

ILAC News

30th Anniversary Edition Issue 32, October/November 2007



ILAC
celebrates
30 years

Contents

| | |
|--|--------------|
| From the Chair | 2 |
| News from the ILAC Secretariat | 3 |
| Features | |
| ILAC Chair Daniel Pierre honoured | 5 |
| NATA Australia appoints new CEO | 5 |
| From Conference to Cooperation | 6 |
| A personal view of ILAC history | 7 |
| ILAC—UNIDO Cooperation | 9 |
| ILAC committee news | |
| ILAC/IAF Joint Development Support Committee (JDSC) news | 10 |
| ILAC Marketing and Communications Committee | 11 |
| The Arrangement Committee (ARC) and the ILAC Strategic and Business Plan | 12 |
| IEC CAB and ILAC Technical Panel in Geneva | 13 |
| International update | |
| ISO congratulates ILAC | 14 |
| BIPM-ILAC relationship 'crucial' | 15 |
| Guiding references—the role of ISO-REMCO | 16 |
| Regional cooperations | |
| Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC) | 18 |
| European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) | 18 |
| South African Regional Accreditation Cooperation (SADCA) | 19 |
| Accreditation Update | |
| Croatian Accreditation Agency (HAA) | 20 |
| Cyprus (CYS) | 20 |
| Guatemalan Accreditation Office (OGA) | 21 |
| Standards Malaysia | 22 |
| Pakistan National Accreditation Council (PNAC) | 22 |
| Spanish National Accreditation Body (ENAC) | 23 |
| TAF | 24 |
| Stakeholder News | |
| National Laboratory Association (NLA) | 25 |
| UILI strengthens work in private sector | 26 |
| Eurachem | 27 |
| 2007 ILAC/IAF Joint Annual Meetings, Sydney | (back cover) |

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From the Chair

This year, ILAC celebrates 30 years of existence and of hard work aimed at facilitating trade through mutual recognition of accredited tests and calibrations.

Such an anniversary is an excellent occasion to look at the past, the present and the future of our organisation and, as Chairman, I take this opportunity to express my personal views on what I believe should be the future direction for ILAC and the main challenges that we could face along the way

Where are we today?

ILAC has become robust and well known—at least among the testing and calibration community organisations. We have established a global Arrangement signed by 58 accreditation bodies representing 46 economies.

We have set up strong co-operations with international bodies such as International Organization for Standardization (ISO), International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), Bureau International des Poids et Mesures (BIPM), Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML) and World Anti Doping Agency (WADA).

We are working well with our sister organisation, the International Accreditation Forum (IAF). We have, together with IAF, put in place a structure to support the development of accreditation and related conformity assessment infrastructure in developing economies. Certainly, ILAC and its members can be proud of these achievements which, even if not perfect, have the merit of being operational.

And for the future?

I think one of the main issues for ILAC is to improve its recognition amongst the clients of the accredited bodies. I mean industry, which needs accredited tests, calibrations and inspections, and also regulators who rely more and more often on the technical work done by ILAC members. The enhancement of this recognition, at the national, regional and international levels, would contribute significantly to the facilitation of global trade.

It is a fact that some industry sectors such as aerospace, automotive, electro technical and seed which have already established their own schemes of recognition and that some regulators are still reluctant to delegate their control, but there are clear indications of progress towards a better understanding of what ILAC and its members can provide for them.

A second important issue is the technical support to developing accreditation bodies, which should be intensified in order to offer accreditation facilities in a maximum number of economies. Here, the problem is resources, not only financial, but also human. We need more competent trainers and experts with greater availability to do that job.

A third item is the cooperation with IAF. Together we should strive for a simplification of the current process of working, which could result in a merge of the two organisations. In no case should such a merge be considered as a goal. However, it could be a possible means of improvement that neither organisation should overlook. Again, efficiency is at stake!

Finally and above all, from my point of view, ILAC's main challenge is perhaps to accommodate two opposite perceptions of the concept of accreditation. On one hand, the European view, which considers accreditation as a public service, being a non-profit and non-commercial activity, forbidding competition between accreditation bodies. On the other hand, the American view, where accreditation is considered more as a business, which is open to everybody and where accreditation bodies are operating in full competition. Here, we need to have long and what will certainly be difficult discussions with all interested parties, in order to maintain and improve the confidence level in our Arrangement.

As you can see, ILAC has interesting tasks and challenges in front of us. However, being definitely optimistic, and also well aware of the high level of competence and dedication of our members, I am sure we will succeed.



Daniel Pierre
Chair



ILAC Secretariat: Alan Squirrell, Annette Dever, Sharon Kelly, Amanda Stubbs, Alison Hay.

News from the ILAC secretariat

This year ILAC celebrates its thirtieth anniversary and as you will have noticed, this issue of ILAC News has been dedicated to the development of ILAC, from the early days through to the ILAC of today and then onto a brief look at the future direction and challenges that may await us. The Secretariat hopes that ILAC members and colleagues from other organisations, will enjoy this anniversary edition and we look forward to a productive series of meetings in Sydney to mark ILAC's thirtieth birthday.

A general update on ILAC activities since March 2007 follows:

ILAC Meetings

The June meetings this year were 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 were held. Those in attendance were also fortunate to experience the wonderful hospitality of our hosts from CNAS.

The 2007 Annual Meetings (ILAC and IAF) will be co-hosted by NATA and JAS-ANZ in Sydney, Australia, from 19–31 October. This year, the developing country seminar, scheduled for 31 October, will be held jointly between ILAC, IAF and the Asia-Pacific Metrology Programme (APMP). The three organisations are taking advantage of the proximity and overlap between both sets of annual meetings to conduct this joint seminar on the topic of 'Interactions between National Metrology Institutes and Accreditation Bodies for Laboratories, Inspection Bodies and Certification Bodies - With particular focus on issues for Developing Economies'. UNIDO is a co-sponsor of the seminar, as one of the partner organisations of the Joint Committee on coordination of technical assistance to Developing Countries in Metrology, Accreditation and

Standardisation (JCDCMAS).

The ILAC Arrangement

As at 19 June 2007, there were 58 Signatories (Full Members) to the Arrangement, representing 46 economies.

As noted in the March issue of ILAC News, the Inter American Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC), received formal recognition of their Multilateral Arrangement (MLA) during the meetings in Cancun in November 2006. 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, ie. Signatories to the ILAC Arrangement.

ILAC now has three recognised regional cooperation bodies – Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC), European Co-operation 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 (JGA).

A proposal to change the name of the JWGI to Joint Inspection Group (JIG) was presented to the JCCC in Beijing to reflect the permanent nature of this group. This proposal was supported and will be presented to the memberships of ILAC and IAF during the JGA in Sydney for endorsement.

ILAC Liaisons

The review of liaison activities continues to be a major focus of the ILAC Executive Committee, which seeks to ensure that ILAC interests are represented in areas which have an impact on the activities of ILAC and its members. The Liaison Database, located in the members area of the ILAC website, continues to serve as the main repository for the ever increasing number of reports and documents that are produced as part of ILAC's rapidly expanding liaison activity. The database 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).

ILAC liaison activities since March this year include being represented at a meeting of the Consultative Committee

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on Amount of Substance—Metrology in Chemistry (CCQM) in April, through to a meeting of the Joint Committee on Traceability in Laboratory Medicine (JCTLM) in December.

In November, ILAC representatives will attend the twenty third meeting of the Conférence Générale des Poids et Mesures, (CGPM), which meets every four years in Paris.

The delegates to this meeting are representatives of the governments of the Member States to the Meter Convention and observers from the Associates to the General Conference.

ILAC's continuing close cooperation with EURACHEM and CITAC supports the important metrological initiatives in chemical and biological measurement also being undertaken in conjunction with the International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM).

Liaison activity with EURACHEM and CITAC also includes work on method validation, measurement uncertainty and compliance with limits, the use of "good quality" reference materials and proficiency testing.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between ILAC and OIML in November 2006, has been expanded to include IAF in a Tripartite MoU. Final preparations are underway for the signing of this MoU during the Sydney meetings.

ILAC continues its very active role in many ISO Technical Committees and CASCO Working Groups.

This year ILAC liaison officers (sometimes more than one) have participated, and are scheduled to participate, in meetings of the CASCO CPC (Chairman's Policy Committee), WG 27 (Drafting requirements for use in conformity assessment applications), WG 29 (Revision of ISO Guide 65 – Product Certification) CASCO WG28 (Revision of ISO Guide 43 – Proficiency Testing) CASCO Plenary, ISO TC212 (Technical Committee - Clinical laboratory testing and in vitro diagnostic test systems) ISO TC 69 (Technical Committee - Applications of statistical methods), ISO TC 176 (Technical Committee - Quality Management and Quality Assurance) and the IAF, ILAC and ISO Joint Working Group.

ILAC was also actively represented at ISO REMCO (reference materials) which met in Tsukuba, Japan on 5-8 June 2007

and the APLAC Workshop on reference materials, held in conjunction with this ISO REMCO meeting.

The meetings focussed on the review of ISO Guide 34 *General Requirements for the competence of reference material producers*.

ILAC and its regional cooperation body members are continuing to contribute to the revision of this important guide together with other related work on reference materials.

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 will teleconference the next LC meeting in September 2007 as well as attending the WADA conference in November 2007.

WADA held its fourth training course for accreditation body assessors in April 2007.

Good progress is being made with this collaboration, and has matured to the point that a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organisations is now being developed.

Secretariat Staff

Amanda Stubbs joined the ILAC Secretariat on 15 May 2007, as Administrator – ILAC Secretariat a role she shares with Alison Hay. Amanda replaced Nilla Merrigan who left the Secretariat, to take on a role with another organisation, on 2 May 2007.

Sharon Kelly, who joined the Secretariat in January 2007, attended her first series of ILAC meetings in Beijing in June. Sharon is currently focussing on the Secretariat's activities in support of the ILAC Arrangement Management Committee (AMC), Arrangement Council and the joint sessions of the ILAC AMC and its IAF counterpart the MLA MC.

As noted in the March issue, 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 6 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 work of the ILAC Secretariat

Work on the ILAC website continues in conjunction with the Marketing and

Communications Committee (MCC), in particular additional information, including terms of reference, membership and working groups details, has been added to the ILAC and joint ILAC/IAF committee pages in the members only area. As always feedback on the website is welcome from all users of the ILAC website.

The Secretariat has also been busy with the preparation of a revision to the ILAC Bylaws and several other publications that have either been published or are nearing completion.

The ILAC-MRA Mark registration process continues and, as at 24 May 2007, 42 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 Secretariat will meet with the Secretaries of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and the Regional Cooperation Bodies, in Sydney in October, to further the work begun last year in relation to opportunities for, closer cooperation and communication between the Secretariats.

ILAC Membership

ILAC membership as at 24 August 2007 is as follows:

- 58 Full Members (Signatories to the ILAC Arrangement) representing 46 economies.
- 17 Associates representing 16 economies.
- 21 Affiliates representing 21 economies.
- 5 Regional Cooperation Bodies.
- 1 National Coordination Body.
- 23 Stakeholders.

The ILAC membership - a total of 125 bodies - now covers 82 different economies worldwide. About 30,000 laboratories and 5,000 inspection bodies are accredited by the 75 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.

Annette Dever

ILAC Secretary

September 2007

ILAC Chair Daniel Pierre honoured

Daniel Pierre, Chairman of ILAC, Immediate Post-Chair of EA and CEO of Cofrac, the French accreditation body, has received the medal of Knight of the Légion d'honneur – the highest French decoration - from Francois Loos, French Minister of Industry.

The ceremony was held on November 28, 2006 in Paris. On that occasion, the minister outlined Daniel's talents which had led Cofrac into its current position, being a signatory of all existing multinational recognition arrangements, in Europe and worldwide.

Daniel thanked Cofrac staff, together with Cofrac evaluators and experts and all those stakeholder representatives who are contributing to Cofrac work through their active participation within committees and working groups. He concluded by saying the decoration and honour should be shared with the accreditation community.



Chairman of ILAC, Daniel Pierre receives the Légion d'honneur from French Industry Minister Francois Loos.

NATA Australia appoints new Chief Executive



Mr Alan Patterson—NATA's Chief Executive Designate.

A successor has been named to replace NATA Chief Executive and former APLAC Chair, Tony Russell, who retires in November.

Mr Russell, who has been Chief Executive Officer of NATA for the past seven years, said he was happy to have been part of the organisation's history.

However, Mr Russell will continue his various commitments to ILAC, including his chairing of the ILAC Proficiency Testing Consultative Group, continuing as an ILAC liaison to ISO CASCO WG 28 and as a member of the ILAC Executive Committee.

"I have certainly enjoyed the challenges of the past seven years and, indeed, those of my whole 34 years at NATA. I am also proud to have been involved in the growth and development of ILAC during that time." Mr Russell said.

