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• ILAC remembers Howard Forman

 Breaking the trade barrier

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Good news stories from ILAC members

ILAC has made progress in a number of areas over the past year. Significant items to mention include, the increase in membership and the start of the work of the Proficiency Testing Consultative Group, both being fully in line with ILAC's Strategic and Business Plan. In terms of cooperation with other organisations, the trend is exactly the same.



ILAC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Electrotechnical Commission in

February 2005 and together with the International Accreditation Forum, ILAC has continued the cooperation with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, in supporting the efforts of developing countries to establish reliable accreditation bodies. There has been considerable development in ILAC's cooperation with BIPM and OIML-(see the recently signed common statements) and active participation continues in the work of ISO. Last but certainly not least, ILAC is working more closely on areas of common interest, with its sister organisation IAF. The development of this relationship was emphasised by the signing, in September 2005 in Auckland, of an Agreement for Closer Cooperation.

ILAC must, however, continue to maintain our efforts for the benefit of the membership. Again, according to the Strategic and Business Plan, ILAC should strive for much more cooperation with those organisations representing industry, the clients of the accredited bodies, such as the Industry Cooperation on Standards and Conformity Assessment, and also with the regulators such as the World Trade Organisation and the European Commission.

Another interesting challenge arising in 2006 for the accreditation community is to put an end, once and for all, to the conflict between ILAC and some representatives of the conformity assessment community concerning "what can be subject to accreditation".

For the time being, the question is only related to the fields of reference materials and proficiency testing. There is a real need to clarify things and to convince those who are concerned that neither ILAC, nor ILAC members, are pursuing commercial purposes, with the aim of increasing business.

ILAC and its members are all impartial and independent. The main goal is to establish confidence nationally and internationally in calibration, testing and inspection.

However, clarifying the issue and convincing those who are raising these concerns, will certainly require cooperation between all interested parties. ILAC is certainly ready to work in cooperation with the interested parties for the benefit of all involved. I am confident that a satisfactory result can be achieved for all.

Daniel PIERRE, ILAC Chair

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

News from the ILAC secretariat

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



There were several highlights for ILAC in 2005, beginning with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), on 9 February 2005. The MoU has the effect of making official, a working relationship which has been developing since December 2002.

The release, in August 2005, of the Communiqué on the recent alignment of ISO/IEC 17025:2005 with ISO 9001 (2000), was the culmination of a significant effort coordinated by the joint ILAC/IAF/ ISO working group. The Communiqué is available on the ILAC website.

The start of work by the ILAC Proficiency Testing Consultative Group (PTCG) is a significant step forward in this important area. The group has already started several projects, including the revision of ILAC G13 and, pending final ISO approval, an early revision of ISO Guide 43.

ILAC and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), signed an Agreement for Closer Cooperation in September 2005. This is a further reflection of the joint work being undertaken in areas of common interest and mutual benefit to both organisations. A copy of the agreement can be downloaded from the ILAC website at www.ilac.org under International Partnerships.

The release of a joint statement, by ILAC and BIPM, outlining the roles and responsibilities of the National Measurement Institutes and the National Accreditation Bodies and the signing of a joint declaration by ILAC, BIPM and OIML, reflects the on-going close cooperation between ILAC, BIPM and OIML and promotes the use of the three existing Mutual Recognition Arrangements.

These highlights, together with an increase in membership and the on-going work with IAF and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization in helping develop accreditation infrastructure in developing countries, demonstrate the progress made in 2005.

ILAC Meetings

The first ILAC Executive Committee and the Arrangement Committee meetings for 2006 were hosted in February by ISRAC in Tel Aviv. Special thanks go to Orna Dreazen and her staff for the excellent arrangements for the meetings and for the warm welcome extended to all participants.

The June meetings are being hosted by FINAS in Helsinki and will include meetings of the ILAC and IAF Executive Committees, the ILAC/IAF Joint Committee for Closer Cooperation (JCCC), the ILAC Arrangement Management Committee (AMC), the IAF MLA Management Committee and the ILAC/IAF/ISO Joint Working Group. There will also be the first joint session of the ILAC AMC and IAF MLA MC, as required by ILAC Resolution GA 9.17. The purpose of the joint session is to address the organisation and planning of peer evaluations (regional and unaffiliated accreditation bodies) for accreditation of other conformity assessment bodies where there are common activities, and to jointly consider common elements of evaluation reports from such evaluations.

Arrangements are progressing well for the 2006 Annual Meetings for ILAC and IAF, being hosted by the entidad mexicana de acreditación a.c. (ema) in Cancun, Mexico, from 6–14 November 2006. Further information is now available on the conference website at www.ilaciaf2006. com.

The ILAC Arrangement

At the end of February 2006, there were 52 Signatories (full members) to the Arrangement, representing 43 economies.

ILAC continues to focus on enhancing a more widespread understanding of the benefits of the Arrangement amongst the international community, particularly governments and regulators.

Joint ILAC/IAF Activities

The joint activities between ILAC and IAF continue to be managed through the

JCCC which next meets in June 2006 in Helsinki. Currently operating under the stewardship of this committee are:

· Joint working group for inspection; and

• Joint development support committee; With the publication of the Joint IAF/ ILAC A-Series documents the work of the Joint working group on harmonisation of peer evaluation procedures has been completed. As a result, both organisations decided that this group should be disbanded and replaced by three Joint Working Groups, covering the following areas:

- maintenance of the A-Series documents;
- training of Peer Evaluators; and
- transition/guidance for ISO/IEC 17011:2004

Each of these Joint Working Groups reports on their work programs and progress at the JCCC meetings and also at the annual Joint General Assembly.

Publications

The A-Series documents (A1–A3 joint ILAC and IAF publications), have recently been updated to reference ISO/IEC 17011: 2004 and ISO/IEC 17025: 2005. These documents can be found on the ILAC and IAF websites.

In the 'pipeline' (either out for voting or in committee) are:

- Guideline for the Determination of Calibration Intervals of Measuring Instruments (voting period closed on 23 October 2005)
- ILAC-P8:200x ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement: Supplementary Requirements and Guidelines for the Use of Accreditation Body Symbols and for Claims of Accreditation Status by Accredited Laboratories (comment period closed on 19 December 2005)
- ILAC-P1:2006 ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Requirements for Evaluation of Accreditation Bodies by ILAC-recognised Regional

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Cooperations (voting period closed on 11 February 2006)

- ILAC-P3: 2003 ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Procedures for the Evaluation of Unaffiliated Bodies for the Purpose of Recognition (voting period closed on 11 February 2006)
- ILAC-G11: 200x ILAC Guidelines on Qualifications and Competence of Assessors and Technical Experts (voting period closes on 23 April 2006).

ILAC Liaisons

The review of liaison activities continues to be a major focus of the ILAC Executive Committee, who try to ensure ILAC interests are represented in areas which have an impact on the activities of ILAC and its members. To assist with the management of the ILAC liaisons, the Liaison Database was set up in the last quarter of 2005. The database has increased substantially since that time and is available to all ILAC members. It can be accessed via the members' area of the ILAC website. ILAC members who have not as yet sought access to the members' area of the website can do so on-line, via the home page of the members' area.

The trend of 2005 continues into 2006, with ILAC being actively involved in many liaison activities. ILAC recently participated in the Technical Panel meeting with IEC and the ISO TC 212(medical) meetings.

March saw the annual week of meetings and workshops scheduled with BIPM and OIML in Paris. The March meetings focused on progressing the cooperation between the three organisations, following the recent release of the joint statement between ILAC and BIPM and the tripartite declaration between ILAC, BIPM and OIML. A meeting of the BIPM, CCQM (Consultative Committee on Amount of Substance-Metrology in Chemistry) is scheduled for April and ILAC will be represented at meetings of the Joint Committee on Traceability in Laboratory Medicine when they are held throughout the year.

ILAC's continuing close cooperation and liaison activity with EURACHEM and CITAC supports these important Metrological initiatives in chemical measurement.

The first round of meetings of the various ISO committees in which ILAC plays a very active role are being held in April. Meetings of the CASCO CAPS (Conformity Assessment Promotions and Support Group), CASCO CPC (Chairman's Policy Committee) and WG 27 (Drafting requirements for use in conformity assessment applications) will be attended by ILAC liaison officers. ISO REMCO (reference materials) meets in May and ILAC will also be represented at the meetings of various ISO groups and committees, for example TC 176 (ISO 9000), TC 69 (Statistical methods), TC 34 (Food Safety), WG 23 (Common elements), as they are held throughout the year.

ILAC and the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) have continued the cooperation begun in 2003, with ILAC now holding a seat on the WADA Laboratory Committee. ILAC attended its first Laboratory Committee meeting in Montreal during late March 2006. Representatives from WADA say they will participate in the next meeting of the ILAC PTCG and the Accreditation Committee WADA Sub-Group, to be held in Madrid in May 2006. Firm progress has been made in the collaboration between both organisations in the accreditation and assessment of sports drug testing laboratories. WADA held its second training course for Technical Assessors in April 2005 and another course is scheduled for April 2006.

ILAC continues to focus on enhancing a more widespread understanding of the benefits of the Arrangement amongst the international community

Secretariat Staff

The Secretariat farewelled Florence Fung in early January. Florence began working with the Secretariat in 2000, after many years working for NATA. Many members will have exchanged regular emails with Florence during her five-plus years with the Secretariat. The Secretariat wishes Florence well in her future endeavours.

The ILAC Secretariat is pleased to advise that Alison Hay, who has been working with the group since April 2005, has been successful in her application for the position of Administrator—ILAC Secretariat, following the departure of Florence. The Secretariat is currently recruiting for a part-time replacement for Alison.

The work of the ILAC Secretariat

The ILAC website is, as always, subject to regular review, via internal audits and through close communication with the MCC and other ILAC Committees. Suggestions for improvements to the website are welcome.

The ILAC-MRA Mark registration process continues. At 28 February 2006, 34 ILAC Full Members had signed Licensing Agreements with ILAC, for the use of the Combined MRA Mark. The Combined MRA Mark, is the ILAC-MRA Mark used in combination with the accreditation body's own mark. The Secretariat continues to receive a variety of enquiries on various aspects relating to the registration, licensing and use of the ILAC-MRA Mark. To assist in this area, a list of 'Frequently Asked Questions' on ILAC-MRA Mark matters, was compiled earlier in the year. It can be downloaded from the Members' area of the ILAC website.

