

## Eurolab-D / DAR Workshop held in Berlin on 03 September 2003

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#### *Objective and frame of the Workshop*

The aim of the Workshop was to serve as a discussion forum for the accreditation bodies and accredited organisations such as testing and calibration laboratories, certification bodies as well as further parties interested in accreditation.

About 150 participants from laboratories, certification bodies, accreditation bodies, industry and authorities arrived to inform about the present situation in accreditation and conformity assessment, to communicate about their prospects and to make proposals.

The series of lectures covered the following issues:

- Present developments in the German accreditation scene
- Results of the survey on satisfaction of accredited organisations - Expectations and benefits
- Differences between accreditations in the mandatory and voluntary areas
- Cooperation of accreditation and recognition bodies in the field of environment
- FDIS/IEC 17011 - Modifications in assessment
- Accreditation of multidisciplinary and multifunctional organisations.

In three working groups with emphasis on:

- wishes of the laboratories and certification bodies in view of the enhancement of a German accreditation system
- cooperation between accreditation bodies

- participation in interlaboratory comparison tests within the frame of accreditation

the lecture topics were consolidated by questions defined beforehand. The subsequent results concluded were summarized.

#### *Results and recommendations from the laboratories*

##### *1. to the DAR:*

- Indisputable is the wish of the accredited bodies for a worldwide recognition of their competence - already confirmed through accreditation - by the industry and the authorities.
- Indisputable is the wish for a uniform, competent and efficient representation of the German accreditation system on national, European and international scale, whereby the DAR is regarded as a suitable tool for coordination.
- The use of the Federal Eagle on the accreditation certificates plays an important role for the German accredited bodies.
- It is recommended to the DAR first to stand up with all available means for its further continuity and to aim at a common structure in the mandatory and voluntary areas.
- If the above mentioned recommendations will be considered, maintained and implemented within the frame of an accreditation law accreditation in Germany could just gain in importance. Alternative solutions were discussed.

2. *to the German accreditation bodies:*
- The accreditation bodies are requested to effectively abridge the duration of procedures for initial accreditations, scope extension or re-accreditation.
  - The accreditation bodies are requested to reduce the bureaucracy in accreditation, if possible, and to put more emphasis on the confirmation of technical competence.
  - The accreditation bodies are asked, if necessary on request of the accredited bodies, to coordinate dates and personnel for assessments and surveillance visits conducted by several accreditation bodies. Topics which the accreditation bodies should consider are the modular assessment and the transparency of the requirements. The good cooperation of accreditation bodies and authorities in the field of environment should be transferred to other fields, if possible.

In the field of environment it was reached that accreditation by private evaluated bodies (result of the Conference of the Länder Ministries for Environment) is regarded as a means for demonstrating the technical competence for the subsequent notification reserved to the German Länders. As a result of the Agreement among the German Länders, the competence of the laboratories/measuring bodies for conducting measurements and analysis is recognized by all authorities of all German Länder ministries.

3. *to the Authorities:*

- The cooperation between the Authorities among each other as well as between authorities and accreditation bodies should be permanently demanded and supported.
- An accreditation should be a basis for the approval (by legal requirement).
- A one-time determination of competence as a basis for the

decision to be taken by the authorities would be desirable.

- Extremely desirable is the mutual recognition of notifications (official letters) of the Federal States among each other (harmonization).

***Practical recommendations of the organizers to the laboratories***

In view of the further important role of interlaboratory comparison tests within the frame of accreditation it is recommended to the laboratories to gather information about available suitable interlaboratory testing schemes. For this purpose the database EPTIS provides a survey of interlaboratory testing schemes offered in Germany and in Europe (presently there are more than 750 different entries). Access to this information is free of charge for the laboratories and can be obtained via the BAM address [www.eptis.bam.de](http://www.eptis.bam.de).

*BAM S.42 - N. Bendix*

## **IAF Communiqué on the Validity of ISO 9001 Certificates ISO 9001 Certification after 15 December 2003**

At its Annual Meeting in Bratislava/Slovakia, in September 2003, the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) reaffirmed to the market that all accredited certification/registration of Quality Management Systems to ISO 9001:1994, ISO 9002:1994 and ISO 9003:1994 ceases to have validity on 15 December 2003. The decision that this would happen was taken in 1999 by IAF along with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) committee on Quality Management (ISO/TC 176) and Confor-

mity Assessment (ISO CASCO) in preparation for the withdrawal of those standards by ISO in favour of ISO 9001:2000 (which came into effect on 15 December 2000). Organizations that base their purchasing decisions on the fact that their supplier is third party "ISO 9000 certified/registered" are reminded that after 15 December 2003 the only recognized form of conformity of an ISO 9001 Quality Management System will be an accredited certification/registration to ISO 9001:2000.