Mr Alan Patterson has been named as Mr Russell's successor. He recently joined NATA as Chief Executive Designate, and will formally take on the Chief Executive position from 5 November.

Mr Patterson, brings more than 30 years experience in senior strategic and operational management roles in both the private and public health sectors.

He specifically asked Mr Russell to continue his ILAC duties for the next year to ensure the transition goes as smoothly as possible.

"Mr Russell has a vast store of expertise on international matters. It would be remiss of me as a new Chief Executive designate not to use that knowledge," Mr Patterson said.

"I am excited about the ILAC Conference in Sydney and the

opportunity to meet with some of the key international experts and stakeholders in the accreditation environment, as well as beginning the process of coming to grips with some of the issues facing NATA's contemporary organisations".

Mr Patterson said he was attracted to NATA because of its international standing, history, and proud record of innovation and leadership, both nationally and internationally.

"In every sense of the word, we live in a global environment, where business is conducted across markets and economies in differing stages of maturity, regulation and sophistication. Industries and organisations are faced with escalating pressures to market their products and services in an increasingly competitive environment. As such there is a continuing need for vigilance and due diligence, to ensure the community is protected, and that individuals can have confidence when accessing products and services from an increasingly diverse range of options and sources," Mr Patterson said.



Retiring NATA CEO, Tony Russell.

From Conference to Cooperation

By Mike Peet, ILAC Chair 2000–2004

As ILAC celebrates its thirtieth anniversary it is a privilege to be asked to contribute a few thoughts although I need to declare at the outset that my insights are relatively recent. My first ILAC Conference was in Amsterdam in 1996, ably chaired at the end of his tenure by Jos Leverink and hosted by Raad voor Accreditatie (RvA).

At the end of the proceedings I found myself on the ILAC Executive Committee, representing unaffiliated bodies, under the wise and insightful chairmanship of John Gilmour. I distinctly remember him asking each committee member to commit to attending all meetings going forward wherever they might be held. His motivation was typical of the wisdom that would follow. This was that in running an international organisation, it was vital that people in leadership meet regularly to ensure common understanding and a shared direction. I have seen countless times since, that email comes a very poor second as an effective medium for such communication and often creates even more conflict before issues are finally understood and intelligently debated.

During John's tenure as Chair it became obvious that ILAC would have to embark on a different course if it were to remain relevant. The amount of work identified for a two year stint as Chair was already overwhelming as the fundamental premise of a Chair being elected primarily to host the next bi-annual conference was already under question. As is still the case, a very professional secretariat was provided by NATA in the person of, at that time, Ann-Margret Gilmour. Her attention to detail, amazing memory of preceding events and the associated ILAC rules saved us more than once from rehashing decisions that



Ann-Margret Gilmour.

had already been mutually agreed.

Mutual Recognition Arrangement

At the next General Assembly held coincidentally in Sydney in 1998, Dr. Belinda Collins was elected Chair and continued to guide the work required to set ILAC on its new course.

A fundamental development under her leadership was the creation of a dedicated committee to look after the interests of developing countries. The executive was also tasked to formalise a Mutual Recognition Arrangement at the ILAC level noting that such arrangements already existed in EA and APLAC and that the alternative would be a bi-lateral between these two regions.

As Vice Chair I was tasked to lead the task group. The first meeting in April 1999 was held in Paris and attended by Bill Henderson, Pete Unger, Alan Squirrell, Dr. Bob Kaarls, Daniel Pierre, Wilson de Oliveira, Belinda and myself. A strategy was agreed and actions allocated to the various committee members. What followed was a frantic 18 months of focused activity leading to the creation of documentation that would formalise the rules and procedures of such an arrangement.

It was recognised at the outset that transparency of process and confidence in the outcome would be vital to the future success of the Arrangement. Many hours were spent debating the various possible alternatives around the different areas of activity. The experiences of both APLAC and EA were invaluable in this process and definitely contributed to the fact that the work was completed on time. The Arrangement was subsequently signed in Washington DC, on 2 November 2000 by 37 member bodies representing 28 economies. As was noted in a press release at the time, the next crucial step was for governments to take advantage of this Arrangement by using it for instance, to further develop or enhance trade agreements. A crucial aspect from my perspective was also mentioned, namely that such activity has to take place in an environment which fully appreciates the real needs and concerns of developing economies and fledgling regions.



Mike Peet, ILAC Chair 2000 – 2004. Chief Executive Officer, South African National Accreditation System (SANAS).

The same General Assembly was also memorable on a more personal level. I was entrusted to Chair of ILAC for what was eventually to become a four year term. I was ably supported by a NATA secretariat comprising of Alan Squirrell, Annette Dever, Florence Fung and Paul Davies who managed to both quickly understand, and sometimes appreciate, my quirky sense of humour.

It really was a joy to work with them as well as an executive committee comprising initially of Daniel Pierre as Vice Chair, Belinda as immediate past Chair, Peter Unger, Orna Dreazen, Peter van der Leemput, Hans Mittman, Llew Richards and last but not least, David Stanger.

David ably represented the interests of the laboratory community. After two years we took leave of Peter van der Leemput and David and welcomed Maribel Lopez, Merih Malmqvist, Jacqueline Sample, Tony Russell, Hanspeter Ischi, Beatrice Mutabazi with Tony Anderson representing the laboratory community.

With the new arrangement in place, the executive and secretarial workload increased dramatically. This was due to many reasons but two will be highlighted. One of these was the management of the many issues and associated queries around the Arrangement that became almost a daily factor. Another was the

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significant amount of work addressing the many and growing liaisons with other strategic partners. If this were not enough, the executive also had to manage the incorporation of ILAC as a Cooperation in the Netherlands. Finally, we also managed to create a strategy and business plan for the work ahead.

It had been recognised that ILAC was attracting a lot of additional work but the pool of dedicated volunteers was not unlimited. This ultimately led to the restructuring and current committee structure that continues under Daniel's leadership.

Rotherham, in *Implementing Environmental, Health and Safety (EH&S) Standards, and Technical Regulations* noted in 2003 that 'The IAF and ILAC frameworks are perhaps the most important developments in quality assurance harmonization in the last decade' (2003:11). The same author also highlights the fact that 'A significant amount of institutional capacity building and technical assistance are needed to bring many developing country accreditation agencies into the IAF-ILAC framework' (Rotherham, 2003:11).

With the thought of the work still to be done, if only from this narrow perspective, I would like to close by acknowledging the partnerships that ILAC, and IAF, enjoy with other international bodies like the Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM), Organisation Internationale de Metrologie Legale (OIML), International Organization for Standardization (ISO), International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and UNIDO.

It is only in close cooperation with such like minded institutions working within frameworks such as Joint Committee on coordination of technical assistance for Developing Countries for Metrology, Accreditation and Standardisation (JCDCMAS), that the ILAC Arrangement will achieve its full potential as a facilitator of recognition of technical competence. The unfortunate alternative could be the creation of an even bigger Technical Barrier to Trade.

At the end of the day it all comes down to people. I have really enjoyed meeting technically minded people from all over the globe that are united by a common purpose. I am even more grateful that many have become friends. I trust that this short article has fairly acknowledged the many and continuous contributions that have and continue to make ILAC a unique organisation.



ILAC's founding pioneers at ILAC Task Force B London 1979: Paul Dean (left), UK Division UKAS, National Physical Laboratory, John Gilmour, NATA, Australia and Per Lund Thoft, Denmark, who chaired the first ILAC Conference.

A personal view of ILAC history

By John Gilmour

For this story we have a beginning but there is no end in sight.

During the Tokyo Round of international trade negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in the 1970s, technical barriers became a serious issue. The result was the GATT Standards Code. This was an agreement between a number of the member states that encouraged them to recognise the equivalence of both different standards and the variety of testing and certification regimes used by the other parties.

It was recognised by some of the more perceptive negotiators that recognition of testing and certification by one country required confidence in the competence of the other to perform those activities. Some saw accreditation (a term not widely used at the time) as an efficient solution to the problem. Accreditation opened up the possibility of permitting many laboratories to undertake testing on the basis of proven competence, not ownership. A number of others, however, preferred the model of single (or perhaps a few), large national testing institutions that would enter into cooperative arrangements and provide all test data for official purposes.

The first conference on the subject was convened by Mr Per Lund Thoft of Ministry of Trade, Denmark with the strong support of Dr Howard Forman of the US Department of Commerce. It was held in Copenhagen in 1977.

At this time, there were very few bodies active in accreditation as we know it today but there were a number of bodies offering recognition programs of one kind or another, many of which participated in the conference. Participants also included

many who opposed the accreditation model for international recognition and acceptance. This first conference was exploratory and all about getting to know each other without there being any clearly defined desired outcome.

Nevertheless, decisions were taken to create a directory of existing laboratory recognition schemes and to undertake some work to develop common codes of practice, if not standards. ISO/IEC 17025 is the most obvious outcome of that decision. A number of Task Forces were established to consider legal issues, the directory and technical matters. Probably the most significant outcome was the first articulation of the idea that mutual recognition agreements between accreditation bodies opened the possibility that any laboratory could participate in international trade on the basis of its competence, not its ownership.

The second conference was held in Washington in 1978, Sydney in 1979 and Paris was agreed for 1980.

Apart from the positive outcomes of those first two conferences, there was much jockeying for position, as well as many arguments concerning the wisdom of involving non-government bodies in what was essentially government business – compliance with technical regulations. Certification bodies were also concerned about competition from an alternative mechanism for providing market confidence.

Some of the Europeans were determined that the Paris conference would be the last and insisted on calling Sydney 1979 an interim conference. Not everyone agreed and further conferences were anticipated. Mexico hosted 1981, Tokyo 1982, Prague 1983 and London 1984.

Those early conferences were highlighted by confusion, conflicts of interest and fear of loss of sovereignty. However, they were seen as offering a solution to the problem posed by the GATT and the need to recognise testing carried out in the country of origin rather than the country of destination.

The costs associated with annual conferences led to adopting a two-year cycle following London. Tel Aviv followed in 1986, Auckland 1988, Turin 1990, Ottawa 1992, Hong Kong 1994 and Amsterdam in 1996.

The trouble with this *modus operandi* was that there were more task force and committee meetings than before and those organisations carrying the burden of the work were no better off. In addition, the number of those participating in such working groups grew. Any savings were illusory.

In some ways, the middle years of ILAC were the most productive. Much more cohesion had evolved and a clear sense of direction developed and was put into words drafted by Keith Stanton of NATA. These were adopted as ILAC's objectives and have only been slowly modified over the years. The Task Forces produced results that have stood the test of time and those who worked together in them developed close friendships and considerable mutual respect. The various reports led to the development of many guides and standards such as ISO G58, now ISO/IEC 17011, G25, now 17025, G43, and Organisation Internationale de Metrologie Legale (OIML) Doc. 10. This period also saw, in the Task Force F reports under Ann-Margret Rohnisch-Strom, the articulation of the concept of mutual recognition between accreditation bodies. In those days it also helped to have the first name John – Garside, Gilmour,

Locke, Rogers and Summerfield – who all made significant contributions to the working groups.

Up to this time, ILAC was a forum. There were no rules, although certain traditions had evolved, and the Chair was appointed by the host organisation for the next conference. The only oversight by the participants was through the Planning and Organising Committee comprising the task force and committees chairs and conveners.

By this time, the GATT had been transformed into the World Trade Organization (WTO), which includes the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), the successor to the GATT Standards Code. The significance of this, in the context of this story, is that while adherence to the Standards Code was voluntary, application of the TBT Agreement was mandatory for all WTO Member States and this puts great pressure on all countries to accept foreign testing and certification.

In 1996, it was decided to formalise the organisation through a Memorandum of Understanding and to develop some more clearly defined operational rules and procedures.

The conference returned to Sydney in 1998 and back to a one-year frequency. The 1999 conference was held in Rio de Janeiro and Washington hosted 2000.

The period 1996 to 2000 saw much effort to develop the ILAC multilateral Mutual Recognition Arrangement that brought together the related activities taking place in the regional bodies APLAC and EA and within ILAC itself. The ILAC Arrangement was signed at the Washington conference.

For a number of reasons associated with governance, contracting and



ILAC 1980 Paris – (Left to Right) John Locke, Howard Forman (U.S.).

potential liabilities, it was then decided to incorporate ILAC, and The Netherlands was chosen as the most suitable location. Kyoto hosted the 2001 conference and Berlin 2002 where the final touches were put on the incorporation documents.

The evolution of accreditation of other forms of conformity assessment such as certification and inspection is another story. But as more and more accreditation bodies took on responsibility for all accreditation activities at the national level, there was increasing pressure to bring ILAC and IAF (the International Accreditation Forum) closer together. From Berlin onwards, ILAC and IAF now hold annual conferences in tandem.

The 1980s saw the most substantial technical developments within ILAC. The 1990s saw the groundwork for the MRAs and we are now in the period of realising the vision of the founders – mutual acceptance of test results on the basis of accreditation through mutual recognition of accreditation bodies.

