

ILAC News

Issue 31, April/May 2007



- **ILAC/IAF
Cancun,
Mexico**

- **Confidence in
Measurements**

- **CASCO update**

Sydney hosts the
next ILAC/IAF Joint
General Assembly
19–31 October 2007

ILAC News

Contents

From the Chair	2
News from the ILAC Secretariat	3
Obituary – Beatrice Mutabazi	5
Changes to ILAC Membership	15
ILAC committee news	
Arrangement Committee - Cancun	6
Marketing and Communications Committee - Cancun	7
Marketing and Communications Committee Meets in Bangkok	8
Feature	
Confidence in measurements	10
International update	
CASCO Meets	13
Regional cooperations	
Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC)	14
South African Regional Accreditation Cooperation (SADCA)	15
Accreditation Update	
China National Accreditation Service of Conformity Assessment (CNAS)	17
Croatian Accreditation Agency (HAA)	17
Mexican Accreditation Entity (ema)	18
Guatemalan Accreditation Office (OGA)	18
National Accreditation Agency of Ukraine (NAAU)	19
International Accreditation New Zealand (IANZ)	20
NVLAP New website launched	20
Organismo Argentino de Acreditacion (OAA)	21
Pakistan National Accreditation Council (PNAC)	21
SINCERT	22
SANAS	23
Tanzania (TBS)	23
Stakeholder News	
European Network of Forensic Science Institutes (ENFSI)	24
National Laboratory Association (NLA)	24
ILAC Publications	26
Reader Survey	27
2007 ILAC/IAF Joint Annual Meetings, Sydney(back cover)	

From the Chair

During our last General Assembly in Cancun, all members of the previous Executive Committee, who are elected by the ILAC voting members, were given a new mandate. On behalf of my colleagues, I wish to thank all ILAC members for their confidence.

ILAC is now in the very fortunate position of having significant continuity in both the Executive Committee and the Secretariat, which will allow many of the initiatives which were underway, at the time of the Cancun meetings, to be taken forward in an efficient and timely manner.

I will begin by mentioning the work being undertaken in the fields of Reference Materials and Proficiency Testing. This important work involves the full range of interested parties: accreditors, the International Standards Organisation (ISO), accredited bodies or potential candidates for accreditation, industry and government regulators. The involvement of so many parties in this work demonstrates the importance of these topics and the need to achieve consensus amongst groups from all disciplines and regions of the world.

I will also underline the importance of maintaining and strengthening our liaisons with our Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signatory partners, as well as extending this activity to other organisations with similar interests. Here, once again, the continuity of liaison officers to these organisations, facilitates the task.

I have not forgotten to speak about our ILAC Arrangement. It is our main “product” and we need to continue our activities of supporting and developing the Arrangement, together with communicating the benefits that can be derived from it. It is essential that the ILAC Arrangement becomes increasingly recognised as a symbol of confidence and reliability. We are actively pursuing this aim and focussing our efforts accordingly.

It is also fundamental to keep in mind that our Arrangement is supported by a focus on the harmonization of accreditation practices, between ILAC members, through the establishment of guidance and interpretation documents. Again, continuity of many of the people involved in this work has been very helpful.

To complete this impressive list, I would like to mention one of our joint ILAC/IAF tasks, which is to provide assistance to developing countries in setting up their own accreditation schemes. In addition to some on-going projects there are several initiatives planned for 2007. Unfortunately, here the continuity of Chairmanship has been broken and it saddens me greatly to report that the IAF Co-Chair, Beatrice MUTABAZI, tragically passed away late in 2006.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution made by Beatrice and the sadness that is felt within the accreditation community over her passing. My memories of Beatrice will always be that she was so happy and involved in her mission.

I would like, however, to finish this edition on a positive note by confirming that, for sure, we will continue to move forward in this important area of work. The new IAF Co-Chair, when appointed, will work together with Maribel Lopez (ILAC Co-Chair), the committee members and the whole accreditation community, to progress the work already commenced in this area.

Daniel Pierre
Chair



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ILAC Secretariat: Alan Squirrel, Annette Dever, Sharon Kelly, Nilla Merrigan, Alison Hay.

News from the ILAC secretariat

ILAC Meetings

The 2006 Annual Meetings for ILAC and IAF were hosted by the entidad mexicana de acreditación a.c. (ema) in Cancun, Mexico, from 6-14 November 2006. Representatives of several international liaison organisations attended and the meetings were both productive and informative. Delegates participated in a very full meeting schedule but were also fortunate to experience some very enjoyable cultural events arranged by ema.

The first ILAC Executive Committee and Arrangement Committee (ARC) meetings for 2007 were hosted by COFRAC in Paris, France during early March. As is usual for the first Executive meeting of the year, planning of the work program for 2007 was high on the agenda, with the updated work programs of the Committees also being reviewed. Another standard activity for the first meeting of the year is the review of the General Assembly Resolutions and the status of those requiring action.

The Paris meetings also provided the opportunity for representatives from the Organisation of Legal Metrology (OIML) and the European Commission (EC) to participate in the Executive Committee meeting for the relevant agenda items. Régine Gaucher, Mutual Acceptance Arrangement Project Leader, attended from OIML and provided an update on the progress being made with the joint ILAC and OIML activities. Jacques McMillan, the Head of Unit - Regulatory Policy, attended from the EC and provided an update on the draft regulation, relating to the requirements for accreditation in the marketing of products that is currently under consideration.

The June meetings in 2007 will be hosted by CNAS in Beijing, China. 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 (MC) and a joint session of the ILAC AMC and IAF MLA MC will be held during this period. Terms of Reference for the operation of the joint sessions of the ILAC AMC and IAF MLA MC were approved by each organisation, at the ILAC-IAF Joint General Assembly in Cancun in November 2006.

The 2007 Annual Meetings (ILAC and IAF) will be co-hosted by NATA and JAS-ANZ in Sydney, Australia, from 19-31 October.

The ILAC Arrangement

At 31 January 2007, there were 58 Signatories (Full Members) to the Arrangement, representing 46 economies.

The Inter American Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC) received formal recognition of their Multilateral Arrangement (MLA) during the meetings in Cancun. This recognition was granted following an extensive peer evaluation process that culminated in a ballot amongst ILAC Arrangement Council members. The IAAC recognition is for Testing and Calibration and signatories to the IAAC MLA, who are also members of ILAC, are now eligible to also become ILAC Full Members, i.e. Signatories to the ILAC Arrangement.

ILAC now has three Recognised Regional Cooperation Bodies – Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC), European Cooperation for Accreditation (EA) and Inter American Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC).

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 Joint Committee for Closer Cooperation

(JCCC). Currently operating under the stewardship of this committee are the following:

- Joint Working Group for inspection (JWGI).
- Joint Development Support Committee (JDSC).
- Joint Working Group on Maintenance of A-Series Documents.
- Joint Working Group on Training of Peer Evaluators.
- Joint Working Group on Guidance for ISO/IEC 17011:2004.
- Joint Meetings of the ILAC Arrangement Management Committee (AMC) and the IAF Multilateral Arrangement Management Committee (MLA MC).
- Joint Working Group on Communications.

Each of these Joint Working Groups reports on their work programs and progress at the Joint Committee for Closer Cooperation (JCCC) meetings and also at the annual Joint General Assembly.

ILAC Liaisons

The review of liaison activities continues to be a major focus of the ILAC Executive Committee, who seek to ensure that 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 established in the last quarter of 2005. The volume of information in the database has increased substantially since that time and it is available for the information of 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 website).

March 2007 saw the annual week of meetings and workshops scheduled with

continued over the page

BIPM and OIML in Paris. These meetings continued to focus on progressing the cooperation between the three organisations. ILAC and OIML signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Cancun, in November 2006 and subsequent meetings have centred around developing and progressing the joint work program and also on the proposal to expand the MoU to include the International Accreditation Forum (IAF). The BIPM/ILAC Accreditation Committee (AIC) working group's work on the dissemination of traceability (eg Best Measurement Capability (BMC)/ Calibration and Measurement Capability (CMC)) was further progressed during the recent meetings in Paris. The metrology workshop with representatives of the Regional Accreditation Cooperations and Regional Metrology Bodies was once again well attended and allowed for a valuable sharing of ideas on the topics of common interest to the accreditation and metrology communities.

A meeting of the CCQM (Consultative Committee on Amount of Substance – Metrology in Chemistry) will be held during April 07 and ILAC was represented at meetings of the Joint Committee on Traceability in Laboratory Medicine (JCTLM) and ISO TC212 (Medical Standards) in Paris in December 2006.

ILAC's continuing close cooperation and liaison activity with EURACHEM and CITAC supports these important metrological initiatives in chemical and biological measurement, including work on method validation, measurement uncertainty and compliance with limits, the use of good quality reference materials and proficiency testing.

April 2007 also brings the first round of meetings of the various ISO committees in which ILAC plays a very active role. Meetings of the CASCO CPC (Chairman's Policy Committee), WG 27 (Drafting requirements for use in conformity assessment applications) and the first meeting of WG 29 (Revision of ISO Guide 65 – *Product Certification*) will be attended by ILAC liaison officers. ISO CASCO meetings were also held in Buenos Aires during the period 29 Oct – 3 Nov 2006 and the first meeting of CASCO WG28 (Revision of ISO Guide 43 – *Proficiency Testing*) was attended by ILAC delegates on 4-5 December 2006 in Geneva. A second meeting will be held on 3-4 May 2007.

ISO REMCO (reference materials) will meet in Tsukuba, Japan on 5-8 June 2007 (and an APLAC Workshop on reference materials will be held in conjunction

with this). This meeting will see work on the review of ISO Guide 34 "*General Requirements for the competence of reference material producers*" continue. ILAC and its Regional Cooperation Body members are contributing to the future revision of this important guide together with other related work on reference materials.

ILAC has also continued its cooperation with various ISO technical committees, such as TC 176 (ISO 9000 series), TC 69 (Statistical methods), TC 34 (Food Safety) and TC 212 (Medical Testing).

ILAC and the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) have continued the cooperation begun in 2003. ILAC now holds a seat on the WADA Laboratory Committee (LC) and attended/teleconferenced meetings in March 2006, October 2006 and February 2007. LC issues relevant to WADA/ILAC cooperation are fed into the ILAC/WADA working group (under the ILAC Accreditation Committee). WADA will hold its fourth training course for (Accreditation Body) Assessors in April 2007. Representatives from WADA also participated in meetings of the ILAC Proficiency Testing Consultative Group (PTCG) and the Accreditation Committee/WADA Working Group, in Madrid in May 2006 and in Cancun in November 2006. It is pleasing to note that good progress has been made in the collaboration between both organisations in the area of accreditation and assessment of sports drug testing laboratories.

The trend of 2006 will continue into 2007, with ILAC being actively involved in many liaison activities.

Secretariat Staff

The staff of the ILAC Secretariat has undergone some changes for 2007.

Sharon Kelly has been appointed as the Senior ILAC Coordinator. Sharon, who previously held the role of Assistant Technical Manager at NATA, brings extensive accreditation experience to the role and will be a valuable asset for the Secretariat.

Nilla Merrigan, who joined the Secretariat in May 2006 as Administrative Assistant has been promoted to Administrator ILAC Secretariat, a role she shares with Alison Hay. This change reflects Nilla's extensive background in various senior administrative positions.

From 1 January 2007, Annette Dever has taken on the role of ILAC Secretary from Alan Squirrell. Annette and Alan have worked together in the Secretariat for the past six years. Alan continues to support

the work of ILAC and the Secretariat, in the role of ILAC Executive Liaison, on a part-time basis.

The Secretariat would also like to express their thanks to Mohan Sabaratnam, who assisted the Secretariat on a part-time basis from 2003 to 2006.

The work of the ILAC Secretariat

The new ILAC website was launched on 15 October 2006 and it incorporates changes requested by the ILAC members and other users. In addition, the new website is easier to navigate and there have also been a number of back end changes to make the website more readily able to adapt to the changing needs of the ILAC membership. As always we welcome all feedback from members and other users.

The ILAC-MRA Mark registration process continues and, as at 31 January 2007, 39 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 ILAC Secretary met with the Secretaries of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and the Regional Cooperation Bodies, in Cancun, to consider opportunities for, and benefits of, closer cooperation and communication between the Secretariats. The meeting was very productive and several initiatives were put forward for consideration and some of these are now in the process of being implemented. It is hoped that this informal meeting of the Secretariats may again be scheduled during the annual meetings in Sydney, in October 2007.

ILAC Membership

ILAC membership as at 31 January 2007 is as follows:

- Fifty-eight full members (Signatories to the ILAC Arrangement) representing 46 economies.
- Fifteen associates representing 14 economies.
- Twenty affiliates representing 20 economies.
- Five Regional Cooperation Bodies.
- One National Coordination Body.
- Twenty-three stakeholders.

The ILAC membership (122 bodies) now covers 80 different economies worldwide and approximately 30,000 laboratories and 5000 inspection bodies are accredited by the 73 ILAC Full Members and Associates.

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



Beatrice Mary Mutabazi.

MRS BEATRICE MUTABAZI 1953–2006

Beatrice Mary Mutabazi, a prominent figure in the promotion of accreditation in southern Africa, died suddenly last November.

