APPROVED Minutes of the 32nd Meeting of the EA Advisory Board
held on 3 April 2014
at the EFTA Secretariat, 12-16 Rue Joseph II, B-1000 Brussels

Participants:

**EAAB Chair:** M. Nitsche (NA, Germany)

**EAAB Vice-Chair:** C. Priller (CEOC International)

**CAB College:** R. Brockway (IFIA), B. De Blaere (EUROCER Building), J. L. Sanchez Alvarez-Campana (EUROLAB)

**Industry College:** A. Evans (CAPIEL), L. B. Hammer (ORGALIME, DI), J. Hartge (ORGALIME, BDI)

**NA College:** M. Freyssinet (NA, France), K. R. Michaelsen (NA, Denmark), M. Zečević (NA, Croatia)

**ESOs:** H. Liauw (CEN/CENELEC)

**European representatives of National Metrology Institutes:** J. Drnovsek (EURAMET)

**European Commission:** N. Bönnen, Pilar de la Barcena Angulo

**EFTA:** M. Asserson

**EA:** T. Facklam (EA Chair), G. Samuelsen (EA Vice-Chair), M. Blum (EA Secretary), F. Laudinet (EAAB Secretariat)

Apologies were received from M. Stadler (BUSINESSEUROPE), U. Sälzle (EFAC), D. Bell (CEN/CENELEC) represented by H. Liauw at this meeting, A. Van Spronssen (WELMEC) and S. Russell (ANEC).

1. **Opening of the meeting**

The Chair opened the meeting, thanking EFTA for hosting the meeting. He welcomed the delegates and invited them to introduce themselves.

2. **Approval of agenda; Minutes of 31st Meeting of the EA Advisory Board;**
   - Action list (actions not covered elsewhere)
   - Revised **EAAB Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure**
   - Updated **EAAB Membership List**

The agenda was approved as distributed before the meeting.

The minutes of the last meeting were considered as approved by email since no comments were raised by the end of the comment period.

Regarding the action list, all actions were considered to be either closed or included on the agenda for the meeting.

Finally, the revised **EAAB Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure** were considered to reflect all the modifications agreed at the previous meeting and were reconfirmed.
3. Key topics for discussion

3.1 Final approval of revised EA stakeholders’ expectations towards accreditation and EA

The Chair explained that after the CAB College rephrased some of their bullet points for clarification, the EAAB Secretariat rewrote the document in the light of the comments and editorial suggestions made at the previous meeting. He asked for final comments.

N. Bönnen asked to reword the 1st bullet point on page 1 as follows: “Accreditation should support assessment in the community in both the voluntary and the regulatory area.”

On page 3, in National Authorities section, 1st bullet point. R. Brockway asked to change “EC legislation” into “EU legislation”, and to remove “the” so as to get: “Accreditation should support EU and national legislations”.

**Decision**
The Board endorsed the revised draft of EA stakeholders’ expectations towards accreditation and EA as finalized by the Secretariat and the CAB College according to modifications agreed at the 31st meeting, with two further slight editorial corrections made at this meeting.

**Action Secretariat to circulate the revised document to the EAAB and publish it on the EA website**

3.2 Harmonization/co-ordination of work between ILAC/IAF and the regional co-operations - ILAC/IAF strategy discussion paper and EA position

The EA Chair reiterated that ILAC and IAF are working together for a common agenda for the future. They have looked at how common documents/positions should be prepared. In principal there are two possible routes to develop new concepts and documents: Either ILAC and IAF themselves take the lead for all activities involving the relevant parties, or for each activity one leading region is entrusted to do the work and consider who shall join to contribute. ILAC/IAF invited their members and regions to comment by 15 March; comments from regions will be accepted later because not all regions had held their General Assembly by the deadline, so the real deadline was extended to this summer. This will enable EA’s feedback to be further elaborated based on the EAAB’s input, before it is presented to the General Assembly in May. In parallel, ILAC/IAF will revise the paper according to the comments received from their membership. EA will further elaborate its position based on the revised ILAC/IAF document resulting from mid-term meetings.