At the recent meetings in Auckland, the ILAC General Assembly voted to amend the ILAC Laboratory Combined MRA Mark Sub License Agreement (ILAC Resolution GA 9.15), to expand the provisions for the use of the Laboratory Combined MRA Mark, by accredited testing laboratories and calibration facilities (who have entered into a sub-licensing agreement with their accreditation body). The revised sublicense agreements have been issued to ILAC Full Members and those who have entered into licensing agreements with ILAC are now able to start using the new version of the sub-license agreements.

Other ongoing activities for the Secretariat include the ILAC accounts, general and specific enquiries, publications and updating membership and liaison activities.

ILAC Membership

ILAC membership as at 28 February 2006 is as follows:

- 52 Full Members (Signatories to the ILAC Arrangement) representing 43 economies;
- 16 Associates representing 13 economies;
- 19 Affiliates representing 16 economies;
- 5 Regional Cooperation Bodies
- 1 National Coordination Body
- 18 Stakeholders

The ILAC membership (total 111 bodies) now covers a total of 77 different economies worldwide and approximately 26,000 laboratories and inspection bodies are accredited by the 68 ILAC Full Members and Associates.

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



Breaking the trade barrier

Paul Davies and Rob Oke*

A wine producer wants get his label known on the European market. He needs his product to meet EU requirements, but where does he start?

An appliance manufacturer wishes to export a range of domestic white goods into the Asia Pacific market. But each of his products must meet the electrical safety regulatory requirements of each country before they are allowed in. How can he satisfy each market that it is meeting the various requirements?

These are a few of many instances of the problems facing exporters and imports around the world every day.

These technical barriers to trade are not always bureaucratic, and are often very necessary to ensure that a country's citizens are protected from defective or non-standard products that affect health, safety or consumer confidence. But they are often difficult to address, particularly because of factors such as geography, language, differing technical requirements, or time limitations. Yet steps are being taken around the world to address these barriers in an effective, fair and timely manner so that exporters, importers, regulators and, ultimately, consumers all benefit from the process.

In Australia, exporters find it particularly difficult to address barriers imposed by trading partners, whether they are technical or otherwise, given the distances to key markets in North America, Asia and Europe, compounded by regional and cultural factors. For example, the EU is Australia's largest trading partner, with the total two-way trade in the tens of billions of dollars. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) estimates estimated that differing standards and technical regulations combined with the need for multiple testing and certification of traded goods, adds between two and 10 per cent to production costs.

About 30 years ago world trade barriers came under the spotlight at the Tokyo Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

The lack of recognition of testing and certification between trading nations was identified as a major technical barrier to trade.

As a result, GATT developed a standards code aimed at testing in the country of export to be accepted in country of import. This, of course, required confidence in the testing competence of the exporting country, but at that time appropriate processes to achieve this, such as laboratory accreditation, were not yet widely recognised or understood (only a few accreditation bodies existed then). At that time, the code was voluntary. In 1977, in response to the GATT Standards Code, the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) was established as an international forum to address technical barriers to trade, such as acceptance of test and inspection data, testing standards, and testing competence across national borders.

ILAC identified accreditation as the most efficient mechanism to establish the technical competence of a testing facility and also agreed that the concept of Mutual Recognition Arrangements between accreditation bodies offered the best solution. To work properly though, these arrangements between accreditation bodies required harmonisation of accreditation criteria and procedures, and a common standard of assessment, so that the outcome of the process is the same for all players.

Many countries, including developing countries, now have formally recognised laboratory accreditation bodies. Most have now adopted the international standard ISO/IEC 17025 as the basis for determining laboratory competence. This has resulted in a uniform approach to laboratory accreditation and, in turn, has enabled mutual recognition arrangements to flourish.

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Different countries can accept test and calibration data because each party to the mutual recognition arrangement recognises the other's accredited laboratories as if they themselves had accredited them.

NATA, as Australia's national laboratory accreditation system, is one of the signatories to a global mutual recognition arrangement called the ILAC Arrangement. NATA is also a signatory to a regional Asia-Pacific arrangement called the APLAC MRA.

In each of the cases quoted at the beginning of this article, recognition of Australia's national laboratory/inspection accreditation system by its trading partners overcame a technical barrier to trade.

For example, when exporting wine to the European Union, the EU regulations require that each batch is accompanied by an official EU 'VI 1 Certificate of Analysis'. The analyses must be done by 'approved laboratories'. The Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation, a Commonwealth statutory authority, is responsible for issuing Australian VI 1 certificates. To satisfy the EU regarding competence of the testing the AWBC has a list of "Approved Laboratories" each of which are required to be accredited by NATA. Hence, having his wine tested in a NATA accredited laboratory, enables the wine producer to gain the required certificate for entry into Europe.

There are many other Australian examples where mutual recognition

arrangements have made a crucial difference for exporters. For Australian exporters, even conservative estimates suggest that such arrangements generate cost savings of millions of dollars each year.

Not only do mutual recognition arrangements help facilitate access to foreign markets, they provide other key benefits to exporters and Australian manufacturers, such as:

- The importing country is no longer able to apply its domestic conformity assessment regime (eg testing, inspection, certification etc) in a discriminatory or protectionist manner;
- Testing/inspection in the country of export significantly reduces the risk of the importer using conformity assessment as a tool for reverse engineering or for other illicit forms of technology transfer;
- Devolution of testing, inspection etc from centralised government agencies stimulates competition, reduces prices and enhances the technological base of the exporting country;
- Regulatory agencies that would be tied up with administering compliance procedures can free resources to other tasks which may enhance public health and safety; and
- The continuing expansion of the network of MRAs opens up access for exporters to other key global markets in the future.

Clearly laboratory inspection and accreditation is a key tool in breaching technical barriers to trade. NATA's work in encouraging recognition of that accreditation by trading partners does much to Australian companies establish a foothold in the global marketplace.

Evidence of compliance with both international and local standards will become both more important and more prevalent in the global economy. NATA is conscious of this and is working to ensure its world recognised accreditation continues to overcome technical barriers to trade.

* Paul Davies is the Public Affairs Manager at The George Institute for International Health, Camperdown, NSW, Austalia. Rob Oke is the Branch Manager, NATA Melbourne, Australia.

OBITUARY Erskine Bronson (Bud) Mayo Jr.



Mr Mayo was a fellow of the American Council of Laboriatories

Mr Mayo was a Founder, first President and Director Emeritus of Independent Laboratories Assurance Company; Past President, Honorary Member, and Fellow of the American Council of Independent Laboratories (ILAC stakeholder member); and a Founder and former Vice-Chairman of the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation.

Mr Mayo, 88, of Matthews, NC, USA died on December 18, 2005. He attended Colgate University, served in the South Pacific during World War II and was a retired Commander, SC, US Naval Reserve.

He is survived by his wife, Dorothy Foulds Mayo of Matthews, NC; his daughter, Pamela M. Brownlee-Cooper, son-in-law, Fritz Alexander Cooper of Charlotte, NC, their family and many nieces and nephews.



Changes to ILAC Membership

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

Full Members

- Bureau of Product Standards Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (BPSLAS), Philippines
- Canadian Association for Environmental Analytical Laboratories Inc. (CAEAL), Canada
- Entidad Mexicana de Acreditación (ema), Mexico

Associates

• Emirates National Accreditation System (ENAS), United Arab Emirates

In memory of ILAC's founder

r Howard I Forman, 88, a lawyer and advocate for inventors' rights in the United States and abroad, died of heart failure Monday December 5, 2005. From 1974 to 1981, Dr Forman was a deputy assistant secretary in the U.S. Commerce Department directing the department's Office of Product Standards (OPS). He spearheaded the department's efforts to persuade foreign business communities to stop infringing on U.S. patents and accept U.S. developed laboratory product data. Howard was a founder of the International Laboratory Accreditation Conference (now the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC)) and the National Inventors Hall of Fame. He was a member of the boards of ANSI, ASTM and A2LA. He wrote more than 200 articles about patent law and authored four books.

During World War II, he helped develop weapons at the Frankfort Arsenal and eventually became chief of patents there. At nights, he attended Temple law school and received a law degree, and later a master's degree and doctorate from the Wharton School.

In 1956, he joined the legal department of Rohm & Haas Corp. and was chief of the international and Asian trademarks division when he left in 1974. He also wrote and produced a play, *The Birth* of the American Patent System, which was performed and filmed in Independence Hall in 1976 as part of the Bicentennial. After retiring from government service he was a standards and international laboratory accreditation consultant and also served as an arbitrator for civil cases until his mid-80s.

In addition to his wife of 65 years, Ada Pressmen Forman, and sons Kenneth and Harvey, three grandchildren and a great-granddaughter survive Dr Forman. Howard was an outstanding person and visionary in the world of standards and conformity assessment.

A personal remembrance from John Gilmour

(former Chair of ILAC and former Chief Executive of NATA)

The remembrance of Howard Forman above gives an American perspective. Howard understood the broad reach of the rather arcane world of standards, in all



Dr Forman made widespread contributions to ILAC

its facets, and promoted it upwards, to his political masters, and downward to those who saw only parts of it without necessarily comprehending the whole.

As pointed out, Howard played a large part in the creation of ILAC, which came out of a conversation with Per Lund Thoft of Denmark at the time of the Tokyo Round of the GATT (the precursor to the WTO) negotiations on elimination of technical barriers to trade. Howard had the perspective of the politician (he was a civil servant later appointed to senior posts within the Commerce Department by two Presidents) and of the practitioner. He understood that something like accreditation was the solution to the problem of international acceptance of test data-and the rest, as they say, is history.

He was the coach who encouraged everyone to be involved in the work and he led by example. In the world of accreditation at that time, I probably had the most experience in hands-on activity but in terms of international exposure, probably the least. I was certainly inspired by him and his guidance and counsel were invaluable.

Howard was an active participant in ILAC conferences until his retirement and never lost interest in its progress.

In recognition of his contribution, he and his wife Ada were invited to Sydney for ILAC 1998 and some of you will no doubt remember him from that occasion.

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ILAC committee news

Laboratory Committee

Tony Anderson, Chair, Laboratory Committee

The Laboratory Committee (LC) has been involved with a number of activities since the 2005 GA in Auckland including monitoring the implementation and use by ABs of the Joint ISO/ILAC/IAF Communiqué on *Management System Requirements of ISO/IEC 17025:2005.* Little has been seen in the marketplace to date, but this is due to the fact that very few laboratories have so far been assessed to the 2005 version of the Standard.

