



# News

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ILAC Newsletter Issue 58 | October 2020



## From the Chair

### Message from the Chair



Who remembers we had another, different, free life here. An uninhibited life that was full of flights and face to face meetings.

The pandemic has been with us for almost a year, since February 2020, and it seems that we need to learn to live with it. It is necessary to consider steps for changing the way we work to achieve our goals including examining the need for flights and physical meetings to various destinations around the world.

In this fragile and sensitive world, we continue to operate vigorously under the guidelines and restrictions in our economies, our regions and the global environment.

The partnership between the ABs and the regions has expanded and meetings have been held for joint learning as a way to deal with life in a pandemic.

Regions implement their policies and perform virtual meetings to make sure that their members follow the transition of ISO/IEC 17011:2017 that will end next month.

All ILAC members are reminded that we have information and promotional materials that can assist us in these times to work with our regulators, stakeholders and global companies that use the Accreditation system as part of their Quality infrastructure.

Accreditation with its emphasis on technical competence and impartiality ensures products and processes meet specified requirements and for the medical lab in particular, that the treatment for the patient is based on accurate and reliable results.

These results are often reliant on Reference materials that are now also covered by the ILAC MRA, as this MRA was extended in April this year to include the accreditation of reference material producers using ISO 17034. The information is available from [ilac-mra-and-signatories/](http://ilac-mra-and-signatories/).

Most of the Liaison activities continuing the promotion of accreditation and ILAC and to maintain the work with our MOU partners such as ISO, INetQI, OECD, ITU, BIPM, WADA and OIML have been carried out remotely this year.

All the liaisons information is available on the [ILAC website](http://ilac.org)

ILAC members will meet this year via a virtual ILAC GA on October 22, 2020.

Wishing you, your family, friends and colleagues good health.

## From the Secretariat

### Secretariat Update October 2020

#### ILAC and COVID-19

The ILAC Secretariat in conjunction with the Executive Committee continue to monitor advice from the international community to assess the developments and risks this pandemic presents for us as an association, for our members, and their accredited CABs. Most economies have imposed domestic and international travel restrictions that are impacting the way we all work. We note in particular the on-going commitment of our members to continue to provide a robust accreditation service via the use of remote assessment and evaluation activities to support the accredited conformity assessment community and those, such as regulators and consumers that rely on it.

Data from the regional cooperation bodies on the progress of the transition of accredited laboratories to the 2017 edition of ISO/IEC 17025 was reviewed by the ILAC AMC in May 2020. Given the impact of the global pandemic and subsequent health and safety measures adopted by most economies, the ILAC AMC recommended that an extension to the transition period from 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020 to 1st June 2021 was warranted to ensure all accreditation bodies and the accredited laboratories are able to achieve the remaining transitions under the restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. This recommendation was adopted via ballot in June 2020.

The ISO/ILAC ISO/IEC 17025:2017 Transition Communique available from [ilac.org/about-ilac/partnerships/international-partners/iso/](http://ilac.org/about-ilac/partnerships/international-partners/iso/) has been updated to reflect this extension to the transition period.

The transition policy published by ILAC and IAF in October 2017 requires all accreditation bodies that are signatories to the ILAC MRA and IAF MLA to have completed the transition to the 2017 version of ISO/IEC 17011 by November 2020. This transition period has not been extended and ILAC and IAF released a statement

detailed guidelines on the evaluation activities required to ensure all accreditation bodies will be able to achieve this transition in the remaining time. The statement is available from [ilac.org/publications-and-resources/joint-ilac-iaf-series/](https://ilac.org/publications-and-resources/joint-ilac-iaf-series/) and joint IAF-ILAC publications area of the IAF website.

Information on the ILAC response to the COVID-19 pandemic can be found on the ILAC website where new material and updates are regularly published under [Latest ILAC News](#).

The ILAC Secretariat staff wish all our members and colleagues strength and health as we all continue to operate in a global community affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Decision to Establish a Single International Organisation for Accreditation

The members of ILAC and IAF agreed, during the Joint General Assembly meeting on 29 October 2019, to adopt the resolutions shown below and then subsequently confirmed the adoption of these resolutions during the ILAC and IAF General Assemblies held on 30 October 2019.

**JGA Frankfurt Resolution 1 – Recommendation to Establish a Single International Accreditation Organisation (1):** *The Joint General Assembly endorses the recommendation of the Joint Executive Committee to establish a single international organisation for accreditation on the basis of the results of the "Survey In Support of the IAF 2020 – 2025 and ILAC 2021 – 2025 Strategic Plans".*

**JGA Frankfurt Resolution 2 – Recommendation to Establish a Single International Accreditation Organisation (2):** *The Joint General Assembly endorses the recommendation of the Joint Executive Committee to create a Steering Committee, reporting to the Joint Executive Committee, to lead the process to establish a single international organisation for accreditation. In this regard, a contractor will be engaged and the costs for the project will be shared equally by IAF and ILAC.*

The Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee for the establishment of a single international organisation for accreditation were adopted by the Joint Executive Committee (JEC) in May 2020.

The Steering Committee prepared a tender document for the selection of a contractor to assist IAF and ILAC in the establishment of a single international organisation for accreditation. The closing date for submission of proposals for the tender was 14 August 2020. The Steering Committee is currently reviewing the submissions received and it is expected the outcome of the review process will be available by late October 2020.

## The ILAC MRA

In April 2020, the ILAC MRA was extended to include the accreditation of reference material producers (RMP) using ISO 17034.

This latest extension of the ILAC MRA has been implemented as a result of the decision of the members of the ILAC Arrangement Council that endorsed the recommendation of the AMC to recognise the EA MLA for the accreditation of RMP. This was a result of the re-evaluation of EA I 2018/2019 that included the extension for RMP.

In addition, the recognition of the APAC MRA to the ILAC MRA has also been extended this year to include the accreditation of RMP using ISO 17034 following the 2019/2020 extra-ordinary evaluation of APAC for RMP.

As at 22 September 2020 there were 21 signatories to the ILAC MRA for the accreditation of RMP. The full list of signatories to the ILAC MRA and now including the signatories for the accreditation of RMP using ISO 17034, is available from [ilac.org/signatory-search/](https://ilac.org/signatory-search/).

As at 22 September 2020, there are **101 ILAC MRA signatories**, representing **103 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 *ILAC MRA Annual Report 2019* was published in May 2020 and is available from the [ILAC MRA and Signatories page](#). A single page infographic highlighting the key points from this Annual Report is also available from the [Publications](#) page.

Information on the acceptance of calibration, testing and inspection results, programs provided by PTPs and reference materials produced by RMPs via the ILAC MRA is available from [ilac-mra-and-signatories](#).

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 contains more than 330 case studies, 90 research papers and additional supporting material 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 and includes more than 100 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 filter that allows users to source information by standard, economy and sector.

## ILAC Meetings

The ILAC and IAF on-site 2020 Annual Meetings have been cancelled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ILAC GA will be held virtually on 22 October 2020 with voting carried out for all the elected Executive Committee positions and the resolutions prior to this on-line meeting.

The ILAC Executive as well as the Joint ILAC and IAF Executive, the IAF MLA and ILAC MRA Management and Joint Marketing and Communications committees have all met on-line in the past 6 months.



The IAF/ILAC 2021 on-site mid-year meetings have also been cancelled and will be replaced by virtual meetings as required. The 2021 ILAC-IAF Annual Meetings are currently scheduled to be held at the Westin Hotel, Montréal, Canada on 28 October - 6 November 2021.

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

ILAC membership as at 22 September 2020 was:

- 101 Full Members (signatories to the ILAC MRA) representing 103 economies;
- 14 Associates representing 20 economies;
- 9 Affiliates representing 13 economies;
- 23 Stakeholders;
- 6 Regional Cooperation Bodies (includes 5 Recognised Regional Cooperation Bodies)

The ILAC membership consists of 153 organisations from 128 different economies worldwide. Over 79,800 laboratories, more than 11,300 inspection bodies, 400 PTPs and 190 RMPs 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 and inspection bodies are available from the [ILAC Facts & Figures page](#). This information on the website will be updated to include the statistics for accredited reference material producers as the data is gathered from the ILAC Full Members who extend their signatory status to the ILAC MRA for the accreditation of RMP.

## ILAC Strategic Plan Progress Update

The ILAC Executive Committee continues to review the implementation of *ILAC-R3 ILAC Strategic Plan 2015-2020* and the actions detailed in *Supplement 1 to ILAC R3*.

The ILAC Strategic Plan also continues to be a standing item for each of the ILAC committees. ILAC-R3 can be downloaded from the [ILAC Publications and Resources section](#).

## 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 have continued to represent ILAC during 2020 with face to face meetings being replaced by on-line meetings as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. Participation via on-line meetings is continuing throughout the remainder of 2020.

The current list of ILAC liaison activities includes:

### ILAC Liaisons with ISO:

- 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 REMCO (Reference Materials Committee)
- 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)

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

- ISO/CASCO Common Elements WG 23
- ISO/CASCO WG 49 Revision of ISO/IEC 17000
- 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

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

Stephanie Sun returned from maternity leave in June 2020 to continue her role as Project Officer and Hannah Yeoh has extended her employment contract with ILAC to March 2021.

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](#).

[Subscribe to the latest news](#) to receive updates from ILAC members and liaisons.

## International Updates

### ILAC-WADA co-operation update

#### Covering activities from October 2019 to October 2020

##### WADA 2019 ISL-Assessors Training

Within the framework of cooperation between the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), a two-day training session was conducted by WADA for the International Standard for Laboratories (ISL, version 10.0) and its relevant Technical Documents (TDs) and Technical Letters (TL) on 17-18 October 2019. The participants included the laboratory assessors nominated by those Accreditation Bodies involved in the accreditation of the WADA anti-doping laboratories. The training session was kindly hosted by the German National Accreditation Body, DAkkS (Deutsche Akkreditierungsstelle GmbH) at its Headquarters in Berlin (Germany).

All 25 Accreditation Bodies that are involved in the assessment of WADA anti-doping laboratories were represented at the training session. In total, 40 participants were in attendance (including 4 invited speakers and 4 WADA staff), with a good balance of lead and technical assessors and sound equality in gender representation.





A two-day comprehensive training session incorporated a series of presentations and interactive discussions, including a review of several case studies.



(At the training)

The [List of WADA ISL-Trained Assessors](#) has been updated to include the participants in the WADA 2019 ISL assessors training session (the List is posted on the ILAC and WADA websites).