In summary, based on the EA Executive Committee’s input so far, EA supports ILAC/IAF proposals as outlined, emphasizing the option where regions take the lead. For the EA Executive Committee, the main issue is that regions shall retain freedom: Initiatives should be taken by regions to reduce the influence of ILAC/IAF. The emphasis should be put on the independence of regions. For the EA Chair, the objective should remain to keep the appropriate balance between the authority of regions and that of ILAC and IAF.

H. Liauw welcomed such an initiative, reporting that CEN/CENELEC face the same challenge regarding cooperation. The supremacy of international standards is recognized under separate agreements for different regions. CEN/CENELEC should be able to have regional initiatives if necessary. Their intention is to adopt international practices, but they retain the initiative for regional work and consider European issues. This comes from the application of the WTO TBT agreement.

The EA Chair replied that, under the EA MLA, EA agrees to adopt ILAC/IAF documents provided that they do not contradict with the EU legislation. EA supports international work in that respect.

R. Brockway pointed out that not all regions are of the same level as EA. For him, there is no reason for transferring work to the other regions, most of which are not mature enough. He
expressed doubts that this would be able to work in practice. The CAB College recommended that EA should consider taking this into account.

The EA Chair called for comments on what the best structure should be for providing results. R. Brockway stressed that the main concern is the lack of consistency and, in this regard, relying on regions would not help, so recognizing international supremacy would seem to be the best way.

A. Evans indicated that the Industry College supports the work item. Anything leading to cost savings is very welcome. Concerning stakeholders’ expectations, the issue is whether or not an international authority should ensure the accreditation process, because accreditation should support international trade.

**Decision**
The Board:

- recommended EA to focus on the international strength of its community, keeping in mind that not all regions are at the same level, i.e. have different experience and structures;

- encouraged EA to work with the other regions towards a unified, reliable international system and mutual confidence that can support international trade.

4. **EAAB matters**

4.1 **Operational issues: representation of environmental organisations on the EAAB**

The Chair recalled that Stephen Russell from ANEC had proposed to raise the point with ECOS to seek clarification and feedback about the EAAB Chairman’s invitation for participating in the EAAB, and to ask them whether they could suggest another environmental organisation to be represented on the Board.

Although S. Russell was unable to attend the meeting, he indicated to the Secretariat that he has raised the matter of the representation of environmental organisations with ECOS, but was unaware of their decision.

**Conclusion**
The Board agreed to keep the item open and to table it for review at the next meeting.

*Action Secretariat, ANEC*

4.2 **Report from the EAAB HHC observer**

J. Hartge went through his report, highlighting the main issues discussed at the last EA HHC meeting held on 18-19 March 2014 in Brussels:

- **Benchmarking seminar**

  The EA Chair explained that a survey on the feedback from previous seminars has revealed that there is a clear need for exchange of best practices. Benchmarking should therefore be refocused on sharing best practice on practical issues related to accreditation processes. The outcome of peer-evaluations should also feed into a sharing process. It has not yet been confirmed whether a seminar will take place in 2014, since the issues to be discussed should first be agreed upon.

- **Sampling as a standalone activity**

  J. Hartge reported that in some EU Member States legislation requires accreditation of sampling as a standalone activity. The HHC therefore decided to set up a TFG to look into the point.
In response to J. Drnovsek’s question, the EA Chair clarified that the point to be first investigated is whether sampling on its own can be accredited or not. If it can be accredited, there must be a basis for accreditation, i.e. a specific set of requirements will have to be defined. The HHC TFG is tasked with elaborating a proposal for this basis.

EURAMET would support a work item for developing reference documents, providing for the most relevant requirements. For instance, in the environment field, sampling is a key issue in the accreditation process. The EA Chair invited EURAMET to participate in the HHC TFG.

For C. Priller, sampling is not a conformity assessment activity, but only a part of a process that can be accredited. He voiced some concern about opening the door to separately accrediting sub-activities of the whole process. Even doing this for only one sub-activity this may create room for further developments. There may be a risk of diluting ISO/IEC 17025. The CAB College does not support that accreditation is developed for sampling activity.