Rather than being an informal group of committed accreditors, ILAC has become a respected international body along with its close relatives BIPM, IAF, IEC, ISO and OIML.

Like most things in life, the job is never really finished. The MRA activities must evolve to meet new and changing circumstances and needs and gain wider recognition for the Arrangement itself. Because of WTO pressures, ILAC must pay increasing attention to the needs of the developing world. ILAC may be able to boast of more than 50 signatories to its Arrangement but that still leaves another 100 countries that are WTO Members without ready access to accreditation resources. Every threat presents an opportunity.



ILAC Editorial Committee (L to R) John Gilmour, Stan Linton, Steve Frankis, Per Lund Thoft, Robert Middleton, (Asst. Sec. ISO) and Bert Lindquist (circa 1980).

ILAC—UNIDO Cooperation

By Dr. Lalith Goonatilake*

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the UN specialised agency for promoting industrial development, has for more than 35 years engaged in developing standards, metrology, testing and accreditation capacities in developing countries and transition economies.

These activities have provided essential tools for industrial development, and have aided market access. The first contacts between ILAC and UNIDO were made almost a decade ago, and a Memorandum of Understanding was signed in Washington DC in 2000 at the meeting by which the ILAC Arrangement was constituted.

Since the globalisation of trade and the creation of the World Trade Organisation, demonstrating compliance to the WTO Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) agreements has become a major challenge for developing countries.

In addressing the developing country trade marginalisation challenges, UNIDO launched the Trade Capacity building initiative in 2004, which focused on supply development, as well as addressing quality infrastructure gaps in the context of TBT/SPS compliance.

UNIDO signed an agreement with the WTO in 2003, based on the UNIDO Trade Capacity Building approach. As a result UNIDO became actively involved in developing testing laboratories and accreditation schemes in many developing countries. For promoting trade, the global acceptance of test certificates was an important issue and the ILAC initiative aimed at promoting the mutual recognition arrangements (MRAs), became a timely trade support intervention.

The signature of the renewed tripartite MoU between ILAC, IAF and UNIDO contributed to strengthen the collaboration at a strategic level, and the increased coordination through the Joint Development Support Committee, created to represent the interests of developing countries is operated by ILAC in conjunction with IAF. Among the beneficiaries of the joint activities are accreditation bodies from Argentina, Cuba, Egypt, the Americas, and the Philippines, all of which are signatories of the ILAC MRA or the IAF MLA.

With the increased concerns on the TBT/SPS compliance issues and many donors supporting UNIDO, since 2004



This photo was taken during the ILAC General Assembly held in Cape Town in 2004. It was during this meeting that the signing of the MoU between ILAC, IAF and UNIDO took place. Those involved are Thomas Facklam (IAF Chairperson) on the right, Minister Mandisi Mpahlwa, (South African Minister of Trade and Industry) centre, and on the left is Mike Peet, Chief Executive Officer South African National Accreditation System (SANAS).

the organisation has been very actively engaged in developing laboratories, initiating cross-frontier accreditations, and assisting a number of newly-established national accreditation bodies in developing countries to obtain international recognition. In this context, ILAC and UNIDO have successfully supported several national and regional accreditation bodies worldwide, not only through Pre-Peer Evaluations, but also through study tours and training focusing on different aspects of laboratory accreditation.

Currently, under UNIDO Trade capacity building projects, more than 12 emerging accreditation bodies are being established or strengthened and the close UNIDO linkage with ILAC has assisted the capacity building interventions. As a result of the significant portfolio of projects in recent years, UNIDO has become the voice of developing countries during the ILAC General conference, and UNIDO submits reports on developing country activities and concerns at various ILAC/IAF fora.

The joint ILAC/UNIDO publication, *Laboratory Accreditation in Developing Economies: Tested Once – Accepted Everywhere* was developed based on the experience of Pre-Peer Evaluations, with a view to raise awareness at a decision making level and to better prepare emerging laboratory accreditation bodies in developing economies for participation in the ILAC MRA.

The leadership of ILAC in 2002 also enabled an inter-agency meeting to be held at BIPM for the enhancement of strategic

partnership through the establishment of the Joint Committee on coordination of technical assistance on Metrology, Accreditation and Standardisation (JCDCMAS). It is in this context, that the joint activities have increased significantly.

In 2007, two joint Expert Group Meetings on ‘The Role of Proficiency Testing Schemes and Certified Reference Materials in Accreditation of facilities in Developing countries’ and on ‘The UNIDO LABNET Initiative’ were held in Vienna following the ILAC meetings of the Proficiency Testing Consultative Group and the Accreditation Issues Committee.

In addition, the ILAC/UNIDO publication *Laboratory Accreditation in Developing Economies: Tested Once – Accepted Everywhere* is being updated with a view to including the scope of ILAC and IAF and further, a new publication on Proficiency Testing is being jointly drafted.

UNIDO fully acknowledges the contribution ILAC has made in improving the accuracy of laboratory testing and the mutual acceptance of test certificates and accreditations, which has become a key trade and industry development intervention.

UNIDO wishes ILAC the very best on this thirtieth anniversary and looks forward to close collaboration in the years to come.

* Dr. Lalith Goonatilake, Director, Trade Capacity Building Branch United Nations Industrial Development Organization (tcb@unido.org)

ILAC committee news



ILAC/IAF Joint Development Support Committee (JDSC) news

By Maribel Lopez, chair

The ILAC/IAF Joint Development Support Committee (JDSC) has been working since 2002 to encourage accreditation bodies towards more active participation in activities that will guide them into becoming signatories to the ILAC MRA or IAF MLA.

The origin of the JDSC can be traced back to 2000, when thanks to ILAC and IAF's strategic planning both accreditation forums decided to put their efforts together and make mirror committees that may or may not work in co-operation. A year later in 2001 the first JDSC Meeting was held in Kyoto, Japan, and the Committee's Terms of Reference were presented.

The existence of this Committee is of significance to accreditation bodies from developing countries who sometimes request assistance at all levels, not just economically, but at a training, knowledge and experience level.

ILAC aims to support free trade by increasing the use and acceptance, by industry and government, of accredited laboratories' results, as well as those results from laboratories around the world, helping to develop strong accreditation systems worldwide to strengthen free trade.

On the IAF side, aiding developing countries would also fulfill the organisation's purpose to reduce technical barriers to trade.

Over the years, the JDSC has helped

developing countries strengthen their accreditation systems in several ways: through training courses, peer evaluations, funding registration fees, surveys to detect specific needs, and assistance to attend meetings.

One of the first activities of the JDSC was to create an Intelligence System for Accreditation Body Development Results (ISABD), with the objective of achieving a better allocation of efforts and resources invested in accreditation body (AB) development by using pertinent intelligence on the status of developing ABs; needs of developing ABs; and AB development support activities in each region.

As a result of ISABD, countries such as Malaysia, Mexico, Chile and the Philippines, amongst others were aided in 2002 and 2003.

The JDSC has also given support to developing countries needs in Reference Materials (RM) and Proficiency Testing (PT).

Several activities can be included such as a training course on ISO Guide 34:2000 in June 2005 held in Frankfurt and a survey on RM and PT needs at the beginning of 2006; and, more recently, a workshop on PT Issues in May 2007 held in Vienna.

It has also become a regular event for the JDSC to hold an activity at the end of each year's Joint IAF/ILAC General Assembly.

In 2004 the JDSC organised a seminar for developing countries on *'The role of accreditation in deepening and strengthening trade capacity building and enhancing trade flows'*; in 2005 another seminar was held called *'How to reach MLA/MRA signatory status?'*, and in 2006 a seminar was also organised to address current issues in accreditation such as: PT & RM Programs, ISO/IEC 17020 and ISO/IEC 17024.

These are of course just some of the activities carried out by the JDSC in the last couple of years.

Several countries have been aided by the committee in many ways. For example, OGA—Guatemala, ECA—Costa Rica, ONARC—Cuba and EGAC—Egypt were given economical support to participate in the JGA 2006 in Cancun.

These countries were given orientation on the meetings by developed accreditation bodies under the Big Sister /Brother Program, which consisted of assisting a new ILAC/IAF member during the General Assembly meeting or other committee meetings, to assist with a better understanding on the developments at the meeting and their activities.

The importance of the JDSC rests upon the fact that it is an open door for ILAC and IAF developing countries to express their needs in terms of accreditation and to find ways to deal with them.



International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation 1977-2007

This year ILAC celebrates 30 years of work towards removing technical barriers to trade. Fifty eight signatories, representing 46 economies have now signed the ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement.

ILAC is an international cooperation of laboratory and inspection accreditation bodies which this year celebrates its 30th anniversary of helping remove technical barriers to trade.

Thirty years ago differing technical standards posed significant problems for importers and exporters. ILAC's formation moved significantly towards changing that. ILAC's evolution was prompted by the Tokyo Round of international trade negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the outcome of which was the GATT Standards Code, an agreement between a number of the member states encouraging recognition of the equivalence of different standards, and the variety of testing and accreditation regimes.

Today, ILAC provides a focus for:

- Developing and harmonising laboratory and inspection accreditation practices.
- Promoting laboratory and inspection accreditation to industry, governments, regulators and consumers.
- Assisting and supporting developing accreditation systems.
- Global recognition of laboratories via the ILAC Arrangement, thus facilitating acceptance of test and calibration data accompanying goods across national borders.

ILAC Marketing and Communications Committee

By Graham Talbot*

The Marketing and Communications Committee (MCC) held its second meeting of 2007 in Berlin on 4 and 5 July. The major work item involved planning the second marketing workshop to be held at the General Assembly meetings in October. The proposed structure of the workshop was agreed and progress made with generating the case study examples was discussed.

The MCC also started to look ahead to see whether it should host a third workshop in 2008 (either as an ILAC event or jointly with IAF), and if so, what should be the theme. The committee reviewed progress made to support the 30th Anniversary of ILAC later this year.

A press article has been created which is available for members to use in their economy and the ILAC website homepage was updated to promote the anniversary. Additional progress has been made on the ILAC website including the secure area. A web statistics package that will enable the committee to track visitor usage was demonstrated.

Changes to selected headings and sub-headings on the site will also provide visitors with an easier route to finding the information they require. The committee also provided feedback to the Secretariat on the new file sharing capability on the website.

Following a request from the JCCC to investigate a global accreditation web portal, we have looked at whether this would achieve the objective of raising ILAC's ranking in such web searches as Google. The discussions revealed that a web portal would not achieve what is desired so we will continue to look at other ways for ILAC to improve its web visibility.

The committee continues to look at enhancing the corporate style of ILAC documents and promotional materials and preparation took place to agree on the parameters for the work setting out



Graham Talbot, Chair, ILAC Marketing and Communications Committee.

the objectives, intended outcomes and breadth of documents and materials that may be subject to change.

Various documents were considered during the meeting. Comments from members were reviewed on S1, the document that classifies ILAC documents and publications. A synopsis for a proposed document to detail the use and promotion of the ILAC MRA mark was also agreed.

Promotional tools such as a letter template to promote an accreditation body's signatory status, to the Arrangement to senior trade officials were also considered.

A series of briefing notes about the global accreditation network aimed at Regulators, Society, Business and accreditable organisations is also being drafted for use by ILAC Members.

These will be available at the Marketing Workshop in Sydney. The creation of a 'World Accreditation Day' was agreed to be an excellent mechanism to support promotional activity by individual accreditation bodies in their economy.

It is envisaged that this will be through public relations activities and events. Further details of this will be presented at this year's Joint General Assembly.

*Graham Talbot, Chair ILAC Marketing & Communications Committee.

The Arrangement Committee (ARC) and the ILAC Strategic and Business Plan

Prepared by Orna Dreazen*

What is ILAC's mission? It is worth repeating here, as it offers a succinct view of ILAC and its activities.

ILAC developed a Strategic and Business plan (S3), which was approved in 2004. The Strategic plan starts with ILAC's Mission: ILAC is a global forum for...

- Development and implementation of sound accreditation principles and practices within the global metrology, accreditation and standardisation system, in cooperation with the membership, stakeholders, users and other related bodies.
- Recognition of competent accreditation bodies (ABs), which oversee and monitor competence of testing and calibration laboratories and inspection bodies worldwide.
- Promotion of laboratory and inspection body accreditation to protect health, safety, and the environment; to ensure interoperability; and to facilitate global trade.
- Also in S3 is the statement that the ILAC Arrangement Committee is "responsible for harmonized implementation and continual improvement of the ILAC Arrangement".

The ILAC Arrangement is an international mutual recognition agreement for Accreditation Bodies. According to the ILAC MRA AB's agree to:

- Maintain conformance with ISO/IEC 17010, ISO/IEC 17011 and related ILAC documents.

