



ILAC Strategic Plan 2015 - 2020 (extended December 2020*)

ILAC-R3:12/2014 (extended December 2020*)

ILAC – International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation

ILAC is the international authority on laboratory and inspection body accreditation, with a membership consisting of accreditation bodies, Regional Cooperation Bodies and stakeholder organisations throughout the world.

ILAC provides the infrastructure that supports the world-wide demonstration of competence and equivalence of testing (including medical) and calibration laboratories, inspection bodies and other types of bodies serving or supporting laboratories and inspection bodies through accreditation. Accreditation of laboratories and inspection bodies supports activities within and between economies including trade, protection of health, safety and the environment for the public benefit. Its fundamental purpose is to provide confidence in the competence of bodies supporting these activities.

The ILAC “Arrangement” is an international, multilateral mutual recognition arrangement for accreditation bodies. Participating accreditation bodies agree to promote acceptance of the equivalence of calibration, test and inspection reports produced by accredited facilities. Each accreditation body undergoes peer evaluation according to ILAC rules and procedures prior to becoming a signatory to the ILAC Arrangement.

ILAC values the critical complementary and supportive activities of its Regional Cooperation Body members in the realisation of its vision, mission, and associated strategies. The Regional Cooperation Body members through the implementation of their multilateral mutual recognition arrangements provide an intermediary platform for accreditation bodies to the ILAC Arrangement as well as provide all of the peer evaluation resources and much of the technical inputs to ILAC documents.

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PREAMBLE

This document presents the ILAC Strategic Plan for the period 2015 to 2020 inclusive. It is supplemented by operational activity plans for each ILAC committee. Together, these documents define the work of ILAC.

PURPOSE

This Plan states the ILAC vision, mission, objectives and associated strategies for the period 2015 - 2020. The effective date is 1 January 2015.

AUTHORSHIP

The ILAC Executive Committee, in consultation with the ILAC membership, prepared this revision to the 2009 ILAC Strategic Plan.

* As a decision was taken in October 2019 to establish a single international organisation for accreditation, the ILAC Executive considered whether to commit resources to produce a new strategic plan for ILAC given the current version of the ILAC Strategic Plan was due to conclude at the end of 2020 or to present a proposal to the members recommending the current strategic plan be extended until the establishment of the single international organisation for accreditation.

In November 2020, the ILAC Executive subsequently made the following recommendation that was supported via a referendum of the voting members:

the current ILAC Strategic Plan, ILAC R3:12/2014 ILAC Strategic Plan 2015-2020 & Supplement 1 to ILAC R3:12/2014, be extended until the project to establish a single international organization for accreditation is completed.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since its incorporation, ILAC has traditionally had four fundamental and complementary roles:

1. Maintaining state-of-the-art principles for assessing the competence of an accredited body against applicable standards and other requirements included in its scope of accreditation.
2. Working to raise awareness and ensure that regulators and other users of services world-wide understand, and accept accreditation covered in the ILAC Arrangement as the preferred tool for enhancing confidence and credibility as well as eliminating duplication of activity.
3. Assisting members, especially members of developing economies, to ensure that all accreditation systems achieve the same level of competence.
4. Ensuring that all documentation supporting the internationally harmonised activities of ILAC members within the ILAC Arrangement adds value to market acceptance of goods and services, supports those that are responsible for the environment and for the health and safety of the public, and increases confidence in accreditation.

Following a fundamental review by the ILAC Executive in 2013 and 2014, the ILAC Strategic Plan has been revised to also include specific strategic objectives that are critical for ILAC to achieve in the timeframe 2015 – 2020. This Plan is supplemented by a top-level activity plan in a separate document that establishes the basis for individual committee plans to contribute to the fulfilment of the overall strategic objectives.

2. ILAC VISION (what we aspire to achieve)

Accredited once accepted everywhere.