J. Drnovsek argued that sampling would not necessarily be accredited as a separate activity. But again, he supported having technical documents on how to perform sampling. The EA Chair indicated that this would imply a different work item that is not being covered by the HHC TFG now. The EA position is that such documents shall be developed by technical organizations.

**Conclusion**

The Board:

- supported that the EA HHC has established a task force group to consider sampling as a stand-alone activity which can be accredited, and to come up with a proposal for defining the basis for such accreditation;

- thanked EA for opening the TFG membership to stakeholders as relevant.


J. Hartge reported that EA-2/17 was now ready for comments within EA.

N. Bönnen commented that the cross-reference table for harmonized standards to the modules should reflect current practices in EU countries, and it has been agreed with EA that the table will progressively be moved towards the table as is in the *Blue Guide*.

C. Priller considered that the discussions in the HHC are lost because the provisions in the *Blue Guide* would require that CABs get accreditation for more than one standard, which would increase the cost. All the experience gained from the notification area by NBs that has so far been put into drafting EA-2/17 would be lost. Requirements for notification shall be set out by Notifying Authorities, and EA must write down what can be done for accreditation. The CAB College wondered about the EC’s rationale for such a table. For them, there is a strong interest in commenting on EA-2/17.

The EA Chair replied that for modules with the Quality Management headline, it is assumed by the EC that if notification is based on accreditation, CBs will have to be accredited against ISO/IEC 17021 and do not want to use the possibility of covering such schemes by ISO/IEC 17065 which was developed precisely for dealing with this issue. He asserted that harmonized standards should be leading standards. Actually EC Directives are like schemes; the scheme owner is the EC and Notifying Authorities apply the schemes. He reiterated that the EA paper reflects EA practices as a starting point. The EC will decide on the transition time, but the objective of the EC is to transfer the EA table into the *Blue Guide* table. The *Blue Guide* table may be revised on time or...
not. In all cases, notifying authorities’ decision will prevail. The basic principle is that it is up to the scheme owner to define the requirements for its schemes.

J. Hartge raised the issue of how to develop the Blue Guide table into a more flexible table, taking account of flexibility induced by the standards.

M. Freyssinet indicated that a tool is needed to help notifying authorities to define the proper requirements. She stressed that, at the end, NAs are responsible for notification and not NABs. She will welcome the next EA-2/17 since the current EA-2/17 is very complex and difficult to be applied.

N. Bönnen concluded that, at the end, there must be consensus because notification cannot be based on an EA document that is not binding for NAs. Notification must be based on the scheme’s set of requirements, as defined by the scheme owner, i.e. the EC.

The EA Chair confirmed that, at the end, the EC should come up with a table to be used by everybody. All parties shall take action to influence and provide comments on the mandatory part of EA-2/17. The existing table includes the minimum requirements. The EA Chair reassured that EA will provide expertise as necessary.

**Decision**

The Board:

- took note that the cross-reference table in the draft EA-2/17 2013: EA Guidance on the horizontal requirements for the accreditation of conformity assessment bodies for notification purposes reflects EA practices as a starting point;

- while the objective advocated by the EC is to transfer the EA table into the Blue Guide table, with a transition time set up by the European Commission (EC), the Board could not advise EA to go in other directions than those taken by scheme owners and the EC in that case. The Board then recommended EA to discuss with the EC to gather the expertise resulting from the experience gained with EA-2/17 in order to develop the table in the Blue Guide towards more flexibility induced by the standards, especially the new version of ISO/IEC 17065;

- thanked EA and the EC for giving background information.

- **Sector schemes and EA-1/22**

J. Hartge reported that EA-1/22 was now ready for comments within EA. The Industry College welcomed that the EAAB comment about market relevance has been accommodated in the last draft.

The point would be further discussed later under agenda item 5.6.

Finally the Board thanked the EAAB HHC observer for his report.

**4.3 Lack of resources in small ABs: state of play**

The Chair invited the EA Chair to report on how EA considers the issue.

