

## Launch of EA through merging of EAC and EAL

### The starting position

**EA - European co-operation for Accreditation** has been founded in Vienna (Austria) on November 11 1998.

So far two organisations had existed in Europe, which had combined accreditation bodies operating in the voluntary area: EAL (European co-operation for Accreditation of Laboratories) and EAC (European Accreditation of Certification).

EAL had united the national accreditation bodies for testing and calibration laboratories; EAC had united the national accreditation bodies for certification

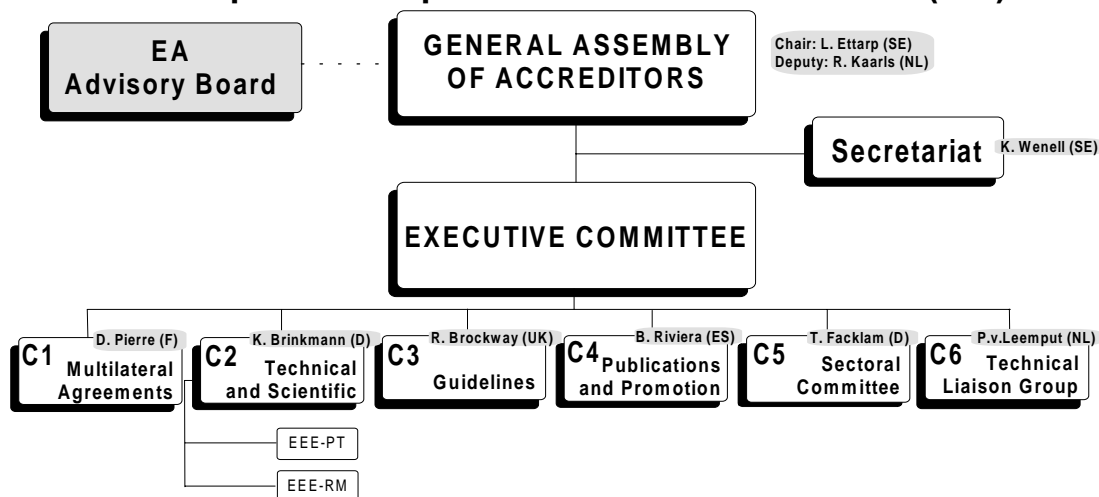
bodies (for products, quality systems and personnel).

Over several years the increasing interlacement and coordination of tasks had been undertaken through joint Working Groups.

At the same time there was the tendency to have accreditations for certification bodies as well as for laboratories "in one hand", ie by one national accreditation body respectively.

This development was strongly supported by the DAR. Efficient coordination and organisation processes shall now be ensured by *one* organisation. Also political reasons pleaded for a merger of both associations: to move towards an incorporation into the European conformity policy, where it is still formally distinguished between mandatory and voluntary area.

### European co-operation for Accreditation (EA)



### The structure of EA

The structure of the new organisation continues that of its predecessor: General Assembly, Executive Committee as Board as well as six Committees, the Chairpersons of which are represented in the ExeCom (see chart).

Furthermore, an "EA Advisory Board" established outside EA elaborates political recommendations and issues them as EA Guidance Papers.

#### Prospects:

- The foundation of EA is a further step towards rationalisation and effective organisation within the European accreditation scene. All technical work done till now in the respective Committees of EAL and EAC will be continued.
- Overlapping fields in accreditation - as eg in the accreditation of inspection bodies (EN 45004) - are now represented in a uniform and harmonised manner.

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- A further approach between the mandatory and the voluntary area (many accreditation bodies are operating in both areas) is increasingly supported.

- Progress can be expected through further cooperation between the international organisations ILAC and IAF, just as EAL and EAC as the European equivalents have collaborated in recent years. †

Dr. T. Facklam, TGA

## News from international organisations

### First worldwide IAF Agreement signed on mutual recognition of accreditations

As a result of the 11th IAF General Assembly (International Accreditation Forum) the first worldwide agreement on mutual recognition of accreditations among accreditation bodies for certification bodies of quality management systems has been signed in Guangzhou (China) on January 22, 1998. *MLA* stands for *Multilateral Agreement on mutual recognition*. Preceding steps have been:

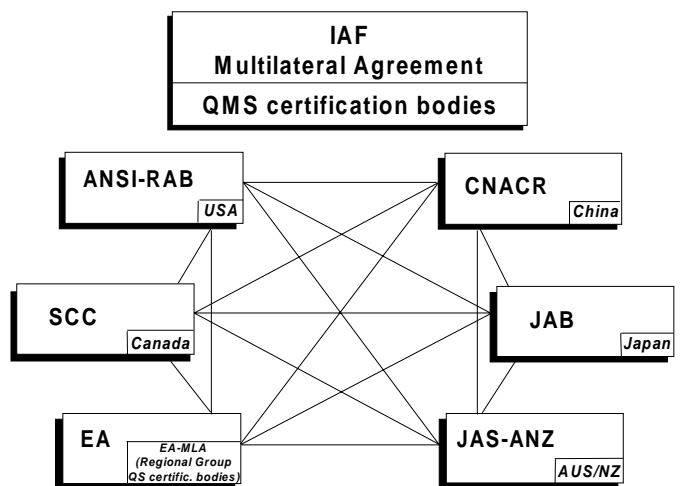
- the preparation and harmonisation of procedures for mutual evaluation and creation of confidence in the accreditation practices;
- the coordination of documents for the interpretation of ISO Guide 62 and 61 as a basis for a uniform approach in accreditation; and
- the performance of evaluations of the various accreditation systems by different evaluation teams.

The mutual evaluation procedures were headed by a MLA Management Committee. This Committee also analysed the evaluation reports and gave recommendations to the General Assembly on the entry into the MLA.

At the 11th General Assembly the entry of the following accreditation bodies into the MLA was recommended and confirmed:

- \* ANSI-RAB (USA)
- \* SCC (Canada)
- \* CNACR (China)

- \* JAS-ANZ (Australia-New Zealand)
- \* JAB (Japan)
- \* Regional Group of EA, ie those members of EA having signed the EA-MLA for accreditation bodies for quality management systems.



By signing the MLA, the accreditation bodies shown in the graph and the regional MLA group of EA commit themselves to recognise accreditations granted by the other MLA signatories as being equivalent and to support them in their home countries. The same support is given to the certificates issued by accredited certification bodies. †

Dr. M. Wloka, BAM-S.42

## News from DAR

### Amended DAR Rules of Procedure

On its 25th Meeting held on December 9, 1997, the DAR decided to amend its Rules of Procedure with regard to membership and operation. A reason for that was the increasing interest of numerous parties in a DAR membership. Over the year 1997 an ad hoc group was discussing the feasibility to open the DAR provided that the ability to work is maintained. This ad hoc group submitted a proposal to the DAR for the amendment of Paragraph 3 of the Rules of Procedure dealing with membership: "Members of the DAR are accreditation bodies. In addition, one member each of the

BMW<sub>i</sub> (German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs), the BMA (German Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs) and the DIN (German Institute for Standardisation) belong to the DAR as well as other institutions, which actively influence the accreditation policy in Germany and contribute to the coordination of the German accreditation system and its representation abroad. New members are proposed by the BMW<sub>i</sub> or the TGA (Association for Accreditation). The DAR decides on the admission of new members".

As to maintain the ability of a larger group to work, a DAR Governing Board has been established:

## "Governing Board"

The Governing Board consists of six members:

- \* Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the DAR;
- \* two members representing accreditation bodies;
- \* one representative each of the Government (BMW) and the industry (BDI - Confederation of German Industry).

The Governing Board has the following tasks, which are performed in compliance with the guidelines set out by the DAR Plenum:

- \* to take urgent decisions between the meetings of the Plenum and to represent them nationally and internationally;
- \* to prepare leading decisions taken by the Plenum.

The Governing Board gives account to the Plenum on decisions taken."

As it used to be, new members being active in the private (voluntary) area are nominated by the TGA as the coordinating body. New members being active in the state (mandatory) area are nominated through agreed action between the Federal Government and the Laender ministries.

When preparing fundamental resolutions or taking urgent decisions between the meetings of the Plenum, it was reached consensus within the DAR that the new Governing Board relies on the work done within the respective Committees (in particular the *Committee for International Cooperation - AIZ-* and the *Committee for Technical Issues - ATF*).

The two members representing accreditation bodies in the Governing Board should come from different areas, if possible (mandatory and voluntary area), and should change by rotation. On the 25th DAR meeting TGA (*Association for Accreditation*) and ZLS (*Central Body of the Laenders for Safety*) have been appointed for that.