The LC supports the initiative by the Arangement Committee on behalf of ILAC in proposing to CASCO that they approach the ISO Council to request that ISO Directives and Procedures be amended to include ISO/IEC 17025 Chapter 5 as the preferred reference in all ISO documents, which are relevant to testing, measurement and calibration. If this can be achieved the LC feels that it would be a great step forward in getting more visibility for accreditation and for ISO/IEC 17025.

The issue of Proficiency Testing frequency continues to be monitored by the LC. The idea that 'one size fits all' is inadequate for testing laboratories. The LC agrees with some of the comments that have been made, in the testing laboratory community that the recently published P9, in attempting to address the problem, may still need more revision and it may be necessary to develop sector specific requirements. The LC will be soliciting information from testing laboratories to share with the ILAC committees involved with the frequency issue.

The next ILAC Laboratory Committee meeting will be held at ENAC in Madrid, Spain on May 8 and 9, 2006.

Marketing and Communications Committee

Graham Talbot, Chair, Marketing and Communications Committee

The first Marketing and Communications Committee (MCC) meeting of 2006 and was hosted by the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards in March. As well as building on work that has been



Members of the MCC at the meeting in Trinidad and Tobago

ongoing since previous meetings (such as promotional brochures, procedures for accepting 'good news' stories for the website, and conference surveys), the Committee started work on a number of new initiatives.

Planning took place for the Marketing Workshop to be held in Cancun on Saturday 11 November, during the General Assembly meetings. This half-day workshop will be open to all accreditation bodies and is designed to both inform and provide practical examples of ways to promote accreditation and enhance bodies' marketing efforts. Invitations to participate in the workshop will be sent out to Members in the next few months.

A brainstorming session was held to commence the process of agreeing a 'tagline' that can be used within ILAC promotional material and by accreditation bodies in support of ILAC. This produced a number of ideas that will be further refined before being circulated to ILAC Members with a view to stimulating further ideas and, hopefully, leading to a consensus on one or more suitable options.

It was agreed that work needs to be done over the coming year to improve the ILAC website to make access to information and general site navigation easier. Changes will be made to the overall 'look and feel' of the pages on the website, as well as to the site architecture. Once these have been agreed and trialled on a dummy site, the data from the existing site will be migrated across and the new look website will go live. Our current plan is that this will occur later in 2006. The committee is also preparing a document on behalf of the ILAC Executive to detail the controls for the use of the ILAC logo—an essential aspect if ILAC is to protect the value of its Logo and to prevent misuse.

In the next couple of months, the committee will circulate the two-yearly survey that seeks details of regulators' attitudes on the requirement for or acceptance of accreditation in support of regulation in the different economies of ILAC members. There have been some minor changes to the questions compared to the last two surveys to overcome some differences of interpretation found in 2004. The results of this survey will be available in Cancun in November.

The committee still has much to do. It is looking to assist the hosts of both the 2006 and the 2007 General Assemblies with press releases and publicity materials, as well as supporting the other ILAC committees with communications support. The MCC intends to develop documentation to help guide newer members of the ILAC community towards signatory status of the Arrangement and will continue to look at improving the design and effectiveness of all ILAC publications.

The committee would welcome further participation from more accreditation bodies. The next meeting is planned to take place in London on 30–31 August. If any ILAC member that is currently not involved would like to participate, please contact Graham Talbot by email: graham. talbot@ukas.com.

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Accreditation Committee

Merih Malmqvist, Chair, Accreditation Committee

All ILAC members and stakeholders are invited to participate and contribute to the next meeting of the Accreditation Committee, on 10 and 11 May 2006 in Madrid, Spain. Details can be obtained through the committee secretary, Ms Hanna Oinas at hanna.oinas@swedac.se

Other activities during that week will be a meeting with representatives of WADA and a workshop on the accreditation of NMI and related issues.

The Accreditation Committee is planning a workshop on the accreditation of RM producers, which will be held during the General Assembly meetings in November 2006.

Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) Certification Forum

From the ILAC Accreditation Committee

ILAC accreditation bodies operating in a number of countries may soon be contacted by test laboratories requesting accreditation to CDMA Certification Forum standards.

The CDMA Certification Forum, or CCF, is a partnership between CDMA mobile phone operators and CDMA terminal vendors. It is aimed at creating a streamlined global certification process to ensure CDMA2000 devices are adequately tested and ready for market in an affordable and timely manner.

The CCF has an established and comprehensive set of certification criteria that a terminal device must meet in order to obtain CCF Certification, published in the CDMA Certification Forum[™] (CCF) Certification Process Guide.

The forum is modeled after the Global Certification Forum (GCF), which is a program used to certify GSM mobile phones internationally. CDMA mobile telephone technology is commercially deployed in Africa, the Middle East, the Asia Pacific, Caribbean, Russia and North America

The CCF process stipulates that laboratories testing CDMA mobile phone devices be ISO/IEC 17025 accredited by an accreditation body that is a signatory to the ILAC mutual recognition arrangement.

It is the responsibility of the accreditation body assessor to assess the management system and technical requirements of the test laboratory. The assessor also has the responsibility to assess the proficiency testing activities performed by the applicant authorised testing facility.

The CCF process also stipulates a CDMA Subject Matter Expert that has been approved by the CCF assess the additional specific technical requirements developed by the CCF. These additional requirements are specified in the CDMA Certification ForumTM (CCF) Subject Matter Expert (SME) Checklist.

According to the CCF, laboratories in the United States, Korea, China, Brazil, India, Russia, Germany, Chinese Taipei, Mexico, and Canada have expressed interest in being authorised by the CCF.

Further information on the CCF and their process and requirements can be obtained by contacting Mr Mitchell Kettrick, Chair of the CCF Certification working group, at mkettrick@globalccf. org.

Arrangement Committee

Orna Dreazen, Chair, Arrangement Committee Arrangement Committee (ARC) members met in Tel Aviv, Israel in February. The three main topics were:

- Guidance on ISO/IEC 17011;
- ILAC arrangement; and
- Cooperation with stakeholders

Guidance on ISO/IEC 17011

A joint working group with IAF has now issued a ninth draft of guidance to ISO/IEC 17011. ARC members reviewed the ninth draft and comments will be soon provided to the WG.

Complaint handling by ABs, regional and international accreditation organisations was discussed in detail. A summary of the discussion and the agreed rules will be transferred to Arrangement Management Committee (AMC) for further discussion.

ILAC Arrangement

The following main points were discussed concerning the ILAC arrangement:

Economic impact of ILAC MRA

A report on the merits of laboratory accreditation in Japan was presented by Dr Katuo Seta. He provided a cost comparison between the establishment and use of MRAs versus bilateral agreements and demonstrated the conformity assessment cost saving when Japanese export is done under the terms of an MRA. ILAC members may be able to provide similar cost comparison examples.

- Update of KPIs
- Expansion of the scope of MRA

Tony Russell and Gro Rodland presented a discussion paper on expansion or extension of the scope of ILAC MRA. The paper outlined three sources for proposed accreditation expansions. It proposed seven steps for a process after which a decision whether to expand the MRA scope is taken. A revised version will be submitted as a proposal for an ILAC 'S' document, for comments and balloting.

- Revision of ILAC MRA
- ILAC P8

The proposed document ILAC P8 was discussed and comments from ILAC members considered. The proposed P8 has been sent to ILAC members for a 60 day ballot period.

• Time limits for evaluations

A proposal for time limits for ILAC when evaluating an individual AB or a regional body was discussed. The MRA committee chairs from each region were asked to work on a discussion paper which then could become an ILAC "pledge document".

• Delimitation of AB's scope

A discussion paper on having scopes of recognition of ABs was presented by the Accreditation Committee Chair, Merih Malmqvist. There was general agreement that at most, the scopes of recognition be delimited to include the different standards (ISO 17025, ISO 17020, ISO 15189). A task force will define a glossary of possible scope of recognition descriptors and a revised version of the discussion paper will be sent to ILAC members for comment. The subject will be discussed in Cancun during the open forum meeting.

Cooperation with stakeholders

The ILAC liaison page and website will be demonstrated in the open forum in Cancun.

ISO liaison reports were discussed on TC212 (medical laboratories), WG23 (common elements in ISO/CASCO standards), TC34 (food safety standards) and CASCO CAPS.

TC212: An amended version of ISO 15189, aligned with ISO/IEC 17025; 2005 is currently under vote (voting period ends in May). It was agreed that a future version (planned for 2008-2010) will have the

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current structure. However, issues raised in the survey regarding implementation of the current ISO 15189 will need new wording of some sub clauses. A task group started working on the new text.

OIML

Mrs. Regine Gaucher, MAA project leader, gave a presentation on the OIML Mutual Acceptance Arrangement (MAA) for legal metrology organisations and their peer assessment process.

The proposed MOU between OIML and ILAC was reviewed by the ARC and by the ILAC Executive Committee.

ISTA

Hanspeter Ischi reported on discussions with ISTA aimed at developing a draft MoU between the two organisations. Cooperation in the areas of proficiency testing and use of technical assessors are some of the potential benefits currently being explored.

international update

BIPM News Joint BIPM/ILAC Statement

A Joint BIPM/ILAC statement outlining the respective roles and responsibilities of National Metrology Institutes and Accreditation Bodies has been issued by both organisations. The Joint Statement together with an introductory covering letter can be downloaded from the ILAC website at www.compad.com.au/cms/ilac/ sitearticles/444

Joint Declaration of the BIPM, OIML and ILAC

This joint declaration is a reflection of the ongoing close cooperation between ILAC, BIPM and OIML and promotes the use of the three existing Mutual Recognition Arrangements. The Joint Declaration and an introductory covering letter can be downloaded from the ILAC website at www.compad.com.au/cms/ilac/ sitearticles/447



Chinese delegation visits ILAC Secretariat

A delegation from the China Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Research and the Ministry of Water Resources, visited the ILAC Secretariat at their Sydney offices in March 2006. The Secretariat provided information on the operation of ILAC and general developments in laboratory accreditation at the international level.

Regional cooperations

APLAC

APLAC Secretariat: Helen Liddy, Jane King, Janet Clark The 2005 APLAC General Assembly and associated meetings in Chiang Mai were very successful and all ran very smoothly. Thanks to TISI, DMSc and DSS for their fabulous organisation of APLAC 2005.