The EA Chair indicated that EA has just been starting to consider the issue as an initial step. The MAC will discuss the point and come up with recommendations on how to design the peer-evaluation process for small NABs. For a small NAB, the question should be whether the NAB needs to cover all scopes; the peer-evaluation will in any case have to look at a minimum level of activities. Peer-evaluations do check whether resources are sufficient to perform the tasks. Peer-evaluators should look more in depth at the structure and highlight whether there is a real lack of
resources; certainly the main issue is that of internal competencies. It is clear that covering all scopes in a small structure is difficult and a pool of assessors may be one option. There may be pressure however from NAs for small ABs to cover all scopes.

J. Drnovsek confirmed that there is a strong need for a pool of experts. But EA should also give support to small NABs to discuss additional resource needs with their NAs, including financial resources. He added that implications of Regulation (EC) 765/2008 are appearing in real life now, and all needs shall be covered.

The EA Chair and Vice-Chair agreed that peer-evaluation teams shall have enough expertise. But the structure of small NAB’s should also be looked at and focused on. Moreover, EA would welcome a message from the EAAB to support NABs’ discussions with NAs.

R. Brockway pointed out that the issue is bigger than how to evaluate small ABs. The Industry College supported a more effective pooling of resources (i.e. assessors). There is a real market need for all 35 EA-member ABs to cover all accreditation scopes. EA has to organise itself for coordinating resources. EA should adapt because all of the NABs will never have the necessary resources to cover all scopes. For R. Brockway, EA’s paper distributed for the meeting adopts the wrong approach by focusing on evaluation aspects. The issue should be considered at a higher level, grasping the reality of economy. The current situation is not and will never be viable. And it is neither necessary nor feasible to expect that all EA NABs can eventually have all expertise required. He recalled that the Regulation provides for the option for a CAB to be directed towards another NAB when the local NAB does not provide the service. It gives easy access to a solid network, which would be much clearer and more efficient with information on limited scopes and how to access larger expertise. From a user and customer perspective, the Industry College expected some progress to be achieved by EA on this point.

J. Drnovsek argued that the issue is understood differently by a small and a big economy. EURAMET supported EA’s meeting paper, which shows a good path for improvement.

The EA Chair clarified that there is no lack of expertise; expertise provided by external assessors for performing assessments is already quite available, internal expertise for planning and taking decisions might be a problem. He insisted that communication between NABs is good enough for them to obtain all appropriate expertise for carrying out assessments.

**Decision**

The Board:

- thanked EA for its “very useful” report, acknowledging that the EA MAC is considering the issue to come up with recommendations on how to design the peer-evaluation process for small ABs;

- supported the CAB College in urging EA to organize a more effective pooling of assessment resources in order to meet the real market need for all 35 EA-member ABs to provide access to all accreditation scopes while recognizing that not all the ABs will have the full competence, and therefore need not be subject to peer-evaluation for those areas where they are not active;

- asked EA to report on further progress made according to discussions in the EA MAC at the next meeting. **Action EA**

### 4.4 Reissuance of the tests reports when the trade name or the trademark of the tested product has changed: outcome of the EUROLAB survey

The Chair reminded that EA has accepted to defer the adoption of a possible EA Laboratory Committee’s resolution until a survey is completed by EUROLAB to obtain more comprehensive feedback from all the sectors concerned. The CAB College did conduct a survey and was asked to report orally on the outcome.
J. L. Sanchez Alvarez-Campana indicated that the collected figures reveal:

- a lack of information on the market;
- a lack of harmonization of practices: in the same sector, policies vary from one laboratory to the next;
- some contradiction between the feedbacks from laboratories and the market: in a single Member State, the responses obtained from accredited laboratories vary or even contradict as to whether reissuance of the tests reports is allowed by the NAB.

As a result, EUROLAB recommended EA, through the EAAB, to go ahead with the resolution whose impact would not be so big. The question is ultimately who takes responsibility on the conformity of a product with a changed trade name.

EUROLAB also recommended a flexible application of the resolution, during one year for instance, so that experience can be gained by NABs and CABs, before EUROLAB can further investigate their feedback and advise EA on how to develop the best policy to serve the market. EUROLAB would welcome having the opportunity to further advise EA at the next LC meeting.