Beatrice was born on 29 August 1953 at Missenyi, Bukoba Rural District, Tanzania. She attended primary and secondary school in Uganda, graduating with a Bachelor of Science, with Honors in Agriculture at the Makerere University in Uganda, she also obtained a diploma in Education and specialised in Food Science.

In January 1977 after her graduation Beatrice joined the National Bank of Commerce as Assistant Operations Manager, responsible for advising and processing loans to food industries and farmers in Tanzania. In October of that year she joined Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) as a Standards Officer responsible for drafting Tanzania standards for the agriculture and food sectors.

Beatrice worked herself up the ranks at TBS becoming head of the Quality Management Department in 1986 and in 1993 she was promoted to Deputy Director of TBS, the position she held until her death. During her tenure at TBS she chaired a number of committees, apart from these she was also involved in a number of other committees in Tanzania.

In the international arena Beatrice participated in several study tours, routine factory visits and training courses to Sweden, Britain, Malaysia, Zimbabwe, Hungary, Tanzania, Kenya, Mauritius, Cyprus, Ireland, Singapore, Thailand, South Africa and the USA, primarily to familiarise herself with standardisation and quality assurance activities.

In 1997 at a meeting in Geneva, Beatrice was introduced to the Southern African Development Community in Accreditation (SADCA) by Mike Peet who at that stage was the Regional Coordinator. Beatrice had not heard of accreditation although she was very familiar with quality and standardisation. From the onset Beatrice told Mike that she was interested “in this accreditation story,” as she aptly called it. If it meant progress for her country and for Africa she supported it, she attended her first SADCA meeting in 1998 in Angola.

*“The voice of our friend and colleague, the SADCA Chairperson, Mrs Beatrice Mutabazi, will be silent forever. Beatrice was taken away from us suddenly on 25 November 2006,”
.....Marie Chilcott, South Africa.*

In 1999 Beatrice was elected as the Vice Chair of SADCA. At the 2004 annual SADCA meeting, Beatrice was elected as Chairperson, a position she held until her death.

In 2002 SADCA became a regional body member of both the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF). In conjunction with all the regional positions held by Beatrice, as SADCA Chairperson she was elected to the Executive Committees of both ILAC

and IAF. As a member of the Executive Committees, Beatrice worked tirelessly to bring the problems and concerns of her beloved Africa to the attention of the international accreditation community. At each and every meeting Beatrice would report on the progress, if not, then why not, of Africa, but in particular that of the South African Development Community (SADC) region and would always look for opportunities to place Africa on the global map.

In 2005 Beatrice was elected IAF Chairperson of the Development Support Committee, a Committee concerned with support for developing countries. Similarly, ILAC also had a Development Support Committee and together with the ILAC Chairperson of their Development Support Committee, Beatrice co-chaired this joint ILAC/IAF Committee.

Back home in the SADC region, Beatrice was a dedicated Chairperson for SADCA and worked, as always, with enthusiasm to promote accreditation in the region in order for SADCA to be able to compete in the global accreditation market and for its export products to be accepted internationally. As resources, both human and financial, have always been a problem in the region, Beatrice made use of every available opportunity to meet and discuss with donors the possible funding for capacity building in our region.

Her sudden death has left the SADC accreditation community, and the international accreditation community with a gap of a very capable person who always worked with such passion and enthusiasm to promote accreditation in SADC and also Africa. Beatrice has also left a huge gap in the services of the Tanzania Bureau of Standards.

ILAC committee news

Arrangement Committee meeting – Cancun 2006

By Orna Dreazen*

The Arrangement Committee (ARC) met for two days in Cancun prior to the General Assembly meeting, in early November. The agenda attracted many observers. The chair thanked all members and observers for showing interest and their contribution to the discussions.

According to the ARC work plan, the committee concentrates on issues related to three main topics:

- Guidance to ISO/IEC 17011.
- ILAC Arrangement.
- Cooperation with stakeholders.

Guidance to ISO/IEC 17011

The committee discussed the comments on draft 10 of the joint Guidance document and recommended that draft 11 be circulated to ILAC and IAF members for comments.

ARC members reviewed the requirement for use of the accreditation symbol in clause 8.3.1 of ISO/IEC 17011 concerning “a clear indication as to which activity the accreditation is related to”.

Helen Liddy summarised the September 2006 APLAC MRA Council discussion on this issue. A discussion paper by Terence Chan and an APLAC survey were provided in the ARC agenda papers. Issues raised included overburdening the conformity assessment body (CAB), and educating the user to look beyond a simple reference to the conformity assessment activity, as well as language issues.

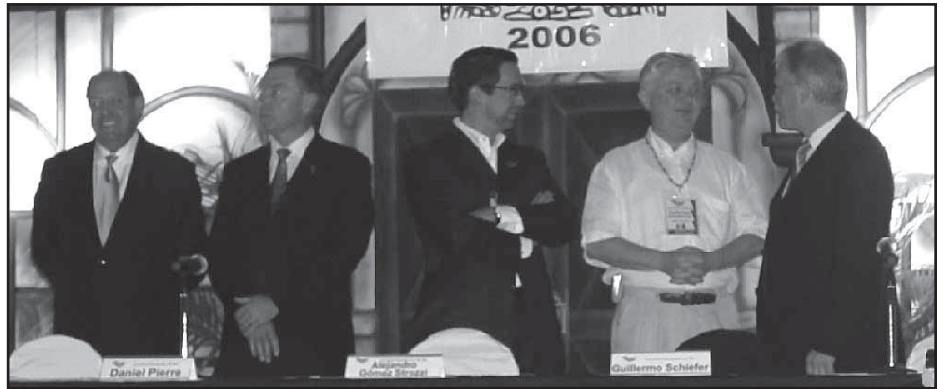
The ILAC members and regions have not reached uniformity in the interpretation of this requirement. To avoid the situation where accreditation bodies (ABs), with recognition from multiple regions, have to meet different requirements, a global approach was suggested to resolve this issue and harmonise the interpretation of this requirement.

It was agreed to initiate the APLAC survey to all ILAC members and alert the Joint Committee for Closer Cooperation (JCCC) to this issue suggesting that IAF may also wish to circulate the survey.

ILAC Arrangement

Cross-Frontier Accreditation

There was a long debate on whether all members can comply with ILAC G21, on Cross Frontier Accreditation, if it is included into the P Series documents. It was argued that accreditation is a non-commercial activity that cannot be applied to anti-trust laws, as well as the point that



ILAC/IAF General Assembly conference dinner, Cancun, Mexico.

accreditation's role is to protect public health and safety efforts.

Accordingly the ARC proposed a change to the Auckland resolution which was subsequently accepted during the Cancun General Assembly meeting:

“The GA agrees to amend ILAC resolution GA 9.31 to read:

All ILAC members shall have a cross-frontier accreditation policy which takes into account G21”.

The ARC agreed that the revision of G21 would be completed at their next meeting, taking account of the GA decision.

Publication of the revised ILAC P1 and P3 had been placed on-hold waiting for the investigation into possible issues relating to anti-trust laws. Progress can now be made with these documents.

Many comments about the A-series documents were received prior to and during the Cancun meetings. It was noted that a thorough revision is needed but the Joint Working Group (JWG) on A-Series Maintenance didn't have sufficient time to discuss all the new issues raised. Revised A-Series documents, relating to comments received before Cancun, will now be voted on. The JWG will then further revise the documents, taking into account the many other comments received, at their next meeting.

Expansion of the scope of the MRA

ARC members, Gro Rodland and Tony Russell, prepared a procedure regarding the Expansion of the ILAC MRA. The procedure was circulated for comments, these were discussed during the meeting and amended accordingly. ILAC members are now voting on this.

Hans Mittmann reported on the training workshop with members of the Arrangement Management Committee (AMC) and regional evaluators.

There was an A1 presentation and then an exchange of experiences. The A-Series JWG conveners received many good suggestions for improving A1, including adding guidance on evaluating the secretariat, decision making, monitoring and witnessing.

There are divergent views concerning the benefits of witnessing and this will have to be further discussed. A working group was established to examine the pros and cons of witnessing at both the regional and the AB level.

Revisions to ILAC P12 were suggested by Dr. Helen Liddy to improve the level of cooperation between the regions and ILAC. The revisions suggested that regions inform ILAC and other regions about their work items, that the region shepherds the project through the early stages, with input from ILAC and other regions, and if and when the project gets to a global level, ILAC invite the regions to give the work to ILAC. It was understood that in certain cases, the regional work is relevant only to that region.

Presently, in accordance with P12, the regions report at the respective ILAC committees and then a discussion about responsibility for the project takes place, noting this process is not well implemented within all of the ILAC committees.

A revision of P12 will be discussed in the next ARC meeting. A revision of ILAC P4 is also currently underway.

Cooperation with stakeholders

ILAC liaison activities with ISO, CASCO, OIML, REMCO and OECD were reviewed. It was noted that the ARC needs to look for new ways to enlarge the outreach to more stakeholders. The committee will review the results of the ILAC survey regarding cooperation of ILAC members with regulators, to learn what is needed to encourage new regulators to benefit from ILAC work.

*Orna Dreazen - Chair, Arrangement Committee, General Director.

What is your target?

ILAC Marketing and Communications Committee (MCC)

By Ian Roy*

The ILAC Marketing and Communications Committee (MCC) held a Marketing Workshop at the ILAC Meetings in Cancun in November 2006.

The purpose of the workshop was to provide general guidance on what marketing is, in relation to accreditation bodies and to highlight the resources that have been developed by the MCC for use by accreditation bodies. The workshop was attended by 64 people representing accreditation bodies from around the world.

Jon Murthy of UKAS provided a succinct overview of what marketing was, and what a marketing plan contained. Jon also spoke about the distinctly different target audiences that would be interested in accreditation and emphasised that it was important to prioritise which specific audiences an accreditation body saw as important. Limited resources means an accreditation body has to select the most important audiences.

Jon emphasised it was also important to understand the differing needs of target audiences, with one message for all audiences being inappropriate.

The subjects of 'communication' and 'business tools' were also identified by Jon as crucial to successfully marketing an accreditation body's business. All accreditation bodies, irrespective of their size and budget, can choose how they will communicate their message to their target audiences, from using a sophisticated website, to letters, emails, brochures, DVDs and presentations. No matter what method of communication an accreditation body chooses to use, keeping the message consistent and building a brand, through the consistent application of an accreditation body logo to all the marketing materials, is crucial to getting the message across to different target audiences.

There are many sources of information that can be used to develop an accreditation body's own marketing campaign. Of primary importance is the 'brochure series' of documents available on the ILAC website (<http://www.ilac.org/brochures.html>). The titles include

Why Use an Accredited Laboratory?

Why Become an Accredited Laboratory?

How Does Using an Accredited Laboratory Benefit Government and Regulators?

The Advantages of Being an Accredited Laboratory.

Laboratory Accreditation or ISO 9001 Certification.

These documents are also available in Chinese, Japanese, Hindi, Spanish, Russian, French and German languages. Some brochures are available in HTML format so the text can be cut and pasted to an individual accreditation body's promotional and marketing literature.



Do you know your target?

Some accreditation bodies have already printed the ILAC brochures with the accreditation body's contact details and logo clearly visible. The accreditation body does not need to research, write, or edit the brochures. Simply printing with the accreditation body's information on the brochures is all that is required to provide a valuable marketing resource for accreditation bodies. However, some accreditation bodies have translated the brochures to the language used in their own economy.

The ILAC website also contains a series of PowerPoint presentations that have been prepared for accreditation bodies to use in meetings or workshops. In addition, a CD-ROM, developed by the MCC, was distributed in Cancun to enable accreditation bodies to create their own pop-up banner which can be

used at events. Primer documents are also downloadable from the site, which provides members with a step-by-step guide to carry out their own marketing initiatives.

The EA and APLAC websites also have web based resources that accreditation bodies may freely use.

At the workshop, the brochures were colourfully displayed in large format for all to see. Members of the MCC provided further explanation of the brochures to the workshop attendees during the morning break.

Other speakers at the workshop were Maria Oldegard from SWEDAC, Martine Blum from COFRAC, and Giselle Guevara from TTLABS, who along with Jon Murthy from UKAS, provided inspiring examples of marketing campaigns from their respective accreditation bodies.

Giselle emphasised that the Trinidad and Tobago accreditation body, TTLABS, was a small accreditation body on a modest budget, but there were many marketing initiatives TTLABS successfully conducted without the budget of a larger accreditation body.

A common theme at the workshop that was shared by all speakers, irrespective of the size of their accreditation body and marketing budget, was the use of creativity and imagination as valuable and free tools to be used in an accreditation body's marketing campaign.

It was universally agreed by the speakers that the documents the MCC have provided, the brochure series (available in several languages) are a key resource that all accreditation bodies can use.

The marketing workshop feedback survey has indicated the event was a major success with 94 per cent of respondents noting the workshop was 'good to excellent'. Many respondents requested the marketing workshop be repeated again during the ILAC meetings scheduled for Sydney in 2007.

**Ian Roy - Manager, International Affairs and Government Liaison, International Accreditation New Zealand.*

ILAC Marketing and Communications Committee

By Graham Talbot*

The Marketing and Communications Committee (MCC) held its first meeting of 2007 in Bangkok on 22 and 23 February. Eleven participants and a number of representatives from Accreditation Bodies (ABs) attended the MCC for the first time. The meeting made good progress on a number of topics.