The main items covered by the General Assembly and associated meetings were:

- approval of the final draft of the APLAC Constitution to come into effect on the incorporation of APLAC, planned for later in 2006 in New Zealand;
- in principle approval for a restructure of APLAC documentation following incorporation of APLAC;
- reports from the APLAC committee Chairs, and endorsement of work programs for 2006;
- reports from ILAC and other ILAC regional bodies, and from the other APEC Specialist Regional Bodies (SRBs);
- endorsement of proposed MOUs between APLAC and APMP and APLAC and PAC;
- approval of APLAC's budget for 2006; and
- approval of three APLAC training courses in 2006: evaluator training; inspection accreditation workshop; RMP assessor workshop.

MRA Update

Congratulations to the new signatories to the MRA: CAEAL, Canada (testing only); ema, Mexico (testing, calibration and inspection) and BPSLAS, Philippines (testing and calibration).

The APLAC MRA now has 23 signatories, 10 of which are recognised for inspection.

Signatory recognition for TAF, Chinese Taipei has been extended to include inspection.

JAS-ANZ, a trans-national organisation covering both Australia and New Zealand is APLAC's newest Full Member.

Applications opened on 1 January 2006 for accreditation bodies to include accreditation of Reference Materials Producers in their scope of MRA recognition.

Workshops and meetings

A Reference Material Producers Workshop was held on 10–12 April 2006 in Beijing. The course presenters were Dr E W B de Leer of the Nederlands Meetinstituut, Mr W W Wong of HKAS and Ms R Robinson of A2LA.

A course for new evaluators is planned for May 29–31 2006 in Bangkok.

The APLAC MRA Council and Board of Management will meet in Singapore during the week of 22–26 May 2006.

IAAC UPDATE

Victor Gandy, Executive Secretary, Inter-American Accreditation Cooperation

IAAC Membership

As of 12 February, 2006, the IAAC General Assembly approved the incorporation of the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors/Laboratory Accreditation Board (ASCLD-LAB) of the United States, as a full member. ASCLD-LAB was an Associate member since May 2005.

IAAC currently has a 37 members, 21 full members, six associate members and 10 stakeholder members from 22 countries in the Americas.

IAAC meetings

IAAC held its 23rd Executive Committee, Technical Committee and MLA Committee meetings in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from 30 November– 2 December last year.

The Executive Committee resolutions include the following items:

- The EC approved a document regarding the Transition to ISO/ IEC 17025:2005 based on an ILAC document.
- The EC developed and approved a Crossfrontier action plan, and IAAC members are currently reviewing a bilateral agreement model for Crossfrontier accreditation.
- The IAAC MLA Committee is in the process of adopting ILAC P-9 as a mandatory document for the IAAC Laboratories MLA.
- IAAC members were encouraged to participate in ISO/ CASCO meetings WG through their National Standards Organisations, in order to participate in the discussion of accreditation related documents.
- IAAC members were made aware of the developments of the ISO standard on Guide 43 and the work done in TC 212 and ISO/REMCO.

Technical Cooperation Projects

2005–2006 OAS Project

IAAC has started the 2005-2006 OAS Project sponsored by the Organization of American States. The project began in July last year and will finish in November 2006.

The first series of activities include:

- An internship for staff of SENCAMER of Venezuela at ema, Mexico in October last year.
- A proficiency testing program in water for IAAC members is being organised by the Argentine Accreditation Body, OAA and the Metrology Institute of Argentina, INTI. APLAC members were also invited to participate.
- A witnessing of a IAAC peer evaluation by a IAF and ILAC evaluating team and the evaluation of the IAAC Secretariat

also by the IAF and ILAC team, both took place in Santiago, Chile, during the second week of January this year. The project includes funding to carry out IAAC four peer evaluations, three consultancies, two additional internships, three training courses, one seminar, and one additional proficiency testing program.

2005–2006 IDB Project

The Inter-American Development Bank 'Reduction of Technical Barriers to Trade through the Strengthening of the Accreditation Systems' project was originally scheduled to be completed at the beginning of 2005. The project includes the participation of Mexico, Paraguay, Costa Rica and Trinidad and Tobago. The Development Bank's pending activities include technical assistance visits, training courses, consultancies to laboratories undergoing the process of accreditation, joint evaluations between an IAAC evaluator and a staff person of the AB, and IAAC peer evaluations.

2005–2006 PTB Project

The project with the Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt, (PTB) of Germany included support for four IAAC members to attend a IAAC-APLAC workshop for English speaking peer evaluators on 17011 and a workshop on 17011 for 30 Spanish speaking IAAC peer evaluators which was held in December 2005, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Upcoming activities include funding for a regional proficiency testing program, consultancy to an accreditation body or PT provider to organise a IAAC proficiency testing program, and support to the IAAC Secretariat to visit the IAF-ILAC-APLAC Secretariats.

Inter-institutional relations

Giselle Guevara of the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS) was designated by IAAC its representative at the ILAC Marketing and Communications Committee.

APLAC

APLAC and IAAC have invited each others' members to participate in several regional proficiency testing programs during 2005 and 2006, within the framework of the IAAC-APLAC MOU signed last year.

NACLA

The IAAC Secretary participated as a speaker to promote the IAAC MLA

at the annual NACLA Forum held in Washington DC in March within the framework of the IAAC-NACLA MOU signed last year.

COPANT

IAAC and COPANT jointly organised a training course on ISO/IEC 17021 and ISO/IEC 17025 for technical staff of IAAC and COPANT members, which was held in Caracas, Venezuela, on October 2005. There were 30 participants from the region, and COPANT provided financial support for their travel.

ILAC and IAF recognition of the IAAC MLA as regional arrangements

IAAC performed a peer evaluation of the INN Accreditation Body of Chile with a scope of QMS, Testing and Calibration Laboratories and EMS, in Santiago, Chile, on 9-13 January, 2006. The evaluation was witnessed by Sean MacCurtain and Jos Leferink of the IAF - ILAC team as a part of the IAAC evaluation process. Only the scopes for QMS and Laboratories were witnessed, as IAAC has not yet applied for international recognition of the EMS scope. The IAAC peer evaluation team was made up by Bertha Munguía (team leader) of A2LA-USA, Heliane Fonseca of Cgcre/INMETRO-Brazil, Peter Unger of A2LA-USA, Mike Ouellette of SCC-Canada, and Veronica Garcia of ema-Mexico.

Sean MacCurtain and Jos Leferink of the IAF-ILAC team, also performed a follow up visit of the IAAC Secretariat and MLA Committee files to review the implementation of IAAC and MLA documents and procedures, which took place in Santiago, Chile, on 16–17 January. Victor Gandy, IAAC Secretary and Fabian Hernandez, MLA Committee Chair, traveled to Chile for this evaluation.

A recent IAAC Executive Committee meeting was held in April, where critical IAAC documents were approved and decisions made which will allow IAAC to close the non-conformities found during the evaluation and review. Additionally, the IAAC MLA Committee will undertake necessary actions during its meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina during the first week of August 2006, and the IAF-ILAC team will take them into account for their final report.

IAAC should be complying fully with the established criteria to achieve recognition of the IAAC MLAs by IAF and ILAC, by August.

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

The IAAC MLA Group voted to accept Entidad Mexicana de Acreditacion (ema) in the IAAC MLA for Testing and Calibration Laboratories with a follow up visit within the next 12 months to review the implementation of Best Measurement Capability, the Proficiency Testing program and progress made in implementing the traceability policy.

ema must submit the letter from the Mexican Ministry of Economy regarding traceability, to the MLA Group members prior to its next meeting to be held during the week of 6–12 August.

The IAAC MLA Group voted to accept INDECOPI of Peru in the IAAC MLA for Accreditation of Certification Bodies of Quality Management Systems (QMS). INDECOPI had to have notified the IAAC MLA Chair, by 31 December regarding the actions to be taken which demonstrate compliance with point 4.3.7 of the 17011:2004. The MLA Group will analyse the information submitted during the MLA Committee meeting in Buenos Aires, with the purpose of defining the date of the next evaluation.

IAAC Peer Evaluations

Upcoming IAAC MLA activities:

IAAC will perform a follow up on the evaluation to the Costa Rican Accreditation Entity, (ECA) and assigned a new team leader to follow up on the findings resulting from the initial evaluation as well as compliance with requirements of 17011:2004. The previous team leader is no longer available.

The IAAC MLA Group (MLA signatories) received a preliminary report regarding the surveillance evaluation of ema as an IAAC MLA signatory for accreditation of Quality Management Systems (QMS) Certification Bodies and will wait for the final report to be reviewed in order to define a position regarding the status of ema as a signatory, during the MLA Committee meeting in Buenos Aires, in August.

The IAAC MLA Group received on 24 November last year a final report regarding the surveillance evaluation of SCC as an IAAC MLA signatory for accreditation of Calibration and Testing Laboratories, considering that the report was delivered in a date close to the MLA meeting, it will be reviewed and discuss the status of SCC as a signatory of the Testing and Calibration Laboratories during the MLA Committee meeting in Buenos Aires, in August 2006.

IAAC was due to perform a reevaluation of A2LA for the program for accreditation of Calibration and Testing Laboratories in March.

IAAC will perform a re-evaluation of SCC for the program for accreditation of Quality Management Systems Certification Bodies (QMS) which will take place this year.

Development of IAAC Peer Evaluators

IAAC is in the process of increasing its base of qualified peer evaluators. IAAC provided two training courses for IAAC peer evaluators in 2005, one of which was organised in conjunction with APLAC in October, the second was in December.

At least 25 new applicants for peer evaluators were trained in these courses and are in the process of being accepted as regional peer evaluators. IAAC has scheduled a third training course for IAAC peer evaluators during the latter part of this year. The objective of these courses is harmonise evaluators' criteria, and to maintain peer evaluators updated on the current IAF-ILAC-IAAC requirements and documents.

SADCA NEWS

Marie Chilcott, SADCA Secretariat

Incorporation of SADCAS

SADCAS was registered on 6 December 2006 under the Botswana law, as a limited not for gain organisation. The challenge now is for SADCAS to become operational. In this regard, a SADCA Project Management Committee (PMC) meeting took place in early November 2005 in Zanzibar to initiate a SADCAS Strategic and Business Plan. An international expert on accreditation, Mr John Gilmour, also attended this series of meetings and provided valuable input.

Board of Directors (BoD)

The newly appointed SADCAS Board of Directors received corporate governance training from the South African Institute of Directors, on route to the inaugural SADCAS BoD meeting, held on November 2005.

