The Association

Celebration of EA's 15th anniversary in 2015

As announced at the last two EA General Assemblies, EA will celebrate its 15th anniversary in June 2015. Jumping at this special opportunity, the EA Executive Committee agreed on a communication campaign that emphasizes EA's values, achievements and prospects. The whole communication project, led by an EA 15th Anniversary Organization Committee, is involving EA Members, the EA Secretariat and NAT, the national accreditation body hosting the autumn 2015 EA General Assembly.

The culminating events will take place during this General Assembly meeting on 25-26 November 2015 in Budapest, Hungary. These include the distribution of a special anniversary leaflet and an entertainment program during the Gala dinner.

The World Accreditation Day on 9 June 2015 will also be a red-letter day when specific news will be published. Additional events kindly supported by ACCREDIA should celebrate EA's 15th anniversary during the Joint IAF-ILAC Annual Meetings 2015 to be held on 28 October - 6 November 2015 in Milan, Italy.

In the meantime, the campaign is being focused on publishing EA's story and future ambitions in six episodes that are published every 2-3 months on the EA Homepage. Each of these six chapters illustrates EA's role towards a specific stakeholder group: key stakeholders are briefly interviewed to give testimonies on how far EA has come in meeting their expectations. Please visit the EA Homepage at: http://www.european-accreditation.org/

The Multilateral Agreement Council (MAC)

The MAC will hold its 33rd meeting on 22-23 April in Istanbul.

The team leader of the ILAC/IAF team in charge of EA evaluation will attend the meeting. It will be one of the last activities of the team, after evaluation of the Secretariat in November 2014, and 3 observations of EA peer evaluations in April, September and October. A last observation has been planned with the evaluation of ESYD, Greece in May.

Monitoring transition to ISO/IEC 17020:2012 will be discussed at the April meeting. 6 evaluation reports and 3 progress reports will be looked into for decision by the Council. Applications from Azerbaijan for associate membership and Albania for full membership will be reviewed for decision by the General Assembly.

- MAC secretariat and operations
The MAC has been undertaking a comprehensive review of its internal processes and procedures. It started with the “pilot project for enhancing of the peer evaluation system” and continued with practical measures endorsed by the Council in October 2014 after a self-assessment of the secretariat operations conducted by the EA Executive Secretary shortly after he joined EA. In both cases, the objective is to improve the system as well as daily operations by a better monitoring and a better use and management of evaluator and secretariat resources. An extended team of 3 persons is now in charge of separate but interlinked processes for the management of evaluators, peer evaluations and MAC general operations. Progress can be reported in the revision of EA-2/02 and its supplement for Evaluator management. A final draft of the 2 documents will be presented to the MAC in April, while the Secretariat is developing in parallel internal instructions and checklists for its daily operations. Planning of training activities has also made headway, based on a clear policy that has entered into force and been reflected in the multi-annual MAC training plan, and takes account of the needs identified as a result of the comprehensive survey launched in summer 2014.
In 2015, the MAC is managing 12 peer evaluations and preparing for 12 evaluations in 2016. In 2016, evaluations for PTP accreditation will also start for 9 NABs who have applied during their re-evaluations.

The Laboratory Committee (LC)

The LC met on 10-11 September 2015 in Windsor, UK.

Following the nomination of Natalija Jovicic Zaric as EALC acting chair, Laurent Vinson was elected as the new EALC vice-chair.

Progress was reported and confirmed at the meeting on the on-going revision of documents, as shown below:
- **EA-4/19 Guidelines for Accreditation Bodies on the Contents of the Scopes of Accreditation for Proficiency Testing Providers.** The final draft of the document which accommodates all comments received, has been endorsed and is ready for circulation for EA voting.
- **EA-4/15 Accreditation of Non-Destructive testing.** The final draft of the revised document has been endorsed and is ready for circulation for EA voting.
- **Guidelines for accreditation of opinions and interpretations.** The final draft is ready for endorsement, but due to the ongoing revision of ISO 17025, LC members are invited to conclude one of the following options:
  - publish the document as an “informative”, i.e. non-mandatory, document provided as a best practice guide;
  - put the work on hold until revised ISO/IEC 17025 is published in around 2018;
  - do nothing and leave ABs’ practice as it is.

Following the proposal adopted at the previous meeting, a FAQ list consolidating all the questions answered since 2010 was prepared. The FAQ list and proposed key words were adopted. It was finally agreed to publish the FAQ list on the EA intranet in the LC folder.