ILAC Website

For the first time, since the new website was launched in October 2006 MCC examined the statistics on the use of the ILAC website. At present, the software that monitors the website only provides limited information on how the website is being used and which documents or pages are the most popular. The consensus reached was that MCC looks at this in further depth so the committee can focus work more effectively in the future.

The present trends indicate that the number of visits to the website is slowly increasing each month, with approximately 18,000 visits in January. As might be expected, the most popular pages include members' contact details, About ILAC, the Guidance Series documents, and Resources. ILAC News is the most popular download (in terms of number of people downloading it). Many people are still attempting to access the site through URLs that were part of the old website, but these numbers are now slowly decreasing.

The new website can be accessed by going to: www.ilac.org

ILAC Intranet

The development by the Secretariat of the Intranet for use by members of committees and their working groups is progressing. This will mean that working committee documents will be able to be held centrally and made available for committee members' use, prior to the stage when recognised drafts are put into the general Members Resource area of the website. This will help ensure that committees can more easily keep all their members informed of the progress of work items.

ILAC's 30th Anniversary

Plans to recognise the 30th anniversary of ILAC this year were also discussed. A number of actions were agreed, including 30th anniversary branding on the ILAC website home page, a media release about the 30 years of ILAC history, with details of key milestones and events for distribution to Regions and ABs for their use in their promotions, and plans for articles in the next edition of ILAC News.

Marketing workshop for Sydney

Following the success of the marketing workshop in Cancun, attended by more than 60 participants, the committee has started future planning for a follow-on workshop to take place immediately prior to the General Assembly in Sydney in October 2007. This will build on the topics covered in Cancun and will focus more on lower cost solutions for effective marketing and give examples that have already been successful for ABs. The MCC is also looking ahead to the meetings in Stockholm in 2008, where the theme of the workshop will possibly be more focused on communications.

The MCC's Terms of Reference, Strategic Objectives and Work Plan were reviewed and revised, and these will be placed on the website shortly.

ILAC News member surveys

The MCC is currently planning two survey questionnaires designed to gain feedback on whether ILAC News is meeting the expectations of Members. Details on the first survey can be accessed by going to www.ilac.org/survey. A second survey will be conducted in 2008 and will focus on whether ILAC is providing the right marketing and communications resources to its members.

Of course there is still work to be done, and we welcome people to take part in the MCC to help with this. MCC are looking to develop and enhance the ILAC 'house-style', including providing a template for downloadable copies of ILAC success stories, and creating a simple document that outlines the process and route for new ILAC AB Members to reach ILAC MRA signatory status. Further progress on these measures will be made at the next meeting scheduled to take place in Berlin in July.

**Graham Talbot, Chair ILAC Marketing and Communications Committee.*



ILAC Marketing and Communications Committee meets in Bangkok.



Four Laboratory Committee Chairs - (Left to Right) Mr Alan Bryden 1996-1998 (LNE, France) - Mr Tony Anderson (NCSLI, USA) 2002 – 2006, Dr Maire Walsh elected Chair 2006 (EURACHEM, Ireland) and Mr David Stanger 1998 - 2002 (UILI, Belgium).

Former Laboratory Committee chairs are put in the picture

In an attempt to source the best photograph David Stanger, a former Laboratory Committee Chair, recently sent out a request to every member of ILAC, for copies of a photo taken at the Signing Ceremony in Cancun Mexico, of the four individuals that have been Chairs of the ILAC Laboratory Committee.

By chance, the best result was from the camera of ILAC's guest Alan Bryden, Secretary General of the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO), and the photo was taken by Jill Stanger.

During the ILAC 2006 proceedings Maire Walsh was elected as the fourth ILAC Laboratory Committee Chair and Alan Bryden, Secretary General of ISO, noticed the unique opportunity during the Signing Ceremony to record the meeting of the four ILAC Stakeholder representatives that have held the position of Laboratory Committee Chair. Alan Bryden (France), David Stanger (Belgium/UK), Tony Anderson (USA) and Maire Walsh (Ireland) were all attending ILAC 2006.

ILAC records show that the laboratory community has been a continuous active participant since the formation of ILAC, with Ken Albutt, Past President of UILI and currently President of The British Measurement and Testing Association (BMTA) attending the inaugural meetings of ILAC held in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1977 and Washington DC in 1978.

From 1979 to the present day, David Stanger has attended all but two of ILAC's plenary meetings, from the days when ILAC was a conference through to the current incorporated status.

Confidence in measurements

How linking metrology and standardisation with accreditation helps to provide confidence in laboratory measurement results

By Alan Squirrell*

Introduction

Links between the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and metrology and standardisation bodies are essential for ensuring accredited laboratories can deliver the services their customers require and expect.

ILAC is the association for laboratory accreditation bodies world-wide. There are 113 members: 88 accreditation bodies, 54 of which are full member signatories to the ILAC mutual recognition arrangement, 5 regional cooperation bodies and 20 stakeholders.

A primary objective of ILAC is to ensure members are competent to deliver high-quality accreditation services. This leads to confidence in the measurement results from the 30,000 or so laboratories accredited by ILAC member accreditation bodies as being competent for a specific scope of measurement activity.

In the global economy measurements should be fit for their intended use. They should assist in reducing technical barriers to trade; and provide domestic and international socio-economic benefits. To achieve these goals ILAC members have to continue giving emphasis to technical as well as management issues.

ILAC has a long association with the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) and is an 'A' liaison member. In March 2004 a memorandum of understanding was signed between ISO, ILAC and ILAC's sister organisation, the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), which deals with the accreditation of various types of certification bodies.

This collaboration assists in ongoing cooperation and the exchange of information on the preparation and use of ISO standards by both ILAC members and their clients - laboratories and their customers. Feedback from these groups on the use and added value of such standards helps make future revisions more effective. Close cooperation between the IAF, ILAC and the ISO is achieved by regular meetings of a Joint Working Group (consisting of senior members of

ISO, ILAC and IAF), and at a grass-roots level by ILAC members representation on ISO working groups and technical committees.

ISO CASCO

CASCO is the ISO committee which deals with conformity assessment. CASCO produces paper standards (ISO/IEC 17000 series) dealing with international best practice and general competence requirements for bodies such as testing and calibration laboratories, proficiency testing providers, inspection and certification bodies.

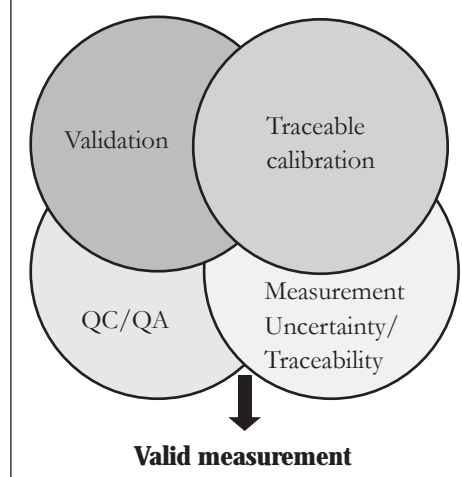
From an ILAC perspective, one of the most important standards produced by CASCO is ISO/IEC 17025:2005, *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*. The current version of this document reflects a long history of involvement and input by ILAC members. Indeed, it was an ILAC Task Group in 1977 that started the process with ISO Guide 25 - a standard written for laboratories, but used by accreditation bodies as the primary competence standard for the assessment of laboratories.

Clause 4 of ISO/IEC 17025 covers the management requirements for laboratories which must be in place to support the consistent and long-term delivery of traceable (and thus accurate and comparable) measurement results.

Clause 5 of ISO/IEC 17025 covers the all-important technical requirements that provide the basis for reliable and accurate measurements, reflecting the need for sound measurement and metrological practices in both the calibration and testing areas.

ISO/IEC 17025 now further emphasises the need to address metrological aspects, particularly traceability and measurement uncertainty associated with testing and calibration. This includes the use of appropriate reference materials for method validation, calibration and control of the

Figure 1: overlap between functions associated with measurement traceability and analytical quality



measurement process. (See Fig 1. top right)

Although ISO/IEC 17025 provides a sound framework for laboratory competence with its 'general requirements', accreditation is not just about compliance with this standard. Annex B of ISO/IEC 17025 recognises that sector-specific 'application documents' are often required. These measurement and internal/external quality control protocols elaborate on the general requirements for particular types of measurements. These are essential, particularly in 'difficult' areas of calibration and testing (eg sports-drug testing), and are included in the 'laboratory scope of accreditation' issued by the accreditation body, which lists information about the specific measurement capabilities which have been assessed by technically trained experts (assessors), who assist the accreditation body in deciding whether the laboratory staff have the technical competence and skills necessary to perform the tasks covered by the scope.

Even though ISO/IEC 17025 alone may often not be sufficient to cover the plethora of different measurements carried out every day, this is in no way a

*Alan Squirrell, ILAC Secretariat.

criticism of the standard itself. It serves an essential purpose of providing a sound basis and framework for the assessment of laboratory competence.

ILAC has recently proposed some amendments to the ISO/IEC Directives so that, firstly, ISO/IEC 17025 is always normatively referenced in other ISO (and IEC) standards which relate directly to laboratory requirements; and secondly, the metrological principles covered in ISO/IEC 17025 are taken into account when requirements for measurements are included in other ISO and IEC standards.

Thus, ISO/IEC 17025 provides the backbone laboratory standard for best practice and the assessment of laboratory competence by accreditation bodies, which, in turn, is supported by the ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement, where those accreditation bodies which have been thoroughly evaluated on site, and satisfied the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011 (see below), become signatories to this Arrangement.

ILAC members are directly involved in many aspects of CASCO's work. For example, ILAC provided input into the development of ISO/IEC 17011:2004, *Conformity assessment – General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies*. This is very important as it details the general requirements for accreditation bodies' own competent delivery of accreditation services and, as mentioned above, is the mainstay of the peer evaluation process and the Mutual Recognition Arrangement for accreditation bodies themselves.

ISO/IEC 17011 says that accreditation bodies should call on external organisations and experts to help deliver their services, reflecting a need for a national infrastructure that is scientifically robust and able to deliver the necessary support in metrology, accreditation and standardisation. Laboratory accreditation bodies should therefore, have a close relationship with their National Measurement Institute, because of their authority relating to national metrology issues and impact on the laboratory assessment process. ISO/IEC 17011 also forms the basis for a variety of stand-alone ILAC documents, including policies and procedures relating to the Arrangement.

ILAC also works very closely with other authorities in particular measurement areas such as sports drug testing (WADA), electrical safety testing (IEC) and legal metrology (OIML). These authorities

produce additional comprehensive application documents which must be used by laboratory assessment teams (in addition to ISO/IEC 17025). From ILAC's point of view, it is sensible to work closely with such organisations to prevent duplication of assessments for laboratories and minimise costs.

Another important activity CASCO undertakes is preparing standards and guides relating to proficiency testing. This is an integral part of the laboratory accreditation process, and arguably the only really objective way of checking on laboratory performance.

ISO/IEC Guide 43-1:1997, *Proficiency testing by inter laboratory comparisons – Development and operation of proficiency testing schemes* and ISO/IEC Guide 43-2:1997, *Selection and use of proficiency testing schemes by laboratory accreditation bodies*, were drafted in the mid-1990s by an ILAC working group and, after adoption by CASCO, have provided the "general requirements" for providers of proficiency testing programs. They are used by some ILAC member accreditation bodies for accreditation purposes (of PT providers).

Earlier this year, ILAC submitted a proposal to revise both parts of ISO/IEC Guide 43 and convert it into an ISO/IEC standard (17043). This proposal was approved by CASCO and work has now started. New initiatives and improved practices in proficiency testing – many relating to good metrological practice – will be included in the new standard.

Arguably, successful participation in proficiency testing, even when traceable assigned values and reliable estimates of uncertainty are used, does not establish traceability. This should be done, a priori, in each individual laboratory (mainly during the method validation process). It does, however, provide a useful later check that sound traceability paths are in place. Such metrological developments are welcomed and are supported by Bureau International de Poids et Mesures (BIPM), who already use such practices in their own proficiency testing programs (key comparisons), which in turn underpin the Comité International des Poids et Mesures (CIPM) mutual recognition agreement between national metrology institutes.

ILAC has also been involved in promoting cooperation between CASCO and various ISO technical committees

(see below) particularly those involved in standards dealing with requirements for sector-specific laboratories.

ISO REMCO

As with CASCO, ILAC works closely with REMCO, which is the ISO Committee which currently produces guides relating to reference materials. The traceable values carried by reference materials are often used to establish metrological traceability and to link them to values of 'higher order' metrological standards, usually in SI units.

The organisations which take responsibility for the values assigned to a particular reference material have an essential role in assessing the accuracy of the measurements results (and related uncertainties) provided by competent laboratories before they are stated on certificates accompanying the (certified) reference material

Recent activity in REMCO includes the publication of the revised ISO Guide 35:2006, *Reference Materials – General and statistical principles for certification*, and also the agreement to commence a revision of ISO Guide 34:2000, *General requirements for the competence of reference material producers*, to take account of recent developments in the assessment (and accreditation) of reference material producers.

Thus, the suite of CASCO/REMCO paper standards and guides relating to requirements for laboratories and related organisations, and dealing with services to and from laboratories, provide a sound basis for reliable laboratory measurements internationally. Perhaps REMCO documents will, in the future, be included in the ISO/IEC 17000 series, which would then produce an integrated and harmonised set of general requirement standards for laboratories.

