



Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the EA Laboratory Committee

Approved by the EA General Assembly on 20 November 2014

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1. SCOPE AND FIELD OF APPLICATION

1.1. This document describes the organizational structure of EA activities related to laboratory accreditation and the responsibilities of all parties concerned, i.e.:

- a) The EA Laboratory Committee (EA/LC)
- b) The Working Groups for interlaboratory comparisons for calibration and testing
- c) The Working Groups
- d) The joint Working Groups reporting to EA/LC (such as EEE-PT)
- e) The Technical Networks
- f) The Management Group
- g) The Task Force Groups under LC

1.2. This document gives particular guidance to conveners and members of these groups, with the aim of harmonizing their activities, avoiding the duplication of work and ensuring that their activities will be carried out in the most efficient way.

2. EA LABORATORY COMMITTEE (EA/LC)

2.1. Terms of Reference

2.1.1. EA/LC is the forum for discussion of all questions related to the assessment and accreditation of laboratories. In particular its responsibility is

- a) to harmonize the implementation of the standard ISO/IEC 17011 with a view to the assessment and accreditation of laboratories, proficiency testing providers and reference materials producers against the relevant standards and to elaborate guidance documents where necessary;
- b) to discuss and where appropriate to develop a European view on issues to be discussed in ILAC or other international organizations and to make available to LC members documents from ILAC AIC and other relevant ILAC documents;
- c) to support European Accreditation Bodies in the implementation of decisions taken by EA and ILAC and to coordinate related activities where appropriate;
- d) to cooperate with relevant working parties of related European organizations, especially as far as the implementation of the standards defining technical competence of laboratories, proficiency testing providers and reference material producers is concerned, in particular the recognised stakeholders and, if appropriate, to approve guidance documents drafted by these organizations as EA advisory documents;

- e) to cooperate with the other EA committees on a regular basis;
- f) to cooperate with other regional accreditation co-operations in the field of calibration and testing;
- g) to review the results of interlaboratory comparisons provided by reliable providers in designated fields (WG ILC), in order to:
 - have an overview of the comparability of calibration and test results provided by accredited laboratories;
 - draw the necessary conclusions for the further development of assessment practices;
 - have a general opinion about the efficiency of the MLA in the field of calibration and testing;
 - Provide the MAC with the general results on participation of EA NABs in ILC activities monitored by the WGs ILC Calibration and Testing.
- h) to advise the General Assembly, the Executive Committee and the other committees in all matters related to laboratory accreditation;
- i) to perform any other task specified by the EA General Assembly;
- j) to nominate the EA/LC representatives to the PLG and to other joint Working groups with Stakeholders, such as the EEE-PT;
- k) to develop the LC knowledge database by:
 - Setting up, maintaining and making available a list of Frequently Asked Questions and responses.

2.2. Composition

- 2.2.1. The Chairperson is elected by the EA General Assembly for a period of two years.
- 2.2.2. The Vice Chairperson is elected by the EA/LC for a period of two years. Candidates are proposed by members of EA/LC to the Chairperson at least 4 weeks before an election takes place.
- 2.2.3. The EA secretariat offers a secretary to the Laboratory Committee.
- 2.2.4. All the conveners of the working groups and the technical networks are nominated by the EA/LC for a period of two years. Candidates are proposed by the members of EA/LC to the Chairperson.
- 2.2.5. The conveners of the task force groups are nominated by the EA/LC for a defined period.

2.2.6. The membership of EA/LC is defined as follows:

- one representative of each EA member and associate member ;
- the conveners or co-conveners of the Working Groups and Joint Working Groups and Technical Networks; it is accepted that conveners do not systematically attend LC meetings but they must provide a report for consideration by the LC MG and the LC at each of their meetings;
- representatives invited by the Chair or Vice Chairperson of EA/LC or by the EA Executive Committee; representatives from other organizations invited by the Chairperson ;
- representatives of the recognised stakeholders.

2.3. Meetings

- 2.3.1. EA/LC will meet when considered necessary by the Chairperson, by the EA General Assembly or by at least one third of its members. EA/LC will, however, meet at least once a year.
- 2.3.2. A draft agenda will be distributed at least 4 weeks before each meeting.
- 2.3.3. Arrange workshops at the meeting, when considered useful.
- 2.3.4. Draft minutes will be distributed within two months after the meeting.

2.4. Management Group

- 2.4.1. The LC Management Group (MG) prepares the work of the LC. The MG is led by the Chairperson. Members are Vice Chair, convenors of the working groups and the technical networks and Task Force Groups. With the agreement of the LC Chair, convenors may appoint a co-convenor or deputy to represent them and report on their behalf. The MG meetings are arranged in conjunction with the LC meetings. In addition the MG can hold web-based meeting hosted by the EA secretariat.