A clear position was reached about how to manage LC Advisory Documents. The Committee endorsed the proposal by the Secretariat that responsibility should be on the owner stakeholder organisation to update EA with changes or revision of those documents the LC has endorsed as advisory ones. This is fully in line with EA-1/14: *Procedure for Development and Approval of EA Documents and the Adoption of ILAC/IAF Documents*.

Upon request by the Executive Committee, a long discussion on the use of ILC results in the peer evaluation was held in order to find a common position to submit to the MAC. Despite active discussion, a position could not be clearly adopted during the meeting, and the LC decided to set up a TFG responsible for preparing a position paper which will be circulated thereafter among members of the LC before being sent to the MAC.

Finally, with the aim of improving the functioning of Technical Networks, LC members were invited to suggest improvements they would like to see implemented. After fruitful discussions, it was decided that members of the management group will achieve the synthesis of the discussion and prepare an improvement program to be proposed for adoption by LC members during the next meeting.

**LC trainings**

To support the development of the EA MLA in the scope of Proficiency Testing, a harmonisation training course will be provided by Martina Bednarova (CAI) and Debbie Hudson (UKAS) on **ISO 17043** in the second half of June 2015 in London, UK.

The next meeting of the LC will take place on 9-10 September 2015, in Belgrade, Serbia.
The Certification Committee (CC)

The EA Certification Committee (EACC) held its 29th meeting on 3 and 4 March 2015 in Bern, Switzerland. Again the CC Chair, Leopoldo Cortez from the Portuguese NAB (IPAC), was assisted by Kevin Belson from the UK NAB (UKAS), the recently-appointed CC Vice-Chair, for a great number of topics.

CC documentation

Approved by the EA General Assembly in November 2011, the drafting of an EA harmonization guidance on the application of ISO/IEC 17021:2011 for OHSAS 18001 has been slowly progressing within a CC TFG. After national regulations referring to OHSAS 18001 were put forward to the TFG, a first draft document was discussed in March 2013. In October 2013, further to similar developments in ISO where ISO/PC 283 Occupational health and safety management systems – Requirements was created and a future ISO/IEC 17021-requirements for third party certification auditing of occupational health and safety management systems standard under development, the CC agreed that the 2011-mandated EA work should continue, focussing in priority on the scope for certification, the scope for accreditation, legal compliance and the man-day issue; auditors competence should be left to ISO for them to deal with it. In late 2014, a draft has been sent out for CC comments by February 2015. Actually work was delayed in 2014 by the TFG convener’s leaving from his NAB and so from his TFG responsibilities. A new convener has been appointed at the CC meeting in March 2015, and the TFG membership’s active participation has been checked to replace some unavailable members. A reshuffled TFG is now ready for consolidating the numerous comments received and elaborated on a new draft to be sent for a new round of comments. It was agreed that, once finalized, the OHSMS document should be put forward as guidance to IAF TC.

In March 2015, the CC agreed to propose a new work item to the EA General Assembly in May 2015 in order to revise EA-6/03: EA Document for Recognition of Verifiers under the EU ETS Directive further to the EACC NG EU ETS’ recommendation for considering the witnessing approach as an informative annex.

It was also asked to the EACC WG Environment to check 2010-revised EA-7/04: Legal Compliance as a part of Accredited ISO 14001: 2004 Certification further to the publication of new version of ISO 14001.

IAF documents recommended for EA adoption: the EACC should recommend the EA General Assembly in May 2015 to adopt:
- IAF MD 8:2015 - Application of ISO/IEC 17011:2004 in the Field of Medical Device Quality Management Systems (ISO 13485);
- IAF MD 9:2015 - Application of ISO/IEC 17021 in the Field of Medical Device Quality Management Systems (ISO 13485);
- IAF MD 17:2015 version 2 - Witnessing Activities for the Accreditation of Management Systems Certification Bodies;

as mandatory documents for all EA members.

Finally, the EACC will recommend the EA General Assembly in May 2015 to endorse that IAF MD 2:2007 (Transfer of Accredited Certification of Management Systems) be applied to all management systems under the EA MLA and not only to QMS and EMS (current IAF MLA sub-scopes).