J. Hartge confirmed that there are different practices both on NABs’ and accredited laboratories’ sides. There is a clear misunderstanding on what type test certificate, type approval and test are. It is time to look at the definitions and different documents in the various processes. When allowed, the reissuance practice is limited to the regulated area, which means that it is certainly linked to type approval for laboratories acting as NBs. J. Hartge approved that the EA resolution can go on with a one-year transition period to change practices.

A. Evans recalled that the problem of reissuing lies in the date. The Industry College proposed that the manufacturer would issue a statement of equivalence between the items to be tested and then the “certificate” can be re-issued. However it was highlighted that the point is not about the certificate but the test report. Examples would be welcomed to clarify the discussion.

The EA Chair indicated that the LC reconfirmed their position that, according to ISO/IEC 17025, when a test report is issued, it is issued and, clearly, shall not be re-issued without re-testing. He welcomed EUROLAB’s recommendation, including stopping the practice at the end of the transition period.

**Decision**
The Board:

- thanked EUROLAB for reporting on a first overview of the survey’s outcome, which shows a lack of information on the market and a lack of harmonization of laboratories’ practices even in a same sector of activity;

- supported EUROLAB’s recommendation that the EA LC resolution should be submitted to the EA General Assembly for endorsement, including a flexible application during one year in order to allow the market to adapt the change; **Action EA**

- thanked EUROLAB to complete the analysis and investigation and come up with additional information at the next meeting; **Action EUROLAB**

- agreed that type approval is another issue that will need to be further explained, taking note that re-issuance of type approval certificate could be accepted for products which have not changed, under a stable certification certificate.
5. **EA matters**

5.1 **Relations with stakeholders – No new applications for Recognised Stakeholder status**

The EA Chair informed that no new applications had been received for EA Recognised Stakeholder agreements.

He also informed that, as part of the ongoing renewal process of the RS agreements signed so far, all current EA Recognised Stakeholders expressed a clear wish to keep their RS status.

He added that the EA Executive Committee will submit a resolution to the next EA General Assembly in May to review EA-1/15: *EA Policy for Relations with Stakeholders* in order to extend the renewal period from 2 to 5 years.

There was no comment from the Board.

**Conclusion**

The Board:

- thanked EA for reporting on the ongoing review of current Recognized Stakeholder agreements, taking note that all Recognized Stakeholders are wishing to renew their agreement with EA;

- noted that the time for reviewing agreements is planned to be extended to 5 years.

5.2 **New EA projects and work items**

The EA Chair reported on the following projects:

- **Breast Cancer Accreditation Services project**

  The project is described in a document developed by EA and published under the aegis of the EC Joint Research Center. The tender process is closed and EA’s proposal was accepted. Formalities are being fully considered before the contract is concluded.

- **Approximation of EU and RF accreditation system – additional project**

  EA has been approached to further develop the current project; this new part would be a bigger one. However, the current political situation has put the discussions on hold.

- **Implementation of AVR – Additional agreement/Action grant**

  All NABs should be peer-evaluated by the end of 2014.

  A continuation of the project may be supported by DG CLIMA. It is being discussed; EA is ready to make a proposal provided that the necessary budget is available for 2015-2016.

- **Action grant for an Accreditation toolbox for the purpose of notification (Choice of standards for individual directives/regulations)**

  The purpose of the “accreditation for notification” package is to look at harmonized standards and additional requirements, and set out the preferred standard and possible options for each EC directive. DG ENTR is quite interested in the proposed project, but no budget could be made available in 2014. EA’s proposal should be further discussed in 2015.
• **Elaboration of Guidance on the accreditation of Reference Material Producers**

There is no harmonized standard for the accreditation of RMP. This is why accreditation should be based on *ISO Guide 34*. There is already a MLA in two regions. The proposed guidance shall be a technical document.

**Decision**
The Board:

- thanked EA for updating the EAAB on the projects dedicated to Breast Cancer Accreditation Services, the Approximation of EU and Russian Federation accreditation systems, the implementation of Accreditation & Verification Regulation, and an Accreditation toolbox for the purpose of notification (Choice of standards for individual directives/regulations);

- endorsed the proposed new work item for the elaboration of EA guidance on the accreditation of Reference Material Producers, noting that the possibility to accredit based on a guide rather than on a harmonized standard should be clarified with the EC.