The possibility of including other ISO documents in the scope of the ILAC Arrangement is currently being discussed by ILAC. For example ISO Guide 34 for reference material producers and ISO/IEC Guide 43 (future ISO/IEC 17043) for proficiency testing providers.

ISO Technical Committees

In addition to CASCO and REMCO, ILAC liaison officers contribute to the work of various ISO technical committees such as:

- ISO/TC 69, Applications of statistical methods – This impacts on a number of other general

continued next page

technical and metrological issues (e.g. quality control and measurement uncertainty).

- ISO/TC 34, Food products – The testing of food products is a large area. This committee writes standards relating to measurement and related activities.
- ISO/TC 147, Water quality – This is another large sector, with standards on measurement and related activities, including proficiency testing.
- ISO/TC 212, Clinical laboratory – Testing and in vitro diagnostic test systems –. This committee covers perhaps the biggest laboratory sector of all, and produces standards relating to laboratory requirements and measurements in the medical area. One of its standards, ISO15189:2003, *Medical Laboratories – Particular requirements for quality and competence* (currently under revision), is also used by accreditation bodies and is cited in the ILAC Arrangement for the accreditation of medical laboratories.

A number of other ISO/TC 212 standards are of interest to ILAC and to the Joint Committee on Traceability in Laboratory Medicine (JCTLM). This is one of many important initiatives lead by the BIPM.

BIPM

BIPM oversees the maintenance and dissemination of metrological standards via their own members – the National Measurement Institutes (NMIs). BIPM Committees include the Consultative Committee for Amount Substance (CCQM) – for metrology in chemistry; Joint Committee for Guides on Metrology (JCGM) – for revision of the International Vocabulary on Metrology (VIM) and the Guide to the Uncertainty of Measurement (GUM) and the Joint Committee on Coordination of Technical Assistance to Developing Countries in Metrology, Accreditation and Standardisation (JCDCMAS) which attempts to deliver services to developing countries in a holistic and cost-effective manner.

Senior representatives of ILAC and BIPM meet regularly to address issues linking accreditation to metrology, including the dissemination of traceability and measurement capabilities from NMIs to accredited 'field' laboratories. This close cooperation promotes both the ILAC and

BIPM Mutual Recognition Arrangements, and the essential links between them.

Conclusion

At a time when there is still confusion in the marketplace between accreditation and certification, it is important to understand that the extra technical focus provided by laboratory accreditation is essential for achieving the required confidence in measurement results as well as pursuing the "tested once - accepted everywhere" objective.

There are no guarantees in this business - but the laboratory accreditation model has proved to be a cost-effective and efficient way of providing confidence those laboratory measurements results are fit for their intended use.

It is vital that the links between ILAC and ISO, BIPM and other key organisations continue to be strengthened so that laboratory accreditation continues to provide the added value laboratories and laboratory customers are seeking.

For more information on ILAC please visit their website: www.ilac.org or contact the ILAC Secretariat by email on ilac@nata.asn.au.



Alan Squirrel—ILAC Executive Liaison.

A similar article first appeared in the October 2006 issue of ISO Focus - The Magazine of the International Organization for Standardization.



Updates on the ILAC website

If you are a regular user of the ILAC website you may have noticed a few changes over recent weeks. These are primarily the result of feedback received from members, following the launch of the new website in October last year. There has been some general editorial and tidying up carried out, with the main changes in the Members' area being:

- The inclusion of training material for evaluators under Member Resources – this is an initiative of the Joint Working Group Training.
- Rearrangement of the Committee pages into two sections to better represent the ILAC committee and joint ILAC/IAF working group structure and to ensure easier access to the information.
- A new area under Member Resources called 'file sharing'. In the near future, this area will be available for committee members to post their working documents for meetings. All committee members will be advised of the additional passwords required to access this area of the website.
- A new button for 'comments' to better distinguish this activity from the ballot process.

The significant changes to the Public area include:

- Inclusion of the GA resolutions under Resources.
- Inclusion of the brochures under Publications.
- Inclusion of a Membership button on the home page.
- Inclusion of an ILAC Arrangement button on the home page to raise the prominence of this important information.

You may have also noted the change in 'look' of the website. This is to help promote a more consistent and recognisable presentation of ILAC's image.

As always, you are encouraged to provide feedback on any aspect of the website to the secretariat via ilac@nata.asn.au

International update

By Sean MacCurtain*

CASCO

The 22nd Plenary meeting of CASCO was held in Buenos Aires from 2 to 3 November 2006. It was hosted by the Instituto Argentino de Normalización y Certificación (IRAM). More than 100 delegates from 35 countries attended the meeting including representatives from 11 liaison organisations including ILAC and IAF. The current membership of CASCO is 102 members, 70 of which are participating and 32 are observer members.

This was the last meeting for Mr Mario Wittner as Chair of CASCO as Mr. Olivier Peyrat (AFNOR) took over as CASCO Chair from 1 January this year. It was also the last meeting for Mr Peter Dennehy as Secretary of CASCO. From 1 March Sean MacCurtain stepped into the role of CASCO Secretary and Head of Conformity Assessment.

Mr Peyrat addressed the Plenary meeting and identified a number of focus areas for the future work of CASCO. This included reviewing both the Promotions and Support Group (CAPs) and the Market Feedback Panel (MFP) structures within CASCO. It would also include a review of the current liaison policy of CASCO in line with ISO work being done on this. Mr. Peyrat also identified three additional priorities for 2007. These were firstly, to increase the involvement of stakeholders in the operations and functions of CASCO, with particular attention to the CASCO members, the conformity assessment bodies and the accreditation bodies together with corresponding members in liaison, regulators and the various industrial sectors and their customers.

The second priority is to complete and maintain what has become known as the "CASCO toolbox" with the launch of the revision of ISO/IEC Guide 43:1997 Parts 1 & 2 (Proficiency testing) and also ISO/IEC Guide 65:1996 (Product certification). Both of these work items have an impact for ILAC. The revision of ISO/IEC Guide 65 has an impact for laboratories in that laboratories can be involved either as testing facilities or as part of a product certification body.

The third CASCO priority was listed as, the development where necessary of



New Chairs - Plenary meeting of CASCO
Mr Mario Wittner (right) retired as chair of CASCO as Mr Olivier Peyrat (left) (AFNOR) took over as CASCO Chair from 1 January 2007.

the sector implementations of ISO/IEC 17021 in collaboration with the relevant ISO Technical Committees responsible for the corresponding management standards.

2006 Year in review

In reviewing the year for CASCO, the plenary acknowledged the publication of ISO/IEC 17021:2006 *Conformity Assessment - Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems*.

Resolutions

The plenary passed a total of 22 resolutions. Those having a direct impact on the work of ILAC or their members in addition to those mentioned above are summarized below:

- The plenary recognized the work being done by the IAF-ILAC-ISO Joint Working Group and encourages it to continue to cooperate.
- Recognizes the completing of the corrections to annex A of ISO/IEC 17025 and thanks the working group for their contributions.
- The plenary supported the ILAC position on the drafting of ISO and IEC standards related to measurement and instructed the CASCO Secretary to submit the proposal to the ISO Technical Management Board (TMB) for their consideration.

In addition to the above, CASCO is developing a Part 2 to ISO/IEC 17021 (CASCO WG 21) which is entitled "*Conformity Assessment – Requirements for third party auditing of management systems*."

This new work item was approved by CASCO members in September 2006.

The plenary also agreed a transition period of two years for management systems certification bodies to comply with the new ISO/IEC 17021:2006. This transition period was agreed in consultation with IAF and other liaison bodies and stakeholders.

Also of interest to ILAC is the confirmation by the Plenary of the CASCO 2010 Roadmap which contains the sequencing of future reviews and revisions to the CASCO documents over the next 10 years.

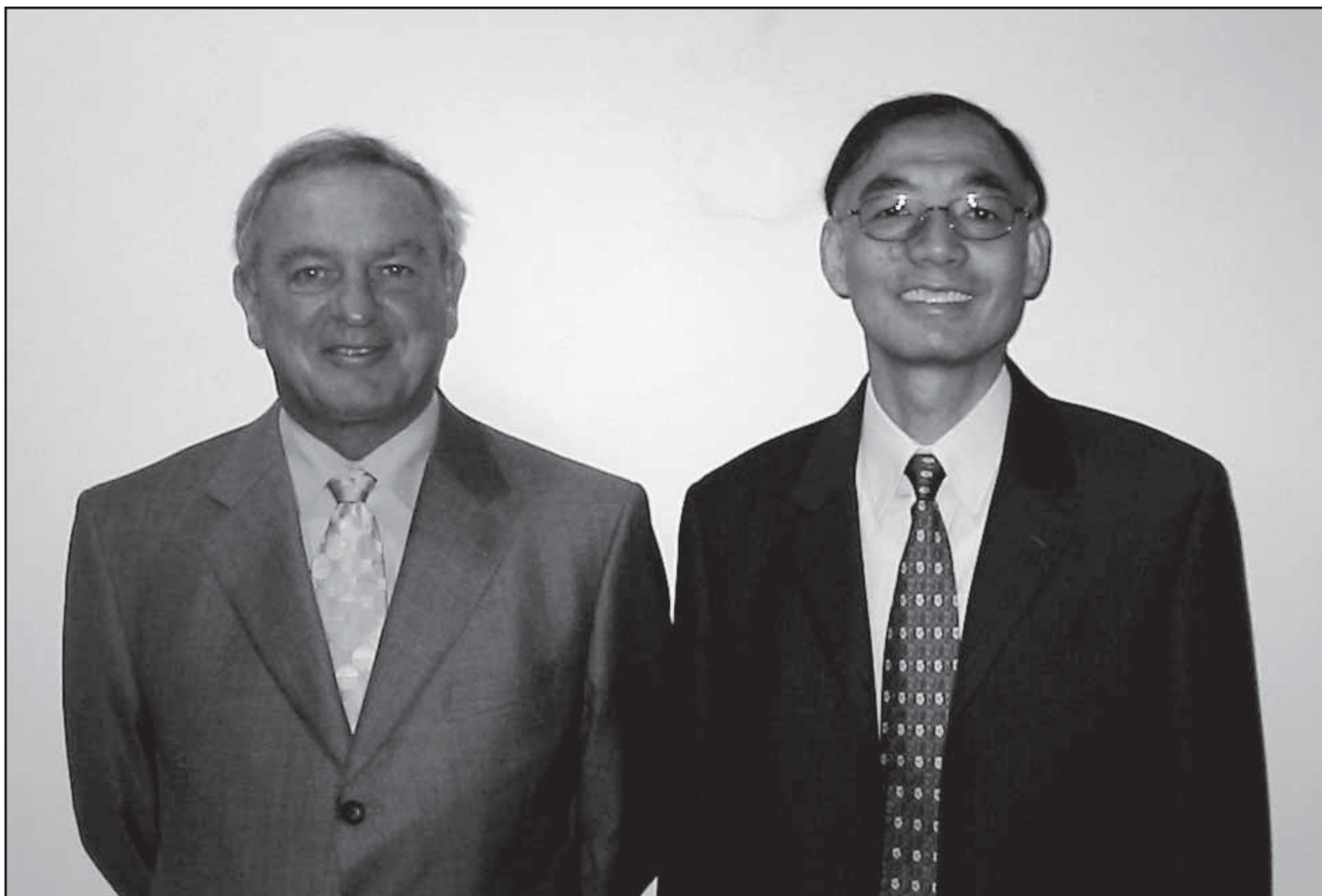
CASCO, at the request of the ISO Council, has harmonized a number of common elements in conformity assessment to ensure consistency in CASCO documents. The elements which have been harmonized to date are; 'impartiality, confidentiality, complaints and appeals', and 'disclosure of information'. It is planned to publish another on the 'use of management systems in conformity assessment' in 2007.

The next CASCO Plenary will be held in Geneva (Switzerland) on 8 to 9 November this year. The next IAF-ILAC-ISO JWG meeting is scheduled for 25 April at the ISO Central Secretariat in Geneva.

Should you require any information on the activities of CASCO or on any of the CASCO publications please contact casco@iso.org

**Sean MacCurtain - CASCO Secretary
Head of Conformity Assessment.*

Regional cooperations



APLAC Changes

The new APLAC Chair, Terence Chan (HKAS) (right) is photographed with the Immediate Past Chair of APLAC, Tony Russell (NATA) during a break in a two-day workshop for Asia Pacific Economic Committee Specialist Regional Bodies (SRBs) (APLAC, APMP, APLMF, PAC, PASC) held in Sydney, Australia on 22-23 January. This workshop was immediately prior to the first meeting of the APEC Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformance (SCSC) in Canberra, Australia on 24-25 January. The five SRBs attend the SCSC meetings and the APLAC Secretary represented APLAC at the Canberra meeting.

Report from the APLAC Secretariat



By Janet Clark and Helen Liddy*

Wishing all Chinese colleagues a prosperous year of the golden pig!

Changes at the Secretariat

We are sad to advise that Jane King has left the secretariat as she has been appointed as the manager of NATA's accreditation program for research

and development laboratories. We wish Jane all the very best in her new work, and thank her for all her excellent work within the secretariat over the last 3 years. It is not planned to replace Jane at this stage but Janet and Helen will still be at the end of an email to answer your inquiries.