National accreditation focal points activities

The PMC met with the National Accreditation Focal Points (NAFPs) and

the SADCAS Board of Directors, during a meeting held in Botswana in early February 2006. Issues discussed included updating NAFPs and BoD on the latest developments in SADCA and SADCAS. The BoD assisted by the PMC, prepared for the inaugural SADCAS Annual General Meeting, held on 4 April 2006. The PMC also participated in the annual SADCA meeting held in Namibia in April 2006.

To date NAFPs from 7 SADC countries have been launched, namely Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia, DRC, Mauritius, Zimbabwe and Angola.

The NAFPs from the DRC and Madagascar travelled to COFRAC, France in March 2006 to undergo their attachment training.

Way forward

The immediate objective is to secure funding to make SADCAS operational. This process is at an advanced stage. SADCA will also assist in the integration of the technical infrastructure being created within SADC into the regional strategies to manage TBT and SPS related activity.

EA REPORT

Martine Blum, EA Secretary

EA membership

EA now brings together 34 full members and two associate members representing 34 European countries. HAA, the Croatian accreditation body, was accepted in November as a full member following the decision by the European Council to accept Croatia as a candidate country. With JAC, the Jordanian Accreditation Commission, signing a contract of cooperation at the same time, EA has developed 16 such contracts out of which nine have been transformed into a bilateral agreement providing mutual recognition of their accreditation schemes by the signatories and the EA MLA members.

Out of the 32 EA full member countries, 18 have signed the EA MLA for all scopes, six have signed for only part of the scopes and eight have not yet signed the EA MLA.

EA and its relations to the European accreditation policy

Discussions are continuing with the European Commission (DG Enterprise and Industry) within the framework of the comprehensive work concerning the revision of the New Approach for Directives. The commission's view of the future status of accreditation is becoming much clearer. According to the commission's proposal, accreditation will be defined as a service of general interest deriving its authority from the national governments, and the non-competition nature of accreditation will be formally recognised. It is also proposed that EA should be given a formal authority backed by the European institutions. EA will sign specific agreements with the commission and EFTA to reflect its new role and mission in the future revised European framework for conformity assessment.

The permanent secretariat started its operations in January

As decided by the General Assembly, the permanent secretariat of EA, made up of Marga Zaffe, MAC secretariat, Benedicte Ziemann and Martine Blum, central secretariat, started its operations on the very first days of the new year. A comprehensive management system is being developed. The EA logo has been registered as a European individual mark.

The new executive committee met for the first time since the elections in June 2005, on 18-19 January in Brussels. Paying tribute to the work achieved by the previous team, the executive agreed on key priorities for the next six months. Apart from the reflections at the European level, establishing strong reliable liaison activities at the ILAC and IAF level features among the key issues to be developed in the future. A list of liaison people has been approved and published on the EA intranet. The executive also decided to review the process for arranging meetings of the Multilateral Agreements Committee in order to make it easier for all EA members to host large meetings if they so wish. A proposal is likely to be submitted to the General Assembly in June.

In progress

The Laboratory Committee is working on elaborating a ILCs guidance document, and met in Prague on 14-15 March.

The Inspection Committee launched a survey to evaluate the need for maintaining the EA publication number 5 /02 on recurrent inspection of motor vehicles.

Finally, EA 2 /11 Policy for Sector schemes has just been published. The policy was revised to reflect the outcome of the discussions at the EA Advisory Board and endorsed at the last General Assembly in November.

EA Executive Committee

Chairman, Lorenzo Thione (Sincert, Italy)

Vice Chairman, Graham Talbot (UKAS, UK)

MLA committee (MAC), Gro Rødland (NA, Norway)

Communications and Publications Committee, Tom Dempsey (INAB, Ireland)

Laboratory Committee, Hanspeter Ischi (SAS, Switzerland)

Inspection Committee, Merih Malmqvist (SWEDAC, Sweden)

Certification Committee, Norbert Müller (BMWA, Austria)

Chairman of the Financial Oversight Committee, Jan van der Poel (RvA, The Netherlands)

EA database for accredited bodies

The EA database for accredited bodies has been developed under the supervision of the EA Executive Committee through a special task force. The database is now working on the EA website for data concerning calibration laboratories accredited by DAR (Germany), DANAK (Denmark), UKAS (UK) and COFRAC (France).

Other countries will be added as members' databases come on line. The scope for calibration has been revised and simplified. A scope for testing is being developed in close cooperation with the EA Laboratory committee. A full text search has also been developed. It is being tested within the project management group and should be implemented on the EA web site before summer.

The main advantage of the software used is it does not require any change to the member's own database and system. The technology makes it very easy for members to link their databases to the EA database and to implement the system overall. The EA database can be found at http://db.european-accreditation.org

Contact: Martine Blum, EA secretary, EA, 37 rue de Lyon, 75012 Paris, France, Telephone: +33 1 44 68 82 25; Email: secretariat.EA@COFRAC.fr

2006 EA meetings

Executive Committee 6 June, Riga 4–5 September, Rome, 17 October, Istanbul EA Advisory Board

27 April, Brussels

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15 September, Brussels

Certification Committee 10–11 September, Ljubljana

Communications and Publications Committee

7-8 September, Bucharest

Inspection Committee 12 September, Ljubljana

Laboratory Committee 12–13 September, Paris

PLG 13-14 September, Paris

MAC 5-6 October, Brussels

General Assembly 7–8 June, Riga 18–19 October, Istanbul

Stakeholders EUROLAB News

EUROLAB expands onto the international scene

The ISO Secretary General encourages European Federation of National Associations of Measurement, Testing and Analytical laboratories (EUROLAB) to apply for membership in ISO CASCO this year.

EUROLAB represents a network of more than 3000 public and private laboratories and conformity assessment bodies throughout Europe.

From the outset in 1990 EUROLAB's overall objective was to voice the opinion of European laboratories on political and technical matters affecting them at the European level. But in 2002 amendments to the EUROLAB Articles of Association were started to extend EUROLAB's area of responsibility to cover international developments affecting the laboratory sector.

Through co-operation with European and international technological partner organisations, through regular contacts with the European Commission and the European and international accreditation bodies (EA, ILAC), and through representation in standardisation committees (CEN, ISO), EUROLAB has become an authoritative voice on the international scene, and is now highly effective at representing the interests of its members.

These members are in three categories: 22 Active members which are either members of the EU or EFTA; two associated members from Eastern and Central Europe which are applicant

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countries to the EU; and 19 international affiliates, including the National conference of standards laboratories International - USA and the National Laboratory Association of South Africa.

Last year several other international and regional organisations expressed interest in membership.

In recent months there have been some internal changes in the EUROLAB organisation. Acting President, Bent Larsen (Denmark), and acting Vice-President, Guy Jacques (Belgium), have been elected by the Board of Administrators. A new Secretary, Jean-Marc Aublant (France) has been designated and approved by the National Member Meeting. As well, the EUROLAB Technical Secretariat has been transferred to LNE in France after being based at BAM in Germany for the last seven years.

Among the main topics to be tackled by EUROLAB in 2006 are:

- The review of the New Approach (EU),
- Appeal procedures at EA level regarding the accreditation process,
- Dissemination and training on the evaluation of measurement uncertainty for quantitative test results,
- The requirements and establishment of European reference laboratories,
- Harmonisation of flexible scope in relation to accreditation procedures, and
- International co-operation.

Workshop held in Paris in October 2005

A joint EUROLAB, EA, EURACHEM and CEOC workshop on *Regulation and standard requirements for conformity assessment of products, services and processes*, organised by LNE was held in Paris in October 2005. It was attended by over 250 participants, with two major topics. These were Review of the New Approach and CE marking; and Conformity Assessment and International Trade.

Jacques McMillan from the European Commission, reported on the status of the review of the European New Approach. He stressed the importance of an improved and harmonised notification process. Preferably accreditation and the European accreditation structure should be used for assessment and surveillance of the competence of the bodies notified to carry out conformity assessment under the European directives. It was suggested that in order for accreditation to be recognised as a 'public authority activity' and to be the highest level of assessment, there needs to be a monopoly status for national accreditation bodies.

Alan Bryden, Secretary General of ISO, reported on the coherence of the new standardisation system at the international level with regard to conformity assessment and international trade and on the connection between accreditation and certification. Daniel Pierre, ILAC Chairman, addressed the recognition of test reports and certificates at the international level pointing at progress and difficulties, eg. the possible new role of EA in the European legally regulated area in the future.

Workshop participants and representatives from European organisations from industry, consumers, public authorities, accreditation and conformity assessment bodies, took part in interactive debates which added to the success of the workshop.

Workshop to be held in May in Sweden

A joint EUROLAB, EA, EURACHEM and PLG workshop with the topic *Flexible scope in laboratory accreditation* will be held on May 15, 2006 in Borås, Sweden. It is organised by SP to answer the following question 'Does innovative industry require flexible laboratory services?' The major topics covered will be:

- View of accreditors on implementation of flexible scope
- Experience from testing and calibration laboratories
- · Future needs from industry and society
- The way forward

Experts and practitioners from a number of fields, accreditation bodies, testing and calibration laboratories, industries and European Commission will give presentations. Discussion periods will include the interpretation of ISO/IEC 17025, the definition of flexible scope and the assessment of personal competence.

For further details, contact Prof. Hans Andersson; telephone: +46 33 16 52 21; email: hans.andersson@sp.se

National Laboratory Association – South Africa

Steve Sidney, Manager, NLA

The National Laboratory Association had a successful year achieving many of its goals during the past 12 months.

Training

The number of training courses that took place up to the end of December saw 188 candidates attending the various NLA/CMeTSA courses. The last year was a most successful one for the Association.

The total number of attendees represents an increase over the previous year and whilst there has been a shift in terms of the demand for the various courses, it is significant that the need for Metrology training continues. Understanding and estimating the associated uncertainties of measurement is still a very challenging concept for not only the testing community, but also for those involved in the calibration arena. The introductory and specialised chemical courses were very popular. The Mass and Temperature courses were also well attended.

Planning is underway for a number of new courses for this year.

Unit Standards and Professional Recognition

Metrology

The Metrology SGG made an updated submission regarding Unit Standards and the Metrology Qualification to EGSB, which has been sent through to SAQA for ratification.

This submission now means that should SAQA be satisfied with the submission both the Qualification as well as the Unit Standards for DC LF and Temperature will be registered on the NQF. In addition, good progress has been made with development of the USs for the Mass and Dimensional and it is hoped that these will be submitted by the end of the first quarter of 2006.