#### **ILAC-WADA Liaison Group Meeting**

The ILAC-WADA Liaison Group held its meeting on 26 October 2019. The Group reviewed and approved the final version of the [Guidelines for Harmonization of Scopes of Accreditation of WADA Laboratories \(ILAC-G29:06/2020 Guidelines\)](#) and discussed common laboratory assessment observations as well as areas for improvements.

The **ILAC-G29:06/2020 Guidelines** have been developed as a joint venture between ILAC and WADA and was published by ILAC in June 2020 (these Guidelines are accessible from both the ILAC and WADA websites). This document provides guidance on the formulation of the scopes of ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation for WADA anti-doping laboratories taking into account the specificities of the anti-doping field as well as the level of flexibility that should be granted to the WADA laboratories. These Guidelines are cross-referenced in the new version of the ISL (v.11.0) in relation to the flexible scope of accreditation.

#### **ISL - version 11.0.**

The new version of the ISL v.11.0 was approved by the WADA Executive Committee on 15 September 2020 and will come into effect from 1 January 2021.

#### **List of WADA-specific Analytical Testing Procedures**

This document specifies the methods that require WADA approval prior to implementation in the WADA anti-doping laboratories. It also provides guidance on the incorporation of these methods within the Laboratory's Scope of ISO/IEC 17025 Accreditation. The list of WADA-specific Analytical Testing Procedures has been made available to the Accreditation Bodies.

ILAC and WADA have been working together for over 16 years towards a common goal of harmonized and improved practices in the assessments of WADA anti-doping laboratories. The successful co-operation between ILAC and WADA has led to further strengthening the complementary accreditation activities (Accreditation Bodies at national level and WADA internationally) to ensure quality and excellence in the performance of the anti-doping laboratories worldwide.

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### **ISO CASCO work goes virtual**

Over the last few months, the ISO Committee on Conformity Assessment (ISO/CASCO) adapted its activities to the new context as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The *CASCO Week*, initially planned for January 2021 in Berlin, has been reorganized and moved to virtual mode. The series of CASCO meetings will take place remotely in the week of the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2021. The CASCO Workshop has however been cancelled. CASCO also refocused its overall engagement plan for 2020-2021. A series of virtual meetings between the CASCO Chair, Vice-Chair and Members' National Mirror Committees (NMCs) have been organized to maintain the dialogue, share information and identify concrete initiatives for CASCO to support the NMCs. So far, 6 calls have been organized covering 5 regions with about 30 experts taking part in this initiative, that is to be continued.

In May 2020, CASCO issued a [statement](#) on the COVID-19 pandemic and conformity assessment and the Strategic Alliance and Regulatory group (STAR) collected and shared the experience of its Members facing this new situation on a dedicated [ISO webpage](#).

The CASCO technical work continues in the virtual environment. Three Working Group (WG) meetings were successfully held over the past few months (WG55, WG56 and WG57) with a high level of attendance and excellent participation from the experts.

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## **Regional Cooperations**

IAAC meetings and more

IAAC beginning of the year meetings

During its last on-site meetings held in March 2020, IAAC members analyzed and made decisions regarding the COVID-19 outbreak and its potential impact for accreditation bodies and conformity assessment bodies in the region. The IAAC MLA Committee agreed that IAAC shall follow the recommendations of the current and future statements issued by IAF and ILAC and posted on their websites regarding the COVID-19 outbreak. The IAAC MLA Committee agreed that each Accreditation Body (AB) shall document how it will address the impact caused by the COVID-19 outbreak and the application of alternative assessment techniques to ensure the competence of accredited conformity assessment bodies. The IAAC MLA Committee also decided that the accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies shall document how they will address the impact caused by the COVID-19 outbreak and the application of alternative conformity assessment techniques, in compliance with the guidelines established by the Accreditation Body.

### The IAAC MLA Committee held 3 virtual meetings regarding the COVID-19 pandemic

The first virtual meeting was held in April 2020. Participants included AB members and representatives of ILAC, Inter-American Metrology System (SIM), and APAC. 70 representatives of ABs and Stakeholders participated in the meeting. The topics included exchange of experiences between ABs and Stakeholders regarding the pandemic. Accreditation Bodies and Stakeholder representatives presented the actions carried out by their organizations to address the impact of the COVID-19. A Guide to maintaining traceability during the COVID-19 pandemic was drafted and discussed. There was consensus to request ILAC to extend the deadline for the transition to the ISO/IEC 17025:2017 standard.

The second virtual meeting was held in May 2020 with 82 attendees from ABs and Stakeholders as well as representatives from SIM and PTB of Germany. There was an exchange of experiences between ABs presenting the actions carried out by their organizations to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The MD002 MLA procedure was revised to include remote peer evaluations.

The third virtual meeting held in June 2020 included 85 attendees from AB members and representatives of ILAC, SIM, and APAC. Accreditation Bodies presented the actions carried out by their organizations to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The MLAC drafted a Guide for remote peer evaluations. The MLAC created Working Groups to address the concepts of risk in peer evaluations, suitability of accreditation schemes and competence in peer evaluations.

### IAAC Peer Evaluators virtual forum

IAAC launched its 1st IAAC Peer evaluators virtual Forum in July 2020. 118 IAAC Peer Evaluators participated in the Zoom meeting. The Forum was organized by the MLAC and Peer Evaluator Management Subcommittee (PEMS) with support of the IAAC Secretariat. The meeting topics included an explanation of the roles and responsibilities of the IAAC PEMS, a presentation and discussion on the changes to the MD 002 MLA procedure which included remote peer evaluations and accreditation of flexible scopes. There was a presentation on a new Remote Peer Evaluation Guide. The Virtual Forum is a new way for IAAC to hold regular meetings with peer evaluators with the aim of harmonizing practices and keeping them updated on changes and developments.

### 25th IAAC General Assembly meetings

IAAC held its General Assembly annual meetings virtually, from August 12-21, 2020. 133 representatives from accreditation bodies and conformity assessment organizations in the region attended these IAAC meetings which is a new record of attendance. The week of meetings allowed the Certification, Inspection and Laboratories subcommittee members to exchange ideas and hold discussions about technical accreditation topics of interest to the region.



The MLA Committee discussed issues regarding the improvement of the MLA process within the context of the pandemic. We wish to thank the ILAC Chair, APAC MRA Chair, COPANT and SIM Secretaries, and other international representatives for their participation during the IAAC General Assembly.

## IAAC Membership

IAAC currently has a total of 61 members, 24 of which are full members, 4 are associates and 33 are stakeholders. IAAC accepted 1 new accreditation body member from Canada and 3 new Stakeholder members from Ecuador, Peru and Mexico.

## IAAC MLA Signatories

IAAC currently has a total of 21 MLA signatory members from 18 countries. The IAAC MLA membership continues to grow organically. ODAC the accreditation body of the Dominican Republic is the latest MLA signatory to be accepted in August 2020 for the scopes of Testing and Calibration Laboratories and Inspection Bodies. This August, 5 IAAC MLA signatories also extended their scopes to include Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems (OH&SMS) Certification Bodies. 3 MLA signatories extended their scopes to include the subscope of Anti-Bribery Management Systems (ABMS) and 1 MLA signatory extended its MLA scope to include Energy Management Systems (EnMS) Certification Bodies. Earlier in 2020, JANAAC of Jamaica extended its MLA scope to include Inspection Bodies.

## IAAC MLA recognition by IAF and ILAC

We are proud to announce that after a comprehensive peer evaluation, IAF and ILAC confirmed that IAAC maintains its recognition as Regional Cooperation for the main scopes of Testing (including Medical) and Calibration Laboratories; Inspection Bodies; Management Systems Certification Bodies (with subsopes QMS, EMS, FSMS, ISMS, MDMS and EnMS), and Product Certification Bodies (with sub scope Global G.A.P). ILAC extended IAAC's MRA recognition for the scope of Proficiency Testing Providers (PTP).

IAAC is currently undergoing its peer evaluation with ILAC for the scope of Reference Materials Producers (RMP). IAAC will soon receive an IAF peer evaluation to extend the MLA recognition for the scopes of Persons Certification Bodies and Green House Gases (GHG) Validation/Verification. The IAF evaluations for these scopes are scheduled to take place remotely in 2020 and 2021.

## The IAAC officers

The current key IAAC officers are:

Liliane Somma of OUA, Uruguay, IAAC Chair

Andrea Melo of Cgcre, Brazil, IAAC Vice-Chair

Elias Rafoul of SCC, Canada, IAAC Treasurer

Ferney Chaparro of ONAC, Colombia, as MLA Group & MLA Committee Chair

Robert Knake of A2LA, USA, as MLA Group & MLA Committee Vice-Chair.

## Training

IAAC carried out a training workshop for new peer evaluators on ISO/IEC 17011:2017, in October 2019, in Washington DC, USA. The host body was ANAB. 14 English speaking peer evaluator applicants participated in the workshop and were qualified as trainee peer evaluators.

A virtual workshop for new peer evaluators on ISO/IEC 17011:2017 in English and Spanish languages will be held in December 2020. The host organization that is providing the infrastructure for this workshop is SCC of Canada.

## Technical Cooperation Project

The technical cooperation project titled "Quality Infrastructure Services for Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency (R3E) in Latin America and the Caribbean" was carried out by the 3 regional organizations for accreditation, standards and metrology: IAAC, the Panamerican Standards Commission (COPANT) and the Inter-American Metrology System (SIM). The sponsor organizations included the Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB) of Germany and the Organization of American States (OAS). Among other activities, a total of 9 regional workshops to train IAAC peer evaluators were carried out using project funds from 2014-2019.

## Cooperation with the Regions

IAAC has strong relationships with regional accreditation cooperations. IAAC and the Asia-Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (APAC) regularly carry out joint peer evaluations of their common members, regularly share peer evaluators as well as MLA practices. IAAC will perform 2 joint peer evaluations with APAC in 2021. The APAC MRA Chair attended the IAAC MLA virtual meetings in August 2020.

IAAC regularly exchanges technical information with the African Accreditation Cooperation (AFRAC), the Southern African Development Community Accreditation (SADCA) and the Arab Accreditation Cooperation (ARAC), regarding best practices in MLA management. IAAC also exchanges information with the European Accreditation Cooperation (EA) on the latest developments and trends in the region.

**The Quality Infrastructure Cooperation of the Americas (QICA)** is a partnership of regional bodies with the objective of promoting the strengths of a Quality Infrastructure in the region of the Americas. QICA participated in 2 events in 2019.