New APLAC Member

APLAC is pleased to welcome AAC Analitica of the Russian Federation as the newest Full Member – one more APEC economy joins our cooperation.

New APLAC Quality Manual and APLAC Evaluation Report Template

The new APLAC Quality Manual that replaces several APLAC SEC and PR documents and also NC 001 was issued in early February. Members are encouraged to download a copy from the APLAC web site and familiarise themselves with it.

The first edition of the APLAC evaluation report template was also issued in early February as APLAC

MR 009. This template is designed to facilitate the production of the report, with the Accreditation body being evaluated completing sections three and four (history and background of the accreditation body (AB); AB's self-assessment against the KPIs (IAC/IAF A3)). It is available as a PDF from the public area of the web site and as a Word document in the "members only" area of the web site.

APLAC Board of Management (BOM) and Mutual Recognition

Arrangement Council Meetings

The BoM and MRA Council will meet in Shanghai, People's Republic of China on 16-17 April (BoM) and 18-20 April (MRA Council). We thank CNAS for hosting the meetings. A workshop reviewing evaluation reports will be held during the Council meeting.

During the Council meeting there will be the inaugural signing of the APLAC MRA for accreditation of medical laboratories to ISO 15189: previously recognition for this area of accreditation had been included within the "testing" scope of the MRA.

APLAC Evaluator Training Course

A training course for evaluators and provisional evaluators will be held in

Shanghai on 23-25 April. The course coordinator is Ned Gravel of CAEAL, and Ned, Barry Ashcroft (IANZ) and Panadda Silva (DMSc) are the course presenters.

APLAC Training Courses in 2007

A most successful workshop on the planning and conduct of proficiency testing (PT) courses in accordance with ISO/IEC Guide 43 was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 13-15 February. Our thanks to Standards Malaysia that hosted the meeting. This was the first in a series of three workshops run by APLAC in conjunction with PTB, Germany. It was pleasing to have colleagues from non-APLAC member economies, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Laos and Nepal join the workshop, thanks to funding support for them from PTB.

An APLAC workshop on the accreditation of medical laboratories to ISO 15189 will be held in Bangkok, Thailand on 15-17 May, hosted by DMSc. One of the presenters will be Dr Robert Wielgosz of BIPM who will give a presentation on the activities of the Joint Committee on Traceability in Laboratory Medicine (JCTLM). This interactive workshop is aimed at those

AB staff and assessors with experience in accrediting medical laboratories as the participants will be asked to present details about their organisations' accreditation programs and to discuss experiences. Regina Robertson (NATA) and Panadda Silva (DMSc) (a very busy lady!) will also be presenters.

An APLAC training course on the accreditation of reference material producers will be held in Tsukuba, Japan on 30 May-1 June, hosted by IAJapan. The presenters will be Dr A M van der Veen of NMi (Netherlands), W W Wong (HKAS) and Roxanne Robinson (A2LA).

These latter two courses are open to 1 attendee from each APLAC member and also from each ILAC region (including the group of unaffiliated bodies). Registration (with the APLAC secretariat) and hotel reservations (directly with the hotel) should be made as early as possible.

APLAC 2007

The APLAC General Assembly and associated meetings will be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in the week of 2-7 December, hosted by Standards Malaysia.

**Janet Clark and Helen Liddy - APLAC Secretariat.*

Changes to ILAC Membership

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

Association of Independent Test Laboratories and Certification Bodies (ALPI), Italy

Full Members

Ente Costarricense de Acreditacion (ECA), Costa Rica

Voluntary EMC Laboratory Accreditation Center INC (VLAC), Japan

Associates

Mongolian Agency for Standardization and Metrology (MASM), Mongolia

National Centre of Accreditation (NCA), Kazakhstan.

Affiliates

Saudi Arabian Standards Organisation (SASO), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Stakeholders

Association of Forensic Quality Assurance Managers (AFQAM), USA

Recognised Regional Cooperation Body

Inter American Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC)

ILAC Membership

ILAC membership as at 5 February 2007 is as follows:

- 58 Full Members (Signatories to the ILAC Arrangement) representing 46 economies;
- 15 Associates representing 12 economies;
- 20 Affiliates representing 20 economies;
- 5 Regional Cooperation Bodies (3 recognised)
- 1 National Coordination Body
- 23 Stakeholders

The ILAC membership (total 122 bodies) now covers a total of 80 different economies worldwide and approximately 30,000 laboratories and inspection bodies are accredited by the 73 ILAC Full Members and Associates.

Southern Africa

Southern African Development Community Accreditation



The delegates who attended the corporate governance training in December 2006 in Pretoria, South Africa.

SADCA News

SADCA Chairperson, Mrs Beatrice Mutabazi, died on 25 November 2006. Her funeral was held in Dar Es Salaam on 29 November 2006 (see separate article in this issue). Mike Peet, Ron Josias and Marie Chilcott from the SADCA Secretariat attended her funeral.

As SADCA Vice Chair, Mrs Masego Marobela has resumed the duties of the SADCA Chairperson.

NEPAD

Meetings have been held with The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Secretariat with respect to the creation of an African body for accreditation. The NEPAD strategic framework document arises from a mandate given to the five initiating Heads of State (Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa) by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to develop an integrated socio-economic development framework for Africa.

The 37th Summit of the OAU in July 2001 formally adopted the strategic framework document. Documents regarding this were prepared by the SADCA Secretariat and discussed

with NEPAD. It is anticipated that a brainstorming workshop with global players will take place in South Africa later in 2007. A donor had been approached to fund this workshop.

For more information about NEPAD go to <http://www.nepad.org/2005/files/home.php>

A Project Management Committee (PMC) meeting was held in December 2006. The meeting was attended by a representative of the Norwegian Embassy. As one of the major role players in the funding of SADCA initiatives, Mr Hotvedt from the Embassy wanted to appraise himself of the activities within SADCA and the important role the PMC plays within SADCA. A number of key issues were discussed at this PMC meeting such as the imminence of donor funding from Norway becoming available, the issue of the appointment of SADCAS personnel, the opening of a bank account, marketing issues and the modus operandi for SADCAS accreditation.

The annual SQAM (Standardisation, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Accreditation) meetings will take place in April 2007 in Madagascar. Each of the four structures is allocated one day for the meetings of their specific structure. The

series of meetings culminates with the executive meeting. The SADCA meeting will be held on 24 April 2007.

SADCAS

The SADCAS Board members and PMC members received training in corporate governance, risk management and audit committees in December 2006. This training was very important for the SADCAS Board of Directors who are required to understand their responsibilities and the principles of good corporate governance. Appreciation was expressed to the Norwegian government who funded this training.

Mrs Marobela has been co-opted onto the SADCAS Board of Directors as a full director.

The Annual General Meeting of SADCAS is scheduled to take place on 24 April 2007 in Madagascar during the annual SQAM meetings.

The challenge ahead for SADCAS is to make it fully operational and all the donors are eager to ensure its success.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Mr Ron Josias, the SADCA Regional Coordinator, attended the ILAC Executive meeting in Paris, France in March 2007.

Accreditation Update

China

China National Accreditation Service of Conformity Assessment (CNAS)

Accreditation of Medical Laboratories

Experts in the fields of laboratory accreditation or laboratory medicine from Taiwan, Hong Kong, the Mainland of China and Canada attended a workshop on Medical Laboratories in Guangzhou China. The workshop was hosted by China National Accreditation Service of Conformity Assessment (CNAS) from 27-29 January this year.

The group jointly exchanged ideas and discussed their experiences and existing problems in the accreditation of medical laboratories and implementation of ISO 15189.

Two government departments related to medical laboratory regulation, Certification and Accreditation Administration

(CNCA) and Ministry of Health (MOH), People's Republic of China had shown great interest in the discussions at the workshop, and both sent representatives to participate and speak at the workshop.

The workshop covered topics of common interest for those economies regarding accreditation and regulation of medical laboratories, including setting up and marketing for medical laboratory accreditation programs, the relationship between the government regulation and accreditation, the process of accreditation and the ways to enhance its credibility. Also included were the major difficulties in implementation of ISO 15189, the possibilities of strengthening cooperation within the region and the sharing of expertise and other technical resources such as Proficiency Testing (PT) programs. The workshop also reviewed the progress of international mutual recognition arrangements in the field of medical laboratory accreditation.

The two-day workshop was conducted in both English and Chinese languages, which led to a better communication and understanding amongst the colleagues from this group of economies.

The workshop is recognised by the relevant government authorities in China as a very informative and in-depth forum in the field of medical laboratory accreditation and regulation. The results from this workshop will provide useful input into the relevant policy making process in China.

The event was also highly appreciated by the participating parties as a successful experience sharing opportunity, which opened the door to closer technical cooperation in the field of medical laboratory accreditation within the region. All parties in attendance agreed to continue with this form of experience sharing in the future, taking into consideration the results from this workshop.

Croatia HAA

Hrvatska akreditacijska agencija
Croatian Accreditation Agency

13th EA- Laboratory committee meeting held in Croatia

The Croatian Accreditation Agency (HAA) hosted the first 2007 European Co-operation for Accreditation (EA) - Laboratory Committee meeting from 8 to 9 March in Cavtat, Croatia.

Opening the meeting, Ms Biserka Bajzek Brezak, Director General of the HAA welcomed 39 participants mainly from different national accreditation bodies who are members of EA, as well as representatives from other organisations and the European Commission (EC).

During the meeting information about EA and ILAC activities and reports from conveners of permanent and ad-hoc working groups were presented and related issues were discussed.

The main discussion related to the topics of calibration, flexible scopes, Quality Assurance (QA) under the water framework directive, services covered by the scope of accreditation

(but not provided under accreditation), Also included in this discussion was the assessment of laboratory staff competence, minimal content of an assessment report, sampling under the drinking water directive and accreditation of RM producers.

Additionally, information from Eurolab, Eurochem and Euromet was presented, as well as updates on cooperation in specific technical fields (with European Federation of Immunogenetics, CEN/TC 264 WG 19 "Emission Monitoring Strategy", WADA, ENFSI, Measnet).



EA Laboratory Committee meets: Ms Biserka Bajzek Brezak, Director General of the HAA welcomed 39 representatives attending the 2007 European Co-operation for Accreditation (EA) - Laboratory Committee meeting in Cavtat, Croatia.



Mexico

Mexico's national accreditation compact

By Maria Jose Mesen

The Mexican accreditation entity (ema), in an effort to reinforce accreditation in Mexico, has set in motion the National Accreditation Compact (PNA for its Spanish abbreviation).

What is the PNA? It is a voluntary initiative that consists of a public engagement made by companies, organisations and all levels of government, where they commit to adopt and support a set of actions, with the intention of promoting and strengthening the Mexican Metrology, Standardisation and Conformity Assessment System (SISMENEC, is the Spanish abbreviation).

The purpose of this Compact is to ensure that all the accredited structure of the country is used by industry, trade, conformity assessment bodies, government offices, universities, research centers and individuals.

The PNA is a voluntary affiliation instrument: it is not a legislative

instrument; neither does it allow certification or accreditation. The Compact works as a network where those who sign it, according to their policies, needs or possibilities, commit to carry out one or all of the actions required.

Some of those actions are: to know accreditation and its benefits; to use the current accredited structure (accredited laboratories, certification bodies and inspection bodies); to spread accreditation activities and advantages. Also included are to continuously improve the accreditation process, to participate in accreditation activities and to report accredited conformity assessment bodies that do not operate according to principles of ethics, transparency and confidentiality.

To be part of the National Accreditation Compact, the interested party must fill in an application form and direct it to ema's Executive Direction, declaring its interest in the Compact. After signing the PNA, each signatory is responsible for fulfilling the acquired commitments: hence there will be no evaluation, but every 12 months they must hand in a report with progress and activities carried out according to their selected actions.

The activities to promote the PNA began last November when ema visited different Associations and Chambers, achieving the signatures, of Mexico City's Chamber of Trade, Services and Tourism and four of its Associations, becoming the first signatory adopting and supporting all six of the actions.

Mexico's electrical sector recently decided to be a part of the PNA, holding

an event in late January at the Federal Electrical Commission where a crowd of 201 witnessed 56 signatories being added to the Compact. The Industrial Chambers' Confederation also joined in, adding another 18 signatories on 13 February. By the end of February the PNA gathered more than 200 signatures, including industry participants, research centers, engineering associations, accredited laboratories and assessors.

Even though many have already signed the PNA, the formal launch of the National Accreditation Compact will take place on 20 March. It is expected that at least 1000 signatures will be gathered by then. One of ema's key goals is to have 3000 signatories by December this year.

ema believes the PNA is one of their most ambitious projects for this year, and its ability to strengthen accreditation at a national level is the reason why so much effort and promotion is being directed towards this initiative.



Signing the National Accreditation Compact- Salvador Padilla, Chairman of the Electrical Manufacturing National Chamber Julián Adame, Technical Sub - Director of the Federal Electrical Commission.



Guatemala

Guatemalan Accreditation Office (OGA)

OGA moves towards MLA

By Alexander Pineda*

Huge steps were made last year for accreditation in Guatemala. The assessments for laboratories have been done according to the Annual Program in order to verify the status of the accredited bodies. The first assessment on the inspection field was performed at one

of the most important agro-industrial sectors in Guatemala.