3. ILAC MISSION (what we aim to be)

To be the global solution for providing confidence in the results and services delivered by accredited conformity assessment bodies¹.

4. ILAC STRATEGY (how to fulfil the mission)

In support of the four fundamental and complementary roles that are outlined in Section 1 (Introduction) above, the ILAC Strategy has a number of timeless components that are central to ILAC fulfilling its Mission. These establish the environment in which the ILAC Executive and committees formulate their long-term work programmes on behalf of the General Assembly, and are listed below.

¹ ILAC's interest is the national, regional and international demonstration of equivalence of reliable results from testing, calibration, inspection and related activities (such as reference materials, proficiency testing and sampling) in both voluntary and mandatory fields/sectors.

In addition, for the specific 2015 – 2020 timeframe, ILAC has 13 Strategic Objectives that are listed in Section 5.

MRA Effectiveness

- 4.1 Provide and maintain an effective international multilateral mutual recognition arrangement that identifies and recognises competent accreditation bodies that attest the competence of laboratories, inspection bodies, and related service providers.
 - 4.1.1 Taking into account the existing effectiveness of the ILAC Arrangement, continue to develop the ILAC Arrangement to meet the needs of regulators, communities, accredited entities and ILAC members, to facilitate global trade, and to support the improvement of safety, health, and the environment.
 - 4.1.2 Work to further enhance the recognition, acceptance, credibility and effectiveness of the ILAC Arrangement and to further optimise the ILAC Arrangement with Regional Cooperation Body members.

Accreditation Principles and Practice

- 4.2 Ensure sound principles and practices are maintained within the global accreditation system, in cooperation with the membership, stakeholders, users and other related bodies;
 - 4.2.1 Identify, develop, improve and promote the accreditation knowledge required to support technical competence.
 - 4.2.2 Support the education in and awareness of metrological principles, including measurement uncertainty and metrological traceability, within the accreditation framework to ensure comparability of results used by decision-makers.
 - 4.2.3 Identify and disseminate knowledge about proficiency testing programs, practices, needs and related policy issues.
 - 4.2.4 Identify needs for laboratories, inspection bodies, and related service providers and their supporting infrastructure globally.
 - 4.2.5 Develop, review and promote ILAC policies and positions in the development, maintenance and application of standards and guidelines for accreditation related to the ILAC areas of interest.
 - 4.2.6 Review and develop policies and guidelines, in collaboration with stakeholders, for the publication and dissemination of ILAC information.
 - 4.2.7 Ensure that all ILAC documents are regularly reviewed and revised as needed.
 - 4.2.8 Facilitate the transfer of accreditation knowledge to all interested parties with particular emphasis on ILAC Associates, Affiliates and potential new members.

Education

- 4.3 Promote laboratory, inspection body and related service provider accreditation to minimize risk to health, safety, and the environment, to avoid duplication of activity, and to facilitate trade goals:
 - 4.3.1 Provide proper mechanisms to ensure reliable, accurate and comparable conformity assessment results, which are expressed in a relevant and transparent way.
 - 4.3.2 Provide education and information/knowledge transfer regarding accreditation of laboratories, inspection bodies and related service providers globally.
 - 4.3.3 Identify, understand and develop initiatives to meet regulatory, procurement, industry and professional needs.
 - 4.3.4 Develop and implement communication and marketing activities that target current and future worldwide specifiers of accreditation.
 - 4.3.5 Develop effective marketing, communications and technical assistance programs.

Engagement

- 4.4 Work to ensure that regulatory authorities and other user/stakeholder communities world-wide are aware of, accept, and specify accreditation covered by the ILAC Arrangement as the preferred tool for enhancing confidence of users in the credibility of conformity assessment results, eliminating duplication of activities and facilitating trade, health, safety and environmental goals.
 - 4.4.1 Promote the benefits of the ILAC Arrangement and accreditation of laboratories, inspection bodies and related service providers by focusing communications and marketing to facilitate recognition of the ILAC Arrangement by industry, government and other end users of accredited services.
 - 4.4.2 Interact with and attract other accreditation organisations (including those operated by regulators) to buy into ILAC solutions and/or learn from their experience to improve ILAC's processes.
 - 4.4.3 Identify new areas where ILAC can support the goals of the global community, both for the elimination of technical barriers to trade and in support of values such as ecological sustainability, environmental protection, resource sustainability, health and safety of the public, animal health and nature.