Conferences

T&M Conference 2006

After the success of the T&M Conference 2005, dates for the 2006 meeting have been set: 23–25 October 2006, at the Emperors Palace Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Contact Steve Sidney at NLA for more information or visit the website: nla.org.za

International Affiliations

NCSLI has been invited to attend the T&M Conference 2006 and Dr Malcolm Smith has reported positively on behalf of the Board.

accreditation update



Awards presented to TAF Assessors at the TAF Annual Meeting

CNLA/TAF

The 2006 TAF Annual Meeting and Workshop on Conformity Assessment and Accreditation took place on 16 February. This was TAF's third annual meeting since its foundation in 2004. More than 800 delegates from government sectors, private sectors and accredited organisations participated in this large annual celebration.

In addition to the annual meeting, the workshop was designed as a thesis presentation event where studies on conformity assessment and accreditation could be shared by and amongst experts and interested parties. In total, one hundred and fourteen thesis presentations were delivered in various fields such as civil engineering, calibration, laboratory accreditation and management, environment/foods/chemical, electrical, medical inspection, product/green house gas certification and management system certification.

Argentina

The Argentine Accreditation Body (OAA) has published its first institutional magazine. In the first issue, the OAA opens itself to the world, once again, but with a new image. A tour across its history shows its beginnings and the bases that nowadays support its increasing activity. The magazine also has interesting articles on quality, accreditation, trans-frontier and opinion. To receive an issue, email OAA at revistaoaa@mecon.gov.ar.

Argentina to host IAAC meeting

The Argentine Accreditation Body has been chosen by its American peers to be the host of the 11th General Assembly of the Inter-American Cooperation for Accreditation (IAAC) that will be held on August 5-11, 2006.

The General Assembly is the most important annual meeting of IAAC in which strategies and policies are defined and action plans established regarding the development of the accreditation infrastructure in the American continent and its linkage with the International Accreditation System.

Croatian Accreditation Agency

The Croatian Accreditation Agency (HAA) will participate this month for the first time at the meeting of EA-MAC committee as a new full member, after being formed in July last year.

Previously, the State Office for Standardization and Metrology had performed HAA activities.

The development of an accreditation system in line with the European rules started in Croatia 10 years ago, based on the Law on Standardization (Official Gazette No 55/96). The accreditation system was set up on the basis of the



Abdullah Abdul Rahman Al-Shaibani, Assistant Director General of Dubai Municipality for Technical Services Affairs and Paul Stennett, Chief Executive of UKAS, exhchange MoU documents

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European standards series EN 45000 which were adopted in Croatia as the Croatian standards series HRN EN 45000.

The reorganisation of the Croatian State Office for Standardization and Metrology started at the end of 2003 and finished on 30 June 2005. Two new public institutions, the Croatian Accreditation Agency and the Croatian Standards Institute were established. The State Office for Metrology remains the governmental body.

A Governmental decree on the establishment of the Croatian Accreditation Agency was issued on October 2004 (Official Gazette No 158/2004, 44/2005) based on the Law on Accreditation (Official Gazette No 158/2003). The HAA implemented a management system in compliance with the standard HRN EN ISO/IEC 17011:2005 - adopted as the Croatian standard - as well as regulations and guidance of EA, ILAC and IAF.

In March 2005 the Croatian Government appointed the HAA director and members of the Administrative Board. The HAA was registered at the Commercial Court on 13 April 2005. The Statute of HAA was verified by the Croatian Government in June last year.(Official Gazette No 76/2005).

During the last eight months, the HAA concentrated on employing additional staff, renovating offices and training centre facilities, purchasing IT equipment and all other equipment. This year, the HAA has 17 staff compared to eight when it started working as independent institution.

The HAA is full member of the European Co-operation for Accreditation (EA). It was confirmed by EA General Assembly in Rome on 17 November 2005.

The HAA contact details are: Croatian Accreditation Agency (HAA) Address: Ulica grada Vukovara 78, 10 000 Zagreb, Croatia. Phone: ++ 385 1 610 63 22 Fax: ++ 385 1 610 93 22 e.mail: akreditacija@akreditacija.hr Website address: www.akreditacija.hr Director General: Biserka Bajzek Brezak, M.Sc.

Dubai

Dubai Accreditation Center signs MoU with UKAS

The Dubai Accreditation Center (DAC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) on 13 February 2006.

This MoU has great significance in the light of rapid growth in all spheres, particularly, the construction boom that is occurring in Dubai today and the government's keenness to place great emphasis on providing quality services.

The MoU was signed by Abdullah Abdul Rahman Al-Shaibani, Assistant Director General of Dubai Municipality for Technical Services Affairs and Paul Stennett, Chief Executive of UKAS. DAC is the first organisation in the region to sign a MoU with UKAS.

DAC was established in May 2005 'to be the sole authorised accreditation body within the emirate of Dubai, providing accreditation services to CABs, using international standards, guidelines and best practices, for enhancing confidence in conformity assessment which ensures free movement of goods and services within and across the borders.'

In order to achieve that DAC became an ILAC associate member in August 2005; and is working towards becoming a signatory to the ILAC MRA.

There are a number of UKAS-accredited testing laboratories and certification bodies of quality and environmental management systems in Dubai. UKAS is therefore considered the foreign accreditation body with the biggest customer-base that is operating in Dubai. For that reason and to further achieve its mission; DAC agreed with UKAS that mutual benefit could be derived from staff interaction, information exchange, cooperative assessments, training and other forms of collaboration. Both organisations see advantages in the development of strong accreditation links and relationships.

The following areas of cooperation are considered to be desirable and feasible:

- Group joint assessments with DAC assessors being observers in the UKAS assessments taking place in Dubai;
- Possible exchange of information on the status of accreditation by UKAS

in Dubai, subject to the agreement of individual accredited bodies;

- Mutual guidance and assistance in the preparation of seminars, conferences, and workshops;
- Providing leads for contacting appropriate UKAS technical assessors;
- Cooperation in training projects for specified areas of development; and
- Encouraging implementation of ILAC and IAF Cross Frontier Accreditation policies in UAE.

The terms of specific areas of cooperation will be further considered and agreed upon in writing by both parties prior to the initiation of any particular program or activity. Any specific program will be subject to mutual consent, availability of funds, and approval of both parties.

It is important to emphasise that this Memorandum of Understanding is not a formal legal agreement giving rise to any legal or financial relationship, but can be considered as a definite expression and record of intention of both parties.

There are a lot of international contractors working in Dubai. Cement, soil, sand and other materials used in construction should also conform to international standards. The increased number of cranes used for construction in Dubai demands a strict quality check from an accredited body with international recognition in order to ensure their safety.

DAC will shortly will do what UKAS does in England. Since many labs, inspection bodies and certification bodies in Dubai are seeking accreditation, DAC has plans to organise the accreditation sector in Dubai, so that the public in the near future can look for the DAC symbol as a synonym for quality and safety in Dubai.

Both DAC and UKAS hope that through the MoU, DAC can become the number one organisation in the region in the accreditation sector.

With the signing of this MoU, DAC is now closely associated with an international body in the field of accreditation. Through this, DAC can access the services of qualified British engineers and technical experts to use them through its process of accreditation for a wider scope of expertise.

Discussions were also held with Mr Stennett regarding contacting appropriate



Participants enjoy a training course in Dubai

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UKAS technical assessors and experts, as well as training DAC staff in accreditation of certification bodies that include product, personnel and management system certification.

DAC organises ISO/IEC 17025: 2005 training course

In February 2006 a Lead Assessor Training course to ISO/IEC 17025:2005 was offered in Dubai in response to market needs. At the same time as expanding into new areas and scopes of accreditation it is also offering training courses to qualify assessors who meet the initial selection criteria and have assessment experience so that they may be added to the DAC assessor pool.

This course is designed to meet the training requirements of ILAC G-3: 1994 and the course content is based on the principles and practice for audits of Quality Management Systems in accordance with ISO 19011:2002 and Quality Management System in Laboratories in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025:2005 standards.

The course provides the basic knowledge and skills to persons who need to lead the assessment teams for laboratory accreditation. It highlights the special approach to management systems in laboratories and the methodology of assessing these systems appropriately, and to encourage constructive development of effective assessment skills.

This highly interactive five-day course was based on class participation both as individuals and in teams, and involved exercises, case studies, syndicate work, role play, presentations, actual on site assessment practical training and final exam. The appraisal of participants was done by a combination of continuous assessment of their interaction during the course and a written examination in the conclusion of the course.

A minimum of 80% score in the overall course appraisal was required to qualify participant to qualify for the course. Participants were evaluated through their contributions made throughout the duration of the course, especially regarding their knowledge and understanding of the accreditation criteria and assessment techniques, ability to work as a member of a team, ability to communicate and deal with the human aspects of assessment, and leadership potential.

The course was organised for accreditation bodies' staff e.g. DAC as well

as for personnel involved in the processes and assessments within accreditation of Management Systems in laboratories as per ISO/IEC 17025. There were 15 participants in this training course who came from a wide spectrum including members from the Gems and Precious Metals laboratory, Food and Environment laboratory, Engineering Materials laboratory and Calibration laboratory in Dubai Central Laboratory Department, Department of Health and Medical Services (Dubai), and Sharjah Municipality.

The tutor for the course was Eng. Lina Qudah, the Head of Accreditation Decisions Section in DAC, and was assisted by the Co-tutor Eng. Muhammed Shahid, Head of Assessment Section in DAC. They both added to the course their extensive experience in assessments, accreditation and training, monitoring and supervising Lead Assessors, giving valuable guidance and constructive reviews of the participants' assessment skills during the course.

The course received a very positive feedback and much appreciation from all the participants, especially those who are looking forward to being added to the "DAC Pool of Assessors" and the associated organisations.

With the success of this training course DAC has added a sixth course to its series of training courses to be offered for assessors.

Guatemala

Alexander Pineda, Head of the Guatemalan Accreditation Office

New Legal Status of the Guatemalan Accreditation Office

The National Quality System has now been established in Guatemala, following the issue of Law 78-2005 "National Quality System" in November 2005.

The National Quality System is made up of the Standards Body (COGUANOR), the National Metrology Center (CENAME) and the Guatemalan Accreditation Office (OGA).