In order to be recognised within the MLA for testing laboratories, the Guatemalan Accreditation Office (OGA) is focusing its efforts to be well prepared for the peer assessment programmed by IAAC for next June.

OGA has been 'adopted' by NATA within the program of the ILAC/Joint Development Support Committee (JDSC) called Big Sister/Brother program. Very good communication has been established since the last ILAC meeting in Cancun, where one of the main outcomes of the cooperation was the visit by NATA representative Rob Oke, during the first week of March this year. The aim of the visit was to evaluate the system implemented by OGA according to the ISO/IEC 17011 standard, the ILAC guidelines and the KPIs. This activity also included two visits to accredited laboratories and

the witnessing of one surveillance assessment. The result of the evaluation was useful feedback for the Guatemalan Accreditation Office.

Within the region, the Central American Forum (FOCA) continues taking important steps to consolidate the cooperation amongst the accreditation bodies. OGA's representative continues as a Coordinator of the FOCA. Significant activity was also implemented by FOCA in order to get the recognition of the Central American Integration System (SICA).

The Guatemalan Accreditation Body (OGA) is a component of the National Quality System within the Ministry of Economy. The OGA was started by Governmental Agreement Number 145-2002 on 3 May 2002 and it was updated by Law 78-2005, National Quality System Law.

**Alexander Pineda, Head of the Guatemalan Accreditation Office.*

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OGA's main purpose is to apply and manage the accreditation in the whole national area, in order to formally recognize the technical competence of the conformity assessment bodies, according to the national and international standards.

OGA launched its new web site www.oga.org.gt for the benefit of clients and other stakeholders. The web site is in both Spanish and English. Further information can be found at info-oga@mineco.gob.gt

Comments on the visit to OGA by Rob Oke, NATA's Victorian Branch Manager.

"I was indeed fortunate to be selected by NATA to provide on-site training to OGA as part of Phase 2 of the JDSC Committee Big Sister/Brother program. This was my final assignment for NATA as I retire in April after a career of 35 years in laboratory accreditation.

The training took the form of a review of OGA's preparedness for the IAAC peer review planned for June. During the week I observed an assessment, visited two other laboratories and had meetings with the National Metrology Laboratory, the Accreditation Council and the Technical Committee.

I was impressed with OGA's staff, with the enthusiasm of the members of the Accreditation Council and the Technical Committee and with the assessors I met. I was particularly pleased to see the strong focus on the technical competence of the laboratories.

This was my first visit to a Central American country. I enjoyed the hospitality of the Guatemalan people and was lucky to see some wonderful places including San Jose, Antigua, Chichicastenango and Lake Atitlán."



(Centre) Rob Oke, Manager NATA Victoria visiting Guatemalan Accreditation Office as part of the ILAC/JDSC Big Sister/Brother program.

Ukraine



General meeting of the Technical Accreditation Committee of the National Accreditation Agency of Ukraine (NAAU)



Technical Accreditation Committee (TAC) Annual General Meeting in Kiev. Sergii Kazantsev, Chairman of NAAU, Valerii Krasiuk, Head of informational-analytical department, NAAU, Olga Romanovych, Leading specialist, NAAU.

The fifth Annual General Meeting of the Technical Accreditation Committee (TAC) was held in Kiev on 23 February this year. Delegates from eight TAC sub-committees presented nearly 100 enterprises of the Ukraine to members of TAC.

Representatives of the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, the State Committee of Ukraine for technical regulation and consumer policy, the experts of the European Commission Jorge Canossa and Antonio Dias also took part in the meeting.

The Chair of TAC, Viktor Kaminskii, reported on last year's activities and the main tasks ahead, including continuing to build the normative system for providing accreditation procedures along with the development of corresponding draft documents and the improvement of organisational and planned activity. The meeting discussed organisational structure and sub-committees, as well as the work relative to participation of sub-committees engaged in the work of allied international and regional technical committees.

Added to this was the subsequent development of work regarding the application of qualifying requirements for assessors and experts; development of the system of inter laboratory comparative tests, the introduction of testing method validation, as well as uncertainty and traceability of measurements in the practice of conformity assessment bodies.

Participants at the meeting were informed about NAAU activity and it was decided the main issues for subsequent work of TAC will include: accreditation of calibration laboratories, the introduction of the standard ISO 15189 "Medical

laboratories particular requirements for quality and competence" and the standard ISO 15195 Laboratory Medicine-Requirements for reference measurements laboratories.

Also included in TAC's work were: requirements for reference measurement laboratories; introduction of recommendations of ILAC and EA in Ukraine; recommendations in relation to ways of introducing the standard ISO/IEC 17021; activity on the creation of advising councils for proficiency testing providers (ILAC G13); and the development of general policy concerning proficiency testing in defined industries.

The development of recommendations for defined industries, relative maintenance of works of internal control, in particular, evaluation of method validation; participation during examination of accreditation personnel applications for strengthening confidence in the process of accreditation, and participation in evaluation of accreditation files were other items included.

The following questions were considered:

The introduction of the standard ACTV ISO/IEC 17025: 2005, preparation of specialists, involved by NAAU in accreditation, creation of a new sub-committee "Natural Resources," and changes in TAC management.

The representatives of the European Commission presented the project "Ukrainian quality infrastructure. Norms and standards."

NAAU continues work regarding extending and deepening cooperation with ILAC, IAF and EA to become a signatory to EA MLA as soon as possible.



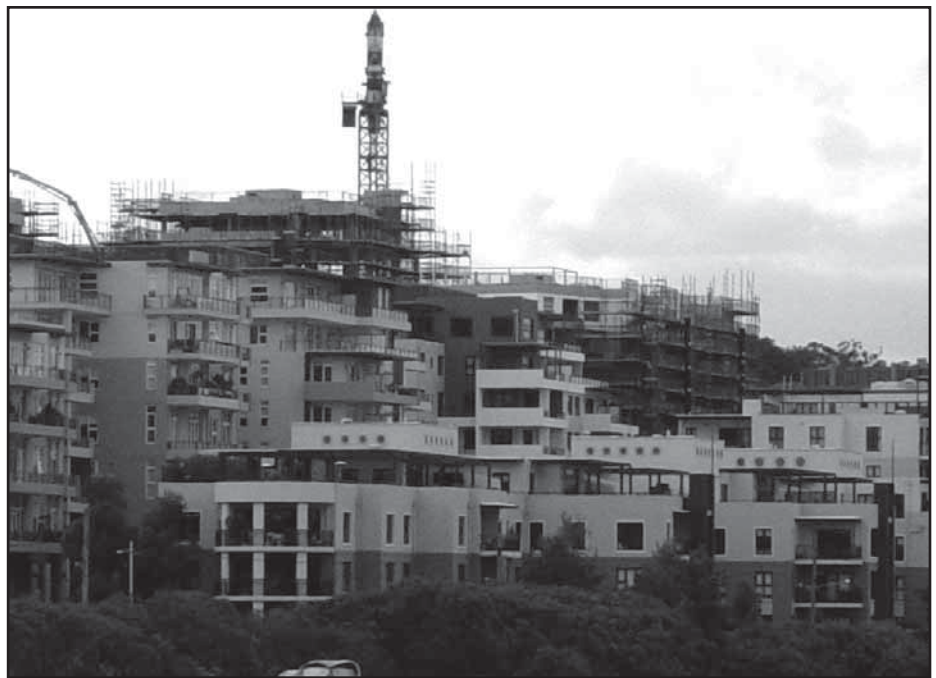
New Zealand

IANZ appointed for Building Consent accreditation

By Ian Roy*

The New Zealand regulator responsible for overseeing the improvement and quality of construction, the New Zealand Department of Building and Housing (DBH), has announced that it has appointed International Accreditation New Zealand (IANZ) as the New Zealand building consent authority accreditation body. Building consent authorities are generally city councils' building approval and inspection departments. The appointment is part of the Department's commitment to improve control of, and encourage better practices in, building design, construction and building control.

The New Zealand *'Building Act 2004'* sets standards and procedures for people involved in building work to ensure buildings are built properly. To strengthen the decision-making process at the critical building consent and inspection stages of the building process, building consent authorities will be accredited to a standard based on ISO/IEC 17020. DBH staff has worked closely with IANZ, city councils and territorial authorities, as well as private sector organisations, to establish the criteria for accreditation. IANZ has employed two new assessment staff to help with this work. The accreditation of



IANZ - New Zealand's new building consent authority accreditation body.

city councils and territorial authorities is scheduled to be completed by November 2007.

IANZ's Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRA/MLA) are referred to in the text of the Agreement between IANZ and the Department of Building and Housing, with the continued participation of IANZ in MRAs a prerequisite for the Agreement to continue. While the ILAC Arrangement, APLAC MRA, and the EA-IANZ bilateral MRA -signed in 1994 for testing, 1996 for calibration and 2006 for inspection- provide IANZ with the ability to accept testing and inspection reports from its MRA partners, the DBH see participation in MRAs as providing evidence of competence of the IANZ assessment process. However, as the accreditation is based on a modified ISO/IEC 17020,

the actual inspection bodies accredited in this regulatory programme will be outside the coverage of the MRAs, at least in the short term.

Nevertheless, the endorsement of accreditation by another New Zealand regulator will, in the long term, help enhance opportunities for IANZ's MRA partners' accredited laboratories and inspection bodies' clients to have their test or inspection reports accepted in New Zealand by the many regulators (such as the DBH), who use accreditation and the MRA as a means of complying with their requirements.

The appointment of IANZ as the independent accreditation body will bring greater consistency in regulatory building control across New Zealand.

**Ian Roy, Manager International Affairs and Government Liaison.*

NVLAP Interactive Web Site Launched

The National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP) has launched the NVLAP Interactive Web Site (NIWS), a web-based system that allows laboratories to submit applications for accreditation over the Internet. Participation is currently open to testing laboratories enrolled in the Acoustical Testing and Electromagnetic Compatibility and Telecommunications laboratory accreditation programs. The system will be gradually expanded to include all NVLAP accreditation programs.

The NIWS was developed in response to

both customer requests received through NVLAP's ongoing customer satisfaction survey process and the federal government mandate to provide customers with a way of electronically submitting information. In response to the survey question, "How can NVLAP improve its accreditation service to you?" customers said they wanted a simplified application process using on-line interactive forms that are pre-filled with data from the previous year's accreditation. In addition to providing better customer service, the NIWS enables NVLAP to comply

with the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) and the Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA).

The NIWS is expected to bring NVLAP closer to its customer laboratories and stakeholders by bringing e-government directly to them. By taking advantage of online automation, NVLAP is responding to the ever increasing expectations of an Internet-savvy public. Feedback is being collected from NIWS users to ascertain whether the system is user friendly and meets users' needs for e-business transactions.



Argentina

Organismo Argentino de Acreditación (OAA)

Regulators increasingly recognise and demand the accreditation of laboratories and certification bodies by the OAA.

The reduction of uncertainties in the fields of human health, safety and environment is essential for the fulfillment of Regulators' responsibility in defence of the public interest.

The OAA, due to its independence, transparency and technical competition, is widely recognised by institutions from the government sector.

Application authorities of regulations related to health, safety and environment increasingly perceive that accreditation is an instrument for making decisions, based on confidence in the results produced by accredited laboratories, and in the certificates issued by accredited certification bodies.

This acceptance is demonstrated by the growing inclusion of the concept of accreditation and of the OAA in their work.

Resolution 92/98 passed some years ago and subsequent resolutions since have required OAA accreditation of product certification bodies and testing laboratories for products such as concrete, toys, steel products for construction, low tension electrical products, personal protective equipment, electrical devices for gas applications, lighters and young children's bicycles.

Resolution 91/2001 issued by the Secretariat of Industry, Commerce and the Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) requires automotive products, safety auto-parts and bicycles must be certified by the OAA accredited certification bodies.

Resolution 1088/2004 issued by the Ministry of Health and Environment establishes the limits for lead content of latex paints and defines that these paints must be certified and tested by certification bodies and laboratories accredited by the OAA.

Additionally, the Register of Laboratories of Environmental Determinations – RELADA - was created for sampling, analyses and measurements applicable to fixed sources, both public and private, that are capable of producing environmental pollution within Buenos Aires. The decree establishes that the laboratories included in the register must be accredited by the OAA according to IRAM 301 standard.

Another disposition (5267. B.O.19/09/06) issued by the National Drugs, Foods and Medical Technology Administration, ANMAT, requires medical technology products of classes I, II, III and IV be tested by official or private laboratories accredited by the OAA.

A further Resolution (736/2006) issued by the Secretariat of Agriculture, Farming, Fishing and Foods creates the National Network of Testing and Diagnosis Laboratories dependent on the National Service of Sanitation and Quality of Food Products, SENASA, and establishes that in order to belong to this Network, the OAA must accredit their tests.

The Ministry of Health has adopted another resolution (Nr 1924/2006) establishing the National Commission of External Evaluation in Health Services that is going to act in the field of the Federal Council of Health. The OAA is one of the institutions that compose this National Commission.



Pakistan

Pakistan National Accreditation Council (PNAC) Medical Laboratory Accreditation Program

PNAC launched the Medical Laboratory Accreditation Program on 9 February, with the goal of enhancing the quality of tests, and contributing towards the importance of health care delivery systems in Pakistan.