The IAAC representative on behalf of QICA gave a presentation at the November 2019 Thematic Session on National Quality Infrastructure of the WTO TBT committee.

In December 2019, the Organization of American States (OAS), hosted the IX Meeting of its Science and Technology Commission, COMCYT, which was held in Washington, D.C. IAAC was invited to present on National Quality Infrastructure: regional experiences and collaborative projects.

## Redesigned IAAC website

The Ecuadorean Accreditation Body (SAE) and the Universidad Pedagogica of Quito with the support of the IAAC Secretariat redesigned the IAAC website. The new site has a streamlined design and is easier to navigate. The new [IAAC website](#) went live in January 2020.

## IAAC Meetings

You are invited to attend the next IAAC virtual meetings being held via Zoom from March 22-26, 2021.



### 1. Accreditation & Food Safety Arab week

Within the framework of the cooperation between ARAC and Arab Food Safety Initiative for Trade Facilitation [SAFE] and on the occasion of World Food Safety Day on 7th June 2020 with the theme "Food safety, everyone's business" and World Accreditation Day on 9th June 2020 focusing on how accreditation supports food safety, ARAC and SAFE organized the Arab Accreditation and Food Safety Week [AAFSW] during the period 06-10 June 2020 with the theme "Together towards enhancing the accreditation and food safety infrastructure to protect the consumer in the Arab region".

Several on-line activities held during the AAFSW highlighted ways to further develop the infrastructure for accreditation and food safety in the Arab region and the pivotal role that they play in protecting the Arab consumer. In addition, the following capacity-building activities were implemented to strengthen the ARAC and SAFE members competencies:

#### 1.1 Regional Workshop on Best practices in establishing and operating reference food and feed laboratories

In the context of implementing a regional reference laboratory initiative, the workshop aimed to enhance Arab awareness by reviewing the international best practices in establishing and operating regional reference food and feed laboratories in the Arab region. The workshop also contributed to identifying the financial and human investment required.

#### 1.2 ARAC ABs Exchange of experiences in the implementation of accreditation schedules and transition policies in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic

This webinar reviewed relevant experiences from the ARAC Accreditation Bodies with respect to how they are operating in the current COVID-19 situation in particular in the use of information and communication technologies to support and maintain the integrity of the assessment process in order to maintain robust accredited CABs.

The event gave ARAC AB members a common understanding and guidance for managing, in a harmonized way, the conformity assessment activities as well as the implementation of the current transition policies related to the accreditation standards i.e. ISO/IEC 17025.

#### 1.3 Forum of Arab joint efforts to harmonize and develop accreditation and food safety systems

This was a specialized on-line seminar detailing the regional efforts achieved so far in improving the accreditation infrastructure and harmonizing food safety systems in the Arab region. The symposium included interventions from the directors of the regional partner organizations highlighting the existing coordination through the two regional projects, enhancing joint Arab cooperation in the two fields, in addition to selected interventions by some international experts.

#### 1.4 Launching of ARAC new Brochure "Benefits of Joining the ARAC Multi-Lateral Recognition Arrangement (ARAC MLA)", the new ARAC website & IT platforms

The ARAC Brochure on the Benefits of Joining the ARAC MLA will contribute to the promotion of the added value that signatory status to the ARAC MLA provides to ARAC members in comparison to other regional MLAs in order to continually review ARAC's level of leadership in accreditation globally and ensuring it is commensurate with the importance for the region.

The new ARAC website & IT management platform will provide ARAC with advanced IT tools to facilitate the implementation of the technical and administrative activities and enhance the linkages with and among its members in an effective, inclusive and transparent manner.

The event, which was held in the context of the implementation of the ARAC communication strategy, will further contribute in strengthening the visibility of ARAC inside and outside the accreditation community, supporting recognition and acceptance of the ARAC MLA and the services/products provided under accreditations issued by the ARAC accreditation body members.



(Arab Accreditation and Food Safety Week AAFSW Poster)





("Benefits of Joining the ARAC Multi-Lateral Recognition Arrangement ARAC MLA" brochure)

## 2. ARAC Regional Workshops

### 2.1 On-line Regional Workshop on preparing for an ARAC peer evaluation and completing the new version of the self-assessment report - IAF/ILAC A3:03/2020

Within the framework of the implementation of the ARAC Capacity Building program and in order to support non ARAC MLA signatory members to start their peer evaluation process, an online regional workshop was held on 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020 for the ARAC Accreditation Body member representatives, including their quality managers, on how to prepare for an ARAC peer evaluation including completing the new version of the self-assessment report IAF/ILAC A3:03/2020 "Template report for the peer evaluation of an Accreditation Body based on ISO/IEC 17011:2017".

The main objectives of this regional workshop were:

- Provide updated information on the Joint IAF/ILAC documents used for evaluations
- Provide an overview of the requirements and the documents to be prepared for applying to join the ARAC MLA
- Learn the essentials on the main sections of the latest version of IAF/ILAC A3 used for the application and peer evaluation process
- Provide participants with knowledge and skills to complete the template report on the performance of the accreditation body as part of the application documents for evaluation by ARAC
- Exchange experiences and knowledge through group discussions on useful lessons from previous practices

## 3. Establishment of ARAC E-learning platform

Taking into consideration the Covid-19 outbreak that reveals the benefits and the need for the e-training, ARAC established its first e-learning platform developing the materials for 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:

- Review key aspects of risk management
- Recognize the risk based thinking in ISO/IEC 17011:2017 and the different accreditation standards
- Common understanding of the expected outcome of the risk management process
- Review the possible tools to confirm the compliance of an Accreditation Body's ability to address risks and opportunities in its operation
- Describe the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011:2017 from the viewpoint of what has to be demonstrated by an accreditation body for fulfilment of the requirements related to the establishment of new accreditation schemes



(Poster of the Online Regional Workshop on how to get ready for ARAC peer evaluation and filling the new version of the self-assessment report IAF/ILAC A3-03/2020)

## 4. ARAC PT programs

Since March 2020 and with the aim of enhancing the measurement capability and traceability in countries and economies in the Arab region through a better regional scientific infrastructure, ARAC is implementing the following two PT programs:

**4.1 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. More than 73 laboratories from the Arab region are participating in this program. Under the auspice of ARAC, the ARAC PT program ARAC PT 001 is being offered in-conjunction with the PT provider "Global Proficiency".

**4.2 ARAC PT 002** "SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) Molecular Proficiency Testing Program"

ARAC launched a PT program "SARS-CoV-2 Molecular Proficiency Testing Program" for clinical microbiology laboratories in the Arab region that perform microbiological analysis of clinical samples to provide an independent assessment of measurement quality. The ARAC PT 002 "SARS-CoV-2 Molecular Proficiency Testing Program" will help the participating laboratories:

- Add a level of quality assurance to help ensure that they deliver accurate and reliable test results.
- Provide an opportunity to meet the requirements for alternative performance assessment.
- To assess their entire workflow from nucleic acid extraction through to detection.

It should be highlighted that the results of the participation of the ARAC AB accredited laboratories in these PT programs are used in the ARAC peer evaluation process with the aim of checking the compliance of ARAC ABs with ILAC/IAF A2 and ARAC applicable requirements.

## 5. Upcoming ARAC key events

The ARAC 2020 Annual meetings will be conducted remotely in October.

The contact details for the ARAC Secretariat are:

Email: [secretariat@arabarac.org](mailto:secretariat@arabarac.org)

Phone number: + 212 600 78 56 78

[ARAC website](#)

## EA Risk management in accreditation

### IAF/ILAC Report

EA published in early July 2020 the report to the IAF/ILAC regions. These bi-annual reports provide an exhaustive vision of the work accomplished by EA Members regarding the EA MLA and peer-evaluation activities. It also focuses on the status of EA's recognition in IAF/ILAC, on the status of EA documents, on the activities performed by EA to promote the IAF MLA and ILAC MRA, and on any other major developments, such as the impact of Brexit, the finalization of the EA MLA mark or the cooperation with the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA).

In April 2020, the ILAC Arrangement Council endorsed the recommendation of the ILAC Arrangement Management Committee (AMC) to recognise the EA MLA for the accreditation of reference material producers (RMP) using ISO 17034, as a result of EA's full re-evaluation including this extension carried out during 2018 and 2019. EA became the first regional cooperation body member of the ILAC MRA for accreditation of RMP. In addition, the recognition of the EA MLA to the ILAC MRA for the accreditation of calibration and testing (including medical) laboratories, inspection bodies and proficiency testing providers has been continued. The next re-evaluation of EA by ILAC is scheduled to begin not later than July 2022



Click [here](#) to download the document. The next issue will be published early January 2021, and the previous reports are available on the following [page](#).

### How to implement a risk based NAB approach

Risk management is now a concept embedded in ISO/IEC 17011:2017: *Conformity assessment — Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies*. The standard provides new requirements concerning a "risk-based approach" for the accreditation processes, as well as "risks" with regard to the general operation of all processes in an accreditation body. Considering that the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011:2017 and Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 are mandatory for National Accreditation Bodies (NABs), the main purpose of [EA-2/19: List of risks for accreditation processes and operation of national accreditation bodies](#) is to support NABs in their risk-based approach by providing lists of possible risks that they may consider.

The transition of all NABs to the new version of ISO/IEC 17011:2017 has to be completed by the end of 2020, and the EA Horizontal Harmonization Committee has undertaken a number of activities to facilitate this transition by its members, including several workshops. During the workshop dedicated to the concept of risks, EA members expressed the need for support regarding specific new issues required by the new standard, such as the planning of assessments or for the operation of an NAB (risks concerning financial and impartiality issues were already well-known by EA NABs).

Therefore, thanks to the excellent work from the appointed HHC Task Force Group, under the convenorship of Malgorzata Tworek (PCA, Poland), a new informative document was created from scratch in a short time. EA-2/19 was published in May 2020 and is expected to help NAB to develop their own system.

Click [here](#) to download the document EA-2/19: List of risks for accreditation processes and operation of national accreditation bodies.



## Renewed cooperation agreement between EA and CEN-CENELEC

EA renewed the cooperation agreement with CEN (the European Committee for Standardisation) and CENELEC (the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation), first signed in 2009 and renewed in 2016.

Signed on 25 August 2020, this three-year renewal will contribute to the continued strength and consistency of the development and review of standards for accreditation and conformity assessment in support of the EU New Legislative Framework (NLF), and thus the overall functioning of the European Quality Infrastructure.