Buoyant discussions
For the second time, the CC meeting in Bern dedicated one full morning to a strategic group discussion, aimed in March 2015 at considering the High Level Structure (HLS) elements of Conformity Assessment Standards. Three questions were actively discussed with a focus on the way in which ABs will assess the competence and approach of CBs with regard to the HLS elements of the certification standards:

- How can a Certification Body demonstrate to an Accreditation Body its ability to assess the organisation’s Risk Based Thinking?
- How can a Certification Body demonstrate to an Accreditation Body how Organisational Context is built in to audit programmes and activities?
- At a witnessed assessment, what might the NAB expect to see to identify that the Certification Body has understood and implemented the new requirements of the certification standard resulting from the HLS?

The discussion outcome was summarized by the EACC Vice-Chair before being elaborated on and sent to IAF TC for discussions at IAF level.

CC members have also lively discussions on the following topics:

- **Non-accredited certification offered by accredited CBs**
  The solution agreed as the best one is that the CB/CAB has to perform the accredited activity as if it was under accreditation, unless it is otherwise contractually established with its client and allowed by the scheme and legal requirements that are applicable. A formal paper should be drafted in light of meeting discussions to set out a harmonized rationale for this solution to be clarified at the IAF level by some normative text.

- **Approach to the transitions to new ISO 9001 and 14001**
  There was an agreement that there are not so many changes in new ISO 9001; the major modification lies in the different kinds of auditing, on which EA should find a consensus for European ABs. A formal paper should be drafted in light of meeting discussions to set out a harmonized EA position for ISO 9001 transition to be discussed at the IAF level.

  The CC agreed to send EA ABs a questionnaire about the implementation status of ISO/IEC 17024:2012 and ISO/IEC 17065:2012 once the deadline for transitions is closed on 15 September 2015, and to discuss the consolidated outcome at the meeting in October 2015.

- **Outsourced processes/activities vs scope of certification**
  It was agreed that the question should be re-discussed at the next CC meeting in October 2015 in light of the IAF TC Decision Log and the outcome of IAF MD 5 revision.

**CC trainings still in full swing**

A refreshment training workshop on ISO/IEC 17024: 2012 was held on 24 and 25 March 2015 (2 back-to-back 1-day sessions) in Milan and led by Else-Hanna Elgåsen (SWEDAC) and Ian Ronksley (UKAS) as most experimented trainers.

A couple of other training events should soon take place in conjunction with the next meetings of EA CC WGs:

- a training course will be provided by Peter Hissnauer (DAkkS) and Casper van Erp (RvA) on the new version of ISO 50003 on 17 April 2015, the day following the EA CC WG Environment meeting held on 16 April in Riga, Latvia;
- a training course will be provided by Casper van Erp (RvA) on ISO/TS 22003 on 18 June 2015, the day following the EA CC WG Food meeting held on 16-17 June 2015 in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Finally, a half-day workshop on ISO/IEC 17021-1 will be planned in the agenda of the next EA CC meeting in October 2015.

The next CC meeting will take place on 6-7 October 2015 in Lisbon, Portugal, where Leopoldo Cortez will chair his last CC meeting.
The Inspection Committee (IC)

The EA Inspection Committee (EAIC) held its 29th meeting on 5 and 6 March 2015 in Bern, Switzerland.

The new IC Vice-Chair, Tomas Holm from the Swedish NAB (SWEDAC), assisted in the management of the meeting chaired by Rolf Straub from the Swiss NAB (SAS).


The first meeting day was almost entirely dedicated to a large workshop during which IC members were divided into 7 groups reflecting 7 main sections of the standard (impartiality and independence, organisation and management, personnel, facilities and equipment, subcontracting, etc.) in order for each of them to answer 8 template questions about the use of ILAC P15:2014 for application of ISO/IEC 17020.

The discussion outcome should be summarized and elaborated on by the EAIC Chair for the EA General Assembly in May 2015, when the EA IC will present a positive recommendation for EA's adoption of ILAC P15.

Car Inspection

The IC has been paying careful attention to accreditation of car inspection for the purposes of harmonization and mutual recognition of PTI (Periodical Technical Inspections) in Europe within the framework of the European Commission's Road Safety Programme for 2011-2020. Due to great national discrepancies, a technical network specific for car inspection has been running since 2012 for an expertise group to share information, experiences and practices. Notably this TN followed up and discussed the development of the new EC Directive (2014/45/EU) on periodic roadworthiness inspections of motor vehicles, in order to ensure that it was progressed in the right direction. Each EU Member has now two options: either a supervising body shall be introduced to perform supervising tasks, or accreditation of the testing centres shall be required. In March 2015, it was agreed that the EA IC should now consider how EU Member States are discussing so as to comply with Article 14 of the Directive and to require accreditation of inspection centres. How every EU Member State is planning roadside inspections (Directive 2014/47/EU) should also be discussed within the EA IC.