3. WORKING GROUPS FOR INTERLABORATORY COMPARISONS IN THE FIELD OF CALIBRATION AND TESTING

- 3.1. The Working Groups for ILCs (testing and calibration) shall identify the needs for EA initiated comparison on a 5 year rolling plan. The ILC plans shall be presented to the LC for approval annually.
- 3.2. The Working Groups are open to all ABs and stakeholder members, such as EURAMET, EUROLAB, EURACHEM and EEE-PT. The convenors of the working group can invite Proficiency Testing provider to attend the meetings.
- 3.3. The Working Groups will discuss the outcome of Intercomparisons (ILCs) These Intercomparisons are mainly provided by EURAMET members for calibration and provided by IRMM and other professional providers for testing. It will be up to the Working Groups to propose to EA/LC the necessary conclusions with a view to the efficiency of the EA MLA, further improvement and harmonisation of assessment techniques. They will report to EA/LC at each meeting.
- 3.4. The convenors are nominated by EA/LC according to point 2.2.4.
- 3.5. The Working Groups will co-ordinate their activities with the activities of the Working Groups of other regional accreditation co-operations. They will exchange results and

experience with these groups. Laboratories accredited by members of other regional groups will be included in ILC's or the evaluation of the respective results as far as possible.

- 3.6. The Working Groups will meet when considered necessary by the convenor or by EA/LC, but at least once a year. Invitations to the meetings will be distributed among the members of the Working Groups and sent to the EA/LC secretariat. If considered necessary, the convenor will invite professionals (from NMI's and other experts) and from reliable providers.
- 3.7. The Working Groups will send copies of the minutes to the EA/LC secretariat within two months after the meeting and report to EA/LC at each LC meetings.
- 3.8. The Working Groups may decide to establish special subgroups, with an appointed convenor, to study a precisely defined problem and/or ILC in a special field. Such subgroups should automatically be disbanded if there is no further need for the respective type of work.

4. WORKING GROUPS

- 4.1. Working Groups are established for well-defined tasks. Terms of Reference will be defined by the LC. They will report to EA/LC at each meeting.
- 4.2. The convenors are nominated by EA/LC according to point 2.2.4. Members of the Working Groups are representatives of Accreditation Bodies and representatives from interested parties, Recognized Stakeholders mainly laboratory organisations. They are invited by their convenors.
- 4.3. The Working Groups will be disbanded as soon as their tasks are carried out.
- 4.4. The Working Groups will co-ordinate their activities with the activities of Working Groups of other regional accreditation co-operations and ILAC. They will exchange results with these groups whenever possible.
- 4.5. Working Groups will meet when considered necessary by their convenors or by EA/LC, but at least once a year. Invitations to the meetings will be distributed among the members of the groups and sent to all Accreditation Bodies being EA full or associate members or having signed a contract of cooperation with EA at least 4 weeks before each meeting.
- 4.6. Working groups will send copies of their minutes to the EA/LC secretariat for distribution to EA/LC members within two months after the meeting and report to EA/LC at each LC meetings.
- 4.7. Working groups may decide to establish special task force groups, with an appointed convenor, to study a precisely defined problem and to report back on it. The task force groups should automatically be disbanded after presenting its final results.

5. JOINT WORKING GROUPS

- 5.1. Joint Working Groups (groups working jointly with other organizations) will follow the same rules as Working Groups (see section 4) unless otherwise agreed upon by the organizations concerned. Each Joint Working Group will appoint a representative to be a member of EA/LC.

- 5.2. The EA representatives of EEE-PT members are nominated by the EA/LC for a period of two years. The EA representatives are requested to report about the EEE-PT activity at each LC meetings. The EEE-PT will coordinate its work with the WGs for ILCs.

6. TECHNICAL NETWORKS

- 6.1. Technical networks (TN) are established by the LC to stimulate discussion and harmonisation in selected technical fields. The TNs operate by suitable electronic means led by a convenor.
- 6.2. The TNs offer the EA ABs an informal platform for discussion and exchange of experience and of technical expertise and assessors.
- 6.3. The members of the TNs are the AB nominated persons actively engaged in the particular field of the TN
- 6.4. The convenor of the TN, preferably a member of the LC, is nominated by the LC for a period of two years. The convenor or co-convenor reports on the activity of the TN at each LC meetings.
- 6.5. The LC evaluates the need for the TN biannually. New TNs are established based on the need and interest of the LC members.

7. TASK FORCE GROUPS

- 7.1. The LC, its committees and its technical networks can establish Task Force Groups for a defined task. The chairman or convenor under whose jurisdiction the TFG is established shall propose Terms of Reference for the TFG. The terms of reference shall be approved in the committee/working group. A clear time frame for the task shall be defined. The LC secretary will keep a list of the active TFGs, their tasks and composition. Stakeholder members can be nominated to the TFGs.