**5.3 Review of ISO/IEC 17011**

The EA Chair indicated that 29 votes were against the revision, and 21 in favor of it. CASCO questioned the results, which proved ambiguous, and the need to follow the rule. There are now 2 options: either to stop or to influence the process.

For C. Priller, the results of the voting process should be respected. But there is a lot of pressure for revising the standard. A NWI proposal may even be pushed. This pressure is coming from the Asia Pacific and US areas. According to the rule, revision should be undertaken after 5 years. Despite negative votes, due to the pressure, it is unlikely that the revision can be stopped but for 1 or 1.5 year. The Chairperson Policy Group will meet next week to consider the issue. There is no real technical base for justifying changes; commercial and business objectives seem to be the only rationale.

**Decision**
The Board:

- concluded from the discussions that, although no real technical rationale can justify making changes into ISO/IEC 17011, there are some commercial and business interests in revising the standard;

- did not really support that ISO/IEC 17011 is revised before the 5-year implementation period is ending, while acknowledging the commercial and business pressure.

**5.4 Feedback on EA Members’ actual use of statements of equivalence**

The EA Chair reported that an oral survey had been made at the November 2013 EA General Assembly, demonstrating that a majority of members is ready to use the templates, and half of EA MLA signatories have used them on one or two occasions per year - upon request only. So the equivalence statement is used, but in a limited manner when requested by CABs.

In response to a question, the EA Chair confirmed that it is an obligation for NABs to issue the statement, provided all the conditions are fulfilled for them to be able to confirm the equivalence. This information is important in the light of the discussions about small NABs.

The Industry College welcomed very much this equivalence statement and considered the fact that it is not used a lot to be positive.
Conclusion
The Board thanked EA for reporting that the equivalence statement is issued by NABs, though with limited frequency.

5.5 Presentation of the “accreditation for notification” package
The point was already discussed under agenda item 5.2.

5.6 Report on progress of revised EA policy for conformity assessment schemes (EA-1/22)
The Industry College welcomed the improvement of draft EA-1/22, which now takes account of market relevance. However, the concern about the proliferation and inconsistencies of schemes still lies in the current proposal. The College also asked for a list of schemes to be available.

The EA Chair replied that the HHC resolved not to publish a list of schemes. However, after the point had been discussed in the Executive Committee, there will be a list of Home ABs with the schemes they have in charge. For the time being, this list will be an internal management tool reserved for EA members only. The rationale is to avoid that EA recognition is used for marketing purposes.

C.Priller recommended letting the work progress and reconsidering the point of the “list” in the future based on implementation of the new policy.

Conclusion
The Board:
- welcomed that the point on market relevance raised by the EAAB has been accommodated by EA in the last draft of EA-1/22;
- took note of EA’s proposal to establish an internal list of “Home ABs” with the schemes they are in charge of.

5.7 EA Executive Secretary: update on the recruitment process
The EA Vice-Chair reported that a candidate has been appointed as the EA Executive Secretary. Because this nomination has not been disclosed to the General Assembly yet, the Board was kindly requested to keep it confidential until all details about the process and its outcome are given to the General Assembly at the end of May.

The contract is being finalized before being signed; a meeting was held the day before with the candidate to discuss a transition period and induction time. The plan is that he officially joins the EA team on 1 June. The candidate will work at home and travel to Paris and Brussels.

5.8 New IAF scopes for which EA will apply (ISO/IEC 17024, ISO 13485)
The EA Chair reminded that the EAAB advised, and the General Assembly confirmed, that EA should apply for the new IAF scopes. EA applied, but IAF did not accept applications for ISMS and FSMS because other regions are not ready. ISO/IEC 17024 and ISO 13485 will be covered by ILAC/IAF peer-evaluation which is starting the following week.
5.9 IAF MLA structure: need for pressure for changing the principles of sub-scopes

The EA Chair reasserted that, although EA applied for IAF sub-scopes, EA’s opinion is that IAF should change the structure of its MLA sub-scopes. The point had been tabled because support is needed to push EA’s position. Any statement from the EC would also be most useful.