A specific TFG has also been performing the subsequent revision of **EA-5/2: Guidance on the application of EN 45004 in recurrent inspection of motor vehicles.** A revised draft presented at the October 2014 meeting was sent out for IC comments until mid-December 2014; comments were consolidated into a new draft submitted at the March 2015 meeting. Endorsed by the EAIC, the new draft should soon be sent out for EA comments during 60 days.

SWEDAC will represent EA at the CITA (International Motor Vehicle Inspection Committee) Conference in April 2015 to promote the benefits of accreditation. The EAIC Vice-Chair will report on it at the next meeting in October 2015.

ETV

Since the establishment of an EA IC ETV Informal Leading Group in October 2011 in order for those EA NABs already active in verification projects within the framework of the EU Environmental Technological Verification (ETV) Programme, to exchange experiences and best practices with a view to influence the relevant European authorities, an increasing number of outstanding issues have been arising, thus demonstrating a real need for a consistent EA approach to be achieved. It was strongly reiterated in October 2013 that EA NABs should have a clear understanding of what they will have to do when they will receive future applications for accreditation.

Because the French (COFRAC), Danish (DANAK) and Czech (CAI) NABs are those which have been gaining the greatest experience in the ETV field, the EAIC representatives of these 3 NABs set up a small pioneering TFG in March 2013. They reported on their national situations in October 2013,
focussing on scope definition and technical competences. It was acknowledged that one of the biggest difficulties is to recruit assessors with appropriate skills for each technical area.

Since March 2014, it has been recognized that, in a majority of countries, little activity is still recorded in the ETV area so far. One issue for NABs is to get things started with low activity and interest from clients. However ETV is more and more becoming a focal issue for the EC, and will certainly become a more predominant issue for the EAIC in the near future.

**Scope of accreditation**

The EA IC re-started its discussions on how ABs and accredited IBs should define their scopes. Different published scopes of accreditation were presented and commented. EA IC Members were asked to send the EA Secretariat the headings used to describe the inspection scopes on the accreditation certificates before further discussion is planned at the next meeting.

The next IC meeting will take place on 8 October 2015 in Lisbon, Portugal.

**The Communications and Publications Committee (CPC)**

The 27th EA CPC Meeting was held on 18-19 February 2015 in Lillestrom, Norway.

Peter Kronvall from the Swedish NAB (SWEDAC) chaired his 3rd meeting, being assisted by the CPC vice-chair, Knut-Thomas Sjolie from NA, Norwegian Accreditation.

**A new logo for EA**

As approved by EA Members at the last EA General Assembly meeting in November 2014, EA bears a new logo from 9 April 2015.

Since EA was created in 2000, the previous EA logo has been growing old whereas EA has been developing a new, more official status linked to the European Commission (EC). The EA logo should be re-designed to make more people aware of how EA has become an important and modern cooperation structure both in Europe and worldwide. According to the *EA Marketing and Communication Plan 2011-2015*, the EA Communications and Publications Committee has elaborated on a new EA logo to strengthen EA's corporate identity.

This attractive and unique logo is part of EA's new visual identity which is deemed to give a favorable picture of the organization representing the character and core values of the organization, thus increasing EA members' feeling of affiliation.

This versatile logo is simultaneously displayed on the EA web page, EA publications and EA marketing material. The new EA logo's design is more modern; it suits both print and online contents. Whereas the former logo had only a horizontal alignment, the new one can be displayed in horizontal, vertical and square versions, allowing more flexibility for inserting it into different supports. The new design also includes a yellow star to make a visible connection to the European Union and the European Commission (EC).

Consolidating EA's corporate identity proved a real necessity since the adoption of European Regulation (EC) 765/2008, which led to the reinforcement of EA's cooperation with the EC and the ETFA, EA's increased collaboration with various major stakeholders, and the acknowledged need for promoting accreditation values and advocating European rules and policies at the international level.

**Revision of CPC-owned documents**

- The revision of CPC Terms of Reference dated 2008 were finalized before they are approved at the EA General Assembly in May 2015.
- **EA-1/14:** *EA-1/14 Procedure for the development and approval of EA publications and the adoption of ILAC/IAF documents* is being revised, as required by the EA internal audits conducted in 2012 and 2013. Further to its convener’s leaving out of the CPC, the *ad hoc* TFG set up in October 2014 has been reshuffled to be now rooted in the EA Secretariat which is the main user of the document and which is in charge of quality management of the EA procedures. A new draft should soon be out for CPC comments.