CEN and CENELEC are two European Standardisation Organizations (ESOs) whose mission is to produce European standards, thus removing barriers to trade and fostering the European economy, the welfare of European citizens and the environment.

CEN and CENELEC develop and maintain standards for accreditation and conformity assessment purposes that are referenced in the EU Official Journal under Regulation (EC) No 765/2008, for the use of harmonized standards in support of the NLF and sectoral certification schemes, in accordance with Art. 10 of Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012.



For further information, please visit the following websites:

[cencenelec.eu/News/Brief\\_News/Pages/TN-2020-043.aspx](https://cencenelec.eu/News/Brief_News/Pages/TN-2020-043.aspx)

[european-accreditation.org/about-ea/who-are-we/#european-quality-infrastructure](https://european-accreditation.org/about-ea/who-are-we/#european-quality-infrastructure)

## Accreditation Updates

### News from PAB

#### PAB Goes Full Steam Ahead in Providing Information About the Benefits of Accreditation



"If there's a will, there's a way", a proverb that could most likely describe how the Philippine Accreditation Bureau (PAB) of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), ensures that its stakeholders remain informed even with the current travel restrictions and rules prohibiting mass gatherings and face-to-face meetings.

Beginning June 9, 2020, in celebration of the World Accreditation Day 2020, PAB has started using digital platforms in conducting its usual activities. It has not been easy because it was the first big public online activity of the Bureau since the imposition of the community quarantines in the country. Further, staff are still learning to adopt to online marketing.



Following the WAD 2020 event, PAB has slightly switched its focus to the healthcare industry due to the current health situation, although it has retained a few of its info-campaigns on food safety because food has also been greatly affected by the global supply-chain disruptions. In addition, plans for a stakeholders' virtual meeting and promotion of other schemes like the Environmental Management System are very much in the pipeline. PAB is also in talks with the Philippine Trade Training Center, the training arm of DTI, to offer training sessions to the staff of medical laboratories and other health practitioners. The training program will provide the detailed requirements of ISO 15189 and the PAB requirements to inform and develop their confidence in applying for accreditation. The training is also expected to develop a pool of assessors, experts, and resource speakers which will be needed once our national quality infrastructure is fully established.

Monthly activities to December 2020 have been scheduled as a commitment to continuously provide information not only disseminating the benefits of accreditation and accredited conformity assessment services but also to further provide information that is useful to the general public especially in the current situation. Aside from accreditation-related topics, PAB also invites speakers to discuss topics like: Food Safety Guidelines for the Agri-Fishery Sector; Impacts of Pandemic in the Food Industry; and Importance of Reliable Test Results in the Management of Government-Monitored Diseases. These topics are additional to the main discussions on standards and sector-specific benefits of accreditation, to further help the consumers make informed decisions in their choice of goods and services. PAB is always interested in topics to offer its stakeholders that are complimentary to the objectives of accreditation and conformity assessment.

We know that most of us are experiencing the same difficulties, but these should not stop us in ensuring that trusted products and reliable services are delivered to all consumers – all through the help of accreditation and accredited conformity assessment services.

As accreditation bodies, we can contribute to each other's plight in promoting accreditation by sharing our best practices. PAB hopes that other ABs can also gain from continuing to carry out promotional efforts during this pandemic. Likewise, PAB hopes to hear from other ABs and learn from their experiences in how they ensure that their stakeholders are still receiving consistent quality of services from them, with or without the pandemic.

For more information about PAB and related events, please log on to our [website](#) and check out our news and events sections. You may also contact the Promotion and Documentation Division (PDD) at [pab@dti.gov.ph](mailto:pab@dti.gov.ph) or at 0917-802-0047 for more information.

*Prepared by: Jenebert P. Opinion – TIDS, PDD*

*Reviewed by: Amor F. Lahoz – Chief, PDD*

*Approved by: James E. Empeño – Director, PAB 26 August 2020*

### **PAB Accreditation: Maintaining Quality Beyond COVID-19 Challenges**

*By: Ma. Arielle Veronica G. Del Rosario and Karissa Marie P. Rosales*

The Philippine Accreditation Bureau (PAB) recently redefined its assessment methodology to keep up with the challenges and uncertainties brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. By taking advantage of technological innovations, PAB began transitioning to its own version of the new normal through the adoption of the Remote Assessment Process. PAB's operations, which for the most part, relies heavily on on-site visits and personnel interaction, have come to a standstill since the start of the community quarantine period. In order to continue its accreditation services and ensure the competence of its Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs), the adoption of the Remote Assessment process has become a strategic imperative for PAB as it offers an opportunity to improve the efficiency, accessibility, and safety of the accreditation process.

The Laboratory Accreditation Division initiated the proposal in May 2020, reinforced with a survey of the CABs and Technical Assessors and Experts, and literature research. The first action of the team was a consultation with the Laboratory Accreditation Technical Committee (LATC) composed of experts from all related fields. Several LATC meetings were conducted to facilitate the establishment of policies and procedures by identifying the gaps, challenges, and solutions related to the Remote Assessment process.

Part of the project is the capacity building of the two vital members of an assessment – the Assessors/Experts and the CABs. The annual CAB's Forum was held virtually to give an orientation of the program and the updates on PAB activities. The online Technical Assessors and Expert's Forum briefed the participants on the best practices, tips, and etiquettes involved in Remote Assessment as well as the established procedures for the Remote Assessment process. These engagements served as a constructive tool for PAB in determining the adaptability and keenness of the stakeholders.

The Remote Assessment program was formally implemented in July through the advisory LA 2020-05 "Implementation of Remote Assessment", which was immediately followed by the scheduling of the actual assessments. The project demonstrates PAB's commitment to providing continuous conformity assessment services while maintaining accreditation integrity.



*(Screenshots of participants in the PAB Assessors'/Experts' and CABs' Forum taken via MS Teams)*





*(The 1st Remote Assessment Conducted by the Laboratory Accreditation Division of PAB)*

## **PAB Joined Collaboration to Produce Medical Personal Protective Equipment Locally for Health Workers**

*By: Samantha B. Alonzo*

The Philippines experienced a shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) amid the pandemic, putting health workers at risk. Some reports associated this shortage of PPEs with the increasing number of deaths due to the lack of protection. To alleviate the deficient supply of PPE in the country, the government including, the Philippine Accreditation Bureau (PAB) and the private sector, collaborated to provide a long-term solution to help local manufacturers repurpose their capacity to produce medical-grade PPE.

While some of the government agencies exerted much effort to build this manufacturer, PAB encouraged its accredited CABs to be part of this nationwide effort, which led some of them to expand their capabilities, ensuring that testing for PPE would also be available locally. Testing gives assurance to the consumers that this locally made PPE meets the standards and requirements, that it is safe and effective and that it can provide protection and a barrier against penetration of liquid and airborne diseases. Also, a product that has been tested by an accredited laboratory gives credentials creating market demand in exportation.

In addition, PAB accredited testing laboratories were also recognized by the FDA as a third-party testing laboratory to conduct performance evaluation for PPE and that will support their post-market surveillance activity. (FDA Circular No. 2020-014 Interim Guidelines on the Manufacture of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Ventilators and Respirators in Light of Covid-19 Situation).

This effort enables this country to be more self-reliant during this time of pandemic and brings more essence to the meaning of Filipino Bayanihan, helping one another and act as one, to beat the COVID-19.



*(The PAB Technical Working Group for the Project on the Proficiency and Evaluation of Locally Manufactured Medical PPEs)*

## **PCA launch new promotional campaign**

### **Q&A about accreditation – video released by the PCA**

Polish Centre for Accreditation (PCA) launched in July a new promotional campaign about accreditation. A video showing the variety of services offered by the PCA and explaining how accreditation improves our daily lives was published on the PCA website and social media channels.

The concept of the campaign was to present answers from several experts from the PCA to the most frequently asked questions about accreditation.

They answered questions, such as:

- what is the credibility of the accreditations granted by the PCA based on?
- what does it mean for the Polish industry?
- why do we need certificates?
- how does this translate into consumer reality?
- what areas is the PCA involved in?

The campaign is aimed at the general public with the objective of promoting accredited conformity assessment services and their recognition.

It is to show that the efficient system of conformity assessment, of which the PCA is a part, ensures the credibility of test results, calibration, inspection, certification and verification, confirms the qualifications of persons and management systems and, as a result, helps to build consumer trust in the quality and safety of products and services, supporting the competitiveness of the Polish industry and strengthening international trade.



## HAA 15th anniversary and #WAD2020 celebration



### HAA 15th anniversary and #WAD2020 celebration

On 1st July 2020 Croatian Accreditation Agency (HAA) jointly celebrated the 15th anniversary of HAA as an independent public institution and World Accreditation Day. Considering the circumstances caused by the pandemic of COVID-19 disease, these events were marked internally by a workshop for HAA employees.



In the first part of the workshop, the Acting Director General Ankica Barišić presented the establishment and development of the accreditation system in the Republic of Croatia. Her presentation included the history of HAA, the development of accreditation schemes, the international recognition of Croatian accreditation, the position of HAA today, as well as plans and the main objectives of HAA for the period 2021-2025.

In the second part, the heads of the Department for Accreditation of Testing and Calibration Laboratories (Ana Čop), the Department for Accreditation of Certification Bodies (Mladen Vrebčević) and the Department for Accreditation of Inspection Bodies (Helena Jelovčić) discussed this year's World Accreditation Day theme - Accreditation: Improving Food Safety.

In their presentations, they linked the role of accreditation, emphasized its benefits and contribution to ensuring and improving food safety through examples of accredited conformity assessment bodies (CABs) from various accreditation schemes. Through accreditation of CABs in the field of food safety, HAA as a national accreditation body and a signatory to the EA MLA and ILAC MRA agreements, enables the Croatian and international markets the highest level of quality and reliability of conformity assessment results in accordance with consumer needs, internationally recognized standards and the requirements of the competent authorities in the Republic of Croatia and EU.

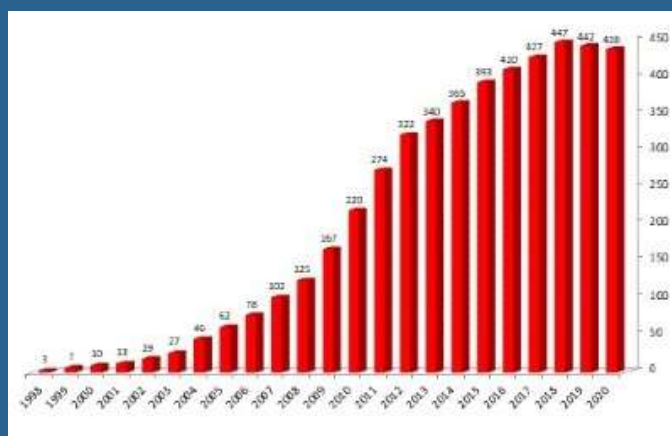




HAA started to operate as an independent public institution funded by the Government on 1st July 2005. Before, accreditation activities in Croatia were operated by the State Office for Standardization and Metrology. The first accreditation in Croatia was granted in 1998 and today 438 accreditations are listed in the HAA Registry of accreditation.