After 15 December 2003, all accredited certifications/registrations to ISO 9001:1994, ISO 9002:1994 and ISO 9003:1994 will have expired. Any use of accreditation marks on such certificates will therefore be an error, and in contravention of the intellectual property rights of the owners of the marks.

Further information about IAF may be obtained from the IAF web site at <http://www.iaf.nu>, or by contacting the IAF Secretariat at email ([secretary@accreditationforum.com](mailto:secretary@accreditationforum.com)).

*BAM S.42 - S. Stobbe*

## **Discussions between EA, Eurolab, Eurachem and the Directorate-General Enterprise of the European Commission**

On 15 July 2003 a meeting of representatives from EA, Eurolab, Eurachem and the Directorate-General of the European Commission was held in Brussels. An issue of interest was the possible cooperation of EA, Eurolab, Eurachem in an improved implementation of the principles of the New Approach in the context of the Communications from the Commission COM (2003) 240. The Directorate-General is aware of the fact that there are differences in the approach of notifying

conformity assessment bodies and their surveillance in the member states and the possible role of accreditation is not precisely enough demonstrated. This could be improved, if accreditation, in particular its processes (how to assess, how to perform surveillance, in which intervals is happening what) and the normative basis (international/regional standards plus possible additional rules) are clearly and uniformly defined.

The Commission could e.g. mandate EA to elaborate documents.

Such a document could filter out all common requirements from the Directives/Guidelines, which in turn could then be published in one document.

Moreover, all specific requirements of the individual directives/guidelines not covered by standards requirements could be represented.

An accreditation according to these rules which also contain requirements for assessments and surveillance visits in Germany and abroad could be a possible precondition for the notification. Alternatively, other approaches should be possible. However, the member state shall explain how to ensure that its approach of an accreditation to above rules is equivalent.

It is planned to include above approach in a short statement in the Communications from the Commission COM (2003)240. Proposals how actually to proceed are expected from EA until October 2003.

When revising a directive/guideline the results from the consultation with the Council and the European Parliament shall be taken into account.

#### **Accreditation and competition**

As regards the status of accreditation and the possibility of competition in the private area, the Commission does not see any possibilities to establish a horizontal directive/guideline for accreditation. The only passable way would be a 'Policy Statement' that designates the accreditation as an activity for the public benefit.

To obtain such a 'Policy Statement' the support of the Council is needed. Currently there are seven supporters, including Germany, that meanwhile defines accreditation as an activity for the public benefit.

The next discussions will take place on 24 October 2003.

The DG Enterprise is planning to take more active part in the work of EA and in particular EAAB.

*TGA GmbH, Dr. T. Facklam  
EA Vice President  
2003-08-27*

## **Status of Developments in the German Accreditation Council**

In DAR-aktuell 1/2003 we reported about the necessary modification of the DAR, its reasons as well as about current developments. In the period July to November, the following activities, events, coordinations took place:

After a number of sessions, meetings, conference calls of the DAR members from the voluntary area among each other and with the responsible staff members of the Federal Ministry for Economics and Labor

(BMWA) a proposal - considering several expert opinions of the "old" DAR system - was elaborated for handling applications of members from the voluntary area for admittance to the DAR. This proposal was subject of a hearing which took place at the Federal Cartel Office in Bonn on 5 November 2003 and was examined with a positive result.

The official minutes will be distributed in the DAR after their completion. The further approach will

shortly be discussed in the DAR.

Mr. Barz (see DAR-aktuell 1/2003) from the Department III of the BMWA was mandated by the Federal Minister for Economics Mr. Clement to prepare main points for an accreditation law.

The law will cover the mandatory and the voluntary areas. This order is currently dealt with utmost priority.

Presently several working papers providing specific ideas are available.

*BAM S.42 - N. Bendix*

## **Outcome from the ILAC and IAF General Assemblies held in Bratislava in September 2003**

At the **3rd Joint General Assembly** of both international accreditation organisations held on 20 September 2003 information was exchanged on ILAC and IAF as well as on the regional groups interesting for both organisations. It was reported about their joint working groups. First common results were presented.

