



**Publication
Reference**

EA-1/13 A: 2024

Peer evaluation of a National Accreditation Body that is member of another Regional Accreditation Group or unaffiliated

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to describe EA's policy on the peer evaluation of a National Accreditation Body that is member of another Regional Accreditation Group or an unaffiliated National Accreditation Body.

Authorship

The publication has been written by the Executive Board.

Official language

The text may be translated into other languages as required. The English language version remains the definitive version.

Copyright

The copyright of this text is held by EA. The text may not be copied for resale.

Further information

For further information about this publication, contact your national member of EA.

Please check our website for up-to-date information <http://www.european-accreditation.org>

Category: Governance and Policy Documents

Date of Approval: 6th July 2024

Date of implementation: 10th July 2024 (date of publication)

Transitional period: None

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	4
2	DEFINITIONS.....	4
3	POLICY.....	4
3.1	NAB, MEMBER OF ANOTHER RECOGNISED RAG OR UNAFFILIATED.....	4
3.2	EA NAB, MEMBER OF ANOTHER RECOGNISED RAG.....	5
	ANNEX 1 REQUIREMENTS FOR SIGNING A COA WITH EA.....	6

1 INTRODUCTION

EA has a prime role to define, harmonise and build consistency in accreditation as a service to European trade, industry and society, with the aim to reduce barriers to trade and to contribute to protecting health and safety of people.

An important means to facilitate trade and to reduce technical barriers to trade is the EA Multilateral Agreement (MLA). Prerequisite to be a signatory to the EA MLA is that the NAB has been successfully peer evaluated by EA.

At the same time, EA relies on the ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (ILAC MRA) and the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (IAF MLA) in relation to the global acceptance of reports and certificates issued by accredited CABs.

Therefore, it is the policy of EA that a NAB that has been peer evaluated by ILAC, IAF or another recognised Regional Accreditation Group (RAG), shall not be peer evaluated by EA.

However, there might be a need for those EA members, which have been peer evaluated by another RAG or ILAC/IAF, and other National Accreditation Bodies (NABs) from non-EA countries, to demonstrate compliance with Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 and the capability to accredit Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) for EU legal purposes.

This policy explains the situations and conditions where a NAB that is a member of another recognized RAG or unaffiliated, may be peer evaluated by EA.

2 DEFINITIONS

- a) National Accreditation Body: the sole body in a State that performs accreditation with authority derived from the State;
- b) Regional Accreditation Group: a formally established regional cooperation of accreditation bodies;
- c) Recognised Regional Accreditation Group: A Regional Accreditation Group which is recognised by ILAC and/or IAF;
- d) Unaffiliated (national accreditation body): a National Accreditation Body (NAB) that is not a member of a Regional Accreditation Group.

3 POLICY

3.1 NAB, member of another recognised RAG or unaffiliated

A NAB that is a member of another recognized RAG or is unaffiliated – and that is not eligible to become an EA member according to the EA Articles of Association - may be peer evaluated by

EA, if the European Commission requests EA to evaluate this NAB to demonstrate compliance with the principles of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 and its competence to accredit CABs for notification purposes and/or for other EU legislations / regulatory schemes.

For this purpose, the NAB needs to sign a cooperation agreement (COA) with EA. The conditions are set out in Annex 1.

Any existing results of the peer evaluations undertaken within the past 4 years by the other RAG (or IAF or ILAC) shall be considered in the peer evaluation by EA.

3.2 EA NAB, member of another recognised RAG

A NAB that is a full member of another recognized RAG – but is eligible to become an EA member according to the Articles of Association - may be peer evaluated by EA if that RAG does not offer the MLA scope required by the NAB under its peer evaluation system.

The NAB shall become an EA member in order to apply for the EA peer evaluation. Any existing results of a recent peer evaluation by the other RAG (or IAF or ILAC) shall be considered in the peer evaluation by EA.

As soon as the other RAG offers the scope concerned for peer evaluation, EA shall stop with the peer evaluation of the NAB and terminate the EA MLA signatory status.

ANNEX 1 Requirements for signing a COA with EA

Each NAB signatory of the COA agrees to abide by its terms and conditions and shall:

- a) Fulfil the requirements in ISO/IEC 17011,
- b) Fulfil the relevant requirements in the Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 as identified in EA-1/17 S1,
- c) Fulfil supplementary requirements defined in EA mandatory documents,
- d) Have demonstrated experience in operating a NAB and have access to technical expertise regarding relevant EU legislation,
- e) Ensure that all accredited CABs comply with the supplementary requirements defined in the relevant EU legislations and EA mandatory documents,
- f) Bring those supplementary requirements to the attention of accredited and applicant CABs,
- g) Inform accredited and applicant CABs that only conformity assessment results (e.g. reports or certificates) that refers to the relevant accreditation are considered to be under the EA MLA,
- h) Only subcontract assessment activities regarding EU legislations to NABs having signed the EA MLA for that particular scope,
- i) Cover the costs of the peer evaluations, including the daily rate specific to the peer evaluator's employers fee schedule, travel, accommodation, and provide sufficient translators; unless compensated by other parties,
- j) Report any significant changes in its status and/or its operating practices without delay to the EA Secretariat. Significant changes are those that could affect issues, stipulated in EA-1/17 S1 and relevant for the accreditation of CABs according EU legislations, such as competence, impartiality and operational ability and include, but are not limited to, those related to legal status, relationship with government, senior personnel, contact persons, accreditation criteria and procedures and office address. The NAB shall provide an impact analysis related to the reported changes,
- k) Accept accreditation systems operated by other signatories as equivalent to its own accreditation system,
- l) Declare, when requested, conformity assessment results (e.g. reports or certificates) issued by CABs accredited by NABs that are signatories for the relevant scope to the EA MLA, to the ILAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (ILAC MRA) and to the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (IAF MLA) as reliable as those issued by CABs accredited by themselves,
- m) Make publicly accessible information about the Level 4 Sector standards, Sectorial schemes and activities based on EU Internal Market legislation (Directives, Regulations) included in the accreditation services offered by the NAB,

- n) Notify, in writing and not later than three months in advance, other EA MLA signatories of any voluntary withdrawal or reduction of the scope of recognition,
- o) Upon changes to requirements of this COA, ensure conformity with the new requirements within the period specified by the EA General Assembly.