Number of accredited bodies in Croatia by years (status 2020-06-30):



More about HAA, as well as the materials from the workshop are available at [HAA web site](#).

## RusAccreditation News

### 1. Measures in the context of the spread of COVID-19

#### 1.1 Using the recommendations of international organizations on accreditation in the context of the spread of COVID-19

In order to maintain the trust and confidence that accreditation and conformity assessment provide to the public, international organizations on accreditation publish on their official websites clarifications on how accreditation bodies and conformity assessment bodies should act in the context of the spread of COVID-19. RusAccreditation acts on the basis of these recommendations, many of these measures are already being implemented in the practice of participants of the national accreditation system of the Russian Federation. Reviews of such clarifications are published on the official website of RusAccreditation.



### **1.2 Recommendations on the temporary measures on inspection control, sampling and other scheduled works in the context of the spread of COVID-19 adopted**

The Ministry of Industry and Trade of Russia and the Ministry of Economic Development of Russia, as well as RusAccreditation, have developed Extended Recommendations on Temporary Measures on Inspection Control, Sampling and Other Scheduled Works, taking into account the difficult epidemiological situation associated with the spread of COVID-19. Until December 31, 2020, the extended recommendations can equally be applied by certification bodies in relation to foreign products and products manufactured in the territory of the Russian Federation, if there is a corresponding request from the applicant.

### **1.3 RusAccreditation implements a new format for conducting remote on-site assessments**

As part of implementing the measures to protect public health and prevent harm to life and health of citizens in the context of the spread of COVID-19, RusAccreditation has switched on-site assessments of applicants and accredited CABs' compliance with the accreditation criteria through remote interaction. An accredited CAB's application to extend the scope of accreditation was selected as a pilot project. In a videoconference mode based on Russian software, the assessors group carried out on-site assessment activities in a remote format. As a result, the videoconference participants generally positively assessed the format of the on-site assessment and made suggestions for optimizing the event in terms of technical support.

### **1.4 RusAccreditation holds a webinar for assessors on the specifics of activity in the context of the pandemic**

In May, at a special webinar organized by the Federal Service for Accreditation with the support of the National Institute for Accreditation of RusAccreditation, representatives of RusAccreditation answered questions regarding the organization of work of assessors in the context of the spread of COVID-19. More than 260 people took part in the event.

## **2. Team**

### **2.1 Nazariy Skrypnyk appointed as Head of RusAccreditation**



In April, Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Mikhail Mishustin signed a decree on the appointment of Nazariy Skrypnyk, who previously held the position of Deputy Head of RusAccreditation, as Head of the Federal Service for Accreditation (RusAccreditation).

Alexey Khersontsev, who previously was the Head of RusAccreditation, was appointed State Secretary - Deputy Minister of Economic Development of the Russian Federation. In this position he continues to supervise the activities of RusAccreditation.

### **2.2 Meeting of the RusAccreditation Public Council takes place**

In August, a meeting of the Federal Service for Accreditation Public Council was held, where the results of the activities of the Federal Service for Accreditation for 2019 and the objectives of RusAccreditation for 2020 were presented. Participants noted the significant contribution of the Federal Service for Accreditation Public Council in the formation of the national accreditation system, the active interaction of RusAccreditation with the professional and expert community, prompt response of RusAccreditation to requests from industry and business representatives, the participation of a collegial body in the development of the digital ecosystem of the national accreditation system.

The video about RusAccreditation was also presented as part of the meeting that vividly demonstrates the work of the accreditation body of the Russian Federation.



## **3. International cooperation**

### **3.1 RusAccreditation takes part in the APAC webinar on remote assessments**

In May, representatives of the Federal Service for Accreditation and the National Institute for Accreditation of RusAccreditation took part in the webinar "Assessment and Audit in Virtual Space", organized by APAC specifically for accreditation bodies that are members of APAC. Best practices and recommendations for conducting remote assessments, methods of risk analysis and preparation for remote assessments, experience of using various information and communication technologies and other information obtained during the webinar will be used to improve the remote format for assessing participants in the national accreditation system of the Russian Federation.

### **3.2 RusAccreditation passes an international document review of compliance with ISO/IEC 17011:2017 requirements**



As part of the introduction of a new version of the international standard ISO/IEC 17011:2017 *Conformity assessment — Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies* IAF and ILAC have adopted a joint plan, according to which the transition of accreditation bodies to ISO/IEC 17011:2017 and confirmation by regional accreditation associations must be completed by November 2020. In this regard, RusAccreditation has implemented all the necessary measures, including with the participation of the National Institute for Accreditation of RusAccreditation.

In the period from November 2019 to May 2020, APAC assessors carried out a documentation audit of the national accreditation system of the Russian Federation. Based on the results of review of the final report on the document review, the APAC MRAMC concluded that RusAccreditation demonstrated the transition to ISO/IEC 17011:2017. The corresponding certificate is dated June 1, 2020.



### 3.3 World Accreditation Day

June 9 marks World Accreditation Day, a global initiative jointly established by IAF and ILAC to raise public awareness of the importance of accreditation. The theme for World Accreditation Day 2020 was the role of accreditation in improving food safety.

Supporting the initiative of international organizations for accreditation, RusAccreditation considers its duty to popularize the possibilities and role of the accreditation institute in the modern world, including taking part in the development and distribution of IAF and ILAC information materials in Russian. In this regard, RusAccreditation published on its website a joint video and brochure of IAF and ILAC "Accreditation: increasing the level of food safety" in Russian about the role of accreditation in the development of health and safety infrastructure.

## 4. Competence

### 4.1. National Institute for Accreditation of RusAccreditation launches new remote educational projects

The National Institute for Accreditation of RusAccreditation, with the support of the Federal Service for Accreditation, carried out about 30 new educational projects. These include a program for declaring the conformity of products, as well as a distance learning course "How to build an effective quality management system and avoid mistakes".

Given the continued risk of COVID-19 spread, the bulk of educational programs have been implemented in absentia using modern distance technologies on a single educational platform of the national accreditation system. This training format allows the participants of the national accreditation system to continue to effectively and safely form and maintain the competencies of employees, regardless of possible restrictions on movement to the place of training.

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## HKAS survey accredited CABs

Hong Kong Accreditation Service (HKAS) conducted a survey through a questionnaire in June this year to collect feedback from our accredited conformity assessment bodies (CABs) on their satisfaction with our services in the past 24 months. The survey covered the following topics:

- (a) Accreditation services;
- (b) International recognition;
- (c) Training courses, workshops and seminars; and
- (d) HKAS website.

### Major Findings

About 25% of all accredited CABs returned their completed questionnaire to HKAS. All respondents indicated that they were 'very satisfied' or 'somewhat satisfied' with our accreditation services in general. Besides, they were all very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the HKAS website, which has been revamped recently in March 2020. The training events organised by HKAS also received a satisfactory rate of 100%. These outcomes have been very encouraging. Some of the respondents also provided suggestions on what new services HKAS should develop in the future, and gave other constructive comments for improving existing schemes in the questionnaire. Their valuable feedback will definitely help HKAS enhance the accreditation services to meet clients' needs.

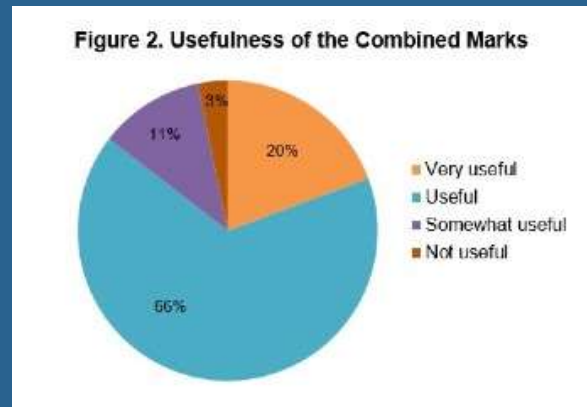
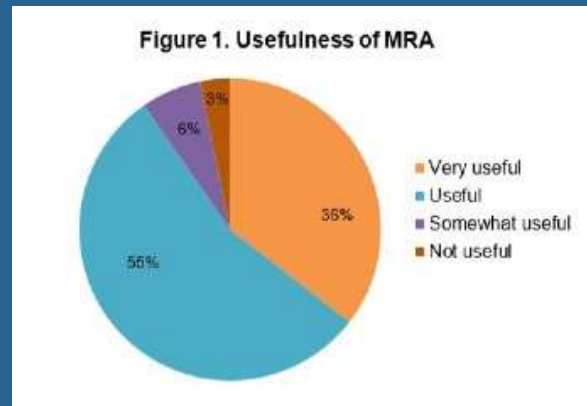
### Use of ILAC Combined Mark

In the questionnaire, we specifically asked the CABs to provide their views on the mutual recognition arrangements (MRA) and the Combined Marks. The following findings were noted:

- 97% of the respondents considered the MRA 'very useful', 'useful' or 'somewhat useful' (Figure 1).
- 97% of the respondents considered the Accredited CAB Combined ILAC MRA Mark or the Combined IAF MLA Mark 'very useful', 'useful' or 'somewhat useful' (Figure 2).
- 43% of the respondents had already applied for or were planning to apply for using the Combined Marks.

On the other hand, about 67% of the respondents replied that they had no plan to apply for using the Combined Marks on their reports and certificates. These CABs are mainly laboratories that provide domestic services, such as medical laboratories and construction material testing laboratories, or those only providing in-house testing service to their parent organisations. As reports issued by these laboratories are mainly used locally, the need for having the Combined ILAC MRA Mark is not significant. Besides, some CABs indicated that they were not showing

the Combined Marks on their reports or certificates because their customers had not requested so. This indicated that more promotion on the value of using the Combined Marks could be useful for users of reports and certificates. Nevertheless, HKAS will continue to promote the ILAC MRA and Combined Marks to all stakeholders.