- **EA-INF/06:** *Guide to EA* is being revised by an *ad hoc* TFG to reflect the latest developments in EA as well as to adopt a new lay-out easier to be updated on the EA website. *EA FAQs* are being elaborated in parallel, focusing on questions not covered in the *Guide*.

- **EA-INF/04:** *Statement on acceptance and recognition of activities under the EA MLA* has been revised to align it with **EA-1/06:** *EA Multilateral Agreement. Criteria for signing. Policy and procedures for development*. The CPC work is closed on this document, which is now being reviewed by the HHC.

### Promoting accreditation values

In October 2014, a TFG was set up to develop a new *brochure promoting the values of accreditation* which aims at: demonstrating how accreditation shall be seen as the best route to meet a specific need; promoting accreditation as the best route for better regulation; and comparing which benefits we have for which standards. The work has been much progressing: a revised version, reviewed in light of discussions held at the February 2015 meeting, should be soon circulated for CPC comments and a final version should be presented at the September 2015 meeting of the CPC.

### EA visibility to be boosted

Stressing the need to increase EA’s communications, the CPC developed an editorial plan for EA *news and bulletins*, which will have to be reviewed later on together with the EA Secretariat. It was agreed that EA’s communication issues need a more specific structure and allocated time.

Moreover, an EA plan demonstrating how to use social media (*SOME*) to meet EA’s objectives is being elaborated on by a CPC TFG. The CPC agreed that the EA Secretariat and Committee Chairs should be in charge of SOME actions: EA should have both Committee Chairs’ individual LinkedIn accounts (to connect to more people) and a Secretariat corporate LinkedIn account (to publish stories).

Finally the CPC is being investigating the technical and security issues to develop the EA intranet for *blogging* and sharing news among members.

The next CPC meeting will be held on 3-4 September 2015 in St. Julians, Malta.

---

**The EA Horizontal Harmonization Committee (HHC)**

The EA HHC held its 13th meeting on 24-25 March in Brussels with a busy agenda.

After discussions in the LC, the issue of “Sampling as a standalone activity” was transferred to HHC. A TFG was appointed to develop a HHC position. The results of the TFG were presented in March and the discussions led to agree a resolution to be submitted to the General Assembly in May. In essence, HHC recognises that accreditation can be granted, either under ISO/IEC 17020 or ISO/IEC 17025 under specific conditions and taking account of the purpose of the conformity assessment. For the HHC, the resolution should be self-standing; there is no need to develop any additional guidance. The GA will decide in May.

The HHC decided to disband the TFG in charge of drafting a *Document on the Confirmation of the Continuation of Accreditation based on the Results of Surveillance Activities*, and to transfer discussions at the level of the CASCO WG in charge of revising ISO/IEC 17011.
How to implement the new policy for sector schemes remains an important topic on the HHC agenda. The new policy, based on the “Home AB” approach which transfers responsibility on the NAB to carry out the analysis of a scheme, is being implemented, after a one-year pilot period. Practicalities remain to be finalised in terms of management of data and publication of information related to schemes. HHC re-affirmed that the new procedure has been designed to be a tool for NAB (Home ABs) to assess a scheme. Further feedback on use of the tool and the final administrative structure for managing the process are planned to be presented at the September meeting.

Use of Accreditation Symbols will also be tabled for discussion in September. In view of the meeting, a survey will be run to collect information and feedback on the implementation of EA-2/13 on cross frontier accreditation and the issues faced with by the EA NABs in practice.

The next meeting of HHC will take place on 16-17 September in Brussels.

The EA Advisory Board (EAAB)

The 34th EAAB Meeting will be held on 15 April 2015 in Brussels, Belgium, at the EFTA Secretariat, to be focused on the following issues:

- reviewing the role of EAAB and interaction with EA, in light of the outcome of a questionnaire filled out by every EAAB College;
- the representation of environmental and other interests on the EAAB, as well as the upcoming call for nominations in view of the renewal of the EAAB membership in 2016;
- assessor resourcing in small ABs;
- the application of ISO/IEC 17065 for schemes;
- the application of ILAC P10 by EA Members;
- the revision of ISO/IEC 17011.

EA Secretariat, 14 April 2015
secretariat@european-accreditation.org