign laboratories, for example, from the Republic of Serbia, also take part in these proficiency testing rounds.

In 2020, 9 Russian laboratories took part in the ILC round on the determination of manganese and permanganate index in water, organized by the CAS-TWAS Center of Excellence on Water and Environment (CEWE), which is part of the Research Center for Environmental Sciences (RCEES) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS).

2. The VIIth All-Russian Congress of Assessors

In February the VIIth All-Russian Congress of Assessors organized by the Federal Service for Accreditation and the National Institute for Accreditation of RusAccreditation (NIAR) took place in Moscow. This year, due to the difficult epidemiological situation, the event was held online for the first time. The Congress was attended by about 400 participants, including more than 200 assessors.

Before the opening of the Congress the participants were addressed by the Chairman of the APAC Capacity Building Committee, Mr. Brahim Houla. He outlined the main challenges for the accreditation sphere and the expert community in the context of a pandemic, and also noted the participation of RusAccreditation in the preparation of APAC educational courses in Russian.



The speakers were representatives of the accreditation bodies of India, China, the USA, Moldova, Serbia, highlighting such topical issues as accreditation of greenhouse gas validation and verification bodies, medical laboratories, remote assessment and work in a pandemic, experience in conducting witness assessment during accreditation procedures, an overview of the requirements of ISO / IEC 17025: 2017, Section 7.11, Data and Information Management.



3. The All-Russian Forum of Accredited CABs

In March the All-Russian Forum of Accredited CABs was held in Moscow - the main annual event of the national accreditation system. The event was held by the Federal Service for Accreditation in cooperation with NIAR. During the Forum issues of digital transformation of the national accreditation system and development of the economy of trust; normative regulation in the field of conformity assessment and accreditation; international recognition of the results of conformity assessment; and the creation of barrier-free trade in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic were discussed. Among the key topics of the Forum were the development and modernization of the Russian laboratories. The event was held online for the first time. More than 10 thousand people from all regions of the country took part in the work of the Forum remotely.



Head of RusAccreditation, Nazariy Skrypnik, among the main effects of the introduction of digital technologies, noted the automation of the processes of providing services, minimizing the influence of the human factor, organizing effective interaction between the participants of the national accreditation system, ensuring the transparency of their activities, and increasing confidence in the results of assessing the conformity of products put into circulation on the market.

4. Interaction with participants in the national accreditation system in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the digital transformation of the Federal Service for Accreditation and led to a transition to new work formats. The service has worked out and implemented solutions for the use of video conferencing, developed a guidance for remote assessment, conducted a number of trainings and completely switched to electronic document management. As a result, applicants' expenses were reduced by 30% due to the absence of the need for assessors to travel to the place of business.

5. The National Institute for Accreditation of RusAccreditation (NIAR) resumed full-time training for attendees of educational programs

In September 2020, after a forced break caused by the risk of the spread of COVID-19, the training of attendees of educational programs resumed in full-time format. At the site of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, the opening ceremony of the full-time part of the training program "Practical issues of the activities of testing laboratories (centers). Accreditation criteria in the national accreditation system. General requirements for the competence of testing laboratories" was held.

Over the past two years, NIAR has been implementing a set of measures to form and maintain the competencies of all participants in the national accreditation system. The course dedicated to practical issues of testing laboratories was one of the first NIAR educational projects aimed at testing laboratory specialists. Today it is the most popular.



Along with full-time training, the implementation of remote education programs continues. In 2021, NIAR, with the support of RusAccreditation, developed new distance learning programs on the practical implementation of the requirements of the interstate standard GOST ISO/IEC 17025-2019 "General requirements for the competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories" (identical to the international standard ISO/IEC 17025:2017).

Stakeholder News

NPL: Measurement Uncertainty evaluation

by Maurice Cox, National Physical Laboratory, UK - EMUE Project Coordinator

Examples of Measurement Uncertainty Evaluation

Overview

[Project EMUE](#) provides a comprehensive set of worked examples illustrating how principles of *measurement uncertainty evaluation* can support documentary standards and guides. It is promoting uncertainty evaluation according to internationally recognized guides across broad disciplines of measurement. The project is delivering new or improved, adaptable examples of, and templates for uncertainty evaluation to the Joint Committee for Guides in Metrology (JCGM) as publishers of the internationally acknowledged *Guide to the expression of uncertainty in measurement (GUM)*. The project is also providing examples to ten standardization bodies that are specifically related to standards they are developing.

