



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

Approved by the EA General Assembly on 23 November 2017

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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
- c) The joint Working Groups reporting to EA/LC (such as EEE-PT)
- d) The Technical Networks
- e) The Management Group
- f) 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 material producers against the relevant standards and to elaborate guidance documents where necessary;
- b) to follow up development of new accreditation or conformity assessment activities in the field of laboratories, PT providers and RM producers;
- c) to follow up development of new standards and schemes and issue recommendations for adoption by the EA General Assembly as level 4 or 5 requirements under the EA MLA;
- d) to discuss and where appropriate to develop a European view on issues to be discussed in ILAC or other international organizations;
- e) to establish and maintain liaisons with ILAC and the other regional cooperations by appointing a dedicated liaison person;
- f) to support EA Accreditation Bodies in the implementation of decisions taken by EA and ILAC and to coordinate related activities where appropriate;
- g) to support EA ABs in the management of transitions (standards, ILAC mandatory documents);
- h) to cooperate with relevant working parties of the European Commission and 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;

- i) to cooperate with the other EA committees on a regular basis;
- j) to cooperate with other regional accreditation co-operations in the fields covered by the LC concerning training activities;
- k) to advise the General Assembly, the Executive Committee and the other committees in all matters related to laboratory, PTP and RMP accreditation;
- l) to perform any other task specified by the EA General Assembly;
- m) to nominate the EA/LC representatives to joint Working groups with Stakeholders, such as the EEE-PT and maintain liaison as required;
- n) to develop the LC knowledge database by:
 - maintaining the LC-owned publications;
 - setting up, maintaining and making available a list of Frequently Asked Questions and LC-approved responses.

2.2. Composition

- 2.2.1. The Chairperson is elected by the EA General Assembly for a period of two years in accordance with the Articles of Association and EA rules of procedure.
- 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 provides 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 until the day when the elections are planned to take place.
- 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 full and associate members ;
 - 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 EA 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 routinely meet twice a year.
- 2.3.2. A draft agenda will be distributed at least 4 weeks before each meeting.
- 2.3.3. The Secretariat will arrange workshops at the meeting, when considered useful.
- 2.3.4. Draft minutes will be distributed within two months after the meeting.
- 2.3.5. Decisions lists are considered and approved at the meeting and published immediately 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 the 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

- 3.1. 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.
- 3.2. 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 and Recognized Stakeholders mainly laboratory organisations. They are invited by their convenors.
- 3.3. The Working Groups will be disbanded as soon as their tasks are carried out.
- 3.4. 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.
- 3.5. Working Groups will meet when considered necessary by their convenors or by EA/LC, but at least once a year. Meetings can be web meetings, as considered appropriate by Convenors for the work to be done. 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 with EA at least 4 weeks before each meeting.
- 3.6. 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.

- 3.7. 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 their final results.

4. JOINT WORKING GROUPS

- 4.1. Joint Working Groups (groups working jointly with other organizations) will follow the same rules as Working Groups (see section 3) unless otherwise agreed upon by the organizations concerned. Each Joint Working Group will appoint a representative to be a member of EA/LC.
- 4.2. 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.

5. TECHNICAL NETWORKS

- 5.1. Technical networks (TN) are established by the LC to stimulate discussion and harmonisation in selected technical fields. The TNs operate by suitable electronic means and are led by a convenor.
- 5.2. The TNs offer the EA ABs an informal platform for discussion and exchange of experience and of technical expertise and assessors.
- 5.3. The members of the TNs are the AB nominated persons actively engaged in the particular field of the TN. Convenors will interact with Recognised Stakeholders as necessary for information sharing.
- 5.4. 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 MG and LC meetings.
- 5.5. The LC evaluates the need for the TN biannually. New TNs are established based on the need and interest of the LC members.

6. TASK FORCE GROUPS

- 6.1. The LC, its working groups 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/technical network. 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.