The new legislation strengthens the activities of the OGA and allows the continuation of the assessment and accreditation of conformity assessment bodies that OGA has been performing since its establishment. The new National Accreditation Board, composed of all interested parties, will support OGA through its involvement in the accreditation system, maintaining the impartiality and independence in the decision-making process. OGA has been working to prepare the new scheme for the assessment of clinical/medical laboratories according to the ISO 15189:2003 standard and the process will be ready the first quarter of 2006.

View the 2005 Annual Report on the website www.mineco.gob.gt or enquire by email to: info-oga@mail.mineco.gob.gt.

Jordan

Contract of cooperation with EA signed

The Jordanian Accreditation Commission (JAC) signed a contract of cooperation with the European Organization for Accreditation (EA) in November 2005, during the EA General Assembly in Rome.

The JAC has now become a member of the European Accreditation community which will help it develop and improve in accordance to the international best practices.

A full evaluation by EA is expected in mid 2006 in order to be able to become a signatory to a MLA, after which JAC will achieve the aim of becoming internationally recognised.

Jordan Establishes its National Metrology Institute

An agreement was signed recently between the two pivotal organisations for metrology in Jordan (The Jordan Institute for Standards and Metrology and the Royal Scientific Society). This agreement established the Jordan National Metrology Institute (JNMI).

The JNMI was established to form the basis of the quality infrastructure in Jordan represented by the standards, metrology, testing, accreditation and conformity assessment. It will work on the maintenance and traceability of the national standards to international standards as well as introducing the calibration service to laboratories in order to satisfy the needs of conformity assessment bodies and industrial sector for ensuring traceability.

Jordan-Germany Twinning Project proceeds

The Jordan-Germany Twinning Project action plan is now being implemented by highly qualified experts. The main activities undertaken were training on some technical issues in accreditation and expanding the scope of accreditation services of the Jordan accreditation body to include certification and inspection



Mr Guillermo Schiefer (ema's President) being congratulated by Mr Leon Halkin (President of the Mexican Industry and Commerce Chamber). Also present is Mr Vicente Fox (President of Mexico)

bodies in addition to testing and calibration laboratories.

This project, which continues the development of the quality infrastructure in Jordan, is to include in its second mission, the expansion of accreditation services scope to include accreditation of medical laboratories. It will also include the performance of some joint assessments and witness audits.

Mexico

The Entidad Mexicana de Acreditacion (ema) has taken out the Mexican Government's Ethics and Values Prize.

The Premio de etica y valores was presented to the organisation by Mexican President Vicente Fox Quesada at a ceremony held last November.

The organisation was recognised for demonstrating its adherence to international standards and guidance, as well as the quality of its daily work.

This prize is awarded to Mexican companies demonstrating social responsibility and benefit.

Confirming that commitment, ema has joined the 'Global Compact' network of the United Nations. The Global Compact asks companies to embrace, support and enact, within their sphere of influence, a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labor standards, the environment and anti-corruption.

ema has continually evolved since its inception as a dream just seven years ago, and is well regarded by institutions and staff it works with.

Mauritius

The Mauritius Accreditation Service (MAURITAS) is progressing steadily in the implementation of accreditation in the country. Following a series of awareness seminars and training for all stakeholders (for example, laboratories and technical assessors) during recent years and the signature of a twinning agreement with the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) in December 2004, MAURITAS has already received 12 applications from laboratories in both the private and public sector. A first document review and pre-assessment exercise was conducted in January 2006 by one Lead Assessor from SANAS in collaboration with MAURITAS, for a first group of four laboratories. These laboratories will now address the non-compliances so as to be

ready for initial assessment. This exercise has also been fruitful for MAURITAS technical staff who are now familiarised with this aspect of assessment. It is anticipated that the first laboratory could be accredited by about June 2006.

MAURITAS is also encouraging the medical testing laboratories to seek accreditation and in this context an awareness session was organised on 21 January 2006 and was attended by 20 private testing laboratories. The main topics covered during the awareness session related to:

- importance of accreditation for laboratories
- MAURITAS accreditation process
- International Standard ISO 15189:2003 Medical Laboratories Particular Requirements for Quality and Competence.

New Zealand

The demand for accreditation, especially as a complementary service regulators can use to support their regulatory requirements, continues to grow in New Zealand.

International Accreditation New Zealand (IANZ) has significantly increased the

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number of staff to accommodate the demands made of several accreditation programs. Since December 2005, the IANZ inspection body program has recruited three new members, the Chemical/Biological/Dairy (CBD) program has two new members and the Medical Program also has two new members. Some staff at IANZ have been relocated within the IANZ office building to make better use of space. Further partitioning of the office is expected later this year as IANZ's accreditation programs continue to grow and more staff join IANZ.

COFRAC

Laurent Roullot, Communication Manager, COFRAC

First medical biology laboratory accreditation against NF EN ISO 15189 standard

Nearly a hundred medical biology laboratories (LABMs) are accredited by COFRAC at the present time according to the NF EN ISO/IEC 17025 standard. For some time now, the 17025 standard has coexisted with the 15189 standard, created for the purpose of providing a more specific response to the expectations of the LABMs. However, since it came into force in 2003, the 15189 standard had not, until recently, given rise to any accreditations by COFRAC in France.

Although COFRAC has already accredited nearly a hundred medical biology laboratories in the past according to the 17025 standard, this is the first accreditation of a laboratory according to 15189. In addition there are about fifteen accreditation requests for this new standard, with several being from laboratories attached to public hospitals. The choice of standard is left to the laboratories and once this choice has been made, COFRAC undertakes the accreditation according to the standard selected.

The differences between the NF EN ISO/IEC 17025 and 15189 standards are not very significant. The major difference is mainly in the vocabulary and terminology used, which in 15189, is more suitable to the world of biology. The 15189 standard uses specific "fieldrelated" vocabulary, which is more appropriate and therefore more easily understandable to the LABMs than that employed by the 17025 standard. That aside, the two standards present the same level of requirements in technical and organisational terms. Because of this homogeneity of requirements the European (EA) and international (ILAC) accreditation bodies have chosen to integrate the 15189 standard in the international recognition agreements which already existed for the 17025 standard, without creating a specific agreement for the 15189 standard.

Reinforced food safety standards

A series of standards published at the end of 2005 (ISO 22000:2005) is intended to make those involved in the food processing industries aware of their responsibilities.

A new series of standards on food safety was inaugurated with the publication in September 2005 of the ISO 22000:2005 standard *Food Safety Management System Standard*—*Requirements for any organisation in the food chain.* The standard incorporates the major principles of both HACCP (principles enacted by the Codex Alimentarius) and the ISO 9001 standard. It was initiated by professionals in the food industry who wished to demonstrate their ability to identify and control hazards related to food safety. Consequently this standard imposes an obligation of results and not of means.

This standard is relevant to all aspects of the food industry: those who are directly involved (from farmers to retailers) as well as those who are indirectly involved (from pesticide producers to suppliers of support services). There is therefore a potential market for certification according to this very important standard, a market which is nonetheless part of a landscape in which other private international documents already exist, such as IFS (International Food Standard) and BRC (British Retail Consortium) established on the initiative of distribution groupings.

As for other management system certification procedures or those more specific to food safety, accreditation would appear essential if the system is to be reliable. A standard (a 'technical specification' according to the ISO denomination) containing requirements for the accreditation of certifying bodies for this activity is currently being drafted. This is ISO/TS 22003 Food Safety Management Systems—Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of food safety management systems.

Pending its publication, the EA general assembly has offered the possibility of accrediting requesting certifying bodies on the basis of the EN 45012 standard. A specific accreditation scheme will therefore be developed within the 'Certification of Companies, Staff and Environment' section of the COFRAC. The accreditation program will be published shortly. In the meantime, accreditation requests can be addressed to the section. Training for technical evaluators has also been scheduled. This accreditation is expected to be operational from April 2006.

As soon as the definitive version of the ISO 22003 standard is published, it will become the accreditation standard for this field. This system will therefore be added to the range of accreditation standards concerning the certification of companies (management systems).

Pakistan National Accreditation Council

There are now 21 laboratories accredited by the Pakistan National Accreditation Council (PNAC) in the fields of Microbiology, Engineering, Textiles, Pharmaceuticals, Leather, Chemical and Electronics. An additional 32 laboratories are at various stages of assessment.

An independent new Laboratory Accreditation Committee (LAC) has been constituted by PNAC to make the accreditation process transparent and impartial. The committee reviews the reports of assessment teams and makes recommendation for accreditation of the laboratories. The 11-member committee is made up of senior level scientists and researchers, including heads of scientific and research organisations. The introductory meeting of LAC was held on 25 February 2006 where Ms Ismat Gul Khattak, Director Industrial and Testing laboratories, gave a presentation to the committee explaining the terms of reference of LAC, overview of ISO-17025 and other requirements of PNAC. Two committee meetings took place in March 2006 in the presence of an expert from Norwegian Accreditation. The meetings involved the committees on proficiency testing and on calibration. The stakeholders have been invited to participate in these meetings to prepare a guideline for laboratories on these issues.

A National Quality Policy and Plan (NQP&P) has been formulated by PNAC with consultation from all relevant government agencies, private sector organisations and other stakeholders. The Cabinet approved, in principle, the broad policy parameters contained in the NQP&P and earmarked approximately US \$176.66 million for its implementation within the coming five years. The NQP&P envisages strengthening and upgrading the national regulatory and quality infrastructure, including accreditation of laboratories to support trade. It also includes the supply of safe and quality products in the market. An implementation committee headed by the Minister for Science and Technology, and represented by both public and private sector organisations and experts, has been constituted to oversee implementation of the NQP&P. PNAC is the Secretariat to the implementation committee of NQP&P.

A 'Crash Awareness Raising Program and Training in the Field of Quality' has recently been launched by PNAC. Under the program, seminars/courses in the field of quality, health, environment, safety and WTO related issues are being organised in all major cities of the country, in collaboration with industrial associations, Chambers of Commerce and Industry, educational institutions and other stakeholders. More than 300 seminars/ courses have been organised in different cities to improve the quality culture in the country in the past three years. In addition, nearly 400 laboratory managers have been attended five-day training courses on ISO-17025. Around 15,000 participants have benefited from these seminars and courses.

Projects for PNAC in the future are accreditation of medical laboratories in accordance with ISO-15189, accreditation of inspection agencies in accordance with ISO-17020, accreditation on product certification in accordance with ISO Guide-65, and new schemes for the accreditation of conformity assessment bodies in accordance with the standards such as HACCP, OHSAS and other emerging standards to meet the need of international market.