Objectives

The specific objectives are:

- To develop examples of measurement uncertainty evaluations capable of acting as template solutions that end users can use for related problems. Examples will include measurement model construction, application of uncertainty evaluation principles for addressing industrial conformity assessment, and taking correlations into account as requested by ISO/REMCO, the ISO committee concerned with reference materials.
- To derive worked examples of uncertainty analyses using the GUM and other methods to assist users to make informed choices on an appropriate uncertainty evaluation method to use. Examples will include an examination of the extent to which the GUM is appropriate for certain applications or whether the Monte Carlo methods of GUM Supplements 1 and 2, or Bayesian methods, have greater efficacy.
- To collaborate with JCGM/WG1 (the chief stakeholder), and the standardization, regulatory and accreditation communities (ISO, IEC, OIML, and ILAC) to ensure that the outputs of the project are aligned with their needs, communicated quickly, and in a form that can readily be incorporated into the JCGM Guides and other documents.

The project will extend current provisions by providing examples in areas that include:

- Calibration where the response and stimulus variables both have uncertainties (quality of life, fluid flow, etc.),
- Testing, including cases where repeated observations under the same conditions cannot readily be made because the process destroys the sample (destructive testing),
- Interlaboratory comparisons where a full account is to be taken of correlation effects (as can arise, for instance, in repeated measured values from the same participating laboratory),
- Tests of conformity to specification and regulation (air quality, doping control, etc.), with consideration of producer's and consumer's risks,
- Comparison of candidate measurement models (environment),
- Image quantification (in molecular radiotherapy and nanoparticle sizing, for example), and
- Metering of utilities (water, electricity, etc.).

Compendium of examples

A compendium containing the examples will be made freely available and will include worked examples covering the environment, energy, quality of life, and industry and society sectors. Moreover, examples will relate to the common metrological activities of calibration, testing, comparison, and conformity to regulation and specification. The final version of the compendium will include some 40 worked examples. The [current version](#), contains about 20 examples.

The images indicate some of the many applications to which the examples relate.

Project 17NRM05 EMUE has received funding from the [EMPIR programme](#) co-financed by the Participating States and from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme.

Eurachem: A year of operating 'virtually'

A year into the COVID-19 pandemic, and with travel restrictions still in place, Eurachem has settled into operating 'virtually'. The decision to host a virtual General Assembly in May last year seemed like a big step at the time. Although there is no true replacement for the networking opportunities provided by face-to-face meetings and workshops, it is encouraging that our planned activities have continued to progress.

A priority activity for Eurochem is the development and publication of authoritative guidance on topics relevant to both assuring the quality of analytical measurements and supporting their appropriate use. The EA-Eurolab-

Eurachem Proficiency Testing Working Group (EEE-PT WG) has recently published the 3rd edition of the popular guide on 'Selection, use and interpretation of proficiency testing (PT) schemes'. This new edition brings the guide up to date with standards and guidance documents that have been revised and developed since the 2nd edition was released in 2011. In particular, it aligns the guide with ISO 13528:2015 and with current guidance on developing a PT participation strategy and selecting the most appropriate PT schemes. The guide on 'Use of uncertainty information in compliance assessment' (developed by the joint Eurachem/CITAC Working Group on Measurement Uncertainty and Traceability) has also been revised. The 2nd edition is going through the final approval process and should be published shortly. In addition, in February, the Method Validation Working Group issued a leaflet highlighting '[The importance of method validation](#)'.

We actively encourage the translation of guidance documents. In the past year a number of translations of guides and leaflets have been published – see the [Eurachem News pages](#), <https://www.eurachem.org/index.php/news/newsarts> for past announcements

Unfortunately the ongoing uncertainty and travel restrictions associated with the pandemic mean that the General Assembly and associated workshop will once again be held online; organised by Eurachem-Czech Republic. A workshop on 'Trends and challenges in ensuring quality in analytical measurements' will be held on 17-19 May 2021. The 'virtual' General Assembly will follow on 20-21 May. The workshop will present and discuss experience with the revised ISO/IEC 17025:2017, current Eurachem activities in the field of analytical quality assurance, and future challenges from both research and practical perspectives. Registration is now open – see <http://eurachem2021.cz/> for further details.

Recently, the organisers took the difficult decision to once again postpone the 10th Eurachem Workshop on 'Proficiency Testing in analytical chemistry, microbiology and laboratory medicine' which was originally planned for October 2020. The workshop will now be held on 26-29 September 2022 in Windsor, UK. We hope that holding the workshop as a face-to-face event will make for a more useful and successful workshop for all the participants. Registration for this popular event is now open at <https://eurachem-pt2022.org/>.

There are a number of ways you can keep in touch with Eurachem activities. At the beginning of the year we launched a [LinkedIn](#) page. As mentioned in the last ILAC newsletter, we also have a [YouTube channel](#). To support the International Day of Women and Girls in Science on 11 February, we produced a short video in which some of the 24 women currently active in Eurachem talk about their roles, expertise and experience of Eurachem. Beyond providing recognition of the contribution of women scientists to the network, the video aims to show interesting perspectives for women and girls and to attract and encourage them to consider working in analytical sciences and with the Eurachem community.

If you prefer occasional email updates on Eurachem news, subscribe to our News mailing list – <https://www.eurachem.org/subscribe>. You can also follow us on Twitter @EurachemEurope.

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