## A2LA Internship Experience

### The 2020 A2LA Internship Experience

By Scott Moorhead, A2LA Marketing Intern

Although A2LA is best known for their commitment to excellence in the field of accreditation, their core values also focus on supporting the community and providing leadership to young professionals. For several years, A2LA has offered a summer internship program to college students who intend to work in fields such as business, human resources, accreditation, government relations, and IT. Each intern is placed into a department that corresponds to the field of their choice, and given a staff mentor who helps them learn the real-world implementation of everyday skills in the office setting.

A2LA began accepting interns in 2012, but at the time the organization had only a general idea of how it would provide mentoring or guidance for the program. "It was not very organized, and I was the only intern," said Kelsey Roberts, who began as an intern eight years ago and is now the company's marketing manager. Although she was overwhelmed by A2LA's earliest attempt at an internship program, she is now very proud of the HR department's work on updating and streamlining the program, and even acts as an internship mentor in her own department.

With each passing year, A2LA's internship program has developed further, striving to provide the best possible experience for the participants. The manager of the Human Resources Department, Natalie Rhoderick, has taken the wheel of the internship program this year. Despite the disruptions caused by COVID-19, she has managed to incorporate professional development, education, and teambuilding. Tanner Spires, Government Relations Intern, says "Having been here before, two years ago, I have been pleasantly surprised to see that in my opinion, myself and all the interns seem to be playing a more active role in A2LA. Before I found myself frequently having to ask for more things to do, and this time I always have my plate full with important things."

With Natalie's guidance, the 2020 interns had the opportunity to both focus on their career path of interest and explore the roles of other people at A2LA. Interns were able to interact with the different department heads and learn what responsibilities each one has, as well as learn from each other as they participate in joint projects. With each intern in separate departments, they each receive a unique experience. Madeline Subasic, a first time HR intern, states: "I've learned real world experience which is very important because I can't get that in school. I think this internship has solidified my choice in my career path which is making me feel more confident. This internship is more than I thought it would be because I am very involved with my department and being tasked with fun projects as well."

A2LA's summer interns will be ending their program in August, but A2LA often sees interns return for more than one summer. The human resources department uses the interns' experiences each year to design the next year's program, with the goal of continuous improvement. A2LA hopes to instill their culture of quality and dedication to conscientious, ethical practice into those within the program, making the future workforce stronger. For more information about the A2LA summer internship program, visit [A2LA careers](#).



## A2LA Approved to Perform Assessments for NH ELAP

On August 4<sup>th</sup> 2020 A2LA was granted approval to perform assessments on behalf of The New Hampshire Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NH ELAP), which provides accreditation for environmental laboratories, both in New Hampshire and out-of-state. NH ELAP accreditation ensures that the results of covered tests, analyses, and measurements are sufficiently accurate, precise and consistent. This is the eighth state environmental accreditation program for which A2LA is now authorized to provide assessments.

The New Hampshire ELAP accredits environmental laboratories to the TNI Standard, which is a nationally recognized standard for environmental laboratories. A2LA was recognized in January 2017 as a non-governmental accreditation body (NGAB) by The NELAC Institute (TNI), confirming their ability to accredit environmental laboratories to the TNI Standard requirements. In most states, including New Hampshire, accreditation is a government function, but states may choose to allow qualified third-party assessor organizations (TPAOs) to perform the assessments required to accredit the laboratories. Accreditation by the state is granted based on the results of a professional assessment of their facilities and processes, ensuring that they meet the requirements of the TNI Standard and any additional requirements specified by the state. "A2LA is proud to have been recognized by the state of New Hampshire as an official TPAO," said Chris Gunning, General Manager of Accreditation Services at A2LA. "We are committed to supporting the state government and helping to ensure reliable and consistent environmental testing data from laboratories."

NH ELAP offers accreditation for a variety of Potable Water (drinking water), Non-Potable Water, (wastewater and whole effluent toxicity testing), Non-Potable Water SW-846, Solid and Chemical Materials SW-846, Air and Tissue methods. For more information about the NH ELAP and its parameters for accreditation, visit [des.nh.gov](#). For more information about A2LA accreditation visit [A2LA.org](#), and for specific information about A2LA's individual state environmental assessment programs, visit [this web page](#).

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## EIAC celebrates WAD

### EIAC acted on the challenges posed by the Coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak

The Emirates International Accreditation Centre (EIAC) has acted swiftly to help the community face the challenges posed by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

The EIAC has:

- launched the schemes for COVID-19 detection and personal protective equipment testing;
- granted ISO 15189 accreditation to three (03) medical laboratories for Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) and Antibody SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) detection;
- granted ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation to two (02) laboratories for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) testing;
- launched a hospital accreditation scheme as per the International Society for Quality in Health Care (ISQua) framework; and
- developed a guideline document for remote assessment and accreditation guideline for PCR and Antibody techniques. These documents are in line with the provisions of ISO/IEC 17011:2017 and ILAC and IAF mandatory and informative documents and guidelines.

### EIAC conducted special training for Assessors

The Emirates International Accreditation Centre (EIAC) has conducted various online training and webinars for assessors.

The meetings aimed to define the general policy and means implemented by EIAC to comply with the ISO/IEC 17011:2017 requirements on the identification and management of risks related to its operation. These included different accreditation schemes e.g. ISO/IEC 17025 calibration and testing and ISO 15189.

A webinar on the EIAC Hospital Accreditation Scheme was held on 6 September 2020. Dr. Girdhar Giyani and Dr. B. Krishnamurthy were the resource persons.

Special training on "Risk Management" for medical laboratory assessors was conducted on 17 September 2020. Special training on "Risk management" for assessors of testing and calibration laboratories was conducted on 16 August 2020. Dr. Mohamed Saad was the resource person.

### EIAC celebrated World Accreditation Day

Along with the accreditation community worldwide, the EIAC celebrates World Accreditation Day on 9 June every year. This year came with a different way of celebrating due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the directives to apply the public health safety measures and social distancing. The EIAC organized virtual meetings with clients, regulators and other stakeholders to emphasize this year's theme, "Accreditation: improving food safety". Ms. Amina Ahmed Mohammed CEO of EIAC spoke of the overall accreditation scenario during the COVID-19 pandemic. She highlighted the joint statement from the ILAC and IAF chairs regarding world accreditation day. She also informed the participants about the EIAC's response and accreditation schemes related to this pandemic.



*(EIAC CEO presenting accreditation certificate)*



*(EIAC training for assessors)*



*(EIAC meetings with clients, stake holders, experts)*

## SOAC dealing with COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact, for more than six months now, on daily lives all over the world. The challenges are multiple, particularly in the economic and public health fields. This crisis has brought to light the central role of a quality infrastructure, including accreditation in providing healthy and safe products and services to citizens. The quality of the masks protecting against contamination, the competence of the laboratories carrying out the diagnostic testing for COVID-19, the quality of hydro-alcoholic hand sanitizers, etc., are all subjects for which governments are required to report regularly to their citizens.

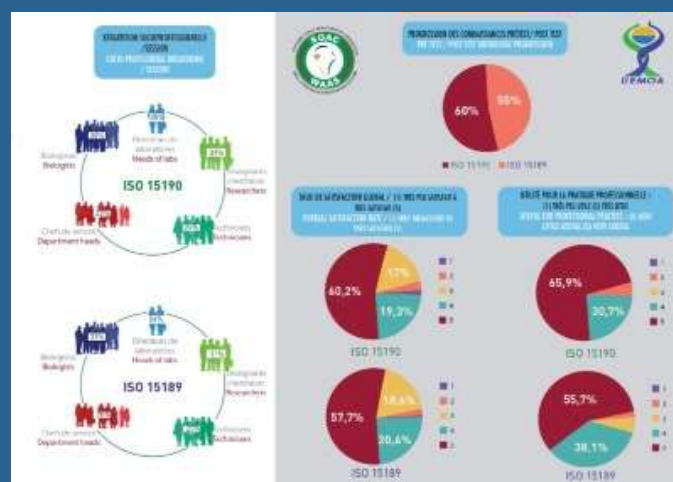




In West Africa, the West African Accreditation System (SOAC) is playing its part to limit the spread of the pandemic. The way forward was set, from the start of the crisis, by the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA). The two regional organizations met during extraordinary summits organized on 23 and 27 April 2020 with the following decisions among others adopted:

- For ECOWAS "ensure that 15% of the annual budget of member states is dedicated to strengthening their health care system" and
- For UEMOA "to develop and implement a regional plan to strengthen the capacity of health systems for the management of epidemics".

Within this framework, the West African Accreditation System (SOAC) has been requested by member states to help strengthen the competence of medical laboratories. Indeed, while the number of medical laboratories is relatively large, their competence in most cases has not been demonstrated to date. There are, within the region, fewer than 20 laboratories accredited to the ISO 15189 standard "Medical biology laboratories - requirements for quality and competence". SOAC has therefore undertaken to organize free capacity building sessions on the ISO 15189 standard and also on the ISO 15190 standard "Medical biology laboratories - Safety requirements" in order to curb the number of laboratory technicians involved in the diagnostic testing for COVID-19 contracting COVID-19 which is on the rise.



In collaboration with the UEMOA Commission and the ministries of health of the beneficiary states, SOAC organized, between August 17 and 28, 2020, eight (8) webinar workshops for the benefit of 329 staff from medical laboratories. They came from nine (9) West African countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo. Taking into account the gender policies of ECOWAS and UEMOA, applications from women were welcome resulting in an average participation rate for women of 25%. The participants from Togo, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, and Senegal were among the most assiduous. The participants were mainly biologists (approx. 35%), laboratory technicians (approx. 25%), and department heads (approx. 25%). The rate of progress in acquiring knowledge between the start and the end of the sessions was on average 57%. The training was considered useful to very useful by 95%; and the audience was 77% satisfied to very satisfied with the webinars. The results of the sessions will be fed back to the ministries of health of the member states, the West African Health Organization (WAHO), UEMOA and ECOWAS. They constitute and demonstrate a basis for decision-making in favor of policies for the development of ISO 15189 accreditation.

At the regional level, SOAC participated as a stakeholder, in April and May 2020, in the development of harmonized ECOWAS standards on hydro-alcoholic hand sanitizers and non-sanitary masks for use by the general public as part of the fight against the pandemic. SOAC intervened in order to take into account the questions of conformity assessment and accreditation which make it possible to guarantee the conformity of these products which are heavily used as part of the barrier actions against the virus. The publication of these standards was the subject of a congratulatory motion in the final communiqué of the ECOWAS Heads of State Summit, held in Niamey, Niger on September 7, 2020.