Ukraine

Victor Kaminskiy, Head of Technical Accreditation Committee, Director of Executive Board of UkrAO

A new association has been formed in Ukraine, the Association of Ukrainian Accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies (UkrAO). The members of the technical accreditation committee created this association with the purpose of increasing the importance of accredited conformity assessment bodies with regard to technical regulation, promotion and development of accreditation systems and conformity assessment in Ukraine, according to international and European requirements.

Currently there are more than 150 certification bodies and 800 testing laboratories operating in different spheres of the economy in Ukraine. However, only 7–10% of them are accredited by the National Accreditation Agency of Ukraine (NAAU). This is due to monopolisation of certification processes from the direction of the state, both in legislative and voluntarily spheres, by a history of creation of certification bodies based on state ownership, and by centralisation of management of its activity.

The association is built on selffinancing and self-repayment principles as a voluntary union of enterprises that join their efforts for common direction of activities. The Association is non-governmental and independent. Association members are conformity assessment bodies with any patterns of ownership and membership of the association does not impose any limitation on its members regarding commercial, public and any other activity.

The main areas of activity of the association are:

- development of proposals with regard to improvement of accreditation systems, conformity assessment and related types of activities;
- consolidation of scientific, technical and production potential of conformity assessment bodies, coordination of efforts of the members for creation of appropriate level of laboratory and scientific base;
- practical and scientific cooperation for complex programs and projects;
- organisation of training and professional development of personnel;
- cooperation with mass media and respective governmental and non-governmental institutions;
- presentation of the interests of the Association in public authorities and protect their rights; and
- international cooperation.

For further information, contact the Association at: Ukraine, Kyiv, Peremogy prospect, 57; tel. + 38 044 201 08 39, Email: nlipovets@insat.org.ua.

Australia

NATA strengthens relationship with AQIS to ensure market access for meat exports

Market access for Australian meat exports to the United States and Europe was underpinned by the signing of a deed of arrangement between the NATA and the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) in March 2006.

The deed formalises arrangements whereby NATA undertakes targeted assessments of laboratories strengthening the already high standard of microbiological testing of export meat.

According to NATA CEO Tony Russell, the deed with AQIS should facilitate confidence in the hygiene of meat exports entering US and European markets.

"Across a range of sectors NATA's international recognition in a number of economies has allowed Australian companies easier access to markets and reduced needs for costly re-testing of their products at point of importation". Mr Russell said.

"Over many years NATA has developed Mutual Recognition Arrangements with its national counterparts in the world's major economies, allowing NATA accreditation to be recognised not only within Australia, but by our trading partners as well."

Mr Russell said NATA's strong international role was strengthened through its membership of the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation.

"This deed should assist abattoirs to meet strict import requirements in markets such as the United States.

"The export beef market alone is worth more than AUD \$3.8 billion, and NATA is pleased to be working closely with AQIS on supporting a market as critical as our meat exports," Mr Russell said.

"In the longer term, the agreement with AQIS predicts NATA accredited laboratories' ongoing involvement in general testing of foods being imported into Australia—again an area vital to the national interest."



The following ILAC publications are available free of charge on the ILAC website at www.ilac.org, as at April 2006.

Brochures

The ILAC Arrangement Why Use An Accredited Laboratory? Why Become An Accredited Laboratory? How Does Using an Accredited Laboratory Benefit Government & Regulators? The Advantages of Being An Accredited Laboratory Laboratory Accreditation or ISO 9001 Certification

Information Documents (I Series)

ILAC-I1:1994	Legal Liability in Testing
ILAC-I2:1994	Currently under review
ILAC-I3:1996	The Role of Testing and Laboratory Accreditation in International Trade
ILAC-14:1996	Guidance Documents for the Preparation of Laboratory Quality Manuals

Guidance Documents (G Series)

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

Secretariat Documents (S Series)

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

Procedural Documents (P Series)

 ILAC-P1:2003
 ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Requirements for Evaluation of Accreditation Bodies by ILAC-recognised Regional Cooperations

 ILAC-P2:2003
 ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Procedures for the Evaluation of Regional Cooperation Bodies for the Purpose of Recognition

 ILAC-P3:2003
 ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Procedures for the Evaluation of Unaffiliated Bodies for the Purpose of Recognition

 ILAC-P3:2003
 ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Procedures for the Evaluation of Unaffiliated Bodies for the Purpose of Recognition

 ILAC-P4:2003
 ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Policy Statement ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Terms of Reference and Composition of the Arrangement Management Committee

 ILAC-P5:2004
 ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement)

- ILAC-P6:2003 Application for Full Member Status
- ILAC-P7:2003 ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Key performance Indicators (KPIs)
- ILAC-P9:2005 ILAC Policy for Participation in National and International Proficiency Testing Activities
- ILAC-P10:2002 ILAC Policy on Traceability of Measurement Results
- ILAC-P11:2004 Monitoring Performance of ILAC Evaluators
- ILAC-P12:2005 Harmonisation of ILAC Work with the Regions

ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Terms of Reference and Composition of The Arrangement Management Committee

Joint ILAC IAF Documents (A series)

IAF/ILAC A1:2006 IAF/ILAC MRAs: Evaluation of a Regional Group

- IAF/ILAC A2:2006 IAF/ILAC MRAs: Evaluation of a Single Accreditation Body
- IAF/ILAC A3:2006 IAF/ILAC MRAs: Key Performance Indicators
- IAF/ILAC A4:2004 Guidance on the Application of ISO/IEC 17020

Good news stories from ILAC members

These and more stories can be found on the ILAC website www.ilac.org, under ILAC Arrangement. Send any further examples to ILAC at ilac@nata.asn.au.

A2LA

A2LA was able to accept an assessment by DATECH of an A2LA-accredited laboratory in Germany in place of an onsite surveillance assessment by A2LA by virtue of the EA MLA.

General Electric has begun to accept laboratories accredited by A2LA by virtue of A2LA's signatory status within the ILAC MRA.

Because of the MRA partner status with JAB, A2LA worked with General Motors to facilitate their acceptance of JAB accredited laboratories in Japan, rather than having A2LA conduct separate assessments of these laboratories.

The State of Minnesota Dental Association and the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services have specified in their document related to hydraulic testing of amalgam separators, that all hydraulic testing laboratories must be accredited by an accreditation body which is a signatory to the ILAC MRA.

A company in Kenya, East Africa that imports goods from the U.S. contacted A2LA for a list of accredited laboratories that their U.S. supplier could contract with in order to have the imported goods tested. Because of A2LA's status as an ILAC signatory, the tested products would not have to be retested in Kenya.

UKAS

In December 2005, the European Marine Energy Centre (EMEC) in Orkney achieved a world first by gaining UKAS accreditation for its unique testing facilities, providing detailed and highly accurate data on the performance of devices developed to harness wave energy. This accreditation is significant as it demonstrates that UKAS can meet the challenges posed by the need to accredit bodies that are developing evaluation techniques for new and innovative technologies. Through the accreditation of this activity, UKAS has been able to assist the British Government in its obligations to reduce the production of greenhouse gases and to support the development of green energy sources.

Two British insurance companies have launched new insurance products designed

to benefit UKAS accredited testing laboratories. Such schemes are excellent examples of the benefits that can result from becoming accredited. Howden Insurance Brokers offer a professional indemnity scheme specifically tailored to the needs of UKAS accredited testing laboratories and has recently announced an increase in cover to $f_{,5}$ million pounds. Miles Smith also offers a preferential scheme for UKAS-accredited asbestos testing laboratories-in particular, for smaller firms- and has now produced an agreed format for clearly describing the extent of cover held by accredited companies.

CAEAL

Research undertaken by the Canadian Association for Environmental Analytical Laboratories (CAEAL) has found that accredited laboratories consistently out-perform non-accredited laboratories in the CAEAL proficiency testing program. The research findings (see 1997 Performance Comparison and 2001 Performance Comparison at www.caeal. ca/aboutus) clearly show that test results from accredited laboratories are more precise than results from non-accredited laboratories, and therefore are more reliable than results originating from nonaccredited laboratories. The benefits of using an accredited laboratory in terms of precision, reliability and confidence in the results are clearly demonstrated.

More than 350 laboratories participate in CAEAL's program, 72% of which are private sector laboratories, and 28% are public sector laboratories which are associated with local, provincial and federal levels of government in Canada.

KOLAS Korean steel exporter benefits from the ILAC MRA

A large Korean steel manufacturer, POSCO, has enjoyed improved market access benefiting from the accreditation of its laboratory by KOLAS in the year 2000.

In 2004, a Mexican automobile parts manufacturer was interested in buying POSCO steel, demanding the proof of the reliability of POSCO steel. The Mexican buyer was delighted to learn POSCO steel had been tested in an accredited laboratory by KOLAS and POSCO successfully secured order from the Mexican customer. Again in 2004, an Indian buyer of POSCO steel required the steel to have certification from BIS (Bureau of India Standard). POSCO's accredited laboratory was accepted thereby satisfying the BIS requirement. The steel tested by the POSCO laboratory was not required to be retested in India, resulting in a considerable saving on the cost of retesting.

POSCO is very pleased with its KOLAS accreditation, and its benefits from KOLAS' signatory status in the ILAC MRA. POSCO estimates the ILAC MRA has brought the company US\$5 million in economic benefits in 2004 alone. ILAC MRA has created the reliability of testing, realising the vision of ILAC "One test, accepted everywhere" in the real world.

New Zealand

New Zealand mussels to Italy

A New Zealand exporter (and their insurance company) was saved a great deal of money and a gourmet extravaganza was provided for Italian palates, because of the ILAC Arrangement. While en route to Canada the original customer for a shipment of mussels worth \$50,000 went bankrupt and the ILAC Arrangement made it possible to organise a replacement export certificate so that a new customer could be found. IANZ and the Italian accreditation body, SINAL were able to assist by finding an accredited laboratory which could perform the necessary microbiological tests, so that the shipment could be re-tested and a replacement certificate issued.

Bottled drinking water into Asia

A major New Zealand exporter was able to have his fresh, clean water from New Zealand accepted in a new market in Asia because his test reports came from an IANZ-accredited laboratory.

The conclusion of the Uruguay Round opened many markets to products that had previously been banned. One such product is bottled drinking water. Drinking water is, however, required to be tested for chemical characteristics and microbiological content. The authorities may also require historical tests of the water at source and following processing. The Asian regulator accepted the New Zealand test reports because IANZ is a signatory of the ILAC Arrangement.