- Ensure that accredited organizations comply with relevant international (ISO, ILAC) requirements.
- Promote acceptance of accredited facilities of MRA partners.

How did the ARC fulfill its assignment?

The ARC is a large committee in which most ABs that are a member of ILAC contribute. Therefore a lot of the issues are discussed extensively.

The main issues discussed by the ARC relate to the ILAC Arrangement documents, guidance on the implementation of ISO/IEC 17011 and ILAC relations with ISO/CASCO, as well as other important stakeholders organisations. Thus the ARC revise the P, as well as A series documents (in conjunction with IAF) which all relate to the ILAC Arrangement including the ILAC Arrangement text.

The ARC's discussions resulted in 16 resolutions being endorsed by the ILAC General Assemblies in Auckland (2005) and Cancun (2006). Among them are a few important resolutions that have an impact on our daily work:

- The ARC developed the criteria and procedure for the expansion of the ILAC MRA into new areas.
- The Accreditation of Reference Medical Laboratories is to be based on ISO 15195 in combination with ISO/IEC 17025.
- The Accreditation of Reference Medical Laboratories is to be included under the current ILAC Arrangement.
- The Accreditation of Reference Materials Producers will use ISO Guide 34 in combination with ISO/IEC 17025.
- The Adoption of the ILAC policy for participation in National and International Proficiency Testing Activities was implemented from January 2006.
- All ILAC members shall have a Cross Frontier Policy.
- Decision on the implementation date of ISO/IEC 17025:2005.
- Accreditation of proficiency testing providers will be considered for

inclusion under the ILAC MRA.

The ARC recently reviewed its work plan in accordance with the ILAC Strategic and Business plan.

The following are the current projects and subjects being discussed by the ARC:

1. 7.1 in S3: "Provide the accepted global solution for the demonstration of competence and equivalence of testing, calibration, and inspection results".

Issues currently being discussed in relation to this goal include:

Guidance on the implementation of ISO/IEC 17011 is being prepared in conjunction with IAF.

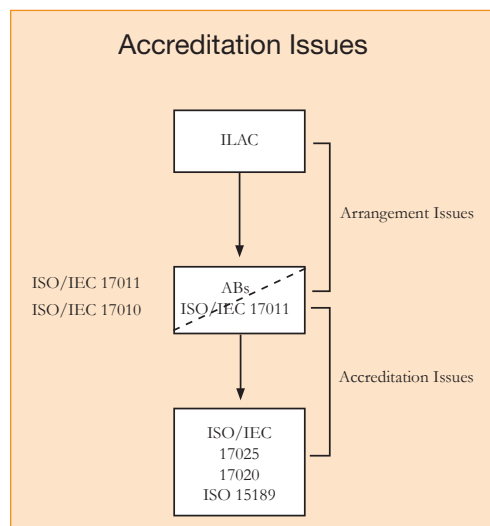
In particular the interpretation of the following issues is being discussed:

- 1.1 Clear indication of the activity to which the accreditation is related.
- 1.2 Impartiality – implementation of clause 4.3.4. (Undue commercial financial or other pressure).
- 1.3 Does ILAC need to provide a PT database? – Clause 7.15.

2. 7.1.1 in S3: "Ensure that the ILAC Arrangement remains 'fit for purpose' "

Issues currently being discussed that demonstrate that the ILAC Arrangement remains 'fit for purpose' include:

- 2.1 Cross-frontier accreditation.
- 2.2 Development and maintenance of the P and A (in conjunction with IAF) series documents.
- 2.3 Alternative tools for the evaluation of ABs (in particular alternatives to witnessing).
- 2.4 Alternative tools (for ILAC members) for gaining global ILAC recognition.
- 2.5 Procedure to enable signatories to the ILAC MRA to expand their scope.
- 2.6 Terms of Reference for the Arrangement Management Committee (AMC).
- 2.7 Monitoring of evaluators and evaluation reports.
- 2.8 Training of evaluators.



- 2.9 Harmonisation of the MRA and MLA/MRA texts.
- 2.10 Time limits for the conduct of evaluations.
- 2.11 Criteria for the suspension or withdrawal of an ILAC member.
- 2.12 Economic impact of the ILAC MRA.
- 2.13 Harmonisation between ILAC and the regions as detailed below:
 - 2.13.1 The ARC reviews issues brought up by the regions and considers whether they need to become international activities; and
 - 2.13.2 The ARC considers ways to ensure harmonisation between ILAC and the regions (ie. ILAC P12).
- 2.14 Publication of evaluation reports.
- 2.15 Expansion of the scope of the ILAC MRA.
- 2.16 Implementation of the 2007 edition of ISO 15189.
- 2.17 Revision of relevant ILAC

documents – ILAC P4 is currently being revised.

- 2.18 The ARC works closely with the Joint Inspection Group and the AMC and reviews issues that need to be discussed as brought up by these committees.
 - 2.19 Potential use of a template for evaluation reports.
- 3. 7.1.2 in S3: “Identify, understand and jointly develop initiatives to meet regulatory, procurement, industry and professional needs.”**
- Issues currently being discussed that demonstrate that initiatives to meet regulatory, procurement, industry and professional needs are being considered include:
- 3.1 Delimitation of the scope of activities for ABs.
 - 3.2 Accreditation of medical reference laboratories – a global effort related to JCTLM and ISO activities.
 - 3.3 The Formulation of the ILAC position on what is accreditable.

- 3.4 Review of ILAC liaison activities to identify industry needs.
- 3.5 Discussion of the results and possible implications of the ILAC survey regarding the recognition of the ILAC Arrangement by regulators.

4. The ARC also has a role in clause 7.2.3 in S3.

“Identify and disseminate knowledge about proficiency testing programs, needs and related policy issues.”

The lead responsibility for this goal lies with the Proficiency Testing Consultative Group (PTCG). However, the ARC liaises with the PTCG and discusses related issues.

I would like to thank the ARC members for their contribution during and between meetings.

I wish the Committee success in future work for the benefit of the accreditation community. I would also like to thank the ILAC members for their trust and acknowledgement.

**Orna Dreazen—Chair, Arrangement Committee.*

IEC CAB and ILAC Technical Panel in Geneva

The sixth meeting of the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) Conformity Assessment Board (CAB) and ILAC Technical Panel held in Geneva in February.

The meeting, chaired by the head of the ILAC delegation, Norbert Muller, built on the success of previous meetings and significant progress was made in a number of areas of the cooperation.

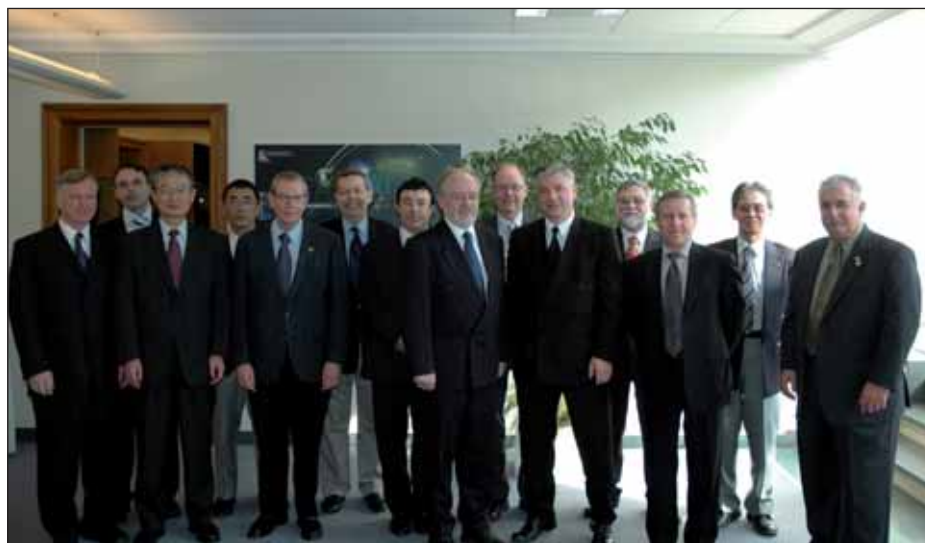
Further advances were made in developing and documenting a common understanding of the application of ISO/IEC 17025, with remaining areas of concern being identified.

Forty five joint assessments had been carried out since the start of the programme, with positive feedback from laboratories and assessors.

Barriers to expansion of the joint assessment programme were discussed and agreement was reached on conducting a workshop on Joint Assessments, improving the joint assessment guidelines, improved planning of assessments, enhancing the publicity and promotion of joint assessments to ILAC members and

developing a common assessment report for testing laboratories operating in the electrotechnical sector and a common checklist based on ISO/IEC 17025. The IEC Schemes agreed to provide as much notice as possible of their reassessment plans.

Feedback from ILAC delegates who had participated in an IEC Electrotechnical Equipment assessor training course showed a high level of satisfaction and ILAC participation in future lead assessor courses will be encouraged.



CAB / ILAC Technical Panel—From left Bill Bryan (IBM-CANADA), Chris Bestwick (ILAC Delegate UKAS-UK), Shigeo Nonaka (ILAC Delegate JAB-JAPAN), Kozo Sakamoto (JISC-METI-JAPAN), Don Mader (UL-USA), Ron Sinclair (BASEEFA-UK), Chris Agius (CAB Delegate IECEx-IECQ), Norbert Muller (Head of ILAC Delegation), Gosta Fredriksson (IECEE Chairman), Pierre de Ruvo (IECEE & Head of the CAB Delegation), Alex Ezrakhovich (IQNet-Australia), Joe Gryn (CAB Delegate-CSA CANADA), Toshiyuki Kajiya (Matashushita-Japan), Rich Pescatore (HP-USA).

International update

ISO congratulates ILAC

By Alan Bryden*

The ISO is more than happy to congratulate ILAC on the occasion of its thirtieth anniversary since it gives me the opportunity to express the appreciation of the whole ISO system for the close cooperation between the organisations, and to highlight the joint achievements of these organisations in conformity assessment within the context of CASCO, our Conformity Assessment Committee, and more generally of ISO and standardisation.

With ILAC's active contribution since its inception in 1977, we have developed mature and globally recognised conformity assessment standards and guides with respect not only to the development of the CASCO toolbox but also to mechanisms that help and promote their implementation. ILAC's continued support and participation in CASCO working groups has contributed much to these achievements.

This cooperation goes back to the development of the very first ISO Guide 25 Guideline for assessing the technical competence of testing laboratories published in 1978. It is interesting to note that this Guide, comprising of four pages, has developed through many revisions and stages to become the new International Standard ISO/IEC 17025:2005 *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*, now comprising 28 pages. This is a clear indication of how well ILAC and CASCO work together to respond to market needs and help trade.

The current ISO/IEC 17025 has, with the participation of ILAC, been aligned with ISO 9001:2000 making it more widely useful to the laboratory community. A Joint Communiqué was published in 2005 on this subject stating that "The management system requirements in ISO/IEC 17025 (Section 4) are written in language relevant to laboratory operations and meet the principles of ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management Systems – Requirements and are aligned with its pertinent requirements."

ILAC continues to participate in the development and maintenance of

many of the other 26 documents in the CASCO toolbox and ISO documents. Amongst these are ISO/IEC 17011:2004 *Conformity assessment - General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies*, ISO/IOEC 17043 dealing with proficiency testing, *International Vocabulary of Metrology (VIM)* and *Guide for the Expression of Uncertainty in Measurements (GUM)*.

Other committees within ISO such as ISO/TC 212 Clinical laboratory testing and in vitro diagnostic test systems, ISO/TC 69 Applications of statistical methods and REMCO Committee on reference materials have benefited from the ILAC expertise.

More generally, the laboratory community is a great and active contributor to many ISO standards related to calibration, testing and measurement at large, both in numerous ISO Technical Committees and in national standardisation committees.

Following many years of collaboration, ISO, IAF and ILAC decided to develop a formal cooperation framework. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was approved at governance levels within the three organisations, including by the ISO Council and at the IAF and ILAC Executive Committees in 2004. This MoU provides an ongoing mechanism for technical cooperation between ISO and international accreditors in order to contribute to the development, and subsequent implementation, of ISO/IEC Standards and Guides.

The MoU helped the ILAC/ISO relationship to develop in other areas. The establishment of the IAF-ILAC- ISO Joint Working Group that identifies and tackles critical issues related to conformity assessment was a direct result of the MoU. This group also deals with matters associated with conformity assessment and the facilitation of trade.

Today there are more than 40,000 laboratories accredited worldwide to ISO/IEC 17025. This number continues to grow especially in the developing countries

where conformity assessment allows them to participate in international trade on an equal footing with the developed world. This in itself is an indication of the success of this cooperation and the importance of conformity assessment. It is also a testimony to the relevance of the contents of the CASCO toolbox and its application today.

ISO would like to thank the ILAC members for their continued support throughout the years and look forward to continuing this work into the future. So many individuals from ILAC and its member bodies have contributed to the work in CASCO that it is impossible to name and recognise them all here. However no tribute would be complete without mentioning the excellent work and dedication of the ILAC Secretariat.