As of August 2003, the **ILAC MLA** has been signed by 44 bodies from 35 countries. Currently ILAC focuses on a promotion of and a better information about the MLA.

On 20 January 2003 ILAC was registered in The Netherlands as "Incorporation". The new *Rules of Procedure* and *MoU* were endorsed ([www.ilac.org](http://www.ilac.org)).

Presently ILAC is elaborating an "ILAC *Strategic and Business Plan*".

As of September 2003, the **IAF MLA** has 42 signatories whereby at this Conference the MLA has been signed by SNAS (Slovakia) and BMwA (Austria) ([www.iaf.nu](http://www.iaf.nu)).

There is a new "Advisory Group on Promotion" in IAF.

IAF has made a survey among 1100 conformity assessment bodies having been accredited by IAF member bodies. The results are currently being analyzed and interpreted for the work in IAF.

A Joint Task Force with ISO/CASCO and TC 176 (*ISO 9001 Advisory Group IAG*) deals with common issues relating to importance and use of certificates as well as with general complaints or insufficiencies regarding the work of the certification bodies.

The following survey provides the current membership status of Regional Groups:

	Members	Associates	MLA Signatories	Regional Areas
EA	34	3	19	Europe
IAAC	19	8	no MLA yet	America
PAC	16	3	13	Asia/Pacific
APLAC	19	5	15	Asia/Pacific
SADCA	under establishment	under establishment	under establishment	South-/Middle Africa

## Common Projects

### • *Inspection*

- Completion of the Guideline on accreditation of inspection bodies as a basis for the MLA; for voting in ILAC and IAF
- Proposal for establishing an MLA Management Committee to prepare the signing of an MLA for inspection
- Signing of a first MLA for inspection in EA by the end of 2003

### • *JWG on Harmonisation of the MLA Evaluation Procedures*

- Harmonisation of the Peer Evaluation Procedures in a Joint Working Group; Final Draft for last comments to ILAC and IAF members; decision by ILAC/IAF which documents are to be replaced/withdrawn/modified
- From 2004 harmonised procedure in ILAC and IAF for performing evaluations
- Regional Groups (EA, PAC) are currently adapting their procedures

### • *Joint Development Support Committee*

- Dealing with issues of the developing countries
- Most important task: coordination of financial support to reach significant improvements in these countries

- Preparation of seminars and training courses, coordination of pre-peer evaluations, organisation of technical consultancy

### • *Joint Working Group on the Preparation of Common Rules for Protecting the International Accreditation Mark*

- Completion of the work, harmonisation of equal rules for protecting the international accreditation mark, in future internationally protected mark to support the IAF and ILAC MLA:
  - o There is one IAF and ILAC mark for the organisations.
  - o There is one IAF and ILAC MLA mark to be used by the signatories.
  - o Laboratories and certification bodies accredited under the MLA may - on the basis of contracts with the accreditation bodies - use combined marks consisting of the respective MLA mark, a mark assigned by the accreditation body and the registration number.

The next joint General Assembly will be held in October 2004 in South Africa.

Two new Multilateral Arrangements are in preparation: for Environmental Management Systems and for Product Certification Bodies.

The "*Policies and Procedures for Industry Specific Programs*" have been put to the vote. This paper specifies under which conditions IAF can cooperate with Sector Schemes and how the sector-specific programs may be considered during evaluation. Within the frame of the MLA process cooperation exists with AEROSPACE, QUEST FORUM and GFSI (food sector).

The following documents have been endorsed:

- IAF Guidance on Cross Frontier Accreditation
- Procedure for Exchange of Documentation among MLA Accreditation Bodies for the Purpose of Assessment
- IAF Guidance on QMS CRB Competence
- Revised IAF Guidance on the Application of ISO/IEC Guide 62
- Revised IAF Guidance on the Application of ISO/IEC Guide 66

The Draft "*IAF Guidance on the Application of ISO/IEC 17024:2003*" has been put to the vote.

The resolutions concluded on the General Assemblies by ILAC and IAF may be found on the respective home-pages of these organizations ([www.ilac.org](http://www.ilac.org) and [www.iaf.nu](http://www.iaf.nu)).

BAM S.42 - M. Wloka