



JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

**BETWEEN THE INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION FORUM (IAF),
INTERNATIONAL LABORATORY ACCREDITATION COOPERATION (ILAC),
AND THE**

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR STANDARDIZATION (ISO)

**CONCERNING CO-OPERATION AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE ON
ACCREDITATION AS PART OF CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT**

IAF, ILAC and ISO are pleased to announce the finalization and signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the three organizations on 2004-03-25.

Accreditation, based in particular on the collaboration and agreements within IAF and ILAC and their memberships, has become an important and recognized option for the evaluation and recognition of operators involved in testing, calibration and inspection as well as in assessing the conformity of products, services, management systems and personal competence based on ISO/IEC Standards and Guides.

Following many years of collaboration, the Chairs of the ISO Committees on conformity assessment (CASCO), quality management and assurance (ISO/TC 176) and environmental management (ISO/TC 207), and of the IAF and ILAC, have concurred that the time had come to develop a formal cooperation framework. The draft MoU has subsequently been approved at governance levels within the three organizations, including by the ISO Council, and at the IAF and ILAC Executive Committees.

The MoU will consolidate practices that are largely already implemented by the three organizations, and will enable ISO to better manage and monitor the relationships of its various components with the international accreditation community. It provides an ongoing mechanism for technical cooperation between ISO and international accreditors in order to contribute to the development, and subsequent implementation, of ISO/IEC Standards and Guides.

The MoU will provide IAF, ILAC and ISO with a mechanism to collaborate with each other at the strategic and planning level, in addition to the work already being carried out at the technical level.

The MoU's main implementation methods will include involvement in each others technical work, the formation of a high-level Joint Working Group to consider policy and operational issues within accreditation as they arise, and the confirmation of complaint exchange procedures to ensure action is undertaken by one or more of the relevant organizations. The Joint Working Group will include IEC Conformity Assessment Board representation. As part of the MoU the ISO Committee on conformity assessment (ISO/CASCO) has been confirmed as the primary body within ISO for the interface with the international accreditation community.