ISO and ILAC have enhanced their synergies in relation to raising awareness and capacity in developing countries. In this way both organisations contribute to the 1+1+1 dream: one standard, one conformity assessment = accepted everywhere.

Happy Birthday, ILAC!

*Alan Bryden, Secretary General of the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO).



Alan Bryden at ILAC IAF 2006 Cancun, Mexico.

BIPM-ILAC relationship ‘crucial’



The International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM) congratulate ILAC on 30 years of activity.

The partnership between the BIPM and ILAC is a crucial one for the world metrology system, as the ILAC Arrangement and the International Committee for Weights and Measures (CIPM) Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) complement each other.

BIPM will continue to develop even closer collaborations in order to make them as effective as possible.

The Memorandum of Understanding between CIPM and ILAC is an active and valuable framework for collaboration.

Many accreditation bodies grew from National Metrology Institutes and there is still a need for close links between them and Accreditation Bodies, so as to assure effective traceability systems at the national level.

The BIPM now has 51 Member States of the Metre Convention, and 23 Associate States and Economies of the General Conference.

The CIPM MRA has now been signed by the representatives of 67 institutes – from 45 Member States, 20 Associates of the General Conference on Weights and Measures (CGPM), and two international organisations – and covers a further 117 institutes designated by the signatory bodies.

The CGPM will address many issues, including the BIPM's four year budget and how to deal with the financial arrears of Member States.

Commission for the System of Units (CCU)

The CCU has met three times since the 22nd CGPM. There have been two main items at these meetings: the preparation of the eighth edition of the International

System of Units (SI) Brochure, which was published by the BIPM in May 2006.

The entire text of the SI brochure is available on the BIPM website, http://www.bipm.org/en/si/si_brochure, as a PDF file.

The CCU also continued the ongoing consideration of proposals to revise and improve the SI by redefining some of the base units, possibly at the CGPM in 2011 with the objective of adapting and improving the SI for the 21st century.

Two short pocket versions of the SI brochure are also available via the BIPM website.

The CCU now believes - provided the current discrepancy between two alternative ways to measure the Planck constant can be resolved - that:

- The kilogram would be redefined based on a fixed value of the Planck constant;
- The ampere redefinition would be based on a fixed value of the charge of the electron;
- The Kelvin could be redefined based on a fixed value of the Boltzman constant, k ; and
- A redefinition of the mole would be based on a fixed value of the Avogadro constant.

Joint Committee for Guides in Metrology (JCGM)

The JCGM has two working groups. The first working group finished its work on the first supplement of the *Guide for the Expression of Uncertainty in Measurements* (GUM).

The second working group recently finished a complete third edition of the *International Vocabulary of Metrology* (VIM).

Both documents are expected to be published before the end of the year and will be available freely from the BIPM website and also for purchase from ISO in printed form.

International Cooperation

The links with the International Laboratory Accreditation Corporation are of crucial interest for both organisations.

Yearly meetings of representatives of

both organisations take place in March at the BIPM. The BIPM is invited to send an observer to the General Assembly of ILAC and ILAC participates at the CGPM.

Both parties, ILAC and BIPM would like to point out the importance of this close relationship and the mutual interest in it.

International organization of Legal Metrology (OIML)

OIML and BIPM hold annual, bilateral meetings as well as tripartite meetings with ILAC.

The BIPM and OIML have a joint action plan which identifies common actions to promote a single and coherent face of scientific and legal metrology to the outside world.

It commits both organisations to publish a joint web portal which, has led to a new printed document describing metrology and some shorter, more specialised documents describing metrology in various sectors. OIML and BIPM are mutual participants to the respective General Conferences.

International Standardization Organisation (ISO)

The BIPM participates in working groups for the development of international standards when they are relevant to our work or the work from our stakeholders.

Other cooperations

BIPM participates, or has close relationships with many other organizations, like the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Electro technical Corporation, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, and the International Lighting Commission (CIE).

Other

The BIPM is working with the World Customs Organization on customs problems on cross-border transportation of metrological samples and discussions on the Kyoto Declaration.

The World Meteorological Organization is also interested in becoming a signatory to the CIPM MRA.

Guiding references -the role of ISO-REMCO

By Ales Fajgelj, Adriaan van der Veen and Hendrick Emons

The ISO Committee on Reference Materials (ISO-REMCO) was established in 1975. Its aim covers the normalisation of all aspects of reference materials (RMs), including establishment of definitions, categories, levels and classification of RMs.

Certified reference materials (CRMs) and reference materials form one of the pillars of quality assurance in measurement as well as calibration laboratories. Their proper application provides the most direct information about the quality of and the confidence in the obtained measurement results.

Reference materials in a generic sense are applied for calibration of an apparatus, for the assessment of measurement methods, for establishing traceability of the measurement results and for determining the measurement uncertainty associated with measurement results. All these fields of RM application are integral laboratory activities and as such included in the ISO/IEC 17025 standard — the most widely followed document in laboratory accreditation.

On the other hand, the high quality awareness and demand of RM users' push RM producers to demonstrate quality and metrological properties of their RMs. This is increasingly done via accreditation according to international guidance on requirements for the competence of reference material producers (ISO Guide 34 and ILAC G12). REMCO has established an extensive liaison with relevant international bodies. The long lasting cooperation between REMCO and ILAC is a good example of common interest in effective and efficient preparation and utilisation of reference materials.

Activities performed by REMCO (see figure 1), as described in its initial terms of reference, include the establishment of definitions, categories, levels and classification of RMs; determination of structure of related forms of RMs; formulation of criteria to be applied for the choice of sources for mentioning in ISO documents; preparation of guidelines for ISO technical committees for making

references to RMs in ISO documents; proposing actions to be taken on RMs required for ISO work; and dealing with matters within its competence arising in relation with other international organisations and to advise ISO Council on these actions.

Following this mandate, REMCO has evolved into an important international body. REMCO membership in July 2007 included 68 ISO members, comprising 31 participating members, and 38 observer members, with 19 international organisations in liaison. Major stakeholders are standardisation bodies, metrology institutions and international and regional liaison partners. REMCO clients—beside

the ISO internal committees to which the REMCO has an advisory function—are producers and users of reference materials as well as accreditation bodies.

The ISO REMCO work is best reflected through ISO Guides on reference materials. The following guides have been prepared so far:

- ISO Guide 30: 1992 (Second edition) *Terms and definitions used in connection with reference materials*; currently under revision;
- ISO Guide 31: 2000 (Second edition) *Reference materials—Contents of certificates and labels*; systematic review of this guide has recently been done, possible revision pending;

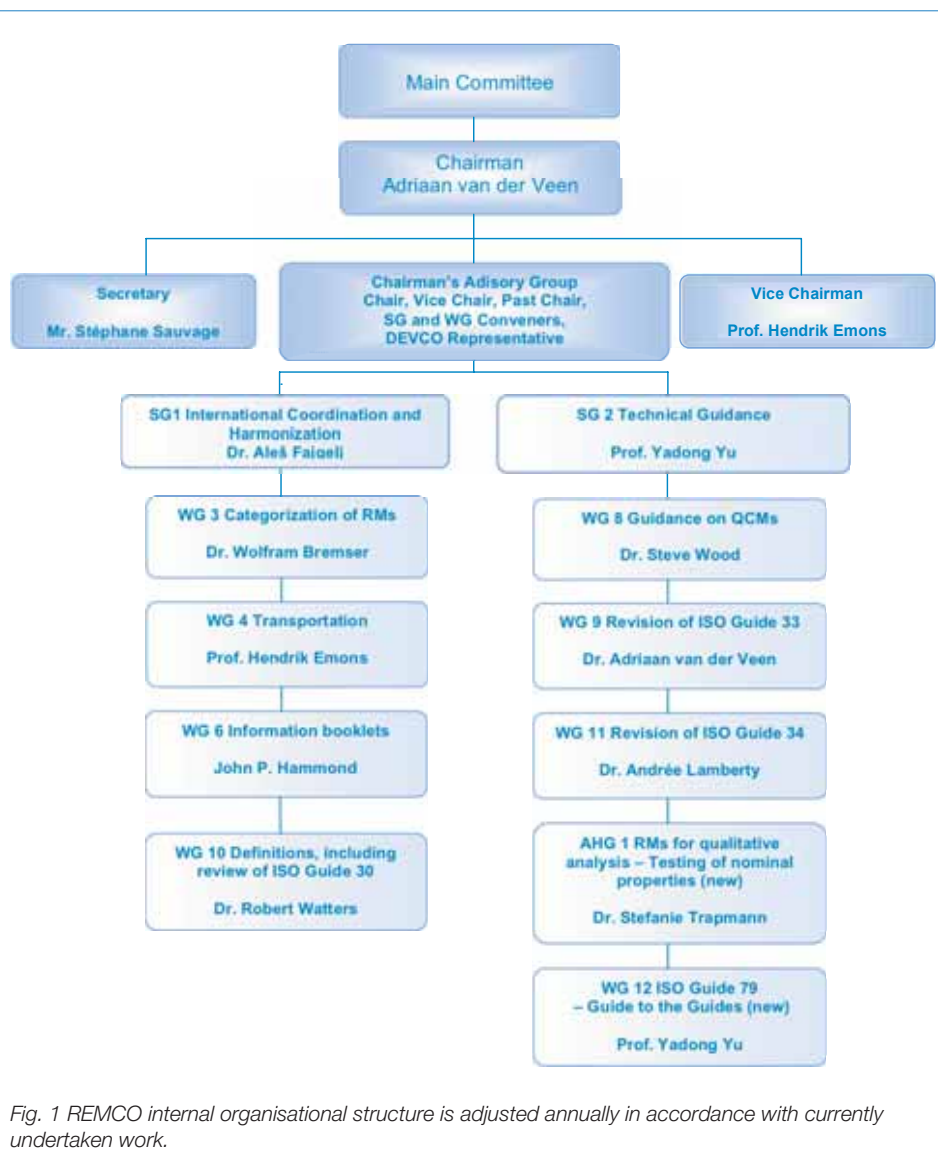


Fig. 1 REMCO internal organisational structure is adjusted annually in accordance with currently undertaken work.

- ISO Guide 32: 1997 (First edition)
Calibration of chemical analyses and use of certified reference materials (no further action foreseen);
- ISO Guide 33: 2000 (Second edition)
Uses of certified reference material production; currently under revision;
- ISO Guide 34: 2000 (Second edition)
General Requirements for the Competence of reference materials producers; currently under revision;
- ISO Guide 35: 2006 (Third edition)
Certification of reference materials—General and statistical principles.

In the last two years, REMCO has worked on the guidance on quality control materials (QCMs), which resulted in a new draft Guide 80. It is expected that the guide will be finalised in 2007.

At the last REMCO annual meeting in June 2007 in Tsukuba, Japan, study items relating to CRMs for qualitative analysis (testing of nominal properties) were initiated. ISO REMCO has identified this as an area of particular importance. Testing of nominal properties has so far not been treated as a metrological topic and there is a general lack of relevant guidance in this area, including guidance related to reference materials. Appropriate CRMs have to serve the quality assurance needs for such testing. For some applications, such as in the identification of drugs, RMs already exist. The problem of estimating uncertainties for results of qualitative analysis has still to be solved in many cases.

Although the number of ISO Guides related to reference materials is not large, these guides cover very different areas of measurement, and from production to the practical use of RMs. To improve the use and understanding of these ISO Guides, a new work item, development of an introductory Guide (ISO Guide 79), was initiated in 2007.

One of the key topics covered by REMCO has been terminology related to reference materials. The need to elaborate definitions for most important terms of general use in the field of RMs was the basis for origin of ISO Guide 30 *Terms and definitions used in connection with reference materials*. Consequently, REMCO definitions were adopted by all major standards and related documents for a few decades. Scientific development in all measurement areas, however, required definitions of RM and CRM to be reviewed and updated. This adoption happened in 2005 at the REMCO annual meeting in Geneva. The definitions are:



REMCO – Tsukuba, Japan, June 07.

Reference material (RM)

Material, sufficiently homogeneous and stable with respect to one or more specified properties, which has been established to be fit for its intended use in a measurement process.

NOTE 1: RM is a generic term

NOTE 2: Properties can be quantitative or qualitative, e.g., identity of substances or species.

NOTE 3: Uses may include the calibration of a measurement system, assessment of a measurement procedure, assigning values to other materials, and quality control.

NOTE 4: An RM can only be used for a single purpose in a given measurement.

Certified Reference Material (CRM)

Reference material, characterised by a metrologically valid procedure for one or more specified properties, accompanied by a certificate that provides the value of the specified property, its associated uncertainty, and a statement of metrological traceability.

NOTE 1: The concept of value includes qualitative attributes such as identity or sequence. Uncertainties for such attributes may be expressed as probabilities.