Relationships

- 4.5 Develop and maintain key relationships.

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- 4.5.1 Develop, maintain and review partnerships with key global players in government, regulatory bodies, industry and conformity assessment bodies as well as metrology, standards writing and professional organisations in order to identify, understand and develop initiatives to meet regulatory, procurement, industry and professional needs.
 - 4.5.2 Enhance the cooperation with regional accreditation cooperations.

Resources

- 4.6 Maintain effective resources to support the operation of ILAC
 - 4.6.1 Collect, analyse and disseminate information to assist in the achievement of ILAC's mission and vision.
 - 4.6.2 Maintain continual improvement efforts on administrative and communication processes, particularly the ILAC website.
 - 4.6.3 Ensure that ILAC is able to meet its financial obligations by annually adopting appropriate budgets for funding operations and projects and annually setting membership dues while maintaining an adequate surplus.

5. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2015 - 2020 (what ILAC must do in this timeframe)

The Strategic Objectives for the timeframe 2015 - 2020 have been plotted in a “balanced scorecard” matrix under the following headings:

Customer/Stakeholder Perspective
Internal Process/Business Perspective
Financial Perspective
Innovation and Learning Perspective

The purpose of listing the objectives in such a way is to ensure that ILAC has a balanced approach and is not overly concentrating on one aspect, or if it is, it is doing so for conscious reasons.

(Note: The order in which Strategic Objectives are listed does not imply any order of priority.)

ILAC Strategic Objectives 2015 – 2020:

Customer/Stakeholder Perspective	Internal Process/Business Perspective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote ILAC and the ILAC MRA to regulators, specifiers, global stakeholders and influencers • Strengthen and broaden relationships with key global stakeholders and influencers • Work to ensure standards, principles and practices related to accreditation are relevant and fit for purpose to meet the needs of ILAC and accredited entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimise the ILAC structure and ensure ILAC has access to adequate resources to meet and sustain its agreed objectives • Ensure the ILAC MRA is fit-for-purpose in meeting the needs of the marketplace • Ensure the ILAC MRA facilitates a “level playing field” for conformity assessment bodies covered under the MRA • Strengthen the relationship between ILAC, the Regional Accreditation Cooperations, and any sub-regional groups • Simplify and improve ILAC’s governance • Ensure ILAC’s processes and rules meet the needs of national and regional regulators that rely on the ILAC MRA and business models of customers and stakeholders operating in a global marketplace
Financial Perspective	Innovation & Learning Perspective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidate and maintain a sound financial position and strategy • Improve the cost effectiveness of ILAC operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain the internal culture of ILAC to help enhance efficiency in its operation • Define the capacity building role that ILAC has in increasing global coverage of ILAC and the ILAC MRA

Activity Plan and Progress Tracking

The top-level actions to implement the Strategic Objectives 2015 - 2020 are set out in Supplement 1 to this document (Supplement 1 – Activity Plan and Progress Tracking). To assist in understanding the context of each Objective, Supplement 1 also shows the intended result/purpose of each Objective; furthermore, it shows which member of the ILAC Executive has top-level responsibility for the achievement of the Objective and the expected timeframe.

Supplement 1 is a working document for the ILAC Executive and provides the means against which progress can be reported. The Activity Plan will be used not only in the implementation of the Strategic Objectives, but in helping ILAC Committees to develop their own specific Committee Work Programmes. The Activity Plan will be managed by the Executive on behalf of the General Assembly.