The EA Chair called for the Board’s support at the IAF mid-term meetings later in April. The EAAB Vice-Chair from the Industry College, M. Stadler, will participate in these meetings and should be briefed.

**Decision**

The Board, which agreed not to duplicate the conclusion already made at the last meeting, reasserted its full support to EA for pushing IAF to change their MLA structure - to be based, for example, on the EA system - at the forthcoming IAF mid-term meetings in Frankfurt.

5.10 Proposed EPA - Third-Party Certification Framework for the Formaldehyde Standards for Composite Wood Products state of play

The EA Chair recalled that EA has concerns about the content of the proposed certification scheme, especially with regard to the requirements defined for ABs. A2LA (USA) has been offering to provide a person as a focal point to interact with the European region. The scheme has not been endorsed yet; there was no further feedback recently.

N. Bönnen noted that the IAF MLA is referenced in the EPA scheme. However in the absence of sub-scopes in the IAF MLA for product certification, this reference will have to be further clarified.

6. Items for information

6.1 Report on complaints and appeals

The EA Vice-Chair presented his report, highlighting 2 complaints:

- CYS-CYSAB against TURKAK

EA policy for cross-frontier accreditation does not apply because the area is not under the EU and Regulation 765 control. This is a political issue out of EA’s remit and the EA procedure. The complainant used the petition route. The petition has been dealt with by the Executive Committee, which have confirmed closure of the case with reference to the statement provided by the EC.

- LATAK 2

The progress report has been submitted by LATAK, which devoted much effort to discuss and clarify the pending issues with the complainant. The complaint should be soon closed.

6.2 Draft Agenda of the 33rd EA General Assembly on 27-28 May 2014 in Prague, Czech Republic

The EA Chair indicated that the draft agenda was reviewed by the Executive Committee the day before, when a few changes had been introduced. A revised version will be soon published.
The highlights of the next General Assembly are the announcement of the EA Executive Secretary’s name and the negotiation of the new FPA with DG ENTR.

The EAAB Chair indicated that he will attend the General Assembly and report on the Board’s latest activities.

6.3 EA Activity Report

The EA Chair reported on the following developments:

- **MAC Secretary**

  Marga Zaffe has just retired and the MAC activities have been transferred to the Paris Secretariat, which is now the unique location for the EA Secretariat. Martine Blum is taking over the MAC Secretary’s responsibilities. A 5th person should be recruited to start working in June.

- **Executive Committee’s Strategic session in January 2014**

  The Executive Committee discussed how to deal with strategic issues during the General Assemblies. There will be no change in the GA meeting’s outline in May. A proposal is being considered to have one GA meeting a year with one more meeting dedicated only to strategic issues. The challenge is how to ensure that EA’s voice is listened to at the international level and to improve EA’s influence on ILAC and IAF. How to achieve this will have to be discussed with the General Assembly.

- **Peer-evaluation**

  The improvement of the peer-evaluation system is going on smoothly. Moreover there is a project for a new, enhanced IT tool for the management of peer-evaluation and resources. All teams have been appointed for the 2014 peer-evaluation programme, and resources are sufficient for maintaining an efficient peer-evaluation system.

  The Board thanked EA for all the written and oral reports given under this item.

7. **EAAB Work programme**

No comment was made on the Work Programme as revised and distributed for the meeting.

The Chair confirmed that no item was closed during this meeting and the Work Programme was considered to remain valid until the next meeting.

**Conclusion**

The Board agreed that no change should be included into the EAAB Work Programme, which remains valid until the next meeting.

8. **Any other business**

No other issue was raised.
9. Selection of dates and places of next meetings

It was confirmed that the next EAAB meeting will be held on **Wednesday 22 October 2014** at the EFTA Secretariat.

The following meeting was planned on **Wednesday 15 April 2015**; the venue should be confirmed according to the availability of EFTA Secretariat’s room.

The EAAB Chair thanked EFTA for the meeting arrangements and the delegates for their valuable contributions. He closed the meeting.