NOTE 2: Metrologically valid procedures for the production and certification of reference materials are given in, among others, ISO Guides 34 and 35.

NOTE 3: ISO Guide 31 gives guidance on the contents of certificates.

The reader would realise that in the new definition RM is considered as a generic term. In the definition of CRM more emphasis has been placed on metrological characteristics

of these materials as before, in the same time understanding that reference materials are used in quantitative measurements as well as in qualitative testing. Unfortunately, these new REMCO definitions were not accepted for the third edition International Vocabulary of Metrology—Basic and General Concepts and Associated Terms (VIM). The International measurement community will therefore be confronted with two different sets of definitions.

For many years REMCO concerned itself with the problems related to the dispatch of reference materials.

Although the global acceptance of general custom tariff number (3322.00) for CRM was REMCO's success, significant cross-border transport problems still remain.

REMCO continues its close work with other international organisations such as BIPM, ILAC, European Pharmacopoeia, US Pharmacopoeia, WHO, and the World Anti-Doping Agency with the view to addressing and solving those problems.

Fruitful co-operation

According to ILAC Executive Liaison Officer Alan Squirrell ISO REMCO and ILAC have enjoyed a long and fruitful cooperation.

“As such, it is appropriate for the above article to appear in ILAC's thirtieth anniversary edition. I think it is important to further strengthen the links between laboratory accreditation and metrology. Reference Materials play an important role in this endeavour,” Mr Squirrell said.

Regional cooperations



Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC)

By Helen Liddy and Janet Clark*

APLAC wishes its big sister ILAC a happy 30th birthday as APLAC itself celebrates its 15th birthday.

New APLAC website

The big news for APLAC is the launch of the new APLAC website. Members have received email advice about the launch and about their individual log on and password for the enhanced members only area. The website and address remains the same: www.aplac.org.

The new website structure is based on the structure of the new ILAC website.

The enhanced members only area with individual log on and password, and levels of access, will enable this area to be used for the posting of APLAC meeting and agenda papers and Minutes, and APLAC ballot papers. There will also be enhanced ability for the APLAC committees to use the area for posting their agendas, Minutes and other discussion papers.

New APLAC Member

APLAC welcomes the Bangladesh Accreditation Board as a new Associate member.

APLAC 2007

Standards Malaysia, the host for APLAC 2007, has advised all members and interested parties of the launch of the APLAC 2007 website. APLAC looks forward to welcoming representatives from ILAC and the other regions to the meeting.

As part of APLAC 2007 an APLAC Awareness Seminar for new APLAC members and new staff of existing members will be held in the evening of Tuesday 4 December. The aim is to provide an orientation on APLAC to newcomers.

New Evaluators

Congratulations to the following APLAC provisional evaluators who have recently been promoted to evaluators: Mohan Manchiraju (National Accreditation Board for Testing & Calibration Laboratories - NABL, India), Siripan Wongwanich (The Bureau of Laboratory Quality Standards - DMSc, Thailand), Yannapat Uthongsap (Thai Laboratory Accreditation Scheme, Thailand - TLAS), Randy Querry (American Association for Laboratory Accreditation - A2LA, USA).

* Helen Liddy and Janet Clark - APLAC Secretariat



**European
co-operation for
Accreditation**

EA celebrates 10 years

European Accreditation (EA) was created by the unification of EAL and EAC on 27 November 1997. The ensuing decade has been one of considerable achievement. Yet according to the EA Chair Lorenzo Thione, the EA must be prepared to perform even better in meeting its mission of ensuring the added value of accreditation and its effective use throughout Europe.

"In particular, this means EA's forthcoming role of official European Accreditation Infrastructure well

represents a unique opportunity that EA cannot miss," Mr Thione said.

The EA's next general assembly will be combined with the first EA workshop on what is accreditable. Also being discussed will be a topical issue for the EA development strategy, how accreditation can best serve the needs of modern economies and society. Questions being posed include whether EA should expand into new spheres of application or stay and consolidate within the traditional fields. The assembly will

include guest speakers from the United Kingdom Accreditation Service, Spain's national accreditation agency ENAC and the International Confederation of Inspection and Certification Organisations (representing the European Conformity Assessment community).

"EA has already started to prepare for its future prominent role. Important decisions should be reached in Cyprus on how to reinforce EA's structure and resources, enhance its peer evaluation process and set up the appropriate tools and communication channels with its key stakeholders and partners in order to be able to meet the European Commission and market operators' expectations," Mr Thione said.

"No doubt the 20th meeting of the EA General Assembly will be an exciting opportunity for all EA members, stakeholder and partner body representatives to celebrate our 10th Anniversary and to help build an even brighter future."



SADCA-Southern African Development Community Accreditation

A brief SADCA/SADCAS history

The initial need of SADCA was to create a representative regional committee for accreditation which comprises of officially nominated, senior representatives from all SADC member states.

A project proposal document for SADCA was initially created in July 1997 by a task group selected and approved by SADCA members. A SADC model for satisfying the accreditation needs of the region in a cost effective and sustainable manner evolved after a series of meetings of the working group and discussions with representatives of international bodies. The model gave rise to two structures, a SADC Regional Accreditation Cooperation, SADCA and a SADC Regional Accreditation Body, SADCAS.

The task group was formally appointed as the SADCA Project Management Committee [PMC] at the annual SADCA meeting in 2003. At this meeting the PMC was given the formal mandate to secure and mobilize resources and coordinate the implementation of SADCA and SADCAS projects on behalf of SADCA.

In tandem with the above, Mr Mike Peet, then SADCA Regional Coordinator, was elected the Chairman of ILAC, a position he held for four years. During his tenure as ILAC Chair, Mike had discussions with the ILAC Executive and relevant ILAC committee, for SADCA to become a regional body member of ILAC. Resulting from this, SADCA was asked to submit their bylaws to both ILAC and IAF for voting by the two global bodies for SADCA becoming a member of the two bodies. SADCA was elated when it became a regional body member of both ILAC and IAF in 2002. Furthermore, both ILAC and IAF invited the SADCA Chair to serve on their Executive Committees.

As a member of the Executive Committees, the late Mrs Beatrice Mutabazi, the then SADCA Chairperson, 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 of Africa, but in particular that of the SADC region and would always look for opportunities to place Africa on the global map.

SADCAS

The creation of the regional accreditation body, SADCAS, was intended to support and supplement current and future member state accreditation activities. It is not intended to compete with current and future national accreditation bodies, but rather to offer a low risk alternative to accreditation needs of member states.

The services of a South African trade lawyer were obtained to conduct a feasibility study on the incorporation of SADCAS. After investigation of SADC policies, it was ascertained that at a SADC meeting of Ministers, provision had been made for the establishment of SADC subsidiaries and it was through this route that SADCAS could be incorporated.

One of the conditions of enjoying subsidiarity status is that SADCAS must register as a legal entity in each of the countries that it would operate.

On obtaining the above information, the SADCAS Bylaws were drafted and submitted to a law firm in Botswana for drafting of the SADCAS Memorandum and Articles of Association. These drafts were studied and amended by the Board of Directors at a meeting held in November 2005.

The application for registration of SADCAS in Botswana was then submitted to the Registrar of Companies in Botswana, resulting in SADCAS being incorporated as a non-profit company under Botswana law in December 2005.

To be in a position to make SADCAS operational a Strategic and Business Plan was finalised in 2006. With the assistance of the Norwegian government, SADCAS will be operational by the third quarter of 2008.

SADCA/SADCAS wishes to express appreciation to three major donors, namely NORAD of Norway, PTB of Germany and the South African Department of Trade and Industry.



ILAC status and locales

Below is a list of locations where ILAC has been held since its inception.

| | | |
|------|-----------------------|--|
| 2009 | Vancouver | 13th GA planned |
| 2008 | Stockholm | 12th GA planned |
| 2007 | Sydney | 11th GA planned |
| 2006 | Cancun | 10th GA |
| 2005 | Auckland | 9th GA |
| 2004 | Cape Town | 8th GA |
| 2003 | Bratislava | 7th GA |
| 2002 | Berlin | 6th GA |
| 2001 | Kyoto | 5th GA |
| 2000 | Washington | 4th GA |
| 1999 | Rio de Janeiro | 3rd GA |
| 1998 | Sydney | 2nd GA |
| 1997 | Gaithersburg | 1st GA of ILAC |
| 1996 | Amsterdam | approved change to "Cooperation" from "Conference" |
| 1994 | Hong Kong | 13th Plenary |
| 1992 | Ottawa | 12th Plenary |
| 1990 | Torino | 11th Plenary |
| 1988 | Auckland | 10th Plenary |
| 1986 | Tel Aviv | 9th Plenary |
| 1984 | London | 8th Plenary |
| 1983 | Prague | 7th Plenary |
| 1982 | Tokyo | 6th Plenary |
| 1981 | Mexico City | 5th Plenary |
| 1980 | Paris | 4th Plenary |
| 1979 | Sydney | 3rd Plenary adopted "ILAC" as International Laboratory Accreditation Conference |
| 1978 | Washington | 2nd Plenary called "International Conference on Laboratory Accreditation" |
| 1977 | Copenhagen | 1st Plenary called "International Conference on Mutual Recognition of Test Results". |

Accreditation Update

Croatia


HAA

 Hrvatska akreditacijska agencija
Croatian Accreditation Agency

A history of accreditation services in Croatia

Croatia's Accreditation Agency (HAA) was established on 1 July 2005, as a result of reorganisation of the State Office for Standardization and Metrology (DZNM).

However, the beginning of accreditation services in Croatia started much earlier, in 1996. At that time the accreditation service was organised within the State Office for Standardization and Metrology (DZNM-NSO).

DZNM-NSO became an affiliate member of EAL in 1997 and an associate member of EA in 1999, and became an associate member of ILAC in 2002. The newly established HAA became a full member of EA in 2005.

A package of new technical regulations in 2003, including Law on Accreditation (OG 158/03) and the Decree on the establishment of the Croatian Accreditation Agency (OG 158/2004 and 44/2005) enabled the establishment of HAA as an independent, non for profit public institution. The last two years have been very dynamic for HAA in terms of professional and technical development as

well as human resources issues.

There has been intensive training for permanent staff and external assessors, as well as the development of the IT system, in both the data base and the webpage.

To the end of July, HAA granted accreditation to 88 bodies, 56 of these accredited bodies are testing laboratories and most of them are in the construction, electro-technical, crude oil, petrol, optical radiation and food related fields. Forty five new testing laboratories are in the process of accreditation. From the beginning of accreditation activities in Croatia, accreditation criteria were based on the requirements determined by the relevant international standards as well as by EA and ILAC/IAF guidance documents.

HAA started its operation as an independent institution with eight employees and now has 21 permanent employees and 73 external associates (lead assessors, assessors and experts). This year HAA has set up a new accreditation scheme and started the accreditation of medical laboratories according to ISO/IEC 15189. Two medical laboratories are involved in the pilot accreditation procedures.

Although regulated by law, accreditation in Croatia is voluntary. From its beginnings HAA has made a lot of effort to promote accreditation among the governmental institutions responsible for harmonisation of the New Approach as well as the Old Approach EU Directives. One of the results of these efforts is that HAA is just about to sign an Agreement on Cooperation with the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship. Based on this Agreement, HAA will perform assessments of technical competence of conformity assessment bodies according to the New and Old Approach EU Directives for industrial products. HAA has drafted rules for assessment of conformity assessments bodies (CABs) for the purpose of authorisation and designation by responsible ministries.

In March this year HAA submitted an application to EA to become a signatory to the MLA for seven MLA scopes. An evaluation team was expected to come in September or October. We hope that the EA evaluation will be positive and that it will, at the end, enable us full membership in ILAC as well.

Cyprus



Quality considerations in today's society

-Problems and challenges in small economies

By Dr Kyriakos C. Tsimillis *

In today's society there are some new needs and trends. Some trends, such as the free movement of goods, elimination of technical barriers to trade are broadening the challenges of ensuring quality.

The Cyprus accreditation body CYS-CYSAB takes realistic measures to strengthen the competitiveness of products and services it deals with. For some years now, great efforts continue to be made at local, regional and global levels towards this. Cyprus' economy depends extensively on tourism and has a long experience in this important sector. A recent emphasis is on introducing additional criteria to ensure sustainable competitiveness - based on comparative

advantages, such as environmental, climatic, historical and cultural features. Experience has taught Cyprus what quality means in this very sensitive and competitive sector and how sustainability in its development could be promoted in a region like the Eastern Mediterranean.

The elimination of technical barriers to trade within a globalised market and, in particular in Europe, the free movement of goods, services and personnel, has imposed some additional difficulties to small economies such as Cyprus, whilst at the same time posing a challenge.

Most of the problems faced in Cyprus are related to factors like size, the lack of raw materials, the geographical location of the island as well as the economic conditions in a lasting transient period.