Before launching the program, 11 seminars and workshops were held to create awareness amongst stakeholders. As a result, 15 technical assessors have been trained on ISO 15189.



PNAC and Pathologists sign MoU Secretary Ministry of Science and Technology, Dr Pervaiz Butt, witnessing the MoU signing ceremony between Pakistan National Accreditation Council and College of Pathologists Pakistan.

PNAC has also signed a MoU with the College of Pathologists Pakistan (CPP) to establish working relationships between CPP and PNAC to coordinate and jointly organise training seminars, courses and workshops on the Medical Laboratory Accreditation Program and ISO 15189. Technical policies were prepared by a sectoral committee, consisting of pathologists, microbiologists and other relevant technical personnel. To meet the requirements of Proficiency Testing (PT) for ISO 15189, PNAC in collaboration with CPP, will also launch a project to encourage and facilitate participation of medical testing laboratories in the program.

The road to PT in Pakistan

Given the fact that there are hardly any Proficiency Testing (PT) providers available in Pakistan and that PT/ILC (Inter-Laboratory Comparison) is a mandatory requirement for an accredited laboratory, PNAC launched PT schemes in collaboration with selected laboratories. These were chosen after a selection process was applied based on the credibility, technical competence and willingness for collaboration of the laboratories. Initially the laboratories selected for preparation of bulk samples, that were PNAC accredited laboratories and participating in PT organised by reputable PT scheme providers around the world and achieving acceptable z-scores. Training on ISO Guide 43 was also provided by PNAC to the laboratories interested in collaborating with PNAC organising PT schemes. PNAC prepared guides and protocol for PT/ILC organisers before launching PT in chemical testing for the following tests in water samples of high and low range: Pb, Cr, Cu, Fe, Mn, Ni, Zn, Hg, As, pH, Ca, Mg, Na, K, Conductivity, Total Hardness, Chlorides, Nitrate. For food/microbiology

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Director Pakistan National Accreditation Council (PNAC) Ismat Gul Khattak poses for a group photo with the participants of a seminar on Proficiency Testing organised by PNAC at a local hotel.

Norwegians evaluate PNAC

A team of three from Norwegian Accreditation (NA) headed by Ms Cecilie Laake, visited Pakistan to conduct the pre-peer evaluation of PNAC early in August last year. The evaluation is part of a three year collaboration project between NA and PNAC.

The aim of the evaluation was to identify gaps in the system and to assist PNAC to prepare for their peer evaluation by Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC) in March 2007.

Additionally, three assessor courses of five days duration were organised in the country with the assistance of Norwegian Accreditation. More than 70 participants from various laboratories attended these courses.

Similarly, two back-to-back technical courses were held on method validation, proficiency testing, traceability, and uncertainty of measurement in Islamabad and Karachi. The main aim of these courses is to build the capacity of laboratory managers in general, and establish a pool of technical assessors in particular.

Presently many of the accredited laboratories participate in Proficiency Testing (PT) schemes organised by external PT providers, which is time consuming and expensive. To overcome this problem PNAC initiated efforts to organise the Inter Labs Comparison (ILC) locally through some of its accredited laboratories. In this regard a sectoral committee was constituted to identify areas for ILC that was followed by a survey of the labs interested in organising the PT program.

Based on the data collected from laboratories a training program for selected accredited laboratories was organised at Islamabad. All 35 participants were provided training by Ms Ismat Gul Khattak, Director Laboratories on the requirements of ISO Guide-43. As a result three laboratories participating internationally in PT schemes and having a Z-score less than one, have been initially selected to organise ILC according to ISO Guide 43 in various sub-disciplines including food-microbiology, water and wastewater analysis and in metallurgy.

from previous page

the following tests were included in dry milk powder samples: Total Coliform, Fecal Coliform, E.Coli, and TPC at $36 \pm 1^\circ\text{C}$. To ensure credibility and impartiality results were directly received by PNAC and coding of the laboratories was done locally. A total number of 36 Labs have participated in the PT scheme. Statistical evaluation was done at PNAC under the supervision of experts from Norwegian Accreditation (NA). Presently, the reports will be issued in March 2007. The next PT round is planned for textile, pharmaceuticals, metallurgy and minerals. This will be a continuous activity and will soon be expanded to laboratories outside Pakistan for participation.

Measurement Audit for Calibration Laboratories

To meet the National and International requirement of Proficiency Tests (PT) for accredited and applicant laboratories for ISO/IEC-17025, Pakistan National Accreditation Council in Collaboration with National Physical and Standards Laboratory (NPSL) launched a PT/measurement Audit Scheme for Calibration laboratories. Six calibration laboratories from various parts of Pakistan participated in the programme. The results from the participating laboratories have been received and PNAC is in the process of analysing data and writing reports.



Italy

National System for the Accreditation of Certification and Inspection Bodies



Visit to Italy: Indian delegation visits SINCERT.

SINCERT offices in Milan hosted a delegation from India on 19 February this year. The group was represented by the Evaluation committee for Indian biological certification bodies involved in accreditation in organic agriculture. The nine members attending the meeting came from different Regional centres of organic farming, the Indian Ministry of agriculture and from APEDA – Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (India).

The study tour for Indian government officers was planned in the frame of the European Project "India Trade and Investment Development Programme" (TIDP), developed by an international consortium and led by the Danish Technological Institute, (working to assist in promoting India's export trade to Europe), especially as far as agro-food products are concerned.

The aim of this project is to strengthen the internal quality management systems according to ISO/IEC 17011:2004 "Conformity assessment - General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies", that in the countries of the European Community sets a uniform range of requirements for all bodies performing the accreditation of the conformity evaluation organisations.

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South African National Accreditation System (SANAS)

SANAS puts Accreditation on the Curriculum

As accreditation is increasingly being used internationally to recognise the technical competence of laboratories, the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) has identified a need to make future technicians and technologists aware of what this involves.

SANAS has embarked on a project to make tertiary students and lecturers aware of laboratory accreditation and the principles underlying it. It is hoped that the initiative will contribute a great deal towards ensuring the technology curriculum in institutions of higher learning reflects worldwide trends in Science and Technology. This knowledge

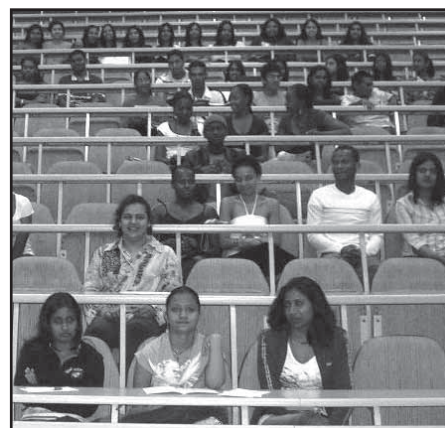
will hopefully benefit students when they start work.

To date, SANAS has delivered lectures to students and staff at the Vaal University of Technology in Vanderbijlpark, the Tshwane University of Technology in Pretoria, the University of Fort Hare in Alice, Eastern Cape, the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth, the Durban University of Technology, and the Central University of Technology in Bloemfontein.

The spin-off of this project at Fort Hare is that the department of Science and Technology has asked SANAS to assist in the inclusion of Accreditation and Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) as part of their curriculum.

SANAS believes the project should help sensitize students, (both as current users of laboratory services and as future providers of such services), to the level of service they should both expect and demand, and what will be expected and demanded of them. The objective for medical students is to make them more aware of the possibility of getting and acting on inaccurate results from the laboratories, and the possible risk this would pose for the patient, the doctor and the laboratory.

SANAS' vision is to ensure that Accreditation becomes part of the curriculum at all South African Science and Technology institutions of higher learning.



Students learn about accreditation in South Africa.

from previous page

The European study tour, conducted from 15 -22 February scheduled three days in Italy, one spent in the workshop at SINCERT and two in audit visits to organic certification bodies accredited by SINCERT. The purpose was to get to know the European context of the market of biological agro-food products and the requirements for the certification bodies for the biological sector. The group were familiarised with the functioning of European accreditation bodies, as well as an explanation by SINCERT of the accreditation procedures.

The meeting was appreciated, especially because of the high level of interaction reached in discussions designed to get to know each others accreditation systems and procedures.

This cooperation signifies increasing economic relationships between business structures of Italy and India. Indeed, from 12-14 February 2007, an Italian delegation to India led by Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi included representatives of both governmental and business was engaged in meetings between Italian and Indian companies. It was a political as well as an economic mission, and the sectors most represented were agro-food, textile, tourism, infrastructures and finance.

Tanzania

Milestone for Tanzanian service (TBS)

Late last year a 'first' was achieved in Tanzania when the TBS Metrology Laboratory was granted the Accreditation Certificate by the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) on 15 December.

The Accreditation covers four metrology fields: mass, small volumes, temperature and timers.

UNIDO supported the process by assisting the TBS metrology laboratory in upgrading and addressing non-conformities as identified by the accreditation body which led to actual accreditation. This is the first laboratory to obtain such accreditation in Tanzania.

Through the ongoing UNIDO/SECO/TBS Project, the laboratory will be in position to extend the accreditation to cover more metrology fields.



First TBS Metrology Laboratory granted Accreditation by SANAS.

(L to R) Tanzanian representative Mr. Daimon Mwakyembe, recently retired Director of the Tanzania Bureau of Standards, being presented with the Accreditation Certificate by Mike Peet, Chief Executive Officer, SANAS.

Stakeholder news



European Network of Forensic Science Institute (ENFSI)

By Judy van Overveld*

ENFSI is the European Network of Forensic Science Institutes whose aim is to ensure the quality of development and delivery of forensic science throughout Europe.

The organisation aims to strengthen and consolidate, expand the membership throughout Europe, while maintaining its development and credibility. ENFSI also wants to establish and maintain working relationships with similar organisations, and encourage all ENFSI laboratories to comply with best practice and international standards for quality and competence assurance.

The history of ENFSI

In 1992 the directors of Western European governmental forensic laboratories agreed to hold regular meetings to discuss topics of mutual interest. At the first meeting in 1993 in Rijswijk, Holland, 11 laboratories were represented. The laboratory representatives met again in 1994 in Linköping when a provisional Memorandum of Understanding was endorsed. At that early stage it was agreed that membership of ENFSI would be open to countries across Europe.

On October 20, 1995 a formal Founding Meeting was arranged and is considered to be the official birthday of ENFSI. At this meeting the founders of ENFSI signed the Memorandum of Understanding governing the operation of the Network, the first regular Board was elected and the logo (the European eye) was introduced.

At the 1999 Annual Meeting held in Moscow, the first constitution for ENFSI was accepted by the membership. In that same year the ENFSI website was established, and has gradually become the main source of information about ENFSI as well as a major means of communication within the ENFSI community.

The organisation is governed by a five-member Board, elected for a three-year term by the membership from the

directors of its member-institutes. The Secretariat supports the Board members in their duties. The 16 Expert Working Groups are the backbone of ENFSI in terms of the scientific knowledge and interests.

Besides the Working Groups two Standing Committees are part of ENFSI. The Quality and Competence Committee (QCC) develop policies on Quality Assurance and Competence Assurance, provides advice to the Expert Working Groups and ENFSI members and helps the ENFSI laboratories to comply with best practice and international standards.

The second standing committee is the European Academy of Forensic Science (EAFS). This is used as a window to the scientific world, a publisher of a glossary in various languages with typical forensic words and terms, and the organiser of scientific conferences.

ENFSI Working Groups include:

Digital Imaging.	Forensic Information Technology.
DNA.	Forensic Speech and Audio Analysis.
Documents.	Handwriting.
Drugs.	Marks.
Explosives.	Paint and glass.
Fibres.	Road accident analysis.
Fingerprints.	Scene of Crime.
Firearms.	
Fire and Explosion Investigation.	

Membership

ENFSI membership has developed rapidly with the numbers increasing steadily over the years from 11 forensic laboratories in 1993, to more than 50 forensic laboratories last year.

The member-laboratories are geographically spread across Europe and include all the countries of the European Union as well as all candidate-countries.

Forensic laboratories can become a member of ENFSI if they fulfill the eligibility criteria including the forensic laboratory covering a broad area of forensic expertise investigations, that is, more than five per cent of the expertise areas covered by the ENFSI Expert Working Groups, having credible status in its own country (such as regular supplier of reports used by police forces, prosecutors or judges), and employing at least 25 people including management, scientific staff and supporting staff. As well, the forensic laboratory needs to have achieved accreditation or documented

progress in quality assurance, with a clear plan to obtain accreditation in the near future, and needs to be a member-state of the Council of Europe.

However, forensic laboratories that are not ENFSI members can, with some restrictions, participate in the activities of the Working Groups.

The activities of ENFSI include a range of meetings such as The Annual Meeting (for members only), EAFS Triennial Meeting (open meetings), one-day, one-issue seminars, and Meetings of the Expert Working Groups (restricted access). Other activities include collaborative studies and proficiency tests, advice to the European Union on forensic issues, publication of Best-Practice Manuals and glossaries (in various languages) with typical forensic words and terms.

Regular updates of the website, publication of the ENFSI Newsletter and projects like Research and Development, Terrorism and European Mentorship for Forensic Accreditation (EMFA) are other activities ENFSI engages in.

External Relations

ENFSI has official contacts with a number of organisations and these include;

The American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors (ASCLD), the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) and Senior Managers Australian and New Zealand Forensic Laboratories (SMANZFL).