Internationally, SOAC participated in a series of webinars, in particular the one organized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), on May 15, 2020. SOAC intervention was focused on the role that accreditation plays in ensuring that the PPE used in the fight against the pandemic conforms to the requirements of the technical standards used for their production.



(UNIDO Webinar PPE 15 May 2020)

## AERSSC Accreditation Certificate Awarded

The National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) under the Department of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Population, Government of Nepal, was accredited by AERSSC, Nepal, for ISO 15189:2012.

Accreditation can only be granted if continuous compliance of international standards and the accreditation requirements is demonstrated.

AERSSC formed the assessment team comprised of Prof. C.V. Anand, Foundation for Quality India, Bengaluru, India and Technical Assessor Dr. Antony Thomas, Director Prime Health Care group LLC, Dubai-UAE. Two days of assessment were held during 2-3 March 2020.

The assessment process was also observed by one of the members of the evaluation team Ms. Shelli Turner (formerly IANZ New Zealand) appointed by APAC for the evaluation of AERSSC.

The Accreditation Certificate Ceremony was held on 9th June 2020 as part of World Accreditation Day 2020.

The Minister for Health and Population Mr. Bhanubhakta Dhakal graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and the Director General, Department of Health Services was present as Special Guest.

Dr. Runa Jha, Chief NPHL welcomed guests. Handing over the Accreditation Certificate to Chief NPHL, Dr. Sitaram Joshi, CEO, AERSSC highlighted the role of accreditation and conformity assessment for consumers and also explained that regulators and business consumers can set overall policy requirements or detailed technical requirements to rely on laboratories, inspection bodies or certification bodies for compliance.



## ema webinar initiative

**#APRENDemaS Webinars: an important tool to raise awareness of the importance of accreditation, conformity assessment and compliance with standards**

The accreditation body in Mexico ema, a.c. has implemented #APRENDemaS Thursdays, with the aim of addressing issues of interest to clients and the general public as well as promoting the importance of accreditation in daily activities and services. The commitment of entidad mexicana de acreditación, a.c. has also been strengthened through the use of technological tools and these webinars that are free of charge. Each week the importance of these issues is addressed for the different productive sectors of Mexico.

Among the topics that have been discussed are:

- the importance of remote evaluations as a tool to continue with the conformity assessment activities;
- the importance of standards, accreditation and the participation of conformity assessment bodies in supporting the protection of the environment;
- the importance of ema-accredited Laboratory Tests for food safety;
- the importance of Accreditation for energy management where the speakers talked about how relevant it is to have the evaluation of standards for the efficient use of energy in products, systems and processes.

These topics of interest among others have attracted more than 1000 viewers per webinar. The audience members come from all over Mexico as well as some international participants.



For 21 years ema, has always promoted the dissemination of accreditation, standardization, metrology, conformity assessment and its importance in Mexico and worldwide, through its training courses, conferences, events with government institutions, and through its "Regional ema Groups" held all over Mexico. Now it also does so through its Webinars called #APRENDemaS Thursdays, which can be viewed on the [ema website](#) and [YouTube channel](#).

## ACCREDIA: Social benefits of food testing accreditation

### Accredited laboratory tests for food safety: the estimate of social benefits in Italy

Over the years, the economic development ratio has changed several times. In this sense, new awareness of the scarcity of resources used as inputs in production processes and energy consumption has had a strong influence.

In 2015, more than 150 world leaders met at the United Nations headquarters in New York and approved the Global Agenda for Sustainable Development and the new global goals: the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Development Goals are built on a set of 170 indicators grouped into 17 categories.

Achieving the targets is a complex task that requires integrated intervention with policies capable of coordinating environmental, economic and social effects. The Quality Infrastructure (QI), defined as a set of tools necessary to accompany a sustainable growth path, has supported governments in the development of economic and social



policies. Among the elements of the QI, a credible system for verifying the characteristics of the products is necessary to instill confidence in consumers and solve the market failure resulting from the misalignment of information sets between producers and consumers. The effect on consumer's utility and, ultimately, on the development of markets is particularly important for all those goods that have more to do with the health and well-being of those who consume them.

The strengthening of control systems in the food supply chain is of central importance among the essential elements for achieving the objectives of social equity. It is no coincidence that the second of the 17 SDGs "Defeating hunger" puts food security at the top of the targets that countries must meet by 2030. Guaranteeing food security in a highly globalized world in which the world population and the variety of foods that consumers have access to is growing, presents increasingly difficult challenges for governments.

Long and complex food supply chains require rigorous control and confirmation activities. In this context, the activities of accredited laboratories make it possible to keep human health risks under control.

In Europe, food safety policy aims to protect consumers while at the same time ensuring the smooth functioning of the single market.

The EU has introduced rules to ensure food hygiene, animal health and welfare, plant health and the control of contamination from external substances, such as pesticides. Strict controls are carried out at each step, and third country producers must adapt to them.

In Europe, the official control of food and beverages provides for complete controls on the product, through inspections, sampling and laboratory analysis, inspections and interviews with personnel, as well as controls on the application of HACCP programs for the identification of the critical points in the production chain.

In Italy, the analyses on food products are entrusted to the public laboratories of the Official Control (Experimental Zooprophyllactic Institutes, Multizonal Prevention and Regional Agencies for the Protection of the Environment) and the results of the surveillance and control activities are processed by the Ministry of Health and transmitted annually to the Parliament.

With reference to self-control, which every food manufacturing company must implement, the activity of the accredited analysis laboratories according to the UNI CEI EN ISO / IEC 17025 standard is crucial. These laboratories must be registered in special regional lists that are periodically updated and accessible by food companies.

The rigor in the control procedures raises the bar for the protection of European consumers.

Last July Accredia presented the results of rigorous research conducted by Prometeia trying to estimate the social benefits deriving from this control system ([accredia.it/en/pubblicazione/accreditation-and-certifications-economic-value-and-social-benefits/](https://www.accredia.it/en/pubblicazione/accreditation-and-certifications-economic-value-and-social-benefits/), pp. 60 - 65). The starting point was the cost estimates attributable to foodborne diseases. Many studies have tried to quantify the effects of these types of illnesses on human health: starting from the data of the cases (real or estimated) of adverse events due to a single pathogenic agent (Salmonella, Campylobacter, etc.) and according to the severity of their impact on health, homogeneous indicators were created based on DALYs (disability adjusted life years): years of life lost owing to contraction of these diseases. Figure 1 shows the years of life lost for every 100,000 people due to foodborne diseases in Europe and elsewhere.

[Figure 1: DALYs per 100,000 people due to foodborne diseases -2017]



Source: Global Health Data exchange

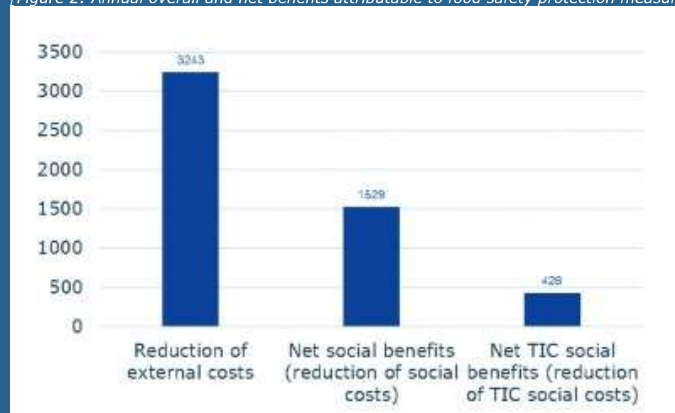
Owing to more advanced social, environmental and economic levels of development, the incidence in the West is much lower than in Asia and especially Africa. A comparison of the European countries characterized by similar life standards is quite mixed, with Italy among the least affected countries.

In order to examine these differences and to overcome the possible distortions caused by under-declaration, an econometric panel model was created for 15 EU States covering the years 2001 to 2017, comparing the DALYs from foodborne diseases with some economic and normative factors. Despite the fact that it's a complex phenomenon the results offer some interesting statistical relations which explain many of the performance differences among the various countries. The consequences of outbreaks of foodborne diseases are influenced positively by the level of per capita food consumption (greater consumption corresponds to more transmission) and negatively by consumption habits oriented more toward fruit and vegetables. Public spending in the agricultural sector and, to a greater extent, the number of workers involved in the food safety control system, reduce the risk of adverse events.

The above relationship made it possible to simulate what would happen if the available resources were to fall drastically (by over 90%). In the case of Italy, which has the highest percentage of dedicated personnel per population, the absence of an enforcement system, all other conditions being equal, could result in a fourfold rise in DALYs – from 37 to 150. This difference is used as a yardstick for measuring the contribution which regulations bring to society in terms of greater food safety. Following the principles set out in the literature it is possible to give an economic value to a DALY as a synthesis of the social cost created by one year of life lost. This enabled the quantification of the costs of foodborne diseases in Italy to be around 1.1 billion euro, whilst the costs which are avoided and therefore the benefits to society of a food safety system are estimated to be in the region of 3.25 billion euro per year – between 2 and 4 billion depending on how the costs to society of DALYs are calculated. (Figure 2).

As it is not always possible to identify precisely the effect of each component of the system on this result, the contribution in terms of social benefits attributable to the Quality Infrastructure has been estimated proportionally with the respective costs, considering both the private and the public components. The total social benefits (reduction of social costs) attributable to TIC activities (including accredited state laboratories) amount to over 400 million euro per year, to which private benefits obtained by the performance of the agrifood chain are added. The analysis highlights how both private and public TIC activities work for the management and protection of food safety with positive benefits for society.

*[Figure 2: Annual overall and net benefits attributable to food safety protection measures (millions of €)]*



## ONAC News

### ONAC: First Remote Internal Audit

Even when 2020 has been an unusually challenging year, it has also been a period full of learning opportunities and skill development, such as time optimization, the capability of immediate response, and the maximum harnessing of technological tools.

It was how, supported by all of these technological resources, that ONAC carried out the internal audit of its management system in June. It is important to note that the audit program was approved in January 2020, thinking that this activity would be executed in the ONAC offices as usual.

However, in mid-March, when the mandatory isolation in Colombia began and its period extensions in May, ONAC chose the "remote evaluation" technique, using technological tools such as Google Meet and shared files through Google Drive, that led us to adjust our audit plan, the audit team preparation, and the time redefinition for its execution.

Schedules, activity coordination and revised logistics were necessary for the accomplishment of this audit. We had a well-articulated multidisciplinary team composed of technical, IT and management system staff that constantly supported the interaction and made it easier for the information to flow between the auditees and auditors.