An international technical language has been used more extensively over the past few decades. The component of this technical language is, in the main part, standardisation, quality assurance and quality management schemes and accreditation.

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism has been responsible for the whole range of these activities, and for

the last 30 years has been in close contact and cooperation with all stakeholders representing almost all activities of economic and social significance.

In the early 90s, the then Cyprus Organisation for Standards and Control of Quality was a catalyst, providing training programmes and establishing the necessary infrastructure with a number of qualified quality auditors. The 15-year experience with standardisation activities proved to be a useful background

continued next page



The Minister of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Mr. Antonis Michaelides, hands the first laboratory accreditation certificate to the Managing Director of Geoinvest Ltd., Mr. Andreas Siathas (Nicosia, June 2006). The Coordinator of CYS-CYSAB Dr Kyriakos C. Tsimillis is on the right.

from previous page

to building and implementing quality assurance schemes.

In the beginning product certification schemes were introduced. Later, quality management systems (based on the ISO 9000 series of standards) were implemented, followed by environmental management systems (based on EMAS and ISO 14000 series of standards). Quality assurance gradually took the place of quality control in industrial activities. In parallel, another scheme referring to the ecological evaluation of products to grant the eco-label has been developed for an extensive group of product categories.

All these schemes are referred to as conformity assessment activities. It is important that once a product or service has been assessed in one country, it does not need to be re-assessed in any other country. In order for conformity assessment activities to be mutually recognised by Member States of the European Union and, even more, globally, they need to operate with the same procedures and criteria. This is the role undertaken by accreditation which is considered to be the highest level of assessment, operated by non-profit distributing accreditation bodies under the aegis of public authorities. The

Cyprus Organisation for the Promotion of Quality (CYS) has been designated as the Cyprus Accreditation Body (CYS-CYSAB).

CYS is the successor of the Cyprus Organization for Standards and Control of Quality, after standardisation and certification activities were placed under a new umbrella which operates as a private organisation with the Government as the sole shareholder. CYS-CYSAB is actively involved in European Accreditation. CYS is also promoting the idea of a Cyprus Quality Network which will be the forum for all quality activities on the island.

This year is the first in a seven-year plan drafted in 2005 after wide social discussions with all stakeholders. Bearing in mind the Lisbon Strategy and in the perspective of Cyprus entering the Monetary Union, the New Strategic Plan for the years 2007-2013 ensures that all stakeholders have undertaken their part of responsibility towards the national task.

This new strategy aims at sustainable development, bringing together all three pillars, namely economic growth, social cohesion and the protection of the environment. The promotion of regional cooperation is considered of high importance with the geographic location

of Cyprus being at the cross-roads of three continents providing an advantage for it to act as a bridge between them.

CYS-CYSAB's task includes the introduction and management of the national accreditation system; management of the inspection and verification of Good Laboratory Practice and the national system for Technical Notification; as well as the promotion of quality issues and support to the quality infrastructure. The aim of CYS-CYSAB is to provide accreditation services all over Cyprus.

Accreditation of laboratories was a first priority reflecting the increasing demand in the market. However, following some developments in the legislation and as a result of the increased awareness, applications were submitted from other types of conformity assessment bodies, mainly from vehicle inspection bodies and certification bodies (including the ones for organic cultivations). CYSAB is already providing services to the relevant fields. It is expected that by the end of the year, seven accreditation certificates will have been granted by CYSAB.

**Dr Kyriakos C. Tsimillis, Coordinator Cyprus Organisation for the Promotion of Quality (CYS). CYS has recently applied to become an associate member of ILAC.*



Guatemala

OGA—Step by step in the right direction

By Alexander Pineda*.

Accreditation in Guatemala is moving forward, step by step in the right direction. In June this year, the Guatemalan Accreditation Office (OGA) was assessed by the Inter American Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC) in order to become part of the MLA for testing laboratories. The result of the peer assessment was very positive for the organisation. Corrective actions have been approved by the Team Leader and OGA expects the follow up visit at the end of this year.

OGA is part of the National Quality System in Guatemala and takes part in actions programmed every year around improving quality. From 21-22 August this year the fourth National Quality Congress took place in the Grand Tikal Futura Hotel and a representative of OGA has

been part of the Organising Committee for the past four years.

ExpoCalidad 2007 was also part of the Congress with more than 40 organisations presenting their products and services, including certified companies and accredited laboratories. Around 700 people participated during the simultaneously held conferences, where topics of standardisation, metrology, certification and accreditation were presented by speakers from Mexico, Venezuela, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala. During

the closing ceremony, OGA granted a new certificate for a calibration laboratory.

OGA, as an Affiliate Member, recognises the work that ILAC has achieved to create the international framework to facilitate international trade. OGA congratulates ILAC on the 30th Anniversary.

OGA can be contacted via the web site www.oga.org.gt or by email at info-oga@mineco.gob.gt

**Alexander Pineda, Head of the Guatemalan Accreditation Office (OGA).*



OGA staff and the IAAC Peer Assessment Team.

Malaysia

Standards Malaysia makes its mark.

After 10 years of work towards advancing excellence in accreditation Standards Malaysia recalled one of the major events that marked their own tenth anniversary celebrations last year: the launch of a new logo on 20 November.

It has now been more than nine months since the introduction of the new logo to the public, which essentially underscores Standards Malaysia's efforts in identifying standardisation and accreditation activities with the view of promoting Malaysia to the world.

In conjunction with the new logo, new accreditation symbols were also introduced to Malaysian accredited facilities. The purpose of these symbols is to harmonise all previous accreditation symbols for the various accreditation schemes under Standards Malaysia.

Standards Malaysia has advised all laboratories to use the new symbol. Laboratories have been given until 31 December this year to fully implement the use of the new accreditation symbol.

In order for the organisation to stay on course, a long-term strategic and action plan has been laid out. The Standards Malaysia Strategic Plan 2006-2010 outlines key strategic thrusts. One of



them is to enhance global acceptance of Malaysian products and services through credible and internationally recognised accreditation.

The origin of the accreditation program in Malaysia, in particular, the laboratory accreditation program, started in 1987. This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the introduction of the laboratory

accreditation program in Malaysia by Standards Malaysia's predecessor.

Standards Malaysia would like to take this opportunity to extend heartfelt appreciation to organisations and individuals especially colleagues in APLAC and ILAC who have assisted in one way or another in advancing our accreditation infrastructure.



Dato' Sri Dr. Jamaludin Bin Dato' Jarjis (centre), Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation , together with Tan Sri Dr. Ahmad Tajuddin Ali, Chairman of Malaysian Standards and Accreditation Council (right) and Director General of STANDARDS MALAYSIA, Ms. Fadilah Baharin (left) launched the new logo of STANDARDS MALAYSIA, on 20 November 2006.



Pakistan

A group has been formed to coordinate the implementation of the National Quality Policy and Plan.

The group's role will be to co-ordinate, liaise and assist all stakeholders to ensure the smooth implementation of various projects and schemes under the plan. This will further strengthen the infrastructure in the country, including accreditation and the conformity assessment system.

The group will also serve as a Secretariat of the Implementation Committee, headed by the Minister for Science and Technology and comprising Secretaries of relevant ministries, representatives of the provincial departments and the private sector.

Discontinuation of Accreditation

The accreditation of QC Laboratories of Wah Nobel was discontinued on re-assessment in May, 2007 as the laboratory could not demonstrate that it was meeting the requirements of ISO/IEC 17025.



Participants of the Seminar on ISO/IEC 17020 at Lahore.



Secretary of Ministry of Science and Technology, Mr. Pervez Butt addressing the participants of the Five-day Laboratory Assessor Course on ISO/IEC 17025 arranged by PNAC.

Capacity Building

Recently three officials of PNAC undertook a training and study tour of Norway. Ms. Ismat Gul Khattak received training on the running of Proficiency Testing Schemes, Mr. Shafqat received training on Certification Bodies and Inspection Bodies and Mr. Najamuddin undertook a study tour of Norway's Accreditation system.

Seminar on ISO/IEC 17020

After successfully launching accreditation schemes for laboratories and certification bodies, PNAC is preparing for the launch of an accreditation scheme for inspection bodies. A one day introductory seminar on ISO/IEC 17020 the International Standard for Inspection Bodies, was organised by PNAC at Lahore. An expert from Norwegian Accreditation gave a presentation on ISO/IEC 17020 and discussed the role of inspection bodies in the European market. Representatives of inspection bodies, industry and other stakeholders attended the seminar.

Technical Courses

PNAC in collaboration with Norwegian Accreditation (NA) organised six technical courses both in Islamabad and Lahore in August this year on uncertainty of measurement, chemical and microbiological testing, method validation, internal and external quality controls and traceability.

These courses were conducted by experts from PNAC who were earlier trained by NA and monitored by an expert from NA with a view to developing indigenous capacity in running these courses independently. This is another step PNAC is taking towards sustainability and self reliance by organising similar courses in the future. Approx 35 participants attended each course from across the country.

Five-day Laboratory Assessor Courses on ISO/IEC 17025

A five-day laboratory assessor training course on ISO/IEC -17025 was organised by PNAC in collaboration with Norwegian Accreditation (NA) in Islamabad from 2-6 July. The training session was conducted by Dr. Muhammad Farooq and Ms. Ismat Gul Khattak of PNAC. PNAC officials were monitored by an expert from NA during the conduct of the course. Approximately 24 technical experts and newly inducted technical officers of PNAC participated in the course. Secretary of Ministry of Science and Technology, Mr Pervez Butt addressed the certificate distribution ceremony and thanked Norwegian Accreditation for their continuous support to PNAC in capacity building. He said he hoped that PNAC would be able to run more such courses to develop a pool of technical and lead assessors.



Secretary of Ministry of Science & Technology, Mr. Pervez Butt with the participants of the Five-day Laboratory Assessor Course on ISO/IEC 17025.



The Spanish accreditation system in its present form emerged in 1986 as the National Accreditation Body (ENAC). Since then, ENAC has provided the market with a range of reliable laboratories that have proven their technical competence through a single, transparent and reproducible assessment process that enjoys full international acceptance.

Today in Spain, conformity assessment is carried out in almost all sectors of the economy: industry, environment, health, agriculture and food, public works, tourism services, and more. ENAC accreditation meets the needs of the various conformity assessment bodies and of the markets in which they operate. Its activity has grown enormously, in line with Spain's size and economic development.

Whereas activity was initially centred on industrial laboratories, in a short period of time this rapidly expanded. From 85 accredited testing laboratories and 39 accredited calibration laboratories in 1996, ENAC now has 510 testing laboratories with more than 800 accreditations and 136 calibration laboratories with more than 300 accreditations.

This quantitative growth has gone hand in hand with the parallel diversification of accredited activities. ENAC accreditations in a wide array of activities such as health (microbiology, serology, bacteriology and clinical micology, genetic-forensic analysis and biocides) IT, transport, thermotechnics and child safety, amongst others, have been added to the high growth in accredited food and environmental laboratories.

The profile of accredited laboratories has also evolved. From a high-tech official laboratory in a handful of major towns and cities to a public or private laboratory

mainly working with companies engaged in activities in distinct areas and found practically throughout the country.

There is a rising number of industries in which the government uses accredited laboratories for assessment activities formerly carried out by the government's own resources, such as the new activities required for reasons of safety, health, environmental protection, fraud prevention and market fairness, in order to respond to an ever-evolving society. This has required coordination between ENAC and the authorities to oversee these activities, which, in Spain, are largely tied to the self-governing regions.

After 20 years of cooperation, ENAC is recognised by the Government in fields as diverse as industrial safety (regulations and directives), IT, health (quality of drinking water, public health laboratories, and biocides), agriculture (such as official control of foodstuffs and non-compulsory product labelling), civil aviation, construction, instrumentation and metrology, amongst others.

Involvement of interested parties is necessary for recognised and reliable accreditation systems which add value. It is perhaps the improvement of efficient communication channels which ensures this participation, one of the main aspects distinguishing the efforts made by ENAC in the last few years. ENAC has been able to get fully involved in the wider community thanks to its institutional relations with the government, with various Spanish conformity assessment associations, with numerous important scientific and technical organisations and with business associations.

The work engaged in by the members of international accreditation organisations such as ILAC meant the field of laboratory accreditation was a forerunner in Multilateral Recognition Agreements which turn certificates and reports from accredited laboratories into a passport to markets. ENAC's peer evaluation for maintaining these multilateral agreements took place on its twentieth anniversary, with a result worthy of congratulations from the assessment team.

ILAC's 30th Anniversary is yet another test of how fully developed accreditation systems have become, how they help to break down technical barriers and how their contribution has led to a transparent market geared to quality and safety. ENAC would like to congratulate the organisation and express its wish of continuing to cooperate and support ILAC's activities.



Left to right: Dr Shiang-Jang Su (Minister of AEC), Dr Jay-San Chen (TAF President).