Official contacts are also conducted with Academia Iberoamericana de Criminalística y Estudios Forenses (AICEF), EU-Police Cooperation Working Party (PCWG), Interpol, the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) and ILAC.

Further information can be obtained by emailing the Secretariat at secretariat@enfsi.eu or from the website

 www.enfsi.eu

*Judy van Overveld, ENFSI co-secretary.

National Laboratory Association (NLA)

NLA AGM

When going to press the South African NLA Board had not yet set a date for the Annual General Meeting (AGM), it traditionally occurs in the March or early April time frame. The AGM is an ideal opportunity to express concerns and requests in terms of what the NLA can do to improve and provide a value-added service.

National Certificate: Metrology

NLA confirms that the South African Qualifications Authority, SAQA, has approved the National certificate in Metrology. The process of investigating how it can be registered and accredited as a service provider (in order to begin offering this qualification), has just commenced.

For those in the calibration community this represents a significant advancement which, (it is hoped will ultimately result in the formal registration of metrologists), thus creating recognition for this employment category.

Training courses

Please see details below for this years schedule. Unfortunately the DCLF course had to be postponed and a new date is indicated below.

New Courses

NLA is pleased to advise the analytical laboratory community that during 2007 we have scheduled three courses which should be of interest.

These include QA for Microbiology, Basic Capillary Gas Chromatography and Basic Quantitation in Chromatography and Spectroscopy.

NLA is confident that these will be the forerunner to other technical courses that will be offered for analytical test laboratories. Coupled with the course in Estimating Uncertainties in Chemical Measurements it demonstrates the NLA's commitment in this area.

People may register via the NLA website or a form can be downloaded and faxed once it is completed. Please note that it is essential that NLA receives your Registration and payment at least two weeks prior to the commencement of a course. Otherwise we may have to postpone/cancel courses unnecessarily.

Proficiency Testing and Interlaboratory Comparisons

NLA is pleased to advise that it is currently running an ILC for AC/DC Power and Energy and for those Calibration Labs who still wish to participate please contact the NLA Office for details.

NLA also advises Agricultural Laboratories the announcement of the details of a Proficiency Testing Scheme for Pesticide Formulations will be happening shortly. Finally, after much talk regarding the NLA conducting Proficiency Testing for the testing laboratory community, NLA are extremely excited about

developments in this direction. Please contact Hanlie Badenhorst for further details.

Conference proceedings database

For those who did not attend last year's T&M Conference, as well as those who did, NLA would like to inform you that there is now a searchable database on the NLA website where the past five years papers (that have been presented at the annual T&M Conference), can be downloaded. There is no charge for this and it is hoped that readers will avail themselves of the opportunity of making use of this feature when they either wish to find a specific paper or if they want to do some research on what is locally available. Go and have a look, you will be amazed at the speed and accuracy of the search!

CIPAC Symposium - 12th JUNE 2007 - UMHLANGA ROCKS -

The NLA will be supporting this one day event and those who are interested should go and take a look at the CIPAC website for further details.

 <http://www.cipac.org>

TEST and Measurement Conference 2007 - 19-21 November 2007

Venue - Emperors Palace Convention Centre (adjacent to Johannesburg International Airport).

Whilst there is still quite some time before this event takes place the NLA would like to encourage you to consider submitting an abstract for consideration by the Technical Review Panel, and coming along to share with the Laboratory community your experiences. This highly successful event affords attendees the opportunity to network with a wide variety of people in the laboratory community and enables you to not only find solutions to vexing problems, but also affords you the opportunity to share your knowledge with others.

The preliminary details as well as the call for papers can be found on the NLA website and we look forward to seeing you at Emperor's Palace in November this year.

National Laboratory Association

 <http://www.nla.org.za>

NLA course calendar

Microbiology QA

16-18 April 2007 R 3690,00

Time & Frequency Metrology

7-11 May 2007 R 4900,00

Electrical (DC LF) Metrology

7-11 May 2007 R 4900,00 - New Date

Temperature Metrology

14-18 May 2007 R 4900,00

Flow Metrology

21-25 May 2007 R 4900,00

Pressure Course

28 May-1 June 2007 R 4900, 00

Basic Capillary Gas Chromatography

29th May 2007 R 960, 00

Dimensional Metrology

4-8 June 2007 R 4900, 00

Introduction to Estimation of Uncertainty of Measurement (GUM)

11-14 June 2007 R 4260, 00

Radio Frequency Metrology

18-22 June 2007 R 4900, 00

Estimation of Uncertainty in Chemical Measurements

17-20 July 2007 R 4260, 00

Force, Torque & Hardness Metrology

23-27 July 2007 R 4900, 00

Oscilloscope Course

13-15 August 2007 R 3690, 00

Humidity Metrology (Part 1 -Relative Humidity)

17-18 September 2007 R 2960, 00

Humidity Metrology (Part 2 - Dew Point, Humidity Systems)

19-20 September 2007 R 2960, 00

Sterilizer & Autoclave Course

8-10 October 2007 R 3690, 00

Introduction to Measurement

11-12 October 2007 R 2960, 00

Electrical (DC LF) Metrology

15-19 October 2007 R 4900.00

Basic Quantitation in Chromatography and Spectroscopy

23 October 2007 R 1480, 00

Mass Metrology

22-25 October 2007 R 4900, 00

Introduction to Estimation of Uncertainty of Measurement (GUM)

29 Oct-1 Nov 2007 R 4260, 00

ILAC Publications

The following is a listing of titles of all ILAC public documents at February 2007. These can be downloaded from the Publications section under Resources on the ILAC website.

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	This document is currently under review
ILAC-I3:1996	Withdrawn
ILAC-I4:1996	Withdrawn

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-G11:07/2006	Guidelines on Assessor Qualifications & Competence of Assessors and Technical Experts
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
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)

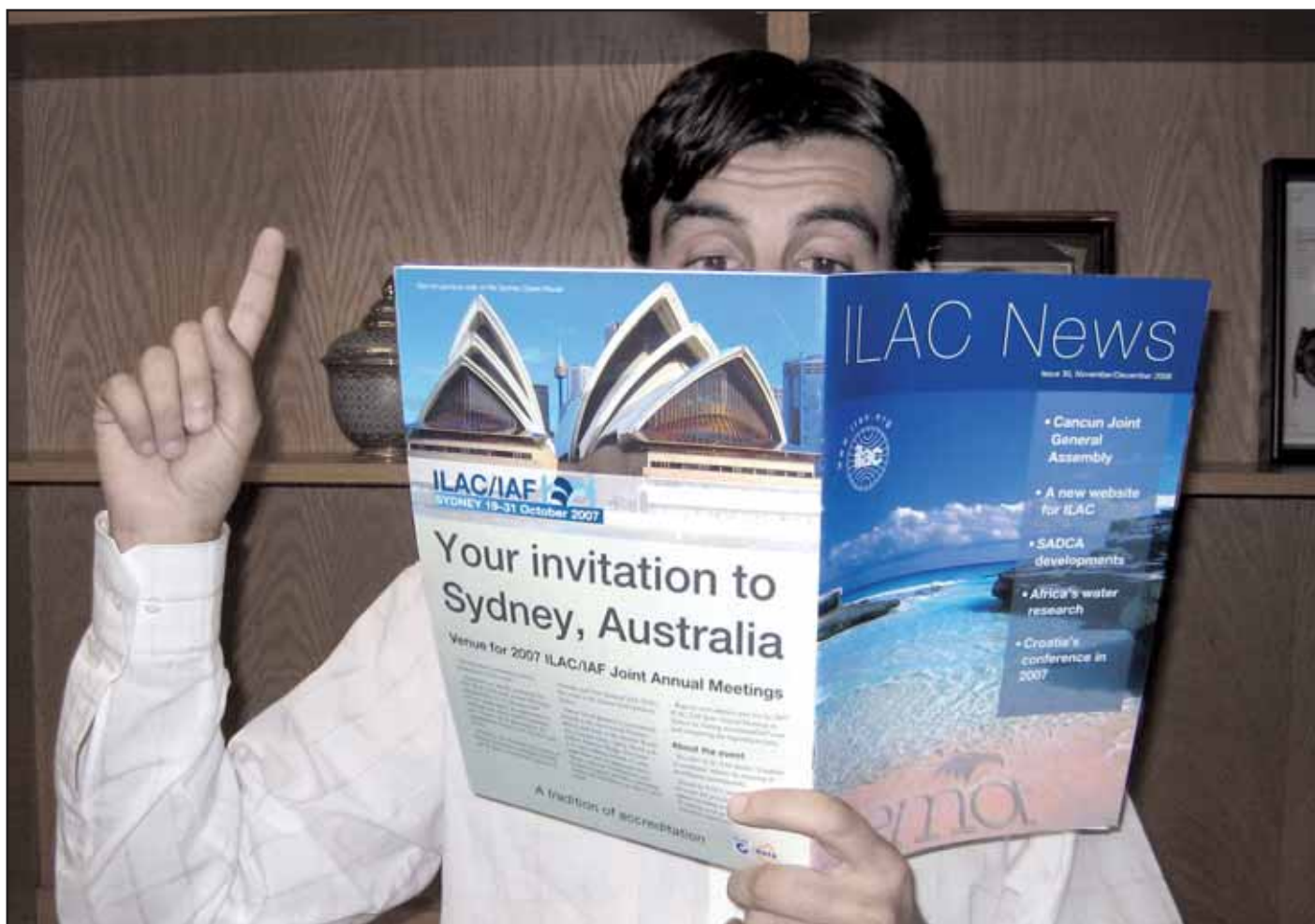
ILAC-S1:2003	Guidelines for the Proposal, Drafting, Approval and Publication of ILAC Documents
ILAC-S2:2003	Rules
ILAC S3:2004	ILAC Strategic and Business Plan
ILAC S5:2005	ILAC Procedure for Disputes, Complaints and Appeals

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-P4:2003	ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Policy Statement
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) (Link to IAF/ILAC A3:2005)
ILAC-P8:07/2006	ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Arrangement): Supplementary Requirements and Guidelines for the Use of Accreditation Symbols and for Claims of Accreditation Status by Accredited Laboratories
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



Have your say - on ILAC News

What are your thoughts on ILAC News? That's the question the ILAC Marketing and Communications Committee would very much like you to answer with their online survey.


ILAC News is published twice a year in magazine format, and is distributed globally to ILAC members and stakeholders. That's an expensive exercise, which is why the MCC is keen to collect your views on what should -and should not - be in ILAC News.

The ILAC MCC has published an online survey form which it encourages ILAC members to complete. The survey takes only a few moments to finish, but will allow the committee to decide what is the best content - and best publishing mechanism - for ILAC News.

It has been suggested that ILAC News be published on the web as news stories similar to this one. That would remove a lot of expenses and increase potential

audience, but would mean there would no longer be a hard copy version. That's just one of the questions the committee hopes the online survey will answer.

If you are an ILAC News reader, please take a few moments to complete the survey. Your assistance will ultimately result in better ILAC news and a better ILAC.

To fill out the reader survey go to:
 www.ilac.org/survey.

Increased Regulator Acceptance of Accreditation and the ILAC MRA (2006 survey results)

By Ian Roy*

Regulators need confidence that businesses comply with regulations, and a cost effective means of ensuring this confidence is provided through accreditation. In some instances, regulators will accept manufacturers' self declaration. In others, regulators may require accredited test and inspection results. Sometimes the regulators may do their own assessment of laboratory

or inspection body compliance. In some instances the regulator may even require product certification -product compliance with a particular standard - or may require evidence of certification to ISO 9001.

Where accurate test and inspection reports are required, the most cost effective, transparent and non-discriminatory assurance of compliance is by accepting test and inspection reports from accredited laboratories and inspection bodies where the accrediting

body is a signatory to the ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (ILAC MRA).

Full details of the individual regulators and their level of acceptance of each accreditation body's accreditations and the MRA are available in the members section of the ILAC website (www.ilac.org).

**Ian Roy is the Manager, International Affairs and Government Liaison, International Accreditation New Zealand.*

Take in the Sydney Harbour at night

Your invitation to Sydney, Australia

Venue for 2007 ILAC/IAF Joint Annual Meetings

Sharing ideas, confirming actions,
planning for future work.

Organisers are already promising the 2007 ILAC/IAF Joint Annual Meetings, scheduled for 19–31 October, 2007 will give participants an opportunity to exchange new ideas, confirm activities and to have a say in planning for the organisations' future work activities and action.

Hosted by the National Association of Testing Authorities, Australia (NATA) and the Joint Accreditation System of

Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ), the venue is the Amora Hotel Jamison, Sydney.

Amora Hotel Jamison is conveniently located in the city's central business district and close to the historic 'Rocks' area, Circular Quay, Opera House and Sydney Harbour Bridge. The hotel is in easy walking distance to cafes, nightclubs and shopping precincts. Major corporate headquarters and business support providers (including banks and legal firms) are also at close hand.

Register your interest now for the 2007 ILAC/IAF Joint Annual Meetings in Sydney by visiting www.ilaciaf2007.com and completing the registration form.

About the event

The 2007 ILAC/IAF theme: '*A tradition of accreditation*' reflects the maturing of accreditation internationally.

Hosted by NATA and JAS-ANZ, the event will provide an informative agenda including eminent presenters and an exciting social program of uniquely Australian experiences.

A tradition of accreditation