The audit team, made up of 9 internal auditors, included: a team leader, an international auditor and technical experts, who carried this audit between 3 June to 7 July 2020, over a total of 22 evaluation days and 31 audited people.

This exercise was auditing the management system processes that directly impact accreditation services, such as: Senior management, development and knowledge management, technical service provision, customer experience, as well as the administrative area, in order to ensure cohesion in the different stages of service.

The most positive aspects to highlight were the excellent willingness of auditors and auditees to accept the challenge of developing this audit remotely, in the midst of the pandemic situation. This also demonstrated a new way for ensuring continuity in the provision of services, determine the compliance level of the management system requirements, verify its effectiveness, and evaluate ONAC's accreditation activities performance in an exceptionally difficult time.

After this internal audit of ONAC, as part of improvement, a perception survey was conducted among auditees, to identify positive aspects and improvement opportunities for remote auditing techniques. The results have been surprising, as despite the difficulties in personal interaction, the use of this technique showed that it is an excellent alternative to maintain integrity of the system, ensure compliance with the requirements and allow work teams to demonstrate compliance in all processes.

Once we concluded the first remote audit, we are more than convinced that the new tools and remote techniques have come to stay, supporting organization management and demonstrating that it is possible to be efficient virtually, as in person.



## June Accreditation Month - Food Safety: A Global Security Strategic Tool

As is well known, World Accreditation Day is celebrated on June 9th each year, to commemorate and strengthen the role of accreditation. Considering the circumstances due to the pandemic and taking advantage of the technological tools, the National Accreditation Body of Colombia (ONAC) found an opportunity to harness this date, by planning the Accreditation Month.

ONAC thought this event would allow gathering a significant number of people and expert speakers around the Food Safety topic, and hence we created "Accreditation Month - Food Safety: a strategic global security tool".

The Accreditation Month was composed of five cycles of conferences performed weekly. Each cycle included diverse topics and segments that allowed audiences to participate in the cycle that they were the interest. Free assistance was provided to encourage attendance and resulted in more than a thousand people participating in all cycles.

The event was attended by accreditation bodies, conformity assessment bodies, regulators, interested parties from the food industry and production sector, and other members of the Colombian national quality infrastructure.

Topics such as strengthening of the Quality Infrastructure, opportunities to harness free trade agreements, the utility of international standards such as FSSC 22000 and Global G.A.P, and success stories about the implementation of these standards in the national industry, were discussed.

Finally, ONAC would like to highlight and acknowledge the participation and support of IAAC and ILAC, along with more than 10 national and international organizations, such as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.









ASCOLAB (DRC-NLA) was represented by Mr Mutale Johnson Deroyer, Managing Director of the Société de Surveillance Minière "SSM", a Laboratory working in the mining sector in the DRC.

The objective of this training was to:

- Provide the skills and tools necessary for a person with little or no financial knowledge to make better business decisions.
- Provide a tool to enable laboratory managers to more realistically cost for tests.

The training was targeted more specifically at the technical laboratory staff who are in some way actively involved in making important decisions concerning the management of their organization. This does not sideline laboratories that are in the public domain because states are increasingly encouraging them to structure and manage themselves in the same way as private laboratories. This implies that they must generate profits in order to better finance themselves instead of depending only on subsidies. To achieve this, both public and private laboratories must be able to keep good accounts and control their costs in order to provide tests at the right price.

To do so, the trainer provided participants with basic accounting and financial management skills (supported by forecasting and analysis tools).

ASCOLAB thanks SRLA and UNIDO for offering this training and Mr. Steve Sidney for providing this training with perfect mastery.

## Upcoming webinar with ISTA President

On Friday, October 16, 2020 ISTA Secretary General Dr Andreas Wais will hold a public webinar with ISTA President Dr Steve Jones.

During the webinar Dr Jones will explore challenges faced since he took over ISTA Presidency with a special focus on COVID-19, its effect on ISTA work and the seed sector in general.

Assuming the role of an interviewer, Dr Wais will provoke a deeper conversation on future goals and projects ISTA President is foreseeing as part of his remaining tenure.

Dr Wais will also be selecting questions from the audience, providing participants with the opportunity to actively participate in the conversation.

The webinar will be open to the public and everybody will be able to join. A link for registration will be provided at least two weeks ahead of the planned date so everybody interested is advised to stay tuned and follow ISTA social media networks for more up-to-date information.

Subscribe to [ISTA Newsletter here](#)

Follow [ISTA Twitter account](#)

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## News from Eurachem

Since the Eurachem update in Issue 57 of the newsletter (April 2020) the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the way many of us work. In particular, we have had to find ways of continuing international collaboration at a time when travel is not possible.

At the start of 2020, Eurachem had a number of training events and workshops planned. On 20-21 February, Eurachem-Cyprus, the Pancyprian Union of Chemists and the Eurachem Education & Training Working Group organised a two-day training programme on "Accreditation of analytical, microbiological and medical laboratories – ISO/IEC 17025:2017 and ISO 15189:2012" in Nicosia. The event was attended by 45 participants from 11 countries (the presentations are [available here](#)). As the presenters and participants travelled home from the successful event, little did we know that it would be the last 'face-to-face' Eurachem workshop for sometime.



**Cyprus WS photo Feb 20**

*(Participants in the workshop on "Accreditation of Analytical, Microbiological and Medical Laboratories - ISO/IEC 17025:2017 and ISO 15189:2012" held in Nicosia in February)*

Agreeing that it was very important to continue Eurachem's activities in these challenging times, and after some successful online meetings, the Executive Committee decided to run events over the web, where possible. So, on 27-28 May, Eurachem held its first 'virtual' General Assembly. Hosted by Eurachem-Romania, the meeting was very successful, demonstrating that it is possible to run highly interactive international meetings over the web. In fact, the number of participants was higher than at recent General Assembly meetings. The removal of the requirement to travel opens up the opportunity of participation to member countries where there may be an economic barrier to attending meetings in person.



**GA Group Photo May 20**

*(New ways of working – Participants in the 'virtual' General Assembly, held in May)*

One of the main items of business at the General Assembly was the appointment of officers, including the new Chair and Vice Chair, following completion of the 2018-20 Chair's two year term. The meeting saw the Chair, Marina Patriarca (Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Italy) hand over to the Vice Chair, Vicki Barwick (LGC, UK) for her two-year term as Eurachem Chair. At the same time, following a vote by correspondence, Isabelle Vercruyssen (BELAB, Belgium) was elected as the new Vice Chair. The Eurachem Secretariat, which has been very ably held by Francesca Rolfe (Istituto Nazionale di Ricerca Metrologica, Italy) for the past two years, has been handed over to Elena Sanchez (LGC, UK).

On 14-15 July Eurachem also delivered another first. A workshop on "Quality assurance elements for analytical laboratories in the university curriculum" had originally been planned for the Eurachem General Assembly week in Bucharest. As for the General Assembly, the decision was taken to switch the event to an online format. The event was hosted by Eurachem-Romania and the University Politehnica of Bucharest, and we were pleased to welcome 79 participants from 23 countries (from as far afield as Iran and Brazil). The workshop presentations are [available from the Eurachem website](#).

Looking to the future, we are hoping that some form of normality will return in 2021 and that meeting in person will be possible. Thanks to Eurachem-CR, the General Assembly and an associated workshop on "Trends and challenges in ensuring quality in analytical measurements" is planned for 17-21 May 2021 in Prague (see [eurachem2021.cz](#) for details). The 10th Eurachem Proficiency Testing Workshop (postponed from October 2020) will take place in Windsor, UK on 27-30 September 2021 (see [eurachem-pt2020](#)).

In addition to organising workshops and training events, Eurachem's other key activity is the development of guidance documents. All guides and leaflets are available in the [publications section](#) of our website. The 3rd edition of the guide "Selection and use of Proficiency Testing (PT) schemes by laboratories" is due to be published in the autumn. Since our last update, a new information leaflet on proficiency testing schemes for sampling has also been published.

This year we have also [launched a YouTube channel](#). To support World Metrology Day members of the Executive Committee produced a short video addressing the question, "How does Eurachem support global metrology?".

To keep up to date with Eurachem news, [subscribe to our News mailing list](#). You can also follow us on Twitter @EurachemEurope.

## Windsor (UK), 27th – 30th September 2021

The EURACHEM Proficiency Testing Working Group, in co-operation with CITAC and EQALM, is organising the 10th event of a series of Workshops addressing current practice and future directions of proficiency testing (PT) and external quality assessment (EQA) in analytical chemistry, microbiology and laboratory medicine.

### Venue

The workshop will take place at the De Vere Beaumont hotel in Windsor, a town on the River Thames in southeast England, just west of London. It is home to Windsor Castle, a residence of the British Royal Family, built by William The Conqueror in the 11th century. The story of De Vere Beaumont Estate in Old Windsor is a very British one; a tale of democracy, royalty, education and religion. At its heart, sits an 18th-century mansion, a chapel, 75 event spaces and a Georgian white house in 40 acres of parkland grounds. The original house was built for Lord Weymouth but it was during its time as a public school, from 1854 - 1967, that saw most of the estate's architectural developments.



### Technical Programme

The workshop will include training sessions, keynote lectures, short presentations, working group discussions and poster sessions, to enable interactive participation and cross-fertilisation of ideas. The official language of the workshop will be English. Invited lectures and accepted presentations/posters will be considered, through peer-review, for publication as full papers as a topical focus in an issue of Accreditation and Quality Assurance (Springer Verlag).

### Training Sessions

Four training sessions, open to workshop delegates, on the following topics:

- Basic statistics
- Further statistics
- PT scheme design
- Ensuring the Quality of PT test items

### Lectures and Working Group Topics

- Revision of ISO/IEC 17043
- Guidance on different methods for setting the standard deviation for proficiency assessment
- Collusion or falsification of results in PT – why does it happen and how can it be prevented
- Comparisons of synthetic vs real PT items
- Emerging trends in PT
- Risk analysis approach for PT participation

### Who should attend?

The workshop will provide an excellent opportunity for PT/EQA scheme organisers, and end-users of PT/EQA (laboratories, accreditation bodies, regulators and the laboratories' customers) to come together and share their views.

### Registration

Visit the [workshop website](#) to register.

### Workshop Secretariat

Adele McCarthy  
Phone: +44 161 762 2555  
Email: [adele.mccarthy@lgcgroup.com](mailto:adele.mccarthy@lgcgroup.com)  
[Website](#)

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