TAF

TAF—Success Story

By Wanji Yang

TAF builds trust

Use of ILAC-MRA Mark on basis of TAF accreditation to Regulator—the Atomic Energy Council

In August TAF President Dr Jay-San Chen, visited Dr Shiang-Jang Su, the Minister of the Atomic Energy Council (AEC) regarding using the ILAC-MRA Mark alongside the TAF accreditation symbol. Dr Su many years ago provided technical expertise in the ionising radiation testing field for CNLA, which became TAF 17 years ago. Like many other technical experts, he has played an important role in strengthening the solid foundations of professional accreditation services and knows the crucial position that accreditation takes.



Recently promoted to the Ministers role, Dr Su not only continues being supportive of TAF accreditation services, but also makes efforts to cultivate the accreditation concept within regulatory sectors. He has been a keen advocate of the use of ILAC MRA signatories. The idea of using an accreditation provided by TAF and ILAC MRA signatories is hopefully to be included in the next revision of the AEC's regulations. TAF sincerely expresses its gratitude for Dr Su's support and looks forward to further cooperation in future.

Stakeholder news

National Laboratory Association (NLA)

Quarterly Report

South Africa

The National Laboratory Association (NLA) held its Annual General Meeting on 30 May. The current board was re-elected as well as Mr Chris De Jager, who was newly elected. NLA participated in the CIPAC conference and symposium.

NLA is participating in two research surveys for GLP laboratories and water testing laboratories to determine laboratory capacity in South Africa.

NLA recently exhibited at the SUSTAIN exhibition and participated in the Conference that ran in tandem with the exhibition.

Training

Public Courses: courses were conducted in Pressure, Basic Capillary Gas Chromatography, Dimensional Metrology, Introduction to Estimation of Uncertainty of Measurement, Flow Metrology and Estimation of Uncertainty in Chemical Measurements. Fifty five people attended these courses during the period under review.

Since the last report in May, the interest in training has been slow. This is reflected in the number of attendees. It is clear that the NLA's ability to continue to provide training in the area of metrology will always be reflected in the Association's ability to find other areas that are more in demand.

This remains a challenge and is being addressed by looking at the broader testing laboratory market as well as the industrial measurement and control sector.

To illustrate this point, even Uncertainty of Measurement training, whilst being the strongest in terms of demand, is still fairly small in real terms.

In-house Courses: the NLA conducted in-house training at two companies; DC LF – Eskom Koeberg and Industrial Temperature - NECSA during the past three months where there were 10 attendees.

The overall attendance figures for all courses organised by the NLA between January and August this year was 106.

Unit Standards and Professional Recognition

Metrology: during the quarter there was no significant work done in this area. It is also apparent that in order to make further progress it will be necessary to consider appointing additional resources. It is clear that it is very time consuming and requires a more dedicated approach.

The NLA Board discussed this issue at its Board Meeting on 29 August with a view to establishing how this might be accomplished.

Materials Testing: the NLA's proposal to the Civil Construction laboratory community to establish a Personnel Certification scheme for Materials Testers has been favourably met. Currently the NLA is helping to prepare a formal proposal for consideration by a donor and it is expected that a decision will be taken by the end of this year.

Conferences

Technical and Measurement Conference 2007: the organisation of the conference is ahead of schedule and there are significant numbers of international and local speakers who have committed to submitting papers and making presentations.

Since this event coincides with the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the NMISA, it is encouraging that such a substantial gathering of experts will take place from this arena.

Furthermore there have been encouraging comments from various quarters in terms of interest, it is hoped that this will translate into increased attendance.

Board members advised that this event represents a significant opportunity for anyone involved in any aspect of conformity assessment who wishes to be updated on the latest developments and are therefore encouraged to attend.

International Affiliations

ILAC LC and AIC: there have been no significant developments during the past three months, the next major event will be the General Assembly Meetings in October; which the NLA will attend.

NCSLI: although the NLA elected not to attend this year's NCSLI Conference it is pleasing to note that Ms Georgia Harris, a NCSLI Vice President, will be attending

this year's T and M Conference. It is hoped that this will lead to more formal recognition of the relationship between the two organisations.

ISO-WG 28 (ISO 17043)

The work of developing this new standard has resulted in a substantial amount of work that has taken place since the last report, a committee draft is almost ready for distribution. The next meeting of the working group will take place in early 2008 in order to finalise the release of this first draft.

ILC/PT

Calibration: the AC Power and Energy ILC has been completed and the results will be made available shortly. A disappointing feature of this particular comparison is that although 10 laboratories took part, now more than three months after completion, only five have supplied their results to date. It is clear that the NLA will have to rethink the way that it operates these in the future.

Testing: as previously reported there is an ongoing PT Scheme for Pesticide Formulations which started earlier in the year. The second round has now been conducted and the results received and forwarded to the participating laboratories. Whilst it is too early to comment on the performance of the laboratories who have taken part, it is clear that a couple of results appear to be questionable. After the completion of the final round at the end of the year the NLA will conduct a workshop so that the laboratories can discuss the results and the NLA can evaluate what should be done for next year.

The Future: during the past two months the NLA held a strategic meeting with SANAS to establish what role it could play in supporting the need for additional PT and Calibration ILC.

A report is currently being written and will be discussed at the next NLA Board Meeting.

Web site: the web site continues to attract interest and the following projects are in progress and it is hoped that the laboratory community will see them as value adding. They include advertising of laboratory recruitment positions, additional documents for download, a database of laboratory capabilities where the first phase will address chemical testing laboratories.



UILI strengthens work in private sector

By David H Stanger - UILI's Delegate to ILAC

The Union Internationale des Laboratoires Indépendants (UILI) has engaged in a number of activities since the Laboratory Committee (LC) meeting held in Cancun, Mexico in November, 2006.

UILI's objectives are to represent the professional and commercial interests of the private sector laboratories and to act as a forum for the exchange of information and views on an international basis.

At the General Assembly held in Brussels, Belgium on 7 September, 2007 the UILI constitution was amended to add an Associate Membership category for organisations providing laboratory support services.

Now in its third year, UILI continues to develop its Proficiency Testing Study Programme. Two hundred and thirty three laboratories from Japan, the USA, Canada and Spain took part in the first programme.

The planning for a second programme is well advanced and it is anticipated that between 100 and 200 laboratories will participate.

A member of this programme from Japan joined this year as a UILI delegate to ISO/CASCO WG 28 developing the standard ISO/IEC 17043—*Conformity assessment—General requirements for proficiency testing* to replace ISO Guide 43:1997 Parts 1 & 2.

UILI's objectives are further advanced by our active participation since 1999 in ISO/CASCO with Liaison 'A' status.

The UILI will be attending the CASCO Plenary to be held in Geneva, Switzerland 8–9 November, 2007.

UILI welcomed the opportunity to brief the LC on key resolutions and issues adopted at CASCO's meetings on work items that have, or will continue to directly impact on the services of the laboratory community.

We continue to encourage CASCO to heighten its promotion of ISO/IEC 17025:2005 and ISO 15189:2007.

UILI has been active in the Middle East since it was announced that the thirty first ISO Plenary will be held during October, 2008 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

In support of ISO's Action Plan, Item 3 "to target seminars (workshops) at national and regional level" and with the emergence of new ILAC Affiliates and Associates in the region, UILI strongly recommends that ILAC actively promotes an ISO/CASCO Workshop on International Standards and Conformity Assessment organised on dates and at a venue complimentary with the ISO Plenary in October, 2008.

The General Assembly held in Brussels, Belgium on 7 September elected UILI's Governing Board Officers and Members; President: Dr. Manuel Dorado Gonzalez (Spain) – Vice Presidents: Mr. Stephen Vincent (USA) and Dr. Hideo Tabata (Japan) – Treasurer: Mr. Jan Soers (Belgium) – Secretary General: Dr. Luc Scholtis – (Netherlands) – Ordinary Member Representative: Mr. David Stanger (Belgium/UK) and Immediate Past President: Mr. Gib McIntee (Canada).

Governing Board meetings in 2008 will be held during April in The Hague,

Netherlands and on 12 September in Santiago de Compostela, Spain.

The UILI Governing Board extends its best wishes to the ILAC Laboratory Committee Stakeholder Members and appreciation to the ILAC Secretariat for their services to the UILI Membership.

An Honorary Member, Dr Ken Albutt (UK) attended the first ILAC meeting held in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1977.

Recognising that this year is the thirtieth anniversary of ILAC, UILI expresses its appreciation to the co-host NATA Australia for their hospitality and the exceptional assistance they have generously provided ILAC and its Stakeholders over the past three decades.

The Union Internationale des Laboratoires Indépendants (UILI) incorporated in Paris, France in 1961 is an international association of private laboratories and practitioners from around the world. UILI serves a membership of over 750 Ordinary Member organisations affiliated in six National Member Associations located in Belgium, Canada, Japan, Netherlands, Spain and the USA or as unaffiliated Ordinary Members providing laboratory services in over 30 countries. The profile of its membership ranges from an individual consultant to a member with over 5000 employees at 90 locations in 24 countries.



Ken Albutt (Left) and David Stanger UILI (Right) attended their first ILAC conference in Sydney in 1979 and remain as members of their national delegations.



A focus for analytical chemistry in Europe

Eurachem acts as a focus for analytical chemistry in Europe, and aims to improve the quality of chemical measurement, and measurements where chemistry is coupled with other disciplines such as physics and biology, in order to meet the needs and expectations of customers.

The organisation has a number of objectives including promoting best practice in chemical measurement, the development of strategies and work programmes to cater for new and emerging analytical technologies to meet the requirements of Eurochem members and their customers.

Another important objective is the development of European networks and national Eurachem groups for the exchange of information, as well as the promotion of collaboration aimed at identifying and defining best practice in chemical measurement.

Eurachem's contribution to the development of international chemical measurement systems, to enable the results of chemical measurements to be traced to authoritative, internationally recognised references, and where feasible to SI is another key objective.

Another objective includes input into, and collaboration with, other European and international organisations concerned with improvement of the quality of chemical measurement.

Helping decision makers and users of measurements appreciate the importance of quality issues as well as encouraging them to ask for evidence of the validity of the measurements they procure is another task for Eurochem.

New Guides

In the past year, Eurachem has produced two major guides, the first on Assessment in Compliance (jointly with CITAC).

Another guide on measurement uncertainty, arising from sampling: a guide to methods and approaches (jointly with Eurolab, CITAC, Nordtest and the Analytical Methods Committee of the Royal Society of Chemistry), was also produced.

At the recent General Assembly, held in Vilnius, Lithuania, Bulgaria became the 33rd member of Eurachem.

Forthcoming events of Eurachem

A two-day workshop on uncertainty in sampling, and compliance based on the recently-published guides will be held at BAM, Berlin on 14 & 15 April 2008.

The 24th General Assembly will take place on 22 and 23 May 2008 in Athens.

The Sixth Eurachem workshop on proficiency testing in analytical chemistry, microbiology and laboratory medicine will be held in Rome on 6 and 7 October 2008.



**Friday
26 October
2007
0830-1200**

Marketing on a budget

ILAC/IAF General Assembly Meetings, Sydney

Raising awareness of accreditation doesn't always need a large marketing budget and dedicated teams of people

Book a place at the workshop to hear real examples of low-cost awareness initiatives that have achieved impressive results.

The contributors to this workshop are all members of accreditation bodies who have practical experience of raising awareness of accreditation. This is not going to be a theoretical session led by external consultants. The workshop will provide:

- Several examples of successful low cost results initiatives from accreditation bodies of different sizes and levels of maturity.
- Ready-made tools to equip you to carry out similar initiatives for minimal additional effort.
- An invitation to share ideas with other accreditation bodies, and the opportunity to shape the ILAC MCC work programme so that it provides

you with the tools you need to effectively promote accreditation.

Everybody attending the ILAC meetings in Sydney is welcome to attend. This workshop will benefit anyone within an accreditation body who is interested in, or has a responsibility for promoting accreditation to stakeholders such as Government, Regulators, industry, customers and potential customers.

More information: contact Jon Murthy at the ILAC/IAF meeting – email: jon.murthy@ukas.com



Enjoy an evening at the Sydney Opera House.

Welcome to Sydney, Australia

2007 ILAC/IAF Joint Annual Meetings

Sharing ideas, confirming actions, planning for future work.

Organisers of the 2007 ILAC/IAF Joint Annual Meetings hope this meeting 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.

The event is being hosted by the National Association of Testing

Authorities, Australia (NATA) and the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ), at the Amora Hotel Jamison, Sydney. The venue is located in the city's central business district and close to the historic Rocks area, Circular Quay, the 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.

Thank you for registering to participate at the 2007 ILAC/IAF Joint Annual Meetings in Sydney.

About the event

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

The event will provide an informative agenda including eminent presenters and an exciting social program of uniquely Australian experiences.

A tradition of accreditation