The revised Rules of Procedure shall be applied over the next two years. The Governing Board held its first meeting on March 3, 1998. t

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## **News from the Committee Cooperation between mandatory and voluntary area (DAR-AZ)**

Primary task of the DAR-AZ is to harmonise accreditation techniques and operation in the mandatory and voluntary area as well as to come to a mutual acceptance of all DAR accreditation bodies among each other, if possible. In view of these tasks the Committee DAR-AZ endeavours to give a uniform and comprehensible picture of the DAR system - despite of its complicated structure - to all bodies affected by

accreditation/recognition and to represent it in Europe and internationally.

Topics permanently dealt with in the DAR-AZ are those occurring in the accreditation practice (as eg medical products, building products, environment, food monitoring, requirements from GLP, GMP, ISO/IEC Guide 25/ EN 45001, ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 etc.).

Due to the results reached at the last DAR-AZ meeting (see also DAR-aktuell 3/97, p. 4), the operative Working Groups of the DAR-AZ are dealing with such topics as:

- Implementation of the "Altauto-Verordnung" (Regulation on the disposal of used cars);
- Standard Quality Manual in its last editorial stage to be used by the DAR accreditation bodies;
- "Procedure for Complaints within the DAR system";
- Proposal for subcontracting practices to be endorsed in the Committee DAR-ATF. t

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## **News from the Committee Technical Issues (DAR-ATF)**

In 1997 the DAR Committee ATF held two meetings. The following documents elaborated within the DAR-ATF were endorsed at the 24th and 25th DAR meeting (both held in 1997) as DAR recommendation papers to be applied by accreditation bodies:

\* **DAR-EM17, Annex I** ("*Recommendation for the assessment of laboratories*"): Practices are described in assessing testing laboratories according to the requirements for proficiency testing. The demands on the qualification of the assessment team are set out. Furthermore explanations are given, when proficiency tests are to be prescribed by the assessor and how the requirements for bilateral proficiency testing have to be characterised, in order to be recognised in the context of accreditation. After all, statements are given on assessment criteria for decision-making with regard to the results gained in proficiency tests.

\* **DAR-EM24** ("*Procedure for the accreditation of a testing laboratory with several sites within one organisation*"): This DAR recommendation is adapted by the individual accreditation bodies according to their specific needs.

\* **DAR-EM23** ("*Glossary*"): These terms are taken from different standards and represent the common understanding within the DAR.

\* **DAR-EM22** ("*Uncertainty of test results*"): The uncertainty of test results has been defined for the first time and is explained according to the classification of the quantitative and qualitative results. It is a recommenda-

tion to be used by testing laboratories and assessors for the determination and statement of the uncertainty of results in testing.

Topics currently under discussion within the DAR-ATF are:

- \* Quality of reference materials and feasibilities of their determination;
- \* Consequences from the results gained in proficiency testing, eg for scheduling surveillance intervals. †

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## ***News from standardisation***

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The following standards or amended standards were endorsed in 1997 and are printed as DIN EN standards:

### **EN 45010**

General requirements for assessment and accreditation of certification/registration bodies (identical in wording with ISO Guide 61)

### **EN 45011**

General requirements for bodies operating product certification systems (identical in wording with ISO Guide 65)

### **EN 45012**

General requirements for bodies operating assessment and certification/registration of quality systems (identical in wording with ISO Guide 62)

### **EN 45014**

General criteria for supplier's declaration of conformity (identical in wording with ISO Guide 22)

The draft of the new **EN 45001** standard was intensively discussed at the 4th ISO/CASCO WG10 meeting held on February 26/27, 1998. As a consequence of the results gained there, a new draft is put to the vote within the national standardisation groups. Accordingly, a voting on this standard cannot be expected before 1999.

In comparison to the first draft, the following essential amendments have been submitted:

1. ISO Guide 25 will become an ISO Standard 17025. Thus the proposal made by the DIN was considered - to reach an equal status with regard to the valence of the ISO standard with the European standard EN 45001.
2. To avoid any mix-up with the EN 45000 standard, the term "professional judgement" has been completely deleted from the standard. However, explicit opinions and interpretations are allowed to be stated in the test reports.
3. To prevent misunderstandings, the term "Verification" has been generally deleted from all paragraphs.
4. Paragraph 5.4.5 on "Validation" has been changed completely to become more understandable and clearer.
5. "Best measurement capability" is applicable only to calibration laboratories and describes their performance for outside parties.
6. "Uncertainty" is always set out and understood as uncertainty of measurement, ie statements on uncertainty are taken into consideration only for measurements.

The new draft will be in hand by